1. Call to Order/Board Comments

2. Minutes of the January 11, 2012 Meeting

3. Update on the Montgomery County Jump Start Program
   Leo Bagley
   10 Minutes

4. 2011 Annual Summary of Subdivision, Land Development, and Zoning Activity – Scott France
   30 Minutes

5. County Trails Update
   David Clifford
   20 Minutes

6. Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
   Michael Stokes
   30 Minutes

7. Household Characteristics Report
   Anne Leavitt-Gruberger
   20 Minutes

8. Staff Profiles Booklet
   10 Minutes

9. Kenneth Hughes Tribute
   30 Minutes

10. Director’s Report
MINUTES: Regular Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 11, 2012
Approved:

BOARD MEMBERS: Mr. Greg Shelly; Mr. Scott Exley; Ms. Dulcie Flaharty; Mr. Henry Jacquelin; Mr. Pat Mascaro; Mr. Roy Rodriguez, Jr.; Mr. Charlie Tornetta; Mr. V. Scott Zelov;

GUEST ATTENDING: Don Steele, Senior Design Engineer, PA Turnpike Commission

STAFF ATTENDING: Mr. Steven Nelson; Ms. Robin McLean; Mr. Leo Bagley; Mr. John Cover; Mr. Joseph Nixon; Mr. Mike Narcowich; Ms. Elizabeth Emlen; Mr. Michael Stokes; Mr. Wesley Ratko

PRESS: Ms. Peggy Gibbons, Intelligencer

I. Call to Order/Board Comments

The Board welcomed Steven Nelson as Acting Director of the Planning Commission. Mr. Mascaro spoke briefly about Mr. Hughes as a professional and managed the department very well. Mr. Shelly agreed and asked that there be a resolution for Mr. Hughes and it be presented at the February Board meeting.

II. Minutes of the December 14, 2011 Board Meeting

The minutes from the December 14, 2011 Regular Board Meeting were approved by the Board.

Motion: Mr. Shelly motioned to approve the December 14, 2011 Board Meeting minutes which were approved by all present.

III. Northeast Extension Widening Project Status

Staff Presenters: Mr. Wes Ratko and Guest Mr. Don Steele, P.E., Senior Design Engineer, PA Turnpike Commission

Handout: Turnpike Next Newsletter

Mr. Ratko introduced Mr. Don Steele from the PA Turnpike Commission. Mr. Steele gave the Board a brief background and a presentation about the $150 million Northeast Extension Widening Project. This first phase is a total reconstruction to be done from the Mid-County toll plaza (milepost A20) to Berks Road (milepost A26) which is scheduled to finish in November 2013. The next piece is in the design phase now and is expected to be finished 3 years after the first phase is completed. A third phase north toward Quakertown is next, one mile of which is in Montgomery County. He also informed the Board that this work is funded entirely with toll revenue and does not use state or federal money.

Also covered was the electronic message signs which are located along the Northeast Extension. Ms. Flaharty questioned about having an “app” along the roadway that could help with road information. Mr. Steele said such an “app” already exists and it is called TRIP Talk (http://www.paturnpike.com/triptalk/). It is available for iPhone and Android. Mr. Bagley elaborated this and explained about #511 systems which can be used by cell phones to find out about road troubles; but is not coordinated with PennDOT and doesn’t cover the turnpike. He explained that the new Secretary of Transportation is very customer friendly and wants to get these systems to help drivers be more informed about the roadways.
Mr. Steele further talked about several other topics related to the extension project. He mentioned about the bridges being done prior to the widening because it easier and takes less time to do. Wetland mitigation of the Norristown Farm Park and work items like dam removal and stream restoration was also brought up, stating that this was a collaborated effort from not only the PA Turnpike Commission but PA Fish and Board Commission, US Army Corps of Engineers, PADEP, Montgomery County Parks and Heritage Services Department and others. He informed the Board about the bridge at Sumneytown Pike (milepost A30) and that work has begun and should conclude sometime in August 2013, as well as new ramps before/after the Lansdale Interchange.

IV. Floodplain Management District Model Ordinance
Staff Presenters: Mr. Drew Shaw

Handouts: “Floodplain ordinance – level d” book and a diskette

Mr. Shaw explained to the Board that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is updating the flood maps for Montgomery County. This will require municipalities to update their floodplain ordinances. MCPC and the County Conservation District, along with input from FEMA and DCED, jointly developed a model floodplain ordinance (book and disc handout) that provides a high level of protection against flood loss and preserves floodplain resources.

