



MP3 COG Board
Wednesday, May 28, 2025
6:00 PM
Reading City Hall Council Chambers

Members: –L. Olsen (County), L. Kelleher (Reading), K. Barnhardt (County), J. Baez, Jr. (Reading), S. Dierolf (Alsace Twp rep Manager), K. Bradley (Alsace Twp rep elected off); M Kindlick (Mt. Penn) – in person and A. Sellers (Lower Alsace Twp), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp) - virtually

Members absent: R. Maurer (Mt Penn)

Others attending – K. Lerch, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, R. Rock, B. Hurst and S. Hurst and L. Kissinger - virtually

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for public comment and advised those attending of the public speaking rules.

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, representing the Pagoda Foundation, gave the board an update on the construction project at the Pagoda. She announced that on June 2nd the lights will be turned off due to the project. The lights will remain off until October. The new lights will be multiple colors and a policy about changing the colors needs to be prepared. She stated that the scaffolding is currently going up. She described the voids in the foundation caused by the degradation of the mortar. The City is making those repairs to ensure the stability of the facility. She added that the construction project was to be completed by the end of the year but the need to replace the mortar in the foundation will probably delay the completion.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the project architect expressed the opinion that when the structure reopens there should be a limit of no more than 50 people in the Pagoda, including staff. This will place limits on the reuse of the building. She added that to avoid overloading the utilities, a full kitchen will not be added to the building.

In response to a question from Mr. Dierolf, Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she will inquire if there are limits on the number of people that can gather on the porches and outdoor areas.

Mr. Baez noted the availability of a survey on the Pagoda's website at readingpagoda.com to provide public input about the future use of the Pagoda. He urged all to complete the survey.

Rich Rock, of the Duryea Hillclimb, stated that this year is the 75th anniversary of the Hillclimb. He stated that the dates are June 21-22 and August 16-17. The races start at 9 am. He stated that the MP3 is welcome to have a booth in the N 13th St Extension area. He stated that he is still working to attract food vendors. He noted the need for the repair of potholes in the area near the Pagoda and the need for the City to consider repaving Duryea Dr.

In response to a question from Mr. Dierolf, Mr. Rock stated that while food vendors may make a donation to the race from their proceeds, there is no mandatory requirement to do so.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA

Mr. Barnhardt asked the board to consider the minutes from the March meeting and the agenda for this meeting.

There was no objection to the contents of the meeting minutes or the agenda and they were approved by acclamation after a motion by Ms. Bradley and a second by Mr. Baez.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Olsen, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report - the MP3 bank account has a balance of \$55,912., noting that the only expense was the payment of \$200 for dues to the DCED PACOG, which was authorized at the March meeting.

The report was approved by acclamation after a motion by Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Baez.

PRESENTATION – Blake Hurst on Vision for Skyline Drive

Mr. Hurst stated that he recently graduated from Drexel with a degree in architecture. His capstone project was the design of a project on Skyline Drive in the Drenkel Field area. He explained that his idea began with exploring how Skyline attracted people to escape big cities and go to park areas like Skyline, Mineral Spring Park, etc. in the mid to late 1800s. He walked those present through the design which created a park and parking area at Drenkel Field and a hotel, restaurant, shopping area and community space on the opposite side. The renderings showed various viewpoints from the hotel spaces. He expressed the belief that this type of facility on Skyline Dr. would be very attractive to all types of visitors.

Mr. Barnhardt congratulated Mr. Hurst on his beautiful project. He added that the MP3 Master Plan for Mt. Penn, prepared around 2018, also suggested this type of hotel project on Skyline Dr.

Mr. Dierolf agreed, noting the existence of the foundation of the former hotel on the Fire Tower lot.

Mr. Olsen stated that the project design is excellent with its approach to the existing natural features. He stated that a project like this would definitely create a destination on Mt. Penn.

Mr. Baez agreed that the project is well done and extraordinary.

