



Meeting Minutes

Open Space and Trails Advisory Board

February 9, 2026

6:30 pm

Community Room, Town Hall

Regularly Scheduled Meeting

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** 6:31 pm
2. **Roll Call and Verification of Quorum:** *Members: Ken Martin (Chair), Tim Payne, Phil Brink, Dave Tazik, Bil Rigler, and Christine Felz; Town Council Liaisons John Mortellaro and Dan Holberg; Town Staff: Luke Bolinger.*
3. **Approval of the Agenda and Assignment of Minutes**
 - A. *Agenda approved*
 - B. *Minutes assigned to Member Tazik*
4. **Approval of Previous Minutes**
 - A. *12 January Meeting Minutes: Approved*
5. **Public Comments:**
 - A. *Letters read into the record by Chair Martin*
 - a. Maria Hughes: Topic Village at Coal Creek, St. Scholastica pre-application Expressed opposition.
 - b. Dwayne Drummond: Topic: Village at Coal Creek, St. Scholastica pre-application. Expressed opposition.
 - B. *In-Person Comments: the following Erie residents provided comments regarding the pre-application for the St. Scholastica Church on the Village at Coal Creek Property: Meghan Hughes, Nancy Shannon, Mike Katryniuk, Michael Kataliich, Jennifer Katalinich, Kevin Vanndorsdel, Winfried Reichelt, Cliff Zwart, Todd Maradino. All expressed concern and/or opposition to the pre-application. Also present was John Bolders (no comment).*
6. **General Business:**
 - A. *Town Council Liaison Report: Council Member Mortellaro.* The St. Scholastica proposal has not yet come before town council for discussion, so no decisions have yet been made. There will be an opportunity for further public input at a future date.
 - B. *Village at Coal Creek, St. Scholastica Pre-Application Discussion:*
 - a. OSTAB previously provided input to Council indicating lack of support for any of the VCC plans presented to date. OSTAB favors maintaining this area as open space.
 - b. Member Martin reviewed the prep-application considering the Town's Unified Development Code.
 - i. The proposed open space to the north is only 4.8 acres, shy of the required 10 acre minimum, and it has a road going through it.
 - ii. The proposed church must be 150 feet from the creek bed.
 - iii. The propose affordable housing section is close to trail corridor significantly impacting the viewshed.
 - iv. The nearby pond presents a risk to building foundations.

- v. The church steeple as proposed is 47' above ground, significantly impacting the viewshed.
 - c. Each of the OSTAB members present expressed opposition to the proposed pre-application. Several reasons stated follow:
 - i. The area impacted by the proposed church footprint is the most valuable piece of open space on the property.
 - ii. There could be flooding issues due to proximity to Coal Creek.
 - iii. No business revenue or other benefits will accrue to the town that might otherwise offset open space benefits.
 - iv. Anticipated heavy outside traffic would significantly impact nearby residents.
 - d. Members Brink and Rigler will draft a memo for review expressing OSTAB's concerns for consideration by Town Council.
 - e. Town Liaisons Mortellaro and Hoback noted for the record that OSTAB prefers this property be designated open space and that the pre-application has not yet come before Council for consideration
 - f. Staff Member Bollinger noted that the proposers have 6 months to file formal application.
 - g. Chair Martain suggested that OSTAB take a proactive approach to justify designation of the property as open space before other development proposals are filed. This is to be discussed at our March meeting.
- C. Town Fair is scheduled for 16 May Town Fair: OSTAB to maintain a booth from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Six (6) volunteers are needed for three two-hour shifts. Staff Member Bollinger will place a signup sheet on the OSTAB SharePoint site.
- D. *Board Member Comments*
- a. The Arbor Day/Earth Day Event is scheduled for 25 April. OSTAB volunteers will be needed.
 - b. Member Martain will arrange to order two more sweatshirts.
 - c. OSTAB members with terms expiring in 2026 must submit applications by 5:00 pm, Friday 27 February if they wish to be considered for reappointment.
 - d. National trails day is scheduled for 6 June. We should discuss if OSTAB wishes to participate in some way. (POC: Member Payne)
 - e. Will there be opportunities for a Town Cleanup? Yes. Parks and Recreation staff are developing a formal volunteer program and process. Volunteer opportunities will be posted on the Town's website. (POC's: Staff Member Bollinger; Member Brink).
 - f. OSTAB should consider preparing an annual workplan.
- E. *Regular meeting adjourned: 7:45 pm.*
- F. *Executive session: Present: Ken Martin, Dave Tazik, Bill Rigler, Phil Brink, Christine Felz, Tim Payne, Luke Bolinger.*

Public Comment:

From: Maria Hughes <mehughes3@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, February 9, 2026 1:06 PM

To: Town Clerk <townclerk@erieco.gov>

Subject: Village at Coal Creek Property – St. Scholastica Pre-Application Discussion.”

External Email: Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board,

I am writing as a concerned Erie resident regarding the “Village at Coal Creek Property – St. Scholastica Pre-Application Discussion.”

This property was acquired by the Town for affordable housing and open space, not a 1,000 seat megachurch.

With Erie’s history of mining and oil and gas development, there are very few places left that are pristine and the Page property is one of them. Losing this beautiful property and allowing the construction of a megachurch with its traffic, enormous parking lot, lighting, noise, would be a travesty.

It also sets a troubling precedent for converting land designated for public benefit, purchased with our local and federal tax dollars, into large institutional use.

The proximity to other trails and town is exactly why this property needs to be affordable housing and open space, not a church and a parking lot. No one is walking to a megachurch. The have land out on 52. Let them build there.

I am also concerned that this is a major development and there’s been no public engagement conducted regarding this proposal. If this project moves forward it, would be a significant violation of public trust.

I am one of many residents who do not support placing a large church on this property, and who strongly believe the land should remain dedicated to affordable housing and open space as originally promised.

Sincerely,

Maria Hughes