



**Meeting Minutes of
February 14, 2019, 8:00 a.m.
Wayne Dumont Administration Building
165 County Rte. 519 Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949**

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by Chair Betty Schultheis, who led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL Present: Eve Azar, Mitchell Jones, John Kruk, Chris Maier, Jim Sheldon, Linda Stettler, Terry Urfer, and Chair Betty Schultheis. Also present were Freeholder Liaison James Kern III, and county staff, Planning Director David Dech, Land Preservation Director Corey Tierney, and Public Information/Tourism Director Art Charlton, and Hank Bignell of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County.

Guests in attendance were: Rob Acker, William Benz, John Monteverde and Dawn Smith.

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes of January 10, 2019 were moved Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Kruk, and approved. Mr. Urfer and Mr. Sheldon abstained from the vote.

The committee's new liaison, Freeholder James Kern III, was introduced and said he is looking forward to working with the group. Mr. Kern stated since this committee was created there has been a lot of success and momentum. There are a lot of things outside our control that have put us at a disadvantage compared to the state and Lehigh Valley, he said, and we need to continue the open dialogue with the state and local municipalities to continue this positive momentum.

Old Business

Chair Schultheis brought up the need for true direction on three projects: the Grown in Warren report, the white paper, and the study by Tetra Tech and Camoin. She suggested the committee package up what we want from each piece with marching orders going forward.

Status on White Paper: County approved it and Dr. Will Austin, president of Warren County Community College, is progressing with timeline given. We will get updates as key portions are completed.

Grown in Warren by Greener by Design: Warren County Director of Preservation Mr. Tierney stated Greener by Design delivered the Grown in Warren report and there were a lot of recommendations, a lot of potential. Greener by Design presented the final report but Mr. Tierney said it needs some revisions and polishing. He is in the progress of working on that. Presentation to Freeholders is on Feb. 27. Mr. Maier suggested again getting input from Dr. Austin, WCCC and a plan of action. Chair Schultheis will call Dr. Austin about it.

Hackettstown Plan: Mr. Sheldon discussed how he wants to strengthen farmers in Warren county/Hackettstown. He brought Mr. Acker, consultant for the Hackettstown BID, from urban re-development, in creating a farmers market in Hackettstown and the County. He suggested the concept of grown in Warren, sold in Warren and bought by others counties. People want experience shopping, sustainable food, and a farmer market. For example, Brick Farm Market in Hopewell, NJ offers a butcher, produce, sandwiches, soups, coffee, salads, juice bar, dairy, and eggs. Another example of this experience is Easton Public Market in Easton, PA. The targeted space for this project is Hometown Hardware in Hackettstown. Cost is estimated at \$2.5 million. The committee discussed how something like this could be funded and who would take this on, which needs to be determined. Chair Schultheis is interested in presenting this and the other three projects to elected officials but wants to wait until we have deliverables. Possible date to present is in the fall timeframe.

Mr. Maier mentioned Land of Make Believe is putting in an off-road safari adventure in 2019.

Mr. Kruk brought up a proposed hotel project with 65 beds, conference room and wedding venue, although the proposed location has not yet been made public. He hopes to be able to tell more about it in next meeting.

Status on Processes: Mr. Dech said he is continuing to refine and update the development application for online mapping and is willing to provide an updated presentation in a future meeting.

WCCC Status: Mrs. Azar reported the NJBIA grant money for computer and software training has been spent and funding is now on hold until new grant period starts up again. WCCC also had a mini job fair for pharmacy tech students. LabCorp is in need of medical lab assistants; the college is putting together training for this spring. Bev Graph Packaging Intl. moved into three incubators; the college will work with them on training and other needs. WCCC is implementing a noncredit track for people looking for certifications and quick jobs for Drones, Addiction, Automotive programs and more.

Tourism update: Mr. Charlton highlighted the Valentine's events on Warren County Wanderings. Statistics from January 2018 to January 2019 show traffic to the Explore Warren website is up 25%. We are just shy of 3500 subscribers to WC Wanderings. Mr. Charlton reported that the Freeholder Director Jason Sarnoski announced the 3rd Annual ParkFest @ Bread Lock Park will be held June 8, and sponsors are being sought. On March 2, there will be a Mardi Gras event in Phillipsburg. Mr. Charlton also introduced Mr. Benz, a Digital Marketer for local businesses. He formed a 501c3 for a Phillipsburg project called Ice House Flats, creating a park place with an open venue for concerts, festivals, walking trails, raised beds for gardening, dog park and more. He is looking for ideas on how best to start process and would like to present more in a future meeting. The project's website is www.icehouseflats.org.

Washington Business Improvement District Executive Director John Monteverde discussed two events coming up this year: Green Festival in June and the Arts, Sweets and Crafts Festival in April. Mr. Monteverde plans on attending future meetings of the WC EDC.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Next meeting: March 14, 2019, 8 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brittany Nigro