The ordinance requirements for these municipalities differ, based on the category they're placed in by FEMA, so four model ordinances have been created. Contents of the ordinance include applicability, definitions, permitted and prohibited uses in district, variances, technical provisions for variances granted, special technical requirements, special permits, etc. The purpose of floodplain management is to prevent the loss of life, property damage, and environmental degradation.

The model ordinance will be distributed on a CD to the municipalities in January, and will also be available through our website.

V. Community Planning Assistance Contract Renewal
Staff Presenters: Mr. John Cover

Mr. Cover presented to the Board a resolution for Board action to authorize a Planning Assistance Contract with Narberth Borough. This is a first time contract with the Borough. It’s a 3-year contract totaling $54,450 and the municipal share would be $27,225. Narberth is looking to do a true form-based zoning code, something this office is very interested in. Sean Metrick will be the planner assigned to the contract.

The Upper Dublin Planning Assistance Contract was withdrawn from Board Action at this time. The Board was informed by Mr. Cover that he and Mr. Nelson have a meeting scheduled with the Upper Dublin Township manager to discuss contract terms.

On an unrelated matter, some Board members, expressed to Mr. Nelson the need to be proactive in presenting Planning Commission goals and objectives to the new County Commissioners. Mr. Nelson agreed but suggested that the Board also needs to hear what the Commissioners' goals for the Planning Commission are first and then respond accordingly. Mr. Nelson will be having
meetings with the Commissioners, and Commissioners’ transition team on Planning/Environment/Transportation and will report back to the Board.

Motion: Mr. Tornetta motioned to approve MCPC Resolution 12-1.1 and seconded by Mr. Zelov. The resolution was approved by all present.

VI. Briefings: Community Planning Assistance Contracts
Mr. Cover informed the Board of the two presentations for today: Perkiomen and Upper Moreland Townships.

A. Perkiomen Township Briefing – Staff Presenter; Mr. Joseph Nixon
Mr. Nixon gave a brief overview of Perkiomen Township describing its demographics and location and how MCPC has had a contract with the municipality for the past 33 years. Perkiomen is described as a bedroom community because of the accessibility to Route 422 and employment centers as well as the close proximity to the Perkiomen trail. Through a slide presentation Mr. Nixon talked about what MCPC has done so far and what it is proposing to do for the township. This includes, ordinances update; village commercial district design standards; open space, recreation and redevelopment areas concept plans. The 3-year contract includes 2 planner-days/month, 24 night meetings (which is more than the usual contracts due to the work load), and $38,115 municipal share.

B. Upper Moreland Township Briefing – Staff Presenter; Mr. Michael Narcowich
Mr. Narcowich described this 3-year contract at $38,115 municipal share, 3 planner-days/month and 12 night meetings per year. This contract will look into completing the revitalization plan, subdivision/land development ordinances, comprehensive plan, as well as redevelopment area plan and expansion of redevelopment and revitalization areas. Some of the major projects completed were the zoning ordinance update, which the Township Commissioners are reviewing and we are still working on the revitalization plan update. The changes to the drafting ordinances include commercial areas (build-to-line, access controls, site configuration), riparian corridors, impervious limits and incentives/bonuses is being expanded to other districts instead of just one district. A use regulation section was created to contain all uses, definitions and a table. An issue mentioned that the Commissioners were afraid that MCPC would dictate to them to where certain land uses could go and the Board suggested that we may have to explain it a little more thoroughly so they would understand they are making the decisions.

VII. Farmland Preservation Program Update
Staff Presenter: Ms. Elizabeth Emlen
Ms. Emlen briefed the Board that the Farmland Preservation Program has been in place since 1990. Our county program is part of a statewide effort by Pennsylvania's Bureau of Farmland Preservation and is completely voluntary. Currently, 57 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties participate. Since 1990, 8,379 acres of county agricultural land on 140 farms have been permanently preserved at a total cost of almost $98,000,000 in state, county and township dollars, relying mostly on state funding. Funding for 2012 have been budgeted by the governor, at a level greater than in the year 2011.
Currently, there are 33 additional farms in the application process, totaling 1,099 acres, and 6 are pending from last year. Ms. Emlen mentioned that plans for 2012 include continued township participation in easement costs, more recruitment for permanent preservation of agricultural land in the county and yearly visits by the technician working with our program through the Montgomery County Conservation District. Preserving farms has been the on-going goal of the program, concurrent with enforcing the easements.

