

ATHENS COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ATHENS COUNTY, OHIO

MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 8, 2024 MEETING

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

ATHENS COUNTY: Neal Reynolds, Warren Jeffers, Jen Seifert, Megan Riddlebarger

ATHENS COUNTY ENGINEER – Jeff Maiden

ATHENS CITY/COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – Jack Pepper

ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Lenny Eliason, Chris Chmiel, Charlie Adkins

ATHENS CITY: Rob Delach, Steve Patterson

CITY OF NELSONVILLE –

VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE: -Gary Goosman

TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVE: -

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Drew Daniels, Selena Cottrill, Amy Lipka, Ben Ziff, Meredith Erlewine, John Kotowski, Cathy Bobo, Jason Pyles, Scott Dunfee, Melissa Blank, Tim Kirkendall, Paige Gates

CALL TO ORDER:

Upon determination that a quorum of at least nine (9) voting members was present, Vice President Pepper called the February 8, 2024 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission to order at 8:03 AM. The meeting was held at the ACEMS Station #51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, OH 45701.

GUESTS PRESENT:

MINUTES:

Motion Neal Reynolds second by Rob Delach to approve as presented the meeting minutes of the January, 2023 Athens County Regional Planning Commission. All approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ODOT is hosting an open house Tuesday, February 13th, at 4:00 pm at the Athens Community Center to discuss the US33 widening. All intersections in Athens County along that project will become interchanges instead of at-grade crossings.

NEW BUSINESS:

CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS

- **City/County Sewer Expansion Project- Lenny Eliason**
 - Phases 6&7 are wrapping in May, possibly earlier depending on the weather
 - A public meeting in New Marshfield took place recently regarding sewer and now a decision must be made regarding funding.
 - There is a potential that Radford Road might need to be closed for a couple of days. Those conversations are happening and a decision will be reached soon.
- **Athens County Land Bank-Chris Chmiel**
 - The next round of demolition throughout the county will be starting soon

- There's money available to tear down structures that are not owned by the land bank.
- The land bank is working with the Health Department to condemn properties
- **Broadband Expansion and Access-**
 - Amesville is still waiting on ARC approval. It has been 18 months.
- **Age Friendly Athens County (AFAC)- Amy Lipka**
 - Healthy Aging Grant guidelines are live on the Health Department and County websites. These are quick action projects. Five grants of \$15,000 will be awarded.
- **SR 682 Corridor-**
 - The SR56 roundabout preliminary designs are completed. There is a possibility for a delay but that will be determined later today.
 - The City of Athens received Safe Routes for All funding for pedestrian infrastructure all the way to Morrison Gordon school
- **Appalachian Community Grants-**
 - Round 2 of funding is anticipated to start anytime now.

PLANNER'S REPORT: Laura Olbers

- On the advice of ODOT, we will not pursue funding for Hockingport sidewalks this year.
- Athens County Together 2024 funding cycle will start accepting team registrations in March.

CITY, VILLAGE, TOWNSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:

- **Athens County Auditor's Office**
- **Village of Amesville-Mayor Goosman**
 - A lot of entities are signing up to participate in YODEL, an aggregated calendar that the Athens County Foundation is sponsoring, hoping to pull all community events into one space.
- **Ohio University-Jason Pyles**
 - Ohio University is starting a comprehensive road maintenance project.
 - It is official that three new buildings will be built: A health resource center near Heritage Hall, a College of Fine Arts building, and a dorm on South Green
- **Athens City County Health Department**
 - Active Transportation tabling has been happening around the county this month to get community input on prioritizing road corridors.
- **City of Athens-Mayor Patterson, Rob Delach**
 - Megan Jennings, the newly hired City Planner, starts on Monday the 12th.
 - 28 municipalities are receiving \$12.5 million for EV charging stations from Dayton to Athens, to include more than 200 charging points. East Elementary and Morrison Gordon are getting Level 2&3 charging stations. Ohio University and the City of Athens are also getting several charging stations.
 - Local Infrastructure Hub has opened up round two of their free bootcamp.
- **Athens Township- Steve Pierson**
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- **Village of Albany – Tim Kirkendall**
 - The new sewer expansion to Carpenter Road is completed.

- **City of Nelsonville-**
- **Athens County Engineer's Office- Jeff Maiden**
 - The Engineer's Office submitted TAP and Systemic Safety grants through ODOT for the Johnson Rd project, which would include buying right of way, dealing with utilities, and storm water. It is anticipated to be a \$1.6 million dollar project.
 - Three bridges are under development to be built this year.
- **Athens County Commissioners-**
- **New Leaf Justice Enterprises-Jen Seifert**
 - Buckeye Hills is redoing their Regional Economic Development Plan and hosting a series of workshops throughout the region.
- **Athens County Economic Development Council- Mollie Fitzgerald**
- **Athens County Auditor's Office-Scott Dunfee**
 - The Auditor's Office finalized the MOU for the co-op members to sign. Members can expect those to come out soon.
- **Athens County Visitors Bureau- Boone Troyer**
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- **Village of Chauncey-Drew Daniels**
 - The Village of Chauncey applied to the Ohio Rail Commission for a grade separation study for the West Bailey Road area to the park. That study will be conducted this summer
 - A home repair fair will take place March 23rd from 12:00pm-3:00 at the Quaker Meeting House
- **Athens County EMA-Melissa Blank**
 - Continuing work on grants and radio equipment inventory
- **HAPCAP-**
 - Mobility Coordinators are working with a consulting company out of Portland, OR to create a Transit Development Plan.
 - Athens Transit will be receiving three buses that were ordered over a year ago over the next couple of months, as well as three additional buses from Youngstown, OH.
- **Athens County Soil and Water District- Cathy Bobo**
 - Annual tree ordering is wrapping up.
 - ACSWD received a grant to deal with invasive species in the County
- **COAD-Megan Riddlebarger**
 - Solar For All has allocated \$200 million statewide in funding. Many houses in Athens County are eligible by their census tract.
 - Lead Safe Ohio offers up to \$50,000 for homes and \$100,000 for commercial structures for lead abatement.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

There being no further business to come before the Commission and no additional comments for good of the order, on a motion by Gary Goosman, seconded Jack Pepper adjourned the meeting at 8:48 AM.

The March 14, 2024 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission is anticipated to be conducted at the Athens County EMS Station 51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, Ohio at 8:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Olbers, Director, Athens County Regional Planning Commission

Approved by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____