

**MINUTES OF THE POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 5, 2024
(Approved January 22, 2025)**

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee (PMRPC) held a meeting via teleconference and in-person at Pottstown Borough Hall on December 5, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Attendees: Douglass Township- Joe Richardson, Andrew Duncan
East Coventry Township- Larry Tietjen
Lower Pottsgrove Township – Tom Troutman
North Coventry Township –Jim Marks, Bill Soumis
New Hanover Township – Not represented
Pottstown Borough – Ryan Procsal
Upper Pottsgrove Township –Wayne Weaver
West Pottsgrove Township – Howard Shawell
Montgomery County Planning Commission – Marley Bice

Recording Secretary – Bonnie L. Frisco

Visitor(s): Doug Slick, Mike Hays, Evan Brandt, Anne Leavitt-Gruberger, Joel A. Johnson, Chris Patriarca

- 1. Meeting Called to Order:** Mr. Marks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance:** Mr. Marks led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. Roll Call:** Mr. Marks did a roll call and all municipalities were represented except for New Hanover Township.
- 4. Review of the October 2024 Meeting Minutes**
Mr. Soumis moved to approve the October 23, 2024 meeting minutes as amended. Mr. Troutman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Amendments being under Review of the October 24 Meeting Minutes change ‘Douglass Township’ to ‘Lower Pottsgrove Township’.
- 5. Review of 2025 Meeting Dates**
Mr. Procsal moved to approve the 2025 meeting dates and continue with the hybrid meetings. Meetings dates will be the fourth Wednesday of each month except for November and December when there will be a combined meeting on December 4, 2025. Meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. at Pottstown Borough Hall and via zoom. Mr. Shawell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 6. Treasurer’s Reports**
Mr. Weaver moved to approve the November 2024 Treasurer’s Report. Mr. Shawell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 7. Public Comment**
Doug Slick noted that he is working with a local homeless advisory committee to address homeless issues and the need for affordable housing. Mr. Marks asked Mr. Slick to provide the Committee with a copy of the information that he read to the group.

Mike Hays inquired about affordable housing issues being included in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Marks noted that the PMRPC does not set policy and asked Mr. Hays to provide the Committee with a copy of the information that he read to the group.

8. Comprehensive Plan Review Items

Draft Housing Chapter & Discussion

Ms. Bice reviewed the survey results and the housing distribution information.

*Guests: Anne Leavitt-Gruberger, AICP, MCPC County Planning Manager
Joel A. Johnson, AICP, P.H.M., Executive Director, Montgomery County Housing Authority
Chris Patriarca, AICP, CCPC Senior Community Planner*

Ms. Leavitt-Gruberger noted one of the ongoing endeavors is to encourage more housing opportunities by making builders whole by offering incentives for more affordable housing.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Montgomery County Housing Authority operates with federal contracts in conjunction with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Two of the programs are the Housing Voucher Program and the Public Housing Program which the Housing Authority owns and operates.

Mr. Patriarca noted the importance of housing that makes sense and is compatible with existing housing, also noting the need for smaller apartment buildings and smaller homes, along with access to amenities such as public transportation. Housing for the aging is also needed and also ensuring that the aging population can stay in their communities. Mr. Soumis noted using empty buildings and blighted properties for housing, along with putting money into abandoned neighborhoods. Mr. Patriarca noted an example in Phoenixville where Phoenixville Borough worked with developers by giving them a land asset for a 50-unit aged-restricted housing building. Mr. Marks asked what the County Commissioners are doing about the housing issue and Mr. Patriarca noted that budget hearings are coming up.

9. New Business

- a. Development of Regional Impact:
276-284 N. Hanover Street – Pottstown Borough – proposed adaptive reuse of several existing commercial buildings to create 85 multi-family units and a retail/café space. Other site improvements include 148 parking spaces, a parklet, stormwater management facilities, and landscaping.

Mr. Soumis moved to send a letter of support to Pottstown Borough relating to the 276-284 N. Hanover Street project. Mr. Shawell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Ordinance Review 24-08: Upper Pottsgrove Township – R-2/R-3 Zoning Map Amendments.
No action needed at this time.

10. Municipal Updates

Douglass Township

Mr. Richardson noted there is nothing additional to report for Douglass Township.

East Coventry Township

Mr. Tietjen noted there is nothing additional to report for East Coventry Township.

Lower Pottsgrove Township

Mr. Troutman noted that the building that was bought for the purpose of the new Township administrative offices is being modified and Royal Farms and Wawa are under construction. The new hotel is in the approvals process.

New Hanover Township

Not represented.

North Coventry Township

Mr. Marks noted there is nothing additional to report for North Coventry Township.

Pottstown Borough

Mr. Procsal requested that the homeless matter be placed on an upcoming agenda. Mr. Marks noted that matter may not relate to the Comprehensive Plan but the incoming Committee Chair could address that issue.

Upper Pottsgrove Township

Mr. Weaver noted there is nothing additional to report for Upper Pottsgrove Township.

West Pottsgrove Township

Mr. Shawell noted there is nothing additional to report for West Pottsgrove Township.

11. School District Updates: No representatives present

12. MCPC Update

Ms. Bice noted the below information.

- a. Montgomery County's Food and Agritourism Directory – an interactive map showcasing local farms that engage in agritourism or sell fresh products/produce:
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9bd59f7f9b004db4be2edad015e11e74>
- b. DVRPC Pottstown Station Area Study underway
- c. Schuylkill River Trail 422 Connector – construction expected to begin March 2025
- d. Keim Street Bridge Replacement – pre-construction meeting November 2024

13. Adjournment

Mr. Procsal moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. Mr. Troutman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonnie L. Frisco
Recording Secretary