

Recommendation Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: September 1, 2021

Prepared by: Christina Norland, Chairperson, Trails & Sidewalks Committee

Recommendation: A RESOLUTION OF THE KENNETT TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR AND COMMITMENT TO THE KENNETT AREA – LONGWOOD GARDENS CONNECTOR TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY, AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION TO THE CHESTER COUNTY VISION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM – CASH GRANT AS THE LEAD APPLICANT, AND DESIGNATING OFFICIALS TO AUTHORIZE ASSOCIATED GRANT DOCUMENTS.

Background:

Kennett Township’s planning efforts have emphasized the community’s desire for bicycle and pedestrian connections between Longwood Gardens and Kennett Township. For example, Kennett Township’s [Comprehensive Plan](#), its [Active Transportation Plan](#) and its [Open Space, Trails and Marks Master Plan Needs Assessment](#) all identify Longwood Gardens as a key destination and propose bicycle and/or pedestrian connections between Kennett Township, Kennett Borough, East Marlborough and Longwood Gardens.

Recently, momentum has been building to make progress on these connections. In January 2021, East Marlborough finalized an update to their [Open Space Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan](#). That Plan also identifies Longwood Gardens as a key destination for residents and visitors and identified multiple conceptual trail routes for bicycle connections to Longwood Gardens. It further recommends applying for grant funding to pursue feasibility studies for these conceptual routes.

In July 2021, the Chester County Planning Commission finalized their [Southern Chester County Circuit Trail Feasibility Study](#). The Feasibility Study found “there is public consensus around the major destinations that a trail should connect, including Longwood Gardens” and proposed two bicycle/pedestrian facilities that would help connect Southern Chester County (including Kennett Township, Kennett Borough and East Marlborough) to Longwood Gardens: (i) a Baltimore Pike Bikeway that would consist of improvements along Baltimore Pike from PA 272 in Nottingham to Schoolhouse Road in East Marlborough and (ii) a multiuse trail paralleling the US 1 Expressway from Bancroft Road in New Garden Township to Schoolhouse Road in East Marlborough. The study also recommended further analysis of how to connect these facilities to Longwood Gardens and the Brandywine Creek Trail in Birmingham. Initial conversations have already begun between Kennett Township, Kennett Borough, East Marlborough, New Garden and PennDOT with respect to the US 1 multiuse trail.

Further, the long-awaited Kennett Bikeway on Route 52 was paved and striped in the last month, allowing for bike lanes from Wilmington to the intersection of Route 52 and Route 1 near Longwood Gardens.

Lastly, Longwood Gardens is currently reviewing its long-term strategic plan, making it an ideal time to collaborate on the feasibility of local trail connections.

Given the status of these planning and implementation efforts, the Kennett Area Regional Trails Committee has recommended that East Marlborough, the Borough of Kennett Square, Kennett Township and Longwood Gardens jointly apply for a Vision Partnership Program Cash Grant from Chester County to perform a “Kennett Area – Longwood Gardens Connector Trail Feasibility Study”. The Study will not duplicate the planning work already above, but rather finalize the appropriate and feasible locations of bike and pedestrian facilities. Once completed, the feasibility study would enable the respective parties to design and engineer any proposed connections.

Current Matter:

At its August 3, 2021 meeting, the Kennett Township Trails & Sidewalk Committee discussed the above background and agreed that they are in favor of Kennett Township pursuing this joint grant application.

The VPP cash grant provides funding for planning studies in the amount of \$30,000 plus \$5,000 for each additional municipality, allowing the municipalities to request up to \$40,000 for the Study. The minimum required municipal match is thirty percent (30%), requiring up to \$17,143 in matching funds (if requesting the maximum grant amount). It is proposed that the municipalities split the match evenly, pledging up to \$5,715 each. The parties also have agreed to solicit a proposal from Kennett Township’s trail consultants to conduct the feasibility study.

The proposed resolution is included with this recommendation.

