

MINUTES  
Cambria County Planning Commission  
March 18, 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, March 18, 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  
Debra Orner  
Rev. Sylvia King  
Danea Koss  
Diane Waksmunski

ABSENT

Eric Wolf  
Ron Rovanseck

STAFF

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

GUESTS

Commissioner Thomas Chernisky

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 Rev. King, the minutes of the February 18, 2021 meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The March Financial Statement was read by Mr. Imhoff and reviewed by the Commission members. Mr. Imhoff noted that the Commission's final invoice to the Commissioners for 2021 liquid fuels funding has been slightly delayed pending response to the Controller regarding calculation of overhead/fringe rates on quarterly invoices. Mr. Imhoff stated that, once informed of the Commission's quarterly calculation procedure, the Controller approved and invoice and submitted it for final processing and payment. The March Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, was approved on a motion by Mr. Batdorf. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Imhoff stated that there was no correspondence to be read at this meeting. Noting that PA State Ethics Commission Statement of Financial Interests forms have been provided to Commission members and staff, Mr.

Imhoff encouraged everyone to complete and return statements to the Commission prior to May 1, 2021.

#### STATUS REPORTS

##### Executive Director

The Executive Director announced that Mike Tedesco has been hired as President and CEO of Vision Together 2025. Mr. Imhoff noted that he is confident that Mr. Tedesco will be an asset to the community and he will invite the CEO to attend a future CCPC meeting.

Noting the passage of the COVID relief bill, Mr. Imhoff stated that Cambria County is slated to receive \$25 million and the City of Johnstown is expected to receive \$32 million. In addition, local governments, businesses and non-profit organizations are also designated as recipients of COVID-relief funding, which can be used for a broad range of activities. Mr. Imhoff also noted that federal funding for earmark projects is also being restored, which can potentially benefit Cambria County and local municipalities. He stated that Commission staff will coordinate with the MPO and PennDOT to identify and implement candidate transportation-related projects that may be funded with earmarks attached to the pending transportation bill.

##### Transportation Planning

Providing an update on the William Penn Avenue corridor plan, Mr. Allison reported that with the cancellation of an online public meeting, staff is re-evaluating how to approach garnering additional public input for the plan. He stated that Ms. Sosko is currently in the process of compiling information received from a mail-in public outreach survey sent to residents of the Prospect neighborhood.

Mr. Allison apprised the members of the status of the BUILD application, noting that stakeholders and PennDOT personnel have been meeting to develop a finalized scope of projects for the application. He stated that the projects to be included in the application are design and construction work on the train station; an engineering study for a new downtown transit center; and repairs to the Johnstown Inclined Plane pedestrian walkway. Mr. Allison indicated that several other projects are also being considered for inclusion in the application, i.e., Main Street Greenway, Johnstown Urban Connectivity Project, 911 Trail/Path of the Flood Alignment. He stated that Michael Baker Consultants will update the Benefit Cost Analysis, which is an essential component of the application.

##### Community Development

Ms. Sosko provided additional details regarding the outreach survey conducted in conjunction with the William Penn Avenue corridor study. Indicating that the survey was sent to approximately 200 Prospect residents, Ms. Sosko reported that 33 survey responses have been received thus far. She stated that cursory review of the surveys indicate that residents feel that sidewalks and crosswalks need improvement and that there are site distance issues along the corridor. Ms. Sosko stated that once all surveys responses have been received and entered into an online platform, staff will conduct further analysis of the survey responses.

Ms. Sosko reported that mapping for the Cambria County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan has been completed. She stated that mapping depicts pedestrian and bicycle trails throughout the county and highlights trails that have been developed since the completion of the 2018 plan. Ms. Sosko noted that an on-line assets map will soon be available on the Commission's website.

With regard to the Local Transportation Assistance Program, Ms. Sosko reported that she recently sent a schedule of LTAP virtual classes being offered in April to all municipalities in the County. To encourage participation in the virtual classes, Ms. Sosko stated that the mailing provided highlights of several specific courses.

#### Senior Planning

Noting that she will be reviewing the final draft of the Cambria County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan under "Old Business", Ms. Kinka provided an abbreviated report on planning activities undertaken during the past month. She stated that work has been continuing on the implementation of the market-rate housing strategy, *Elevate Johnstown*. She reported that she and Mr. Imhoff have held conversations with consultants whose firms may be interested in serving as development consultants for the Strategy.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Kinka presented an in-depth overview of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan update, *Connecting Cambria*. She stated that in addition to highlighting new bicycle and pedestrian sidewalks/trails, the update also discusses signage, accessibility, and safety improvements completed since the 2018 plan. Ms. Kinka noted that pictures throughout the plan depict various projects and initiatives throughout the County, i.e., Ghost Town Trail, Incline Plane Trails, Mt. Aloysius/Cresson Sidewalk, and the Downtown Johnstown WalkWorks. Ms. Sosko shared highlights of the trail assets mapping, noting the addition of major parks and recreational facilities and trailhead locations. She explained that an on-line version of the map will be available to the public via the CCPC website/GIS. Commissioner Chernisky suggested that the Rock Run be added to the mapping. Ms. Sosko noted that although this update focuses on non-motorized and pedestrian trails, adding the Rock Run as another recreational amenity in Cambria County would be a good addition to the mapping.

Mr. Imhoff stated that a PDF version of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan update will be posted to the Commission's website prior to the next CCPC meeting so that members can review the document before final adoption at the April meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Orner and Mr. Imhoff spearheaded a discussion regarding an announcement from the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) indicating that potential changes to Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) definitions are being considered. Mr. Imhoff explained that currently under OMB guidelines, a MSA is defined as an area having a population of 50,000 people; however, under the proposed definition, the population size would be increased to 100,000. Ms. Orner stated that if the definition change is adopted, Cambria County would lose its designation as a MSA. Ms. Orner and

Mr. White expressed concern that federal funding to Cambria County/Johnstown will be severely impacted with the designation change. Commission members and staff stressed that County and City of Johnstown officials/agencies; PennDOT; and area legislators will need to keep abreast of the issue and develop a strategy to move forward.

There being no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Batdorf, seconded by Ms. Orner. Motion carried.