

**FINANCE MEETING
COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM**

Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 1:30 PM

Present: Commissioners Barbara Cross, Jim Hertzler and Gary Eichelberger; Larry Thomas, Chief Clerk; Dave Swartz, Ag Extension Office; Kirk Stoner, Planning Office; Dana Best, Finance; BarbaraSue Hershey, Commissioners' Office; Alex Smyser, IMTO; Jonathan Bowser, Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC); Shireen Farr, CAEDC/Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau; Lisa Riggs, Lancaster Economic Development Corporation; Felicia Dell, Pam Shellenberger, York County Planning Commission; Ruth Ann Ciecierski, Recording Secretary; Joshua Vaughn, The Sentinel; and Steve Marroni, The Patriot News

THREE COUNTY PLANNING UPDATE

Chief Clerk Thomas opened the Finance Meeting for discussion with invited representatives from nearby economic planning counties including Lancaster County Economic Development Corporation, Adams County Planning, and York County Planning Commission. He reported that the Adams County representatives were unable to attend, but they have provided notes for the meeting.

Presentation from York County Planning Commission: Felicia Dell, Director of York County Planning Commission and Pam Shellenberger, Chief of the Long Term Planning Division, discussed their long term economic plan.

- York County Planning Commission and York County Economic Alliance and have built a good strategy through the partnership.
- York County Planning Commission is an agency with 44 employees and 7 different divisions.
- Economic Development and Economic Alliance formed about ten years ago when there was going to be a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission at Aberdeen Proving Grounds and it was felt that the economic impact could leak into southern York County with the potential influx of housing and employees. They were able to secure funding through the BRAC funding with the partnership.
- The Planning Commission did an economic snapshot to assess where they are today and look at statistics for the future.
- The Planning Commission and York County Economic Alliance continue to meet.
- Pam Shellenberger discussed some long term plans regarding opportunity sites and stated that they looked at critical issues to see how competitive York County would be in the area of the work force development of the sites and the market availability.
- Ms. Shellenberger discussed some chapters in their long range plan. One chapter focused on the economic assessment on the fiscal impacts of a projected 2.5 million square feet of new space for York County Economic Development.
- Ms. Shellenberger passed out a copy their Accomplishments Report which sets forth what they accomplished in their first plan.
- They discussed how they could market vacant properties and what commercial properties could revitalize the sites and get them back on the market. Six properties have been revitalized so far.
- York County has their own separate Redevelopment Authority administered by the Economic Alliance. Their Government structure is a C-6.
- The current long range plan is a five-year plan.
- Dave Swartz asked if they have identified certain business industries that they would like to attract for the 2.5 million square feet of potential growth. Ms. Shellenberger stated that the cluster analysis identified some businesses that they would like to retain and the merging industries that they want

to attract. A partial list of those businesses are: advanced materials and diverse manufacturing; logistics and transportation; bio medical; agriculture and food production; healthcare; and financial services.

- There was a question regarding land banks and Ms. Dell explained that York County does not have a land bank. The proposal right now is to create a Blight Review Commission created through the county commissioners with appointed members and staffed by the Economic Alliance. The Planning Commission would be a commission where municipalities could come in with applications for a blight determination and then work with the Redevelopment Authority to come up with a way to obtain the property. York County would like to get the blighted properties back on the tax reducing side of the equation.
- Commissioner Hertzler asked if York County was participating in the South Central Pennsylvania Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Ms. Dell stated that the federal housing funding goes through the County Planning Commission and the City of York, not the Economic Alliance. They receive the federal housing funding to create new or renovate existing affordable housing and work with developers and all the tax deals they put together.

Presentation from Lancaster County Economic Development Corporation: Lisa Riggs, President of Lancaster County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), explained that they are two organizations; the other one is EDC Finance Corporation. The Lancaster County EDC is a private sector organization run by the business community, it is a 501(c) 6 organization, and is supported mainly by membership contributions by the business community (110 members). The EDC Finance Corporation is now set up for a primary conduit for small business administration 504 lending. They have strong regional partnerships with York, Adams and Cumberland Counties.

- Lancaster does not have an Economic Development Plan and there hasn't been one done by the Lancaster County Government. They do have a strategic plan, but no formal plan for Lancaster County. Ms. Riggs stated that they plan on having an Economic Development Plan for the future.
- Lancaster has a scarcity of land right now. There is a lot of farm preservation and they are assessing how much land they have available for development and how to channel growth into the urban areas.
- They are in the process of overhauling their business retention and equipment programs. There are over 12,000 businesses in Lancaster County and they are trying to prioritize the areas that they need to focus on and to put resources into growing businesses and development.
- They are narrowing their focus on types of business that make sense for Lancaster County. The current targets they are focusing on are:
 - entertainment technology (Rock Lititz, Sight & Sound, etc.)
 - food processing (large number of dairy farms)
 - crushing facility (soybeans)
 - office market (businesses looking for larger spaces)
- Commissioner Hertzler asked if Lancaster County had a Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Riggs stated that they do have one.
- Commissioner Cross asked if they had any incubators as a collaborative approach to get into the entertainment technology industry. Ms. Riggs stated that the incubators are called co-working space primarily in the city and they are seeing some increased activity for more demand for it in the urban areas.
- Mr. Swartz asked about the new food processing segment that they are pursuing with the dairy products. He asked what contacts they are pursuing as they try to move towards that goal. Ms. Riggs stated that they will be talking to some key players for discussion such as Ag Counsel; the farming community; Center for Dairy Excellence, Harrisburg; Penn State Ag Extension; and food processors. There is a lot of lead work that needs to be done and the understanding of the industry.
- Commissioner Eichelberger asked how much of a role the existing players, either directly or indirectly, are in becoming a catalyst with entertainment technology. Ms. Riggs stated that there are some key players with the entertainment technology that have been in Lancaster over 30 years that

like to stay in the background. The business model for the Rock Lititz sound stage is different than any other model they are used to. Lancaster County is trying to support Rock Lititz in relationship to building a strong partnership with the industry. There was a sound issue, but Rock Lititz worked well with the historic town of Lititz and the issue has been resolved.

- Chief Clerk Thomas asked if there was a need to try to get things in sync with the farmland development and for land development for other growth. Ms. Riggs stated that they are assessing their real estate inventory and feel they have adequate room for current growth productions. There are 60 municipalities and most of the ground is in agriculture. It is a balancing act between handling growth and retaining farmland.

Adams County Planning: Kirk Stoner reported he talked to Adams County's Planning Director, Sherri Clayton, and read some notes sent from Adams County.

- He stated that he sees a blend of Lancaster and York Counties' approach with Adams County.
- They are implementing their Adams County Conference Plan and working on an Economic Development Plan to get a better understanding of the issues.
- Adams County did a Market Assessment and Economic Development Opportunity Study and used primary data by going out to meet with businesses directly. Based upon the analysis, they are looking at a narrow model of the Adams County Fruit Belt to develop a model to predict the future on a revenue standpoint.
- Chief Clerk Thomas reported that he attended a presentation hosted by the Farm Bureau Agency on The study of the Fruit Belt in Adams County. He stated that overall assessment of the study itself is amazing. The focus on primary data is important to get from the business itself, how it operates and what makes it unique. He discussed how secondary industries that are associated with the business can help support it and help those businesses. He stated that there are invaluable insights that can put the data in the driving seat and how it can be pursued.

Mr. Stoner reported that Ms. Dell and her team have been very helpful in any regional mission that he has worked with on with them. He stated that they have been excellent partners that come to the table with professionalism and he is proud to serve with them.

Ruth Ann Ciecierski
Administrative Assistant