

## CONNECT Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday | September 19, 2019 | 10AM

Castle Shannon Municipal Building

3310 McRoberts Rd



**Municipal Attendees:** Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg; John Stinner, Jefferson Hills; Megan Tuñón, Etna; Thomas Rengers, Etna; Darla Cravotta, Allegheny County; Mark Sampogna, Green Tree; Tim McLaughlin, Aspinwall; Bettina Jones, Castle Shannon; Tom Hartswick, Castle Shannon; Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills; Darrell Rapp, Swissvale; Steve Beuter, Carnegie; Ben Estell, Dormont; Jack Betkowski, Ross; Bill Stout, Millvale; George Zboyovsky, Brentwood; Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna

**Other Attendees:** Jeanne Clark, ALCOSAN; Jim Sloss, Duquesne Light; Eduard Bakos, University of Pittsburgh; JoEllen Marsh, LEAD/CONNECT

**CONNECT/GSPIA Staff:** Lydia Morin, CONNECT; Tess De Jong, CONNECT

### July 2019 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve minutes – Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills

Second – Ben Estell, Dormont

Motion approved.

### Working Group Visioning Session Executive Summary debrief *Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg*

1. Infrastructure and Utilities
  2. Economic and Environmental Development
  3. Public Safety, Health, and Human Resources
- Chair Reno recapped the working group visioning session, and explained how as a group they distilled every issue members brought up into a few key top priorities and potential goals. As many of the goals need additional resources, research, and data, members linked the WG goals to this semester's CONNECT capstone project and volunteered to help guide them (see below.)
  - Broad note on all of the meetings this summer and fall from Chair Reno: we have had more meetings than usual as we head into a strategic planning year and as everyone is getting to know our new staff and vice versa. Through these meetings we want to tighten up our internal vision, goals, and messaging before we invite all the potential partners to help us achieve our goals. If you haven't been able to make one yet and would like to offer some time and leadership, please always feel free to reach out to Tess or Lydia to help make our Visioning Session 2019 Priorities a reality.

### CONNECT Business

**Welcome Jefferson Hills!** *Lydia Morin, CONNECT*

They joined August 12, 2019! Borough Manager John Stinner, formerly Manager of Blawnox, was present.

**Welcome Tess De Jong, CONNECT Project Coordinator** *Tess De Jong, CONNECT*

### **Infrastructure & Utilities Working Group Recap** *Megan Tuñón, Etna*

- There were many representatives from utility companies at the Infrastructure and Utilities launch.
- Increase participation in Coordinate PA. About one-third of municipalities in the region are using it.
- The software exists, and we want to ensure good quality information goes into it.
- We all know the beast that the issue of stormwater is, but it was exciting to see students' fresh faces and know they will bring fresh perspectives particularly around advancing the governance conversation and potentially teeing up some implementation funding.

### **GSPIA capstone projects** *Lydia Morin, CONNECT*

The four projects will be supporting CONNECT goals around

- Coordinate PA
- Stormwater governance
- Recycling and green jobs
- Community policing/LEAD

### **LEAD update**

*Lydia Morin, CONNECT*

- JoEllen's position as the pre-LEAD CONNECT/LEAD Consultant is funded through January though Staunton Farm Foundation and New Sun Rising.
- From the CDC through the ACHD, CONNECT will have \$250,000/year to pilot this program in self-selected communities.

*JoEllen Marsh, LEAD/CONNECT*

- We were one of 14 sites nationally accepted into the national conference in Seattle in January. Pittsburgh's and CONNECT's application went in together.
- Please do the survey and forward it along to your police chief or other stakeholders. It is anonymous. Please do it even if you are not interested, as they would like to interview those who are not interested as well.
- Let me know if you would like to host a LEAD information session.

