

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
June 18, 2020

To assure continued safety and well-being of members and staff, the regular monthly meeting of the CCPC was held via zoom video conference/teleconference on Thursday, June 18, 2020, at 12 noon. The meeting and teleconference line were publicly advertised pursuant to public notice. CCPC members and staff attended via video/teleconference.

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

PRESENT

Eric Wolf
James White
Ronald M. Rovanseck
Russell Kiel
Diane Waksmunski
Debra Orner
Rev. Sylvia King

ABSENT

Lonnie Batdorf

STAFF

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public participated in the teleconference and no public comment was offered at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. White, seconded by Ms. Waksmunski, the minutes of the May 21, 2020 CCPC meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Imhoff read the June Treasurer's Report. The report, which was provided to the members prior to this meeting, was reviewed by Commission members. There being no questions or comments on the report, Mr. White made a motion that the June Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rovanseck and passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was read at this meeting.

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Apprising the members of the status of CCPC operations in light of the Commonwealth's reopening plan, Mr. Imhoff stated that CCPC offices are open to the public with usual office hours. He explained that although staff can continue to work remotely, employees are transitioning to working at the physical office location. Mr. Imhoff also noted the following safety measures that have been developed to maintain a high level of service and ensure staff/client safety: individuals are being strongly encouraged to wear a mask when visiting the CCPC offices; hand sanitizer and a disposable mask are available in each office; and a drop-off bin (for subdivision/land development plans) has been placed in the vestibule of the building to reduce the number of visits into the building. Mr. Imhoff stated that all regular CCPC clients have been notified of these social distancing/safety measures.

Mr. Imhoff informed the members that PennDOT awarded an open-end contract to a state-approved consultant to complete an engineering study of the Johnstown Train Station. He explained that the engineering consultant will identify structural, electrical, plumbing, etc. repairs needed to rehabilitate the facility and allow for future marketability of this historical asset.

Mr. Imhoff reported that he continued his involvement with Vision Together 2025, most recently assisting in securing revenue commitments, budget preparation, and development of a job description for an executive director position. He noted that the organization anticipates hiring an executive director this summer.

Mr. Imhoff reported that during the past month he continued to partner with members of the Greater Johnstown Regional Partnership and their consultant, CamTran, and the Cambria County MPO, to develop a BUILD grant application. He explained that, if approved, the \$16 million BUILD application will provide funding for significant improvements to the Johnstown Train Station, Inclined Plane, and the CamTran Transit Center, as well as various streetscape improvements along the Main Street Greenway which connects these three major transportation assets in the City of Johnstown.

Providing a brief update on the County bridge program, Mr. Imhoff stated that pursuant to the awarding of a contract for the repair of County Bridge No. 4 in Northern Cambria Borough, a groundbreaking ceremony has been scheduled for July 9, 2020. He also noted that design of the Red Mill Bridge in Blacklick Township is currently underway.

Transportation Planning

Mr. Allison apprised Commission members that the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan FFY 2021-2045 and the FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Plan is being finalized, with comments received at the Agency Coordination Meeting and from FHWA and PennDOT being incorporated into the documents. Mr. Allison stated that to facilitate public review of the documents, the plans, project lists, and supporting documents have been made available for download on the Planning Commission's website. He indicated that although an on-line public meeting was held in early June, no members of the public participated. Final adoption of the FFY 2021-2045 LRTP and FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is anticipated at the June 24, 2020 MPO meeting.

Mr. Allison reported that adjustments were made to the current Unified Planning Work Program to fund the hiring of a consultant to complete a cost benefit analysis for inclusion in the US Department of Transportation BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) discretionary grants program application. He noted that Mr. Imhoff previously discussed the BUILD application in the Executive Director status report.

Community Development Planning

Ms. Sosko reported that during the past month her main focus has been on 2020 Census outreach, encouraging County residents to complete self-response questionnaires. She stated that a marketing campaign has been developed that will include the Johnstown Tribune Democrat, WJAC-TV, and advertising on CamTran buses. Ms. Sosko explained that an on-going social media campaign focuses on congratulating those municipalities that have surpassed the 2010 response rate, as well as encouraging County residents to continue to self-respond. Noting that Cambria County is currently slightly above the national rate of self-response, Ms. Sosko reiterated that the census outreach initiatives will continue through mid-August when census enumerators are scheduled to conduct a door-to-door campaign.

Ms. Sosko reported that subdivision and land development reviews are being completed in a timely manner to ensure that building and economic development activities within the County continue during this unprecedented time. She noted that, as time permits, she continues to digitize municipal zoning maps, which will then be available on-line to assist the public, land use professionals, and CCPC staff when conducting subdivision and land development reviews.

Senior Planner

Updating the members on the status of the Johnstown Market-Rate Housing Strategy, Ms. Kinka stated that the final draft of the document is nearing completion, with the current focus being development of a realistic financing structure. She stated that the County Redevelopment Authority is in the process of revitalizing the Cambria County Housing Development Corporation, which could potentially be a funding entity to support a pilot housing project in the downtown. Ms. Kinka stated that she has also been meeting with several individuals who are seeking to organize a core group of interested individuals who could also facilitate the pilot housing project initiative. In this regard, she requested the members to suggest individuals who may be interested in serving on this type of action-oriented committee.

Ms. Kinka reported that she recently participated in planning and zoning training forums sponsored by the City of Johnstown. She explained that the sessions were held to discuss policy distinctions between zoning and subdivisions/land development ordinances, as well as outline the general regulatory and review process.

Noting that she participated in a kick-off meeting for the City's Walk Works steering committee, Ms. Kinka expressed her enthusiasm for the new Complete Streets Policy for Downtown Johnstown, recently adopted by City Council. She explained that this document will guide streetscape development and the direction of multi-modal transportation within the City.

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Imhoff apprised the members of a situation that Commission staff has been dealing with in regard to increasingly aggressive behavior of a local surveyor. He explained that surveyors/developers throughout the County routinely deliver/pick-up plans at the CCPC office; however, the behavior of one particular surveyor is less than professional. In an effort to avoid future confrontations and not violate an individual's rights to enter a public building to conduct business with the CCPC, Mr. Imhoff suggested that the surveyor in question be notified in writing (via certified mail) that he will not be permitted to enter the CCPC's offices until July 1, 2021, and continued communication with CCPC staff must be conducted via e-mail or telephone, with submission of hard copy land development applications be via a secure drop box located outside the Commission offices. Mr. Imhoff stated that he had obtained legal counsel, as well as comments from the County HR and Sheriff's departments, all of whom agreed with this action. After a brief discussion regarding the situation, Mr. Wolf stated that, for the record, the members of the CCPC are in agreement with the proposed notification to the surveyor.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Wolf adjourned the meeting.