

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission

January 19, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 19, 2017, at 12 noon, at Kosta's Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

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

PRESENT

David L. Belz
Lonnie Batdorf
Russell Kiel
Eric Wolf
Diane Waksmunski
Rev. Sylvia King

ABSENT

Ronald M. Rovansek
Toni Renee Anderson
James White

STAFF

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

Mr. Imhoff noted that two individuals were recently appointed to the Commission. Diane Waksmunski and Rev. Sylvia King were introduced and welcomed to the Commission.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

This being the annual reorganization meeting of the Commission, the election of officers was held. Mr. Kiel made a motion to nominate and elect Ronald Rovansek as Commission Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wolf and passed unanimously. On a motion by Mr. Kiel, seconded by Mr. Batdorf, Mr. Wolf was nominated and elected to the position of Vice-Chair. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Kiel made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Wolf, to nominate Mr. Batdorf to the position of Secretary. The motion passed unanimously. On a motion by Mr. Wolf, Mr. Kiel was nominated and elected as Commission Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Mr. Belz and passed unanimously.

At this time, newly-elected Vice-Chair, Mr. Wolf, thanked David Belz for his dedication as Commission Chair over the past three years.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were presented at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Batdorf, seconded by Mr. Belz, the minutes of the December 15, 2016 CCPC meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the benefit of the recently appointed members, Mr. Imhoff gave a brief overview of the Commission's funding sources, i.e., annual County allocation, state and federal transportation funds through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and liquid fuels funds through the County bridge inspection and interchange lighting programs. Mr. Wolf inquired whether the Commission had applied for supplemental funds through the current UPWP. Mr. Imhoff replied that an application had been prepared and submitted requesting \$15,000 in federal highway funds for a pedestrian counting initiative. He further explained that the total cost of the proposed project is \$18,000 (\$15,000 FHA; \$3,000 Local), which will fund the purchase, installation and monitoring of pedestrian counting equipment to be used along the Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail in the City of Johnstown and Lower Yoder Township; the Path of the Flood Trail in Conemaugh Township and Franklin Borough; and in the City's Central Park. Mr. Imhoff stated that the data collected will provide information on the recreational trail usage and the use of sidewalks and crosswalks downtown Johnstown.

The January Financial Statement was read by Mr. Imhoff and reviewed by those present. There being no comments on the report, Mr. Kiel made a motion that the January Treasurer's Report and the bills listed for payment be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Batdorf and passed unanimously.

In a related matter, Mr. Belz made a motion that the current Treasurer, Mr. Batdorf, be authorized to continue signing checks until signatory changes reflecting the newly elected officers are made to the Commission's checking and money market accounts. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Mr. Imhoff stated that a second meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Plan steering committee was held on January 18th. Noting that the meeting was well attended, Mr. Imhoff explained that discussions focused on the core values of the County as well as development of goals and objectives that will foster growth and development within the County.

Reporting that the final public meeting for the Admiral Peary Highway Corridor Plan was held last week, Mr. Imhoff stated that EADS and CCPC staff have identified seven projects to be included in the plan. He provided a brief overview of three of the priority projects, i.e., development of a dedicated pedestrian corridor between Mt. Aloysius College and downtown Cresson; development of a trail corridor between Veterans Park and the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site; and development of turning access lanes at the entrance to Mt. Aloysius College.

Mr. Imhoff noted that the structure for the monthly CCPC meetings may be changing over the ensuing year. He stated that in an effort to keep members interested and abreast of current and ongoing activities, staff will hopefully be providing more visual and interactive presentations at the meetings. Mr. Wolf suggested that each monthly meeting focus on a relevant topic/program whereby more in-depth explanations and discussions on that particular planning effort can be entertained.

Transportation Planning

Mr. Allison reported on several transportation initiatives in which CCPC staff provided input and coordination assistance. Through the PennDOT Connects Program, Commission staff met with PennDOT District 9-0 staff and the Manager and Public Works Director of the City of Johnstown to discuss upcoming highway and bridge projects in the City. He explained that ongoing coordination and discussion between PennDOT and municipal officials relative to upcoming projects will eliminate duplication of services and facilitate better planning efforts throughout the county.

Reporting on the reorganization and membership status of the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Mr. Allison stated that one borough and one township official have been selected to serve on each of the coordinating and technical committees of the MPO. Representatives on the coordinating committee are from Hastings Borough and Richland Township. Geistown Borough and Cambria Township officials will serve as representatives on the technical committee. Mr. Allison noted that Cliff Kitner, Executive Director of the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority, will serve as a bicycle/pedestrian representative on the MPO technical committee.

Mr. Allison noted that, on behalf of the County Commissioners, staff continues to provide coordination activities for the County Bridge Program and the Interchange Lighting Program. He indicated that the annual survey of county-owned bridges has been completed and forwarded to the Commissioners.

Community Development

Ms. Sosko updated those present on the status of the Carrolltown Borough Sign Inventory. She stated that all data regarding signage and street poles has been collected and configured in a user-friendly format. Online accessibility is dependent upon County GIS server and software upgrades. Mr. Imhoff noted that in addition to these upgrades, the County GIS department will also be updating the County's aerial photography. The last update was completed in 2009.

For the benefit of the new members, Ms. Sosko explained that municipal grant applications and funding requests are reviewed by CCPC staff for consistency with county land use goals and objectives. She stated that a listing of the project applications reviewed during the past month are included in her progress report.

OLD BUSINESS

Updating the members on the possibility of CCPC staff involvement with County Redevelopment Authority activities, Mr. Imhoff stated that he was invited to attend a recent meeting of the Authority. He explained that the Authority is requesting that the Planning Commission consider partnering with the RACC in light of the upcoming retirement of the Authority's long-time Executive Director, Larry Custer. In response to several questions, Mr. Imhoff explained that the Authority most likely will not have funds available to hire a new director and is looking for assistance in administering the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for the County and several entitlement communities. In addition, the RACC is instrumental in managing several federal housing programs in the County. In response to Mr. Imhoff's invitation for board member involvement in this regard, Mr. Batdorf and Rev. King offered to sit on a transition committee to discuss the feasibility of Planning Commission involvement in this venture.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no "New Business" to discuss at this time, Commission members and the Executive Director recessed to an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

After the Executive Session, the meeting was reconvened. Mr. Batdorf made a motion that Katherine Kinka be hired as a Senior Planner, effective March 6, 2017, at the salary discussed and approved during the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously.

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