

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
September 19, 2013

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, September 19, 2013, at 12 noon, at The Cottage Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair, Mr. Whited.

PRESENT

Tim Whited
Toni Renee Anderson
Robert E. Fisher, Jr.
Ronald Rovansek
Sam Valenty

ABSENT

Russell Kiel
Nicholas Persio
Joseph McAneny
David L. Belz

STAFF

Ethan C. Imhoff
Christopher D. Allison
Shanna M. Murphy
Colleen A. Bukowski

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Valenty, seconded by Mr. Fisher, the minutes of the August meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report was read by Mr. Imhoff and reviewed by those present. Mr. Imhoff clarified the following two expenses listed for payment approval on the financial statement: \$1,446 to Link Computer for updated (2010 Microsoft Office) computer software for three CCPC office computers and \$876 to Jamar for mile recording devices to be used in the road and bridge inventory assessment. It was noted that the mileage measuring devices are required by PennDOT in completing the inventory and can be utilized in the future should a pertinent transportation project be undertaken. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Anderson concerning the possible delay in the remaining county allocations for 2013, Mr. Imhoff stated that although he had not received specific notification to this effect, he had read an account of this possibility in the newspaper. Mr. Imhoff inquired whether or not the board wished to approve travel expenses for conferences, i.e. PennDOT and planning related, prior to conference attendance. There was a general consensus among those present that listing the expenses on the monthly financial statement is sufficient and prior approval is not necessary. On a motion by Mr. Valenty, seconded by Ms. Anderson, the September Treasurer's Report and the bills listed for payment were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Imhoff stated that there was no significant correspondence to be read at this meeting.

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Mr. Imhoff reported that staff reviewed thirteen subdivision plans during August, one of which was a sizable lot merger plan in Conemaugh Township submitted by Cooney Brothers Coal Company. He also noted that a sizeable land development in Ebensburg Borough was also reviewed. Mr. Imhoff explained that Ebensburg Borough is planning to develop a public parking lot along West High Street. He stated that, to date, review fees for 2013 have totaled approximately \$6,600.

Mr. Imhoff provided a brief update on PennDOT's decision to post new weight limits on state-owned bridges. He explained that PennDOT officials have stated that this action is necessary due to the legislature's inaction on a new transportation funding bill as well as an anticipated decrease in appropriated funds. Mr. Imhoff stated that although the State Route 160 bridge in Wilmore Borough is the only bridge currently posted with a new weight restriction, PennDOT is considering new postings on up to nine other local bridges in the County.

Mr. Imhoff reported that efforts in establishing Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) in Cresson Township and Richland Township were not met with success. He explained that Cresson Township had hopes of purchasing the former SCI prison site, however, the state is unwilling to release the property at this time. Mr. Imhoff noted that although the County was keenly interested in applying to the state for KOZ designation of four sites owned by the County Airport Authority, Richland Township was not in support of the KOZ. He explained that the KOZ designation, which provides tax incentives and could lead to positive economic impacts, requires approval from the county, the local municipality, and the school district.

Mr. Imhoff stated that he had attended an informational workshop sponsored by the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission regarding the PA DCNR mini-grant program for bicycle and pedestrian projects. He noted that eleven local municipalities and non-profit organizations have expressed interest in the program, which offers grants from \$1,500 to \$25,000.

Mr. Imhoff reported that in his continuing efforts to develop the Route 219 Corridor Study he had discussed the project with a PA DCED community planning liaison. He noted that he has also contacted landscape architecture programs at Penn State and Chatham Universities to coordinate intern assistance for visual components of the plan that show proposed upgrades to local transportation infrastructure.

Mr. Imhoff noted that he had recently met with the Executive Director of the Johnstown Area Heritage Association to discuss Association projects that would be eligible for funding through PennDOT's Transportation Enhancement program.

Transportation

Mr. Allison provided a report on the ongoing planning activities funded through the 2013-2014 Unified Planning Work Program. He indicated that staff coordinated the addition of the Route 56/Washington Street intersection improvement project to the 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program. He explained that the project, which involves site improvements, a left-turning lane, and pedestrian crosswalks, has been awarded funding by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Mr. Allison stated that, using GIS map overlays, staff assisted the County Transit Authority in clarifying urban and rural route designations. With regard to the public participation procedures of the Johnstown MPO for the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, Mr. Allison explained that PennDOT has developed a website with a survey tool whereby the general public can provide input on priority transportation projects. He noted that although no regional public hearings will be held, the CCPC, the County Commissioners, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will be submitting written testimony in support of candidate projects to the State Transportation Commission.

Mr. Allison stated that he had attended a public meeting regarding the West High Street Bridge Replacement Project in Ebensburg. Noting that the bridge carries West High Street over the Ghost Town Trail, Mr. Allison explained that vehicular traffic, as well as pedestrian traffic along West High Street and the Ghost Town Trail, will be maintained during the project.

Mr. Allison provided a brief report on interchange lighting coordination activities. He stated that since the current interchange lighting maintenance contract with Barclay Electric expires at the end of 2013, the County Commissioners will be selecting a contractor for the upcoming three-year period. Mr. Allison stated that staff will assist in advertising for this service and will request bids from Barclay Electric and Tercek Electric as well.

Regarding the County Bridge Inspection Program, Mr. Allison stated that the following four bridges, all in need of major repair, had recently been field-viewed by Commission staff and the County Commissioners: Carney's Bridge; Red Mill Bridge; Chest Creek Bridge; and the Van Ormer Bridge. He noted that he will keep the board informed on the Commissioners' decisions on these four structures. Mr. Valenty requested Mr. Allison to provide an update on the status of a local bridge on Bethwell Road in Northern Cambria at the October CCPC meeting. Mr. Valenty stated that the bridge is currently open only to one-way traffic.

Community Development Planning

Ms. Murphy reported that local bridge data collection for the Local Transportation Asset Inventory has been completed, with GIS mapping updated accordingly. She stated that the local roads data inventory for this same project has been initiated. Ms. Murphy noted that, in preparation for this phase of the inventory, she has reviewed the training manual and met with PA DOT personnel for additional instruction.

Ms. Murphy stated that she continues to coordinate with County GIS staff on the creation of an interactive application for the municipal land use ordinances that are available to the public via the CCPC website. She indicated that a similar interactive map tool will also be created, providing user-friendly access to municipal census data.

Those present briefly reviewed a listing of project reviews completed by Commission staff during the past month. Of particular note were an application for a NPDES permit associated with the construction of a new Sheetz Store and an application for a NPDES permit associated with the construction of a CVS pharmacy, both of which are to be located in Richland Township.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Imhoff stated that there was no "Old Business" to discuss at this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Imhoff stated that the terms of three current CCPC board members (Sam Valenty; Toni Renee Anderson; Nicholas Persio) expire on December 31, 2013. He indicated that in November he would request Commissioners' reappointment of the three individuals, pending their consent to continue serving on the Commission board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Valenty, seconded by Mr. Fisher. Motion passed unanimously.