

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
January 21, 2021

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, January 21, 2021, at 12 noon. The meeting and teleconference line were publicly advertised pursuant to public notice. CCPC members and staff attended via video/teleconference.

In the absence of Mr. Wolf, the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair, Mr. White.

PRESENT

James White
Russell Kiel
Lonnie Batdorf
Diane Waksmunski
Ronald Rovansek
Debra Orner
Rev. Sylvia King
Danea Koss

ABSENT

Eric Wolf

STAFF

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

GUESTS

Commissioner Thomas Chernisky

Noting that today's meeting was a Reorganization Meeting of the Commission, Mr. Imhoff stated that election of officers should take place at this time. Mr. Batdorf made a motion that the current slate of officers be retained for 2021. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously. The 2021 slate of officers for the Cambria County Planning Commission is as follows:

Chair - Eric Wolf
Vice-Chair - James White
Secretary - Diane Waksmunski
Treasurer - Lonnie Batdorf

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Kiel, seconded by Ms. Orner, the minutes of the December 17, 2020 meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The January Financial Statement was read by Mr. Imhoff and reviewed by the Commission members. There being no questions or comments on

the report, Mr. Batdorf made a motion that the Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waksmunski and passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

The Executive Director informed Commission members that the hiring of an Executive Director for Vision Together 2025 is continuing to move forward. He stated that after an extensive interview process with highly skilled and experienced finalists, an employment offer to the selected candidate is expected to be made within the next few weeks.

Mr. Imhoff provided a brief update on the status of the revisions to the Johnstown BUILD application, noting that more detailed information is to be presented by Mr. Allison. He stated that the Cambria County MPO formed a subcommittee to evaluate the Department of Transportation's feedback on the BUILD application and CCPC staff will be instrumental in facilitating discussions and actions regarding this initiative.

Mr. Imhoff reported that, at Commissioner Chernisky's suggestion, staff has initiated work on an update document for the Alleghenies Ahead/Cambria County Comprehensive Plan. He explained that the update will document accomplishments and goals attained since the adoption of the comprehensive plan and will be shared with County elected officials, local stakeholders, and the general public.

Transportation Planning

Providing additional information on local efforts to modify and prepare the Johnstown BUILD application for resubmission, Mr. Allison stated that online meetings with the project team will focus on refining priorities and the scope of the application to attain a competitive project listing that will hopefully capture the \$16 million grant award. He explained that the scope of work for the Johnstown Train Station will include renovations and signage to the lower level of the facility as well as renovations to the passenger train station. A reuse study and the economic viability of those reuses, as well as cost estimates for the entire train station renovations, will be an integral element of the application. Improvements to the transit system within the City and renovations to CamTran's Main Street transit center will also be included in the application. Mr. Allison stressed that shovel-ready projects and a cost-benefit analysis are essential to move the BUILD application beyond the highly-recommended stage to an award-winning project. Mr. Allison noted that in addition to local stakeholders, state and federal officeholders will also be requested to support the project application.

Mr. Allison reported that biweekly staff meetings to discuss development of the William Penn Avenue (Prospect) corridor plan are continuing. A community survey and project website have been developed in an effort to capture input from local residents, community business owners, and people who travel the corridor on a regular basis. He noted that the community survey will be sent to residents of the Prospect neighborhood and

will be available on the CCPC website. In addition, virtual meetings have also been held with PA DOT District 9-0 personnel and local community stakeholders to further guide and develop the plan.

The Transportation Planner stated that initial activities regarding the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update have begun. A project priorities survey was developed and distributed to all municipalities and economic development agencies in the County. Responses will be used to prioritize projects for the 2023-2026 TIP update.

Community Development

Ms. Sosko highlighted her involvement with the William Penn corridor project, stating that based on staff input, she developed a 15-question public outreach survey. She explained that the survey, as well as Corridor plan information, i.e., project description, maps and photos, and meeting schedules, can be accessed via a separate tab on the CCPC website. Ms. Sosko also stated that, utilizing GIS capabilities, she is in the process of compiling a mailing list for the survey,

Ms. Sosko reported that although her focus has been on the William Penn Corridor Plan, she continues to develop the bicycle and pedestrian assets map for the Connecting Cambria Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update. In addition, she continues to review subdivisions/land developments and perform routine updates to the CCPC website and Facebook.

Senior Planner

Apprising the members of *Elevate Johnstown* implementation Activities, Ms. Kinka reported that recent undertakings included phone conversations with local investors and the local implementation committee. Conversations have been focusing on the recent pandemic phenomenon of people working remotely and capturing and attracting those individuals who may wish to live in the Johnstown area and work remotely. With regard to promoting market-rate housing within the County, Mr. Kiel suggested that the site of a former golf course in the Ebensburg area may be an area of interest to developers/investors. He stated that adjacent areas are zoned residential/multi-family and there appears to be a demand for rental facilities in this region of the County.

The Senior Planner reported that she has participated in Vision Together 2025 endeavors to support the goal of engaging & recruiting the next generation of future community leaders, specifically development of a survey designed to attract new leadership which would enhance the mission/objectives of community organizations/agencies. Ms. Kinka noted that she also participated in discussions with representatives from the YMCA to continue to build the bridge and platform of young, passionate, diverse voices to fill available vacancies in leadership positions.

Ms. Kinka apprised the members of her continued efforts on identifying a canvas for a pilot mural project. After being notified that PennDOT Central Office is currently deliberating on the guidelines for their statewide mural program, a privately-owned building façade in downtown Johnstown is being considered for the project.

OLD BUSINESS

A brief discussion on the update to the City of Johnstown's Comprehensive Plan was held. Responding to Mr. White's inquiry about the status of the update, Rev. King stated that City Council is keeping abreast of plan development. She indicated that John Dubnansky, Johnstown Community and Economic Development Director, is gathering input from all City departments and is planning meetings with neighborhood residents to identify priorities/goals/objectives. Mr. Imhoff noted that, if requested, CCPC staff will be available to provide assistance to City staff.

Commissioner Chernisky stated that a ribbon-cutting was recently held to unveil a \$1 million broadband expansion project. He stated that the partnership with a local internet provider will expand service to underserved areas in northern Cambria County and will provide residents, first responders, farmers, students, and individuals working from home with faster internet service. Commissioner Chernisky thanked CCPC staff for their efforts in identifying expansion of broadband capabilities as a priority in the Alleghenies Ahead Comprehensive Plan and assisting in achieving the goal to expand broadband service throughout the County.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no New Business to discuss at this meeting, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Batdorf, seconded by Mr. Rovanseck. Motion carried.