

Turtle Creek Valley COG

Director's Report

TCVCOG Board Meeting

October 23, 2014

Important Dates:

October 28th: Police Chief Meeting

October 28th: Woodland Hills Meeting

October 29th: Gateway to Vote on Land Bank Resolution

November 17th -18th: Homes within Reach Conference

November 19th: Manager's Meeting

Land Banking

On Tuesday September 30th Wilkins Township hosted all the municipalities than comprise the Woodland Hills School District as well of the School Board members to discuss land banking. In total 11 of the 12 municipalities were in attendance along with 5 school board members. We presented on the land bank business plan, however the majority of the meeting was a discussion and question and answer period. Many of the municipalities spoke in support of the land bank and urged school board members to consider joining. We will continue our discussion with the Woodland Hills School District.

On Monday October 6th, Liz and I along with An Lewis John Paylo and George Lambrinos went to Cleveland Ohio to learn from the Cuyahoga County Land Bank. We received a full tour of their office, which employs 29 people. We also had in depth conversation about the acquisition and disposition process of land bank properties. The Cuyahoga County Land Bank has been very successful due to its funding sources. The Land Bank has been an active player in reforming state legislation that deals with tax delinquencies and as a result they are also able to acquire the properties at little to no costs. There does not often come a time where acquisition decisions are tabled due to lack of funding. The land bank is able to deposit vacant land to municipal land banks and the City of Cleveland. Much of its property rehabilitation work is completed by the person purchasing the property. The land bank also has a very sophisticated database which streamlines its financial department, property department, and website. The Cuyahoga County Land Bank is one of the most successful land banks because of these reasons, which is why we have tried to integrate, whenever possible, their best practices and funding opportunities into the Tri-COG Land Bank business plan.

On Wednesday Oct 15th Forest Hills became the second community to pass their ordinance to become a member of the land bank. We look forward to more municipalities passing their ordinance and becoming members of the land bank.

Brownfield Assessments

The Tri-COG Collaborative plans to put in another application for an EPA Brownfield assessments grant. We will be working with KU Resources on the application process. To date we have completed six Phase I assessments, two Phase II assessments with the plans to do

three more Phase II assessments once we receive EPA approval to move forward. The grant application will be completed by December 2014.

Other News

Vactor

In 2015 the COG will be offering both an 7-day and 15-day opt in program for the vactor. Please consider incorporating one of these opt-in options into your 2015 budget.

Manager's Meeting

September 22, 2014

In attendace: Rebecca Bradley, Wilkins; Moe Rayan, Penn Hills; Jason Straley; Plum; Steve Morus, Forest Hills; Craig Robinson, Churchill; Connie Rosenbayger, East McKeesport; Patty Logo, North Versailles;

The Tri-COG Blight Initiative will host Myrna Newman, Executive Director, and Joe Divack, DumpBusters Director, from Allegheny Cleanways. They will be discussing their programs which focus on the elimination of trash and dumping within our communities.

Dan Cohen and Natausha Horton from Cohen Law Group attended the meeting to discuss how towns can protect themselves from the invasion of small cell towers. In essence, the demand for data is exploding, and third party companies – who are considered utilities by the PUC – are currently going into towns and installing their facilities. It is critical that towns take a pro-active approach by ensuring that their telecommunications ordinances have been updated to reflect recent changes in the law, and new technologies. Cohen Law is offering FREE assessments of your current ordinance. If you are interested, please send your ordinance to Amanda and she will get it to Cohen Law Group. The managers that attended discussed participating in a joint effort through the COG if assessments reveal that their ordinances do, in fact, need updated.

Amanda updated the group on the status of the Land Bank initiative. On Tuesday, October 28th, there will be a meeting at the Woodland Hills Administrative building to discuss land banking. All Woodland Hills towns are encouraged to participate, and to be vocal. It appears that Woodland Hills School Board will be voting on Wednesday, November 5th. Gateway School Board is scheduled to vote on October 29th.

Police Chief Committee Meeting

The next Police Chief meeting is scheduled for October 28th at 10am at the COG office.

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Settelmaier