

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
May 21, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 21, 2015, at 12 noon, at Kosta's Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Mr. Belz.

PRESENT

David L. Belz
Toni Renee Anderson
Tim Whited
Russell Kiel
Eric Wolf
Ronald Rovansek

ABSENT

James White
Lonnie Batdorf
William Trevorrow

STAFF

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were presented at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Wolf, seconded by Mr. Kiel, the minutes of the April CCPC meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Imhoff read the Treasurer's Report. He noted that in response to his request, Mr. Jim Bonini, Chief Clerk, determined that the outstanding balance on the Commission's 2014 allocation from the County (\$5,800), was withheld for postage and telephone expenses. Mr. Imhoff stated that although the 2015 allocation from the County will also reflect a deduction for these expenses, Mr. Bonini has indicated that the Commissioners would be willing to review this practice for the 2016 budget. On a motion by Mr. Kiel, seconded by Mr. Wolf, the May Treasurer's Report and the bills listed for payment were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Although there was no new correspondence to be read, Mr. Imhoff noted that a letter had been sent to the Portage Area Joint Recreation Commission expressing the Planning Commission's support of their PA DCNR grant for funds to improve the Crichton McCormick Park.

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Mr. Imhoff provided a brief update on public meetings held to gather input for the Long Range Transportation Plan. Noting that the economic development session was very well attended, Mr. Imhoff stated that discussion focused on the airport, rail service, and other improvements to the County's transportation infrastructure. He indicated that the main topics of discussion at the second public hearing were the Hastings Area Industrial Development Authority's plans to develop an access road to the Hastings Industrial Park and Cambria County Community Action Partnership's (CCCAP) need for improved coordination of services between the CCCAP and CamTran for disabled individuals.

The Executive Director apprised the members of several meetings he had attended and plan review he had completed during the past month. Noting that the Department of Defense (DOD) sponsors a program to assist regions suffering job losses as a result of defense industry drawdowns, Mr. Imhoff stated that he attended a meeting with the County Grants coordinator and the DOD to identify projects in the County that may be eligible for this type of grant funding. Mr. Imhoff reported that he met with the Barr Township Supervisors to discuss funding options for repair of the Amadei Bridge which spans the North Branch of Blacklick Creek. Regarding plan reviews, Mr. Imhoff indicated that he had reviewed a proposed subdivision and land development plan involving the expansion of the GapVax facility in the Moxham neighborhood of the City of Johnstown. Also recently reviewed was a project application submitted by Ebensburg Borough seeking grant funding to update traffic signals at the intersection of West High Street and Route 422.

Mr. Imhoff briefed those present on his meeting with officials from the City of Altoona regarding their efforts to establish a land bank. He explained that after efforts by Blair County to establish a land bank failed, the City committed to taking the lead on the project. Mr. Imhoff indicated that the City of Altoona land bank will provide a good model should Cambria County decide to further pursue a similar initiative.

Mr. Imhoff mentioned that the Water Symposium originally planned for May 6, 2015 has been rescheduled for June 17, 2015.

Transportation Planning

Mr. Allison provided a report on recent activities associated with the Long Range Transportation Plan Update. He stated that economic development agencies, legislators, municipal officials, police, emergency services, and other interested parties were invited and encouraged to attend the outreach sessions, which proved to be an excellent source of public input on the need for increased air and rail service and improved bike/pedestrian facilities. Mr. Allison noted that the consultant had field-viewed Sunset Road and Routes 56 and 403.

Briefing the members on meetings he had attended during the past month, Mr. Allison stated that recent meetings with Congressman Shuster and Congressman Rothfus focused on new surface transportation legislation currently being considered for enactment. Mr. Allison also noted that following a meeting with Barr Township officials regarding the repair of the Amadei Bridge, staff advised the Township of the process for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project selection.

Mr. Allison apprised the members of activities undertaken by the staff pertaining to the County Bridge and Interchange Lighting Programs. He stated that upon CCPC staff recommendation, the County Commissioners approved a technical and cost proposal from Keller Engineers for the design and preliminary engineering phase of the Carney's Crossing Bridge replacement project. Mr. Allison also indicated that routine inspections revealed cracking in the fascia beams of several County bridges and Commission staff has requested a technical and cost proposal from Keller engineers for the repair work. With regard to the Interchange Lighting Program, Commission staff continued to review invoices submitted for inspection and repairs and forwarded the same to the Commissioners for approval.

Community Development Planning

Noting that the Commission's website is updated on a regular basis, Ms. Murphy stated that in addition to current Long Range Transportation Plan Update information, a new land use ordinance map has also been posted on the site. She explained that the updated map can now be easily updated and accurately reflects the municipalities in the County that have enacted land use ordinances. Another ongoing project of the community development planning staff is the scanning and digitizing of municipal zoning maps for incorporation into the County Geographic Information System (GIS).

Ms. Murphy reported that due to poor enrollment only one of the three LTAP classes scheduled in Cambria County was held. However, the Principles of Paving course was well attended and a Warm Mix Asphalt course has been scheduled for July 27, 2015. Ms. Murphy stated that since municipal officials and employees are more receptive to classes which focus on maintenance topics, she is hopeful that the Commission can schedule more of these types of courses in the future.

Ms. Murphy stated that as per the recommendation of PennDOT Bureau of Equal Opportunity staff, CCPC staff has initiated work on a Limited English Proficiency Plan. She noted that the plan will identify the limited English proficient populations in the County and discuss the delivery of services to these individuals.

OLD BUSINESS

With regard to the West Hills Comprehensive Plan initiative, Mr. Imhoff reported that five municipalities (Westmont, Upper Yoder, Southmont, Ferndale, and Lower Yoder) have agreed to participate and contribute an equal financial amount (\$5,000) toward the matching share of a DCED grant application. He noted that although Brownstown Borough has not committed to the project, the other five municipalities pledged to cover the Borough's financial share if Brownstown Borough Council will agree to participate. Mr. Imhoff stated that the Planning Commission will assist the municipalities in the grant application process.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no "New Business" to discuss, Mr. Whited made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wolf and passed unanimously.