

MARKETING

Several components to the marketing program were reviewed. After learning doctors, companies, etc. were interested in moving to the area and, not having any promotional material to give them, the HCEDC moved forward with developing some marketing literature. One item is the promotional DVD developed by Rongaus Advertising Group. This is the same company Sharon Regional Health System used to develop their DVD. The motif is a set of postcards with the theme "Hermitage, A great place to live.... and getting better all the time. The DVD, which is approximately 10 minutes long, was previewed by those in attendance.

Rita Ferringer asked if there was a charge for the DVDs if someone wanted to send them out. Gary Hinkson stated that initially the City is most interested in distributing the material, but that discussions are planned regarding mass production.

The majority of funding for the marketing project came from a grant obtained for the City by Senator Robbins.

WEBSITE

The website has been redesigned based on comments received from the HCEDC at the January meeting and is being updated almost daily. Work is still being done to determine who is hitting the site. Currently we are receiving 50-75 hits a day.

Information is available on the website categorized for businesses, residents, and visitors. Information includes demographics, recreation, community, location, maps, forms, a calendar of events page, public notices, community events, the newsletter, public meeting agendas and minutes, etc.

NEWSLETTER

Gary Gulla explained that when the HCEDC began discussing the development of a marketing and promotional strategy, one of the first things they identified was to take advantage of the City newsletter. The newsletter began 6-7 years ago as the Parks and Recreation newsletter, but under the direction of former Commissioner Bill Scanlon it then was developed into a joint Recreation – City Community Update. Three a year are published based on the Parks and Recreation program with an additional one or two printed throughout the year. The next edition will be mailed July 13th. The newsletter is sent to every mailing address in Hermitage, as well as, two supplemental mailing lists.

ADVERTISING

Two additional publications the City has chosen to participate in to promote the City are the Mercer County Business Chronicle and the Convention and Convention & Visitor's Bureau Annual 2008 Visitor's Guide.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Lamor Road Bridge – Project completed in spring 2006. Funds totaling \$3.9 million were lobbied mostly by Sharpville and South Pymatuning to improve access into their communities for safety and business purposes. PennDOT had a considerable amount of public participation and City input for the project. City recommendations to keep the bridge elevated for future trail systems underneath, retaining the old roadway for access, and using aesthetic stone treatment on the bridge were incorporated into the project.

Highland Road Widening Phase I – Project completed in fall 2006 using \$2.2 million of PennDOT funding. The City was very involved in the design of this project and

recommended that the roadway be curbed, that they add bike lanes, acquire enough right-of-way to add sidewalks in the future, and include storm drainage work.

Highland Road Transportation Enhancement Project – Phase I – Completion will occur in fall 2007 using \$184,000 from PennDOT and \$76,000 of local money. The City was successful in obtaining funding through the Transportation Enhancement Program to add the rest of the sidewalks to complete the corridor between N. Buhl Farm Drive and N. Kerrwood.

Highland Road / Shenango Valley Bikeway Transportation Enhancement Project – Project to begin in fall 2007 or spring 2008. Total Shenango Valley project cost is \$434,000 (\$350,000 of the work will be constructed in the City of Hermitage). This is a Transportation Enhancement Project through PennDOT and MPO designating a bike route connecting five (5) municipalities in the valley: Wheatland, Sharon, Hermitage, Farrell, and Sharpsville. The project includes line painting, designating bike routes, and signage. The City will construct stormwater pipe to eliminate the ditch on the south side of Highland Road between Richmond Drive and N. Buhl Farm Drive where the bike route will be. PennDOT will construct a sidewalk and curbing on the north side of Highland Road.

Highland Road Widening Phase II Project – Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2009 using \$5.5 million of PennDOT funding. The scope of this project includes widening Highland between N. Kerrwood and Route 18 to 3 lanes and installing curbing. The City received \$529,000 as part of Transportation Enhancement to continue the sidewalks from Kerrwood to Route 18 on both sides of the road.

State St./Maple Dr./Dutch Lane Intersection Improvements Project – The project is scheduled for spring 2008 using \$427,000 PennDOT funding and \$106,000 local money (total cost: \$533,000). The City received STU funding (federal transportation dollars) through the MPO. The project includes widening Maple Drive south of State Street, adding a turning lane and crosswalks, and improvements to traffic signalization.

Future State Street Intersection Improvements – The City is still working on the design and funding for this project which focuses on the intersections of Kerrwood and State St., Ellis and State St., and possibly Buhl Farm and State St. The survey and traffic studies necessary to proceed through PennDOT have been completed. Some of the problems being addressed are the lack of pedestrian facilities (push buttons or crosswalks) at Ellis Avenue, the facilities at Kerrwood Drive are not up to standard, and the entrance to the plaza drive needs redesigning and signals removed from span wire and placed on mast arms.

Hogback Bridge Replacement – This project should be completed in August 2007. It includes the realignment and grading of the west end of Hogback Road. Total project cost is approximately \$560,000 with the City paying \$91,000 of the cost.

Lamor Road Improvement Project – The project will begin in 2009. Approximately two (2) years ago when Sheetz built on N. Hermitage Rd., they constructed an access road to Lamor Road. PennDOT required Sheetz to construct a very short stacking lane westbound on Lamor Road as part of their Highway Occupancy Permit. The company gave \$100,000 to the City for the project and a total of \$550,000 is in place to fund the project. The City's goal is to have the road widened to three lanes from Route 18 to

Kenray and would include a turning lane, storm sewers and curbing being installed through the area. Road surface widening would occur up to Joy Cone Co.

Morefield Road, North Kerrwood Drive & Theota Drive – As part of the 2007 Capital Paving Program Morefield Rd. and Kerrwood Dr. were completed and Theota is scheduled. Improvements to Morefield included to making tie-ins with intersecting side streets, new loop detectors to provide for better traffic control and pavement markings. The City Street Department did a lot of the prep work for the project. By using the Street Department to replace culverts, do catch basin repairs, etc. helps keep the cost of the projects down and helps prep everything for the paving contractors.

Sample Road and Spangler Road 2007 Seal Coating Project – The City plans to seal coat all of Sample and Spangler Roads and do road repairs. The project should be advertised soon.

Crawford Drive, Adelaide Street & Marshall Street 2006 CDBG Grant – Street Improvements – Project completion will occur fall 2007.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Target Improvement Areas – Two census tracts that are income eligible are Patagonia and the Rombold Road Area.

Neighborhood Investment Program – The City is developing a long term neighborhood investment program to make improvements and feels it is necessary for the integrity of the neighborhoods. The Board will prioritize which areas are to be completed. The initial target area is bordered by State Street, Boyd Drive, Highland Road and Buhl Farm Drive. Gary Hinkson stated that one of the reasons this neighborhood has been prioritized is that it meets the initial criteria of being an older neighborhood and the City is already doing significant work for stormwater improvements and paving and the Municipal Authority completed extensive sanitary sewer improvements.

LindenPointe Recreational Trails Phase II – The project is nearly complete. It includes adding trails in LindenPointe along the south side of the park and through a wooded area to Innovation Way and Route 18 and a sidewalk that connects with one built by Wallace and Pancher north of LindenPointe on Route 18. Once the contract is completed, the City plans to supplement the trails with additional plantings, possibly finish the connection with Armstrong Way, add benches, trash receptacles, and pet stations.

Timber Lane – Silver Ridge Trail Connection – Construction of the \$10,000 project (\$5,000 covered by a grant) will take place in 2008. Neighbors next to each other have no way of getting to the other neighborhood unless they go out to Spangler Road. The City worked with Dan Leali to obtain an easement and received a donated lot from him on Timber Lane that will allow the City to construct a 500' trail connection between Timber Lane and Silver Ridge Trail. Landscaping and possibly a bench or two may be added.

Whispering Pines Community Park – The project is now nearly complete. Cost of the project was \$830,000. Whispering Pines is a passive recreation park to compliment the Historical Society located on the property. The project included the construction of restrooms, parking area lighting, 3/4 mile paved trail and 1/3 mile grass trail. This is the first phase of a master plan that may include additional trails and picnic shelters.

Open Play Fields Site Analysis – The City has received input from residents and organizations regarding the need for additional open play facilities in the City for softball, soccer, etc. The Board included \$1.5 million in the Bond issue a few years ago for a project of this nature and appointed a committee that has met for 1 ½-2 years. Two areas studied to see if they would meet the need for athletic fields are the 55 acre Hanson property on S. Darby Road adjacent to the Little League Complex and a 40 acre farm former Commissioner Sylvia Stull left to the City in her will. The Board hired EPD, a consulting firm, who has evaluated both sites and will provide a formal report with a recommendation within the next week or so. Once the Board decides on the site, and the City begins a developing a formal design, construction should begin in early in 2008. Useable facilities will be available in 2009.

Hermitage Arts Festival - The Fourth Annual Arts Festival is scheduled for July 21 & 22, 2007. It was preceded on July 3rd with a concert and fireworks program.

Hermitage Holiday Light Parade - Planning is underway for the 10th Annual Hermitage Holiday Light Parade to be held November 17, 2007.

Stateline Industrial Park Site Development / Commonwealth of PA – Construction of infrastructure is nearing completion. Total project cost is \$1.8 million including \$600,000 for acquisition. In 2003, Penn Northwest Development Corporation began working with the City and the Governor’s office to devise a plan to acquire 82 acres on Stateline Road and Ohio Street. It was the first Business in Our Sites project approved in the Commonwealth. This project and LindenPointe were part of the Penn Northwest Development Corporation and Mercer County Regional Planning Commission’s effort to identify 1,000 usable acres in the county.

Stateline Industrial Park Manufacturing Facility – Construction Update – The first project is scheduled to be complete in fall 2007. It is a \$3.7 million project for the construction of a 108,000 square foot manufacturer’s facility creating 100 jobs. This is considered a cornerstone project for the site.

LindenPointe – IRT – Construction of this \$450,000 project is scheduled to begin the week of July 16th. They have offices in San Francisco and Wexford, but have chosen a new location in LindenPointe. They are a software and development company with retail bookstores and have an international client base with many in Australia and the United Kingdom.

LindenPointe – Tech Center (RACP) – This is a \$2.5 million project. A grant application is pending. Coordinating with the Mercer County CareerLink, Mercer - Lawrence Workforce Investment Board, Penn Northwest Economic Development Commission the City undertook an effort to look at the possibility of having a Tech Center to help the cluster development of electronics industry businesses in the region. The project is thought to be well positioned to receive state funding as soon as it is available.

LindenPointe – Tech Center (EDA) Training & Workforce Development Building – This project is championed by the Northwest Commission which is the entity the United States Economic Development Administration uses to rate projects. It is the number one rated project in northwest Pennsylvania. It is hoped that in 2008 the City will receive funding for this project.

Solar Atmospheres Expansion – Construction is scheduled to be completed in December 2007 for this \$7 million project. An open house was recently held for their new 16,000 square foot addition. The Hermitage Planning Commission has approved a 20,000 square foot addition to this facility intended to house a 36 foot furnace. Solar Atmospheres currently has 42 employees and expects to have over 50 by the end of the year.

Joy Cone Expansion – This \$19 million project was the key to the City obtaining funding for the Lamor Road Widening Project. Joy Cone Co. anticipates putting another \$4 million into their facility. Currently they have 335 employees and project adding 30 new employees over the next 3 years.

Baker Run – Hermitage Towne Plaza – This \$165,000 project is currently being advertised and is one of the projects recommended in the water shed study completed last year. This project will address the stormwater runoff problems in the area and contributed to by the plaza pavement and roof top surface areas. Currently water by-passes the existing retention basin and goes right into the Baker Run Stream channel. The intent is to reconstruct the berm that separates the retention basin from the stream and redesign the access drive to prevent a lot of spill over to the adjacent property. Construction should start in mid-August 2007.

Baker Run – Theota Drive – This project involves the complete replacement of the storm sewer system, changing the profile of the road, increasing the size of the radiuses on the intersections, and the addition of a retention basin at the end of Theota to collect stormwater. Cost of the project is \$400,000 and construction is scheduled for fall 2007.

Baker Run – State Street Culvert Replacement – Construction is scheduled for fall 2007 for this \$240,000 project. The project consists of the removal of the existing 60” and 36” pipes under the plaza parking lot and replacing them with 10 x 5 ½ foot box culvert. Construction drawings are complete and the City is awaiting permit issues to be able to advertise the project.

Hunter’s Woods Public Infrastructure – Stormwater Project – Construction for this \$325,000 project is scheduled for 2008. This project is in the design phase and the City is waiting on an appraisal for property where a detention basin will be constructed. Area businesses on Route 18 around Star Tech are flooded from time to time and this project will reroute the channel and relocate the retention basin so water will make it in to the stormsewer system.

Indian Run – Phase I – This \$108,000 stream rehabilitation project was completed in June 2007. The project was located between Sunset Boulevard and the Freeway. A technique called natural channel design was used to fix erosion and flooding problems of the stream by using rocks and vegetation instead of concrete walls, etc.

Indian Run – Phase II – This \$135,000 project is scheduled for 2008. The City received a \$19,000 donation from Walgreens when they built on the corner of E. State St. and Route 18 and obtained \$95,000 in Growing Greener money. The City will fund the remaining \$21,000 of the project. This will be a similar project to the Indian Run – Phase I project in terms of what methods were done to channel the stream. Stream rehabilitation will be done in the area behind Artman Elementary School, restaurants along State Street and Walgreens. The project also includes a pedestrian bridge over the stream along Route 18 and a continuation of the sidewalk to the intersection.

South Keel Ridge Road Public Infrastructure Stormwater Project – This \$45,000 project was completed in May 2007. No stormsewer in the front of a property owner on S. Keel Ridge Road was available to collect water from an artesian well and water runoff from adjoining property owners.

Gas Light Village Stormwater System Rehabilitation – This is a \$50,000 project to eliminate consistent flooding problems for a number of homes in the area of Avalon Drive. The City has an engineering proposal they will probably execute in the near future. Construction is scheduled for 2008.

Hermitage Municipal Authority Projects – Gary Hinkson reviewed a number of projects being undertaken by the Authority. A \$15 million bond issue was taken out by the Hermitage Municipal Authority to complete a considerable amount of improvements at the treatment plant and in the community. There has been extensive work done in the collection system. Every manhole in the City has been located and inspected.

Daniel Drive Project – This \$500,000 project is scheduled to begin in fall 2007 to eliminate failing on-lot systems in the Daniel Drive area off of Lamor Road.

Pine Hollow Interceptor Sewer – Phase II Project – This project was completed in summer 2007 and is the line constructed along Dutch Lane over the past year. Cost of the project was \$800,000.

Bobby Run Project – This project was completed this summer and is located between the treatment plant and the intersection of South Buhl Farm Drive and Mercer Avenue. It involved the replacement and repair of interceptor lines in the system. Cost of this project was \$1.2 million.

Also on the agenda, and not part of the consent order, is the Magargee Run project. In a partnership with Jefferson Township, the City will construct a pump station east of Neshannock Road and associated lines.

Anaerobic Digester Study – A study is being done that looks at the potential for taking food industry waste and converting it to a methane gas that can be converted into electricity. Waste can be sold as a fertilizer.

The 36 projects discussed at the meeting represent \$60 million in investment in the community. Of this money, \$13.5 million are federal or state transportation dollars; \$3.2 million in other state funds; \$1.2 million in federal funds; a little over \$6 million from bond issue money; \$2.8 million in capital funds; and \$30 million in private or other equity.

John Holliday moved to adjourn the meeting. Tony Zucco seconded the motion. All members approved and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Gargiulo
Recording Secretary

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