

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
October 16, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 12 noon, at the Ebensburg Borough Council Meeting Room, Ebensburg Borough Building, 300 West High Street, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Vice-Chair, Dr. Koren, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

ABSENT

Charles Koren
Melissa Komar
Scott Eberhart
Debra Orner
Danea Koss
Ron Rovansek
Paul Kundrod
Shawn Veneskey
Diane Waksmunski

STAFF

GUESTS

Mark Lazzari
Colleen Bukowski
Shanna Sosko
Jacob Zerby

Commissioner Thomas Chernisky

There being no changes to the agenda, Dr. Koren called for continuation of the meeting as per posted agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered at this meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Eberhart, seconded by Ms. Komar, the September 18, 2025 meeting minutes were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The October Treasurer's Report was read by the Executive Director and reviewed by those present. Mr. Lazzari reported the October 1, 2025 balance for the Commission's regular checