

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
August 17, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 12 noon, at Kosta's Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Melissa Komar, Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Melissa Komar
Diana Waksmunski
Danea Koss
Russ Kiel
Lisa Mays
Ron Rovansek
Debra Orner
Charlie Koren

ABSENT

Charlie Koren
Mark Bucci

STAFF

Christopher Allison
Shanna Sosko
Jacob Zerby

GUESTS

Commissioner Thomas Chernisky

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairwoman Komar adjourned the meeting for a brief Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. The regular meeting reconvened at 12:15 p.m. At this time, Ms. Komar stated that an Executive Meeting was held on July 26, 2023 to discuss personnel matters.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rovansek made a motion that the minutes of the June 15, 2023 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mays and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Allison read the July-August Financial Statement, noting total accounts receivable, current outstanding invoices, and receipts and expenditures since the June CCPC meeting. He noted that all expenditures were recurring expenses, i.e., payroll, taxes, fringe benefit and operating expenses. The statement was reviewed by those present and Ms. Mays made a motion that the July-August Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously.

Human Resources Consultant RFP

Mr. Allison stated that, at the request of the Board, he prepared a Request for Proposals (RFP) for human resources consulting services. He further indicated that the RFP was previously sent to Commission members for their review and comment. A brief discussion was held regarding the services being solicited, i.e., evaluation of existing policies, formulation/implementation of updated HR strategies, workforce development and training, and ongoing consultation on HR-related issues. On a motion by Mr. Kiel, seconded by Ms. Koss, the Executive Director was authorized to advertise/solicit proposals from qualified agencies. The motion passed unanimously.

STATUS REPORTS

At the suggestion of Mr. Allison, members agreed to forego oral presentation of monthly status reports. Members were apprised to contact staff directly regarding any questions on the reports which were provided via e-mail prior to this meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CCPC Projects and Goals

The status of ongoing projects was reviewed, with completion and anticipated completion dates noted. The project listing was presented by calendar quarter from July, 2023 through June, 2024. Coordination efforts regarding the Red Mill Bridge replacement project, initiation of increased municipal outreach, and development of the Long Range Transportation Plan were key projects discussed. Mr. Allison noted that a media event to provide an update on the Red Mill Bridge project is being planned for September 8th. Commission members expressed their support of Commission staff meeting with representatives from the County's municipalities on an individual and/or regional basis to share information on grant programs, the land development and subdivision process, and the importance of comprehensive planning. Several suggestions were offered to consider coordinating with other County agencies (County Redevelopment Authority, County Grants Facilitator, County GIS) to enhance the informative content of a regional presentation. Commissioner Chernisky noted that although the County Grants Writer is available to provide guidance to local municipalities, top priority is placed on facilitating grant applications on behalf of Cambria County.

Prospect Pollinator Garden

Ms. Sosko reported that Commission staff facilitated a community stakeholders meeting to discuss the Prospect Pollinator Garden. She outlined the concerns of the local residents as presented at the stakeholders meeting: ongoing maintenance of the property; safety concerns regarding the proposed entrance to the site; possible ADA considerations; and the incorporation of a "memorial garden" at the site. Ms. Sosko indicated that representatives from the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy and Penn State Master Gardeners have also been invited to provide input and expertise. A brief discussion was held and due to the specific nature of the funding which is available through the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, Commission Chair recommended that development of a pollinator garden rather than a

"memorial garden" be pursued. Noting that the site of the proposed garden is owned by the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority, Ms. Komar offered the assistance of the Authority with regard to property maintenance. Ms. Sosko noted that the entrance to the garden can be changed to provide safer access to those wishing to visit the garden.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Zerby apprised the members that through PennDOT's open-end contract, Michael Baker International has been assigned to prepare the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). He briefed Commission members on the Scope of Work and upcoming planning process regarding development of the 2024-2050 LRTP update, explaining that five meetings consisting of representatives from the MPO staff, PennDOT district and central offices, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the local Steering Committee will be held to assist and guide development of the update. Mr. Zerby indicated that the Steering Committee is comprised of individuals who represent transportation-related agencies (airport, mass transit, bicycling, state and federal highway departments); tourism (Visit Johnstown, National/State Park Services); higher education; commerce and industry (Chamber of Commerce; JARI); emergency management services; Cambria County (Commissioners and CCPC); the City of Johnstown; and special interest groups (accessibility advocates). Mr. Zerby noted that several Commission members sit on the Steering Committee - Ron Rovanseck (CCPC), Diana Wakszynski (CCPC) and Debra Orner (Cambria Regional Chamber of Commerce). Mr. Zerby stated that Commission staff will continue to provide ongoing assistance to the consultant and will keep Commission members abreast of the LRTP progress.

Who We Are and What We Do

Mr. Allison noted that a small explanatory document prepared by the Commission in 2000 and revised in 2019 has once again been updated with current staff and Commission member contact information. He explained that the document, which provides an overview of the responsibilities of the Commission in relation to county, state, and federal planning initiatives, has been provided to all Commission members.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Komar adjourned the meeting.