Mr. Hurst stated that he did not cost out the project, but he did see that the property is zoned for preservation and a similar project would require zoning variances.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL) is doing a presentation in Williamsport next week on bringing the Main Street program to the mountain, showing how the Main Street program can create revenue streams for recreation uses. She stated that she is working with the Berks County Community Foundation and the PEL to bring the presentation to Berks County.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Review Amendment to MP3 COG Agreement re membership

Mr. Barnhardt stated that Reading has approved the modification to the MP3 COG Agreement. He asked Ms. Kelleher to send the draft agreement to the remaining municipalities.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the agreement was reviewed by the Council Solicitor prior to its introduction and he made no changes.

B. Closing Skyline to Vehicular Traffic and Guardrail Project Update

Mr. Kissinger highlighted the written update provided by the Capital Project Manager:

- a. Gates have been operational for 30 days with minor troubleshooting required.
- b. City and Central Berks Police have been instrumental in the enforcement of the gates
- c. Citations have been issued to offenders
- d. The City added a hardwire light at Skyline gate but the List gate will wait for a Solar light from the Schneider Electric Project.
- b. Installation of camera system across Skyline Dr
 - a. 46 cameras are live with Camera feed and under observation of Video Surveillance Unit and Desk Sgt of RPD. The project is expected to be completed soon. Live feed is available to Central Berks Police – they need to purchase some equipment to work through the firewall.
 - c. Mineral Spring- initial landscaping and rehabilitations are almost completed.
 - d. Egelman’s Dam- PaDEP is requiring a full redesign . A change in leadership at PaDEP has led to a change in thought process and the redesign. Project is stumbling forward slowly.

Ms. Kelleher noted the importance of both police departments having live access to the video feeds. Approximately half of Skyline with the camera coverage is located in Lower Alsace. Live video access allows the departments to check the video when complaint calls come in which allows the department to ascertain that the complaint is valid and decide how to respond.

C. Establish meeting sites for the remainder of 2025

After discussion the following schedule was adopted:

- July 23rd – Mt. Penn
- Sept 24 – Alsace Twp
- Dec 3rd - Lower Alsace Twp

If those locations get disrupted, the meeting will be held at the Reading Council Chambers.

D. Frisbee Golf in partnership with Liederkrantz

Mr. Olsen reported that the Liederkrantz leadership approached the MP3 about partnering to install a Frisbee Golf course. The initial course will be 9-holes in the vicinity of Egelman's Park and eventually will expand to the south toward Mineral Spring Park. He stated that Ms. Kelleher and Ms. Burkovich did some work to create a map showing the municipal ownership of the property.

Ms. Kelleher explained that since the boundary line separating Reading from Lower Alsace surrounds the Liederkrantz property, it would be easiest to have the golf course parking on the Liederkrantz property and the course on City property. This will eliminate the need to seek planning approval from both Lower Alsace and the City. She noted that the Liederkrantz leadership believes that they can have any brush/tree clearing performed by club volunteers.

Mr. Olsen stated that he reached out to Simone Collins regarding a feasibility study for the course. He added that the Liederkrantz leadership suggested seeking hole sponsors to cover the installation costs and that the MP3 may want to consider assisting with some of the upfront planning costs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS – submission in written form only

- Finance & Capital - none
- Promotions & Marketing - none
- Public Safety & Public Services - none
- Environmental & Land Use Committees – none

WRITTEN REPORTS FROM PRESERVE STAKEHOLDERS

None received.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one present indicated their desire to comment and the public comment period was closed.

The next MP3 meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 23rd at 6 pm at the Mt Penn municipal building.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:35 pm on motion of Mr. Baez and Mr. Dierolf.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Ms. Kelleher to send MP3 Agreement to member municipal managers – Sent Friday May 30th

2. Mr. Ahrens, Mr. Pottiger & Mr. Moore - Adoption of the agreement modification by the County, Mt. Penn, Lower Alsace and Alsace Twps.
3. Mr. Pottiger to follow-up with Chief Serafin regarding the access to live video feed.