

MINUTES  
Cambria County Planning Commission  
May 18, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 12 noon, at Kosta's Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Melissa Komar, Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Melissa Komar  
Russ Kiel  
Charlie Koren  
Diane Waksmunski  
Mark Bucci

ABSENT

Debra Orner  
Ron Rovansek  
Danea Koss  
Lisa Mays

STAFF

Christopher Allison  
Colleen A. Bukowski  
Shanna Sosko  
Jacob Zerby

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was presented.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Dr. Koren, seconded by Mr. Kiel, the minutes of the April 25, 2023 meeting were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Allison read the May Financial Statement, noting total accounts receivable, current outstanding invoices and receipts and expenditures from April 1 through May 15. He noted that the expenses to be approved for payment (salaries, taxes, other expenses) were incorrectly listed as April 28<sup>th</sup> expenses; the correct date should be May 30<sup>th</sup> expenses. The members reviewed the financial statement and Chairwoman Komar entertained questions on the report.

In response to a question by Dr. Koren, Mr. Allison explained that the CCPC operates on a July 1 through June 30 fiscal year, with funding from the Unified Planning Work Program (state/federal funds) awarded on this basis and funding from the County allocated on a calendar year basis. In response to questions by Mr. Bucci and Dr. Koren regarding the County's liquid fuels allocation, Mr. Allison explained that the liquid fuels allocated to the Planning Commission are used for project coordination and technical assistance rendered to the County Commissioners relative to the County's bridge maintenance/improvement program. He stated that during the past two years, this allocation has largely been utilized for project management of the Red Mill Bridge Replacement project. Although Mr. Allison did not know the percentage of the County's liquid fuels revenue that is allocated to the CCPC, he indicated that the County Commissioners have

historically allocated a designated amount to the Commission based on the County's annual budget.

On a motion by Mr. Kiel, the May Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment (pending correction of the payment date to May 30) be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bucci and passed unanimously.

#### Acceptance of 2021-22 CCPC Audit

Noting that the 2021-22 CCPC Audit was provided to all Commission members several weeks prior to the meeting, Ms. Komar opened discussion inquiring whether those present had any questions or comments on the report. Noting that no significant audit findings were presented by BarnesSaly Company, Mr. Kiel made a motion that the 2021-2022 CCPC Audit be accepted. The motion was seconded by Dr. Koren and passed on a unanimous vote.

#### STATUS REPORTS

##### Executive Director

Mr. Allison reported that the William Penn Avenue Prospect Corridor Plan has been finalized, presented at a public meeting, and made available to Commission members for review and acceptance. CCPC staff commented on the enthusiasm of the residents of the Prospect neighborhood, and the fact that the plan focuses on a gateway into the City, as well as a community located in close proximity to the City's CBD. A discussion on various aspects and recommendations of the plan ensued. Ms. Komar commented that the plan, which was developed through coordinated efforts of residents, government agencies, and local officials, will be an asset for possible future funding applications and initiatives. In response to an inquiry by Dr. Koren regarding the City's interest in implementing plan recommendations, Ms. Komar indicated that the Johnstown Redevelopment is considering partnering with the CCPC and Prospect community residents in facilitating greenspace improvements within the neighborhood. On a motion by Mr. Bucci, seconded by Ms. Waksmunski, the William Penn Avenue Prospect Corridor Plan was accepted. The motion passed unanimously.

Updating the members on the status of the staff vacancy, Mr. Allison stated that he has been developing a job description for an entry-level planner. He also noted that once the job description is finalized, the position will be advertised on indeed.com and he will reach out to local colleges as well in an effort to garner applications from qualified individuals.

Mr. Allison reported that, at the request of Southmont Borough officials, CCPC staff recently attended a meeting to discuss an update to the Borough's 1960's-era comprehensive plan. The Executive Director explained that he informed Council members that CCPC staff can provide technical assistance in the preparation of a funding application to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for this endeavor; however, for the application to be considered for funding approval, the comprehensive plan must be a regional plan, whereby two or more municipalities will be partnering on the project. Ms. Sosko commented that since there was also discussion at the meeting about Southmont Borough's participation in a shared services agreement with neighboring municipalities she will investigate the current status of the shared services agreement. Both Mr. Bucci and Ms. Komar expressed their first-hand knowledge of the funding benefits and cost savings that can be achieved when municipalities work together. Mr. Bucci

cited the Forest Hills Regional Alliance as an example of regional cooperation and how the participating municipalities have benefitted from shared services. Ms. Komar touted the positivity of regional planning efforts and urged Commission staff to promote cooperative municipal efforts.

Updating the members on the status of the Red Mill Bridge project, Mr. Allison stated that all permitting has been received and the contract for replacement of the structure has been awarded to Merlo Construction. He noted that the County Commissioners are planning a groundbreaking ceremony to be held in the near future and project is expected to be completed by October 31, 2023.

#### Transportation

Noting administrative and coordination activities for the May 30<sup>th</sup> MPO meeting, Mr. Zerby stated that the meeting will focus on priorities for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update. He indicated that the Commission received the following municipal candidate projects for placement on the TIP: Sonman Avenue Bridge, Portage Borough; D Street Extension, Lower Yoder Township; 8<sup>th</sup> Street and St. Mary Avenue Bridges, Northern Cambria Borough; and Reed Street Bridge, West Carroll Township. Mr. Zerby explained that once the project submissions have been reviewed for eligibility and funding feasibility, the candidate projects will be prioritized and considered for placement on the TIP.

Mr. Zerby reported that work has been initiated on the update to the Public Participation Plan (PPP), which is a component of the Long Range Transportation Plan. He explained that the purpose of the plan is to document how public participation is encouraged and assured in the transportation planning process. Mr. Zerby commented that Ms. Sosko has also been involved in the PPP update, particularly with regard to GIS mapping.

Regarding the Red Mill Bridge project, Mr. Zerby stated that he attended the bid opening and will notify the CCPC members when details of the groundbreaking ceremony have been finalized.

#### Community Development

Continuing discussion on the Public Participation Plan, Ms. Sosko stated that in addition to providing a forum for truck and rail freight shippers/haulers and public/private transportation operators to provide input into the transportation process, the plan also enables often overlooked groups and individuals to lend valuable input into the planning process. She explained that this population segment includes minority populations, low-income families, non-English speaking and limited English proficient persons, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Sosko reported that in addition to reviewing residential and land development plans, she has provided numerous letters of support for various projects throughout the County seeking federal/state grant funding. She also noted ongoing updates and maintenance to the CCPC website and Facebook page.

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Bucci apprised the members of an upcoming solar workshop being coordinated by Adams Township. He explained that the Grid-Scale Solar Workshop, to be held June 13, 2023, is being presented through the PA State Association of Township Supervisors and will focus on solar trends and technology drivers, solar ordinances, and successful solar case studies in

Pennsylvania. Noting that Commission staff will be attending the workshop, Mr. Allison indicated that Mr. Bucci had provided an invitational flyer which was also e-mailed to all Commission members.

Ms. Waksmunski commented on the upcoming Aerium Summit to be held at the John Murtha Johnstown Cambria County Airport. She stated that the three-day summit is intended to foster collaboration among private/public aviation stakeholders, business/industry, and high school/university educators and students in promoting aviation and aerospace education and workforce development in the region. Also discussed was the Summit's inclusion of speakers who will address current and potential drone technology and usage. Ms. Waksmunski noted that she is planning to attend the Summit and encouraged staff representation at the conference as well.

On a motion by Mr. Bucci, seconded by Dr. Koren, the meeting was adjourned.