



# ORPC Oxford Region Planning Committee

Chair: Albert Jezyk Jr. Vice-Chair: Charles Fleischmann Treasurer: Robert Ketcham

## August 2023 Meeting Report

**Thank you David for hosting the August 2023 Zoom meeting, providing information for and proofing this meeting report.**

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 - 7:00 pm      **Venue:** Zoom Video Conference

**Reported By:** Mark Gallant (I), ORPC Secretary

**Please note** that I have added a feature to the ORPC Meeting Report that identifies follow-up or homework for the ORPC secretary or membership: **← Follow-up for Mark**. This should serve as a reminder and help to ensure that requested follow-up is completed.

**Voting Representatives:** Albert Jezyk, Jr. – Elk Township; Joel Brown – Lower Oxford Township; Bob Ketcham – Oxford Borough; Scott Rugen – Upper Oxford; Bill Winand, David Ross – West Nottingham Township. East Nottingham was not in attendance.

**Also in attendance:** Stephanie Armpriester – Brandywine Conservancy; John Reynolds – OARA.

**Chair's Report** *Albert Jezyk, Jr.*

None at this time.

**Treasurer's Report** *Bob Ketcham*

Balance: \$1,375.40. The ORPC will table next at the October First Friday which will require a \$20.00 payment.

**Municipal Updates and More** *Planning Committee*

**Medic 94** (reported by Scott Rugen). 2023 call volume is up 16% over 2022. In Chester County, 60% of calls involve advanced life support. This is pushing the total projected municipal budget share to \$570,000.

According to Bob Hotchkiss, the opening of the Christiana Care facility (formerly Jennersville Hospital) will be pushed back until the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2025. Apparently, they will be unable to utilize the existing ER because it is not up-to-code and will retrofit the newer part of the hospital for the new ER, demolishing the old ER. It looks like they will not be providing cardiac care at the new facility. Christiana Care is planning to provide 10 beds for mental health patients (primarily overdose victims) and 10 beds for general care.

Medic 94 has been using Union Hospital in Elkton, Maryland because they can get in and out of Union Hospital faster than Christiana or Chester County Hospitals. As a result, they are putting a lot of miles on their vehicles. They are losing one medic and hope to hire a replacement in the next couple of weeks. Scott noted that Medic 94 recently acquired a portable ventilator which was purchased by Londonderry Township using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds at a cost of \$30,000.00.

**West Nottingham (and OAHA).** Bill Winand mentioned that their Historical Commission would like to merge with the Oxford Area Historic Association (OAHA) and wondered if the other municipalities have discussed a similar strategy. Bob mentioned that Krys Sipple and Carolyn Hess (OAHA) came to Oxford's Borough Council meeting to invite them to OAHA's open house from noon to 3:00pm on Sunday, August 27 at their new location: 119 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Oxford, Pa. 19363. They also mentioned that it is OAHA's goal to host all of the municipal historic commissions in their new facility. Further, OAHA hopes that they will become the "welcome center to southern Chester County." Bill mentioned that he thought the funding that is regularly provided to the West Nottingham Historical Commission would likely go towards the OAHA building.

David shared that the HCs are set up by ordinance and that each has a slightly different municipal role and/or responsibility. Would this "merger" require updates to those ordinances and does the state allow for a regional historical commission? Mark said that he would put this topic on the agenda for the Historic Preservation Subcommittee (H-Sub) to discuss at their meeting on August 29 that would be held at the OAHA facility ← Follow-up for Mark → The H-Sub will report back to the ORPC following their August meeting.

Bill mentioned that a person is living out of their car in the park and ride lot at Route 272 and Route 1 and wondered who he should contact to address the issue. I suggested a phone call to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Bob referred to SILO (Serving, Inspiring, and Loving Others) and recommended that Bill contact them for information.

**Oxford Borough.** The mayor, who has worked in the tobacco industry for many years, is concerned about vaping and the lack of regulation given that some feel that is it more dangerous than smoking. The mayor is working with the County commissioners to see if they can address this issue in some way.

The Borough Police are having trouble finding applicants (to fill key positions) which appears to be a common theme in the region. The company the Borough is working with to guide the Borough Police to accreditation is also looking to get into the recruiting of emergency personnel on a national level.

Oxford is close to approving a contract with Comcast to provide cable services in the Borough. Apparently, the state does not allow a municipality to contract for internet

service. David said that Candie Miller (West Nottingham Supervisor) found out that state-funding is something that cable companies can apply for, not municipalities. The state would pay an individual cable company (such as Comcast or Armstrong) to fill identified gaps in service.