CHESTER COUNTY VISION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM – CASH GRANT

The Vision Partnership Program (VPP) is available to Chester County municipalities and multi-municipal groups seeking to improve their planning programs while achieving consistency with and implementation of the goals, objectives, recommendations, and map of *Landscapes3*. Kennett Township, Kennett Square Borough, and East Marlborough Township (the Parties) desire to apply for VPP funding to complete The Kennett Area – Longwood Gardens Connector Trail Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study), which will analyze and recommend bike and/or pedestrian facilities to connect the greater Kennett area to Longwood Gardens. Longwood Gardens is also actively coordinating with the Parties to complete the Feasibility Study.

The VPP cash grant provides funding for planning studies in the amount of \$30,000 plus \$5,000 for each additional municipality, allowing the Parties to request up to \$40,000 for the Feasibility Study. The minimum required municipal match is thirty percent (30%), requiring up to \$17,143 in matching funds (if requesting the maximum grant amount). It is proposed that the municipalities split the match evenly, pledging up to \$5,715 each.

The Resolution for consideration designates Kennett Township as the lead applicant and memorializes each of the Parties' intent to provide matching funds for the Feasibility Study.

**KENNETT TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

RESOLUTION 2021-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE KENNETT TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR AND COMMITMENT TO THE KENNETT AREA – LONGWOOD GARDENS CONNECTOR TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY, AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION TO THE CHESTER COUNTY VISION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM – CASH GRANT AS THE LEAD APPLICANT, AND DESIGNATING OFFICIALS TO AUTHORIZE ASSOCIATED GRANT DOCUMENTS.

WHEREAS, Kennett Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania (the “Township”) desires to advance the Kennett Area – Longwood Gardens Connector Trail Feasibility Study (the “Feasibility Study”); and

WHEREAS, the Feasibility Study is multimodal and inter-municipal in nature, involving both an analysis and feasibility recommendation on bike and/or pedestrian facilities to connect the Kennett Area to Longwood Gardens; and

WHEREAS, the Township, in coordination with the Borough of Kennett Square and East Marlborough Township (collectively referred to as the “Parties”) have identified the Chester County (“County”) Vision Partnerships Program – Cash Grant (“VPP”) as an applicable funding source for the Feasibility Study; and

WHEREAS, the Parties have determined that completion of the Feasibility Study will benefit the greater Kennett Square community and wish to work collaboratively to advance this multimodal, inter-municipal planning effort; and

WHEREAS, the Parties have agreed that the Township will serve as the Lead Applicant and Grantee for the purposes of the VPP grant application, with the expressed support of the Parties; and

WHEREAS, the Parties will select a mutually-agreeable consultant to complete the Feasibility Study and will provide matching funds split evenly among the Parties.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Kennett Township Board of Supervisors, as follows:

1. The above recitals are incorporated herein by reference.
2. The Township hereby supports the Feasibility Study and authorizes the preparation and submission of a VPP grant application for the Feasibility Study, whereby the Township will serve as the Lead Applicant and Grantee.
3. The Township hereby requests a VPP grant in an amount of up to Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00) from the VPP grant program to be used towards completing the Feasibility Study.
4. The Township understands that the VPP grant requires a matching commitment of Thirty Percent (30%) which would be equal to Seventeen Thousand One Hundred Forty Three Dollars (\$17,143) if the maximum grant amount is received.

5. The Township pledges to provide matching funds in the amount of up to Five Thousand Seven Hundred Fifteen Dollars (\$5,715), which represents the matching commitment shared equally among the Parties.
6. If awarded, the Township will enter into a mutually agreeable cooperation agreement with the Parties to identify roles and responsibilities, as well as outline funding contributions.
7. The Township hereby designates the Township Manager and Chairman of the Board of Supervisors as officials authorized to execute all documents and agreements between the Township, Parties, and County, as well as any other financial contributors to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested VPP grant.
8. The provisions of this Resolution shall be severable, and, if any of its provisions shall be held unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality, or invalidity shall not affect the validity of any of the remaining provisions of this resolution.
9. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.
10. All other resolutions or parts of resolutions inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

ADOPTED and **RESOLVED** this 1st day of September 2021.

ATTEST:

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF KENNETT TOWNSHIP:**

Eden Ratliff, Secretary

Richard L. Leff, Chairman

Whitney S. Hoffman, Vice-Chair

Scudder G. Stevens, Member