VIII. County Trails Update

Staff Presenter: Mr. David Clifford

Deferred to February 2012 Meeting

IX. Director’s Report

A. Mr. Nelson gave the Board a brief background and his role as acting director. He’s been asked by the Commissioners to be actively involved with the transition committee on Planning/Environment/Transportation that is reviewing the Planning Commission and other departments. He mentioned working with Ken Hughes and that he was a consummate professional and that the staff is looking to do something to honor him in the near future.

B. He re-introduced Robin McLean, who is replacing Leslie Wingard as Board secretary.

C. He talked about the Board member’s new portal to the Planning Commission website and how he hopes that the Board is utilizing it. The Board concurred and liked the idea of the accessibility.

X. Further Board Comments

Ms. Flaharty and Mr. Exley told the Board that they went to the swearing in ceremony for the new commissioners and found it very exciting at the stand they are taking to help improve the county. Ms. Flaharty re-iterated about how she found the Commissioners’ speeches optimistic and open to all opinions.

Mr. Exley met with Mr. Shapiro and found him willing to accept suggestions as well as saying how he (if re-appointed) could help and that the public is looking for Commissioners who care about Montgomery County.

Mr. Rodriquez brought up doing a final Jump Start Program report and he felt that this was one of the highlights of the Planning Commission. Mr. Shelly suggested that this be presented the program to the Commissioners and how successful the program was. Mr. Nelson agreed.

The next MCPC Board meeting will be February 8, 2012 at 9:00 am
Subject: Jump Start Program Status

Background: A status report was requested at the last Planning Commission meeting. While Jump Start 1 was successfully completed in 2009 and 2010, no further action was taken in 2011 on a potential Jump Start 2. The County’s 2011 Capital Budget did identify some funds for a potential program but it was not advanced due to other over-riding capital issues facing the county.

Actions: Information Only—No Action Needed.

Contact: Leo Bagley, 610-278-3746 or lbagley@montcopa.org

Subject: 2011 Annual Summary of Subdivision, Land Development, and Zoning Activity

Background: The Planning Commission is required to review all proposed subdivisions, land developments, and zoning amendments in the county. Each year the Planning Commission compiles statistics regarding these submissions to analyze trends in plan proposals. This presentation will review the submissions that were received in 2011 as well as look at plans that were actually approved in 2011.

Actions: Board information only

Contact: Scott France, 610-278-3747 or jfrance@montcopa.org

Subject: Montgomery County Primary Trail Network - Update

Background: We’ll recap trail progress in 2011 and discuss future projects. Additionally, the complete trail network map will be on display to illustrate the ultimate goal of an integrated trail system in the county and beyond.

Actions: For board update; no action required

Contact: David Clifford, 610-278-3887 or dclifford@montcopa.org
Subject: Subdivision and Land Development Model Ordinance

Background: The subdivision and land development model ordinance has been developed to educate and assist municipal officials in the use and preparation of a subdivision and land development ordinance. It has been prepared in a format similar to other model ordinances completed by the planning commission. The guidebook portion of it provides information how the subdivision and land development ordinance addresses process, design, and engineering construction issues associated with the subdivision and land development. The model ordinance contains commentary explaining different approaches used in the ordinance. A large appendix of source materials and forms is included to further guide municipalities.

Actions: Board review and comment prior to final publication

Contact: Michael Stokes, 610-278-3729 or mstokes@montcopa.org

Subject: Montgomery County’s Household Characteristics

Background: Montgomery County gained 50,887 people and just over 28,000 housing units between 2000 and 2010 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. As residents notice this growth on a local level, the planning commission gets an increasing number of inquiries on the effects of newly built housing on the infrastructure and services provided by the county, municipalities, and school districts. This report takes a closer look at the county’s population living in both new and existing housing units to get a better sense of numbers of new school aged children, the age of the county’s residents, and household composition.

Actions: For board’s information

Contact: Anne Leavitt-Gruberger, 610-278-3727 or aleavitt@montcopa.org