More about LEAD:

- Usually there are two options for catching people with low level offenses such as drug possession or being drunk: telling them not to do it again, or putting them in jail. If they are put in jail, they can come out in an even worse place than when they started. LEAD allows police officers to connect people with a case manager or social services instead. People aren't committing these crimes because they want to be a public nuisance, but because they have unmet needs. They could be hungry or be dealing with past trauma. Charges are not filed until after working with a case manager.
- How many of you think your residents can easily access a case manager? (very few hands.) How many of you think your police officers want to be the one referring

everyone to services? (very few hands). This program fills in that gap. Police can also refer someone that they see struggling out on the street every day, even if they haven't committed a crime.

- People who did the LEAD program in Seattle (where it started) were 58% less likely to be re-arrested than those who did not do the LEAD program. Additionally, many people saw police more favorably afterwards. Even with some costs associated, the net cost of this program is lower for government as it saves court and police department costs.

#### **TOD update** *Ben Estell, Dormont*

- Ben Estell represented CONNECT's work with PAAC and Dover Kohl funded by RKM on a panel for the Rail~Volution conference in Vancouver. He was joined by Jenni Easton who helped with Bethel Park's new comprehensive plan.
- The session was on remaking the suburbs with Transit-Oriented Development.
- He talked about struggles small communities can face, and how CONNECT was a major part in combating these struggles.
- Dormont does not have the planning capacity of a major city, which is why the TOD zoning planning project was very important, as well as working with a local transit agency (PAAC) to expand their own capacity, plan on regional level, and then implement it.
- Dormont just finished a stationary plan with PAAC and is about to start a complete zoning re-write which will introduce things learned from the TOD project and Dover Kohl. They are interested in form-based code, which can be taboo but useful in small communities.
- Member comment: It is great to see lots of orgs like CONNECT internationally that want to do regional work together rather than competing against one another!

#### **Upcoming events/announcements:**

- Jeanne Clark attended and shared that ALCOSAN filed the consent decree for the clean water plan just this morning. Read more here:  
<https://3riversproud.com/app/uploads/2019/09/CD-CWP-press-release-final-9-16.pdf>  
There is a 60 day comment period.

#### **Friday, 9/20, 12-4pm**

Speakers and rally  
City-County Building

#### **Saturday, 9/21, 9am-4pm**

##### **ALCOSAN Open House**

ALCOSAN  
3300 Preble Ave

#### **Tuesday, 10/8, 2pm**

**House Democratic Policy Committee public hearing on Harm Reduction, with State Rep. Sara Innamorato as hostess**

JoEllen Marsh will be speaking on the LEAD program. It is open to all, and CONNECT members interested in solutions to the opioid crisis are encouraged to attend.

Teamster Temple in Lawrenceville  
4701 Butler St

**Thursday, 10/10, 1-3pm**

**Economic and Environmental Working Group**

Dormont Rec Center  
1801 Dormont Ave

**Saturday, 10/12, 1-4pm**

**Forest Hills Centennial Symposium: 100 Years Ago, 100 Years Ahead**

There will be guest speakers on key historic moments, an unveiling of the new comprehensive plan, dedicating a new time capsule, and a hayride.

Forest Hills Borough Building  
4400 Greensburg Pike

**Thursday, 10/17**

**Domestic Violence Awareness Day**

**8am-12pm** training for law enforcement (including municipalities).

**5pm-8pm** community event: local agencies will speak about their services and potential signs of domestic violence situations, and speakers will share their personal experiences.

Sharpsburg Borough building  
1611 Main St

**Thursday, November 7, 3-5pm**

**Public Safety and Health Working Group Launch**

West Homestead Borough Building  
456 W 8<sup>th</sup> Ave

**Thursday, November 21, 10am-12pm**

**CONNECT Bylaws and Strategic Planning Meeting**

Ross Township municipal building  
1000 Ross Municipal Dr

**Monday, December 9, 9am-12pm**

**GSPIA Capstone Project Presentations**

University of Pittsburgh

Exact Location TBD

**TBD: Thursday, December 19**

**CONNECT Bylaws and Strategic Planning Meeting**

*This meeting will only occur if necessary after the 11/21/19 meeting.*

**Adjourn 11:35am**