The Moran tract should soon come before Council again as the original incentive that provided the developer with a density bonus in exchange for streambank restoration has fallen through based on Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PaDEP) criteria. Apparently, DEP may not count the restoration towards the Borough's MS4 responsibilities.

Bob also announced that the Borough received a grant of \$1,000,000.00 through the CRP Grant program, to redevelop Niblock Alley and that there is a lot of community buzz about this project.

Bob said that Kathryn attended a recent meeting of the Western Chester County Council of Governments who are having discussions about forming another solid waste authority. This would involve composting and recycling on a major scale. Questions were raised regarding this new waste authority's service area, goals, and their impact on the SECCRA and Lanchester landfills.

**Chesco Chesapeake Communities Action Plan (C3AP).** David noted for municipalities in the Chesapeake drainage area, the County has some state money (administered by the Conservation District) to fund non-agricultural BMPs that meet the State's Chesapeake Watershed Improvement Plan. Grants were issued to Upper Oxford Township and Oxford Borough in 2023. Another funding round with a Request for Projects (RFP) will open September first with an October 13 deadline. Oxford Borough, Upper Oxford, and East Nottingham all have pollution reduction requirements for their MS4 plans and would qualify for this funding. Cori Trice from CCCD will be forwarding information next week.

**The County Sustainability Newsletter.** Bob and David were very complimentary of the County's Sustainability Newsletter (Summer 2023) that was developed by the County's Sustainability Division that is lead by Rachael Griffith. Bob was very pleased with the content of the newsletter and requested that David forward a link to the full membership. **←Follow-up for David.** This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> newsletter that was developed by the County's Sustainability Division.

**Brandywine Conservancy (BC).** Stephanie shared that as a result of Hurricane Ida's impact on the BC Campus and the Brandywine River Watershed, they would be embarking on a Flood Study in conjunction with the Chester County Water Resources Authority and the University of Delaware. This study will identify locations where flood mitigation could be implemented to avoid the historic level of flooding that occurred almost two years ago.

□ **Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan Update (MMCP) – draft VPP Grant Agreement** *Mark*

I reminded the group that they had gone over the draft Scope of Work at the July ORPC meeting and had responded favorably. The Scope of Work is included as Appendix B of the draft Vision Partnership Program (VPP) Grant Agreement. For the purposes of this meeting report, I am only including key points that should be most relevant to the membership from the draft Grant Agreement. Please feel free to review the draft Grant Agreement and forward any questions to me.

- The project length is 36 months but CCPC staff (the consultant) will do their best to stick to a 30-month schedule allowing for some wiggle room, if necessary. The contract term will begin on November 1, 2023 and end on October 31, 2026 if all paperwork is signed in a timely manner.
- The VPP is a grant program that is designed to bring the County and the participating municipalities into consistency in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan, Landscapes3. Here is the link to the Landscapes3 pdf: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Landscapes3/PDF/Landscapes3.pdf>
- The Grant Agreement is a two-party agreement between the County and the Region with the County providing consultant services.
- While I am the lead planner, a good portion of the CCPC staff will be involved with the development of the Plan.
- The total cost of the project is \$76,500.00 with the Region’s municipalities responsible for 40% or \$30,600.00. That breaks down to \$5,100.00 per municipality or 10 quarterly payments of \$510.00.
- The Grant Agreement requires that the updated Plan be adopted by all participating municipalities.
- The endorsement pages only require action by the municipal secretary and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors or, in the case of Oxford Borough, the Council President. This should help to expedite this requirement.
- The “Task Force” and “Chair” referred to in the draft Grant Agreement will be the ORPC membership and Albert Jezyk, Jr., respectively.
- The Consultant and ORPC membership (Comp Plan Task Force) will be asked to attend an Initial Briefing Meeting (the project kick-off) where all parties will go over a checklist of responsibilities to make sure everyone is on the same page. The ORPC agreed that this should be an in-person meeting.
- Mark will contact Lower Oxford to see if they would be willing to play host to any associated in-person meetings. **← Follow-up for Mark.** Lower Oxford hosted ORPC meetings until the beginning of the Pandemic.



- The Consultant will forward draft materials to the Task Force prior to the scheduled ORPC meetings to allow time for review.

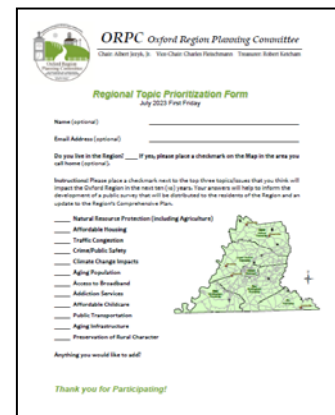
**Questions:**

Bob asked if I thought that the public should be invited to the Initial Briefing Meeting. While all of the Comp Plan-related meetings will be open to the public, the goal for that “kick-off” meeting should be to have as many members of the participating governing bodies and planning commissions attend so we can make sure that everyone is on the same page and that we identify expectations of all of the municipal stakeholders.

David noted that municipal solicitors might need to review the draft Grant Agreement before the BOS Chairs and Borough Council President sign the VPP Gant Agreement. David suggested that all of the elected officials should read the draft Agreement before signing it. I suggested that the ORPC members forward the draft to their fellow board members now for inclusion on next governing board meeting.

← **Follow-up for ORPC Membership.** David also suggested that I forward a link to the VPP Grant Manual for those who may want to review the grant details more thoroughly. ← **Follow-up for Mark.**

**Regional Topic Prioritization Form.** The ORPC membership requested that we utilize this Form, originally developed for use at the July 2023 First Friday, to kick off the public participation phase of the MMCP update. Mark worked with the CCPC’s Communication Division to bring the form and introduction into SurveyMonkey. The link or QR to the survey can be included on a municipal website, in a municipal newsletter, on a post card, or poster anywhere in the Region. After reviewing the draft link, the ORPC membership asked that we update the map to focus on the Region rather than the whole County. I will forward the link when the new map has been added for a final review by the membership. ← **Follow-up for Mark.** Scott requested that I forward a link to a print-ready copy so he can make it available it available at the Upper Oxford Township building and to the plain sect community. ← **Follow-up for Mark.**



When asked where completed hard copies of the form should be sent, I suggested that they be returned to a Township building or Borough Hall and then forwarded to me so I can record the results. I suggested that the membership think about ideas for distribution of the Form and bring those ideas to the September ORPC meeting.

← **Follow-up for ORPC Membership.** David shared that in West Nottingham, the planning commission set aside 10 minutes to answer the question as a group. Bob asked if we would be able to develop a Spanish version of the Priority Survey and I suggested that the Borough work with one of the organizations that operate in the

Borough and see if they can translate the Survey as there is no budget for translation services. It was suggested that we could use Google Translate (<https://translate.google.com/>) but translation by someone who lives or works in the area would be preferred.

**Interactive Existing Land Use Map.** Mark shared with the group that there have been a few glitches and that the interactive existing land use maps would not be available until early September. As requested, hard copies of the existing land use maps will also be available for those municipal planning commissions that prefer mapping that they can update by hand (the analog option).

☐ **Making The Most of Future ORPC Meetings** *Mark*

The ORPC shared concerns regarding the ability to continue to have an open dialogue at future meetings when the main focus will be reviewing MMCP-related draft materials. Mark suggested a few ideas that would involve the ORPC sharing ideas, issues, concerns, etc. via an email chain prior to scheduled meetings. The ORPC could also create a Google Doc where members could post ideas to be discussed online or as a short round of follow-ups at the next ORPC meeting. I suggested that we essentially cross that bridge when we get to it and move forward with an alternative plan if it is necessary.

**Activities of ORPC Subcommittees** *David and Mark*

**Regional EAC.** David reviewed the history of ORPC's Stormwater Action Initiative as partly motivated by an effort to meet PaDEP MS4 requirements in a collaborative and cost-effective manner. East Nottingham and Upper Oxford Townships have September 30 deadlines for submitting annual MS4 Status Reports to DEP. To assist that effort, the volunteer EAC has drafted a report compiling regional activities and resources that could be included in those reports under Minimum Control Measures 1 and 2. David took the group through the pages of the report and will circulate a copy following the Meeting. ← **Follow-up for David**

**Historic Preservation Subcommittee.** The H-Sub's next meeting on August 29<sup>th</sup> will be held at OAHA's new headquarters in the Borough.

☐ **Public Input** None.

☐ **Website Updates:** See for yourself:

<https://chescoplanning.org/municorner/projects/oxfordregion>

**Next Meeting:** September 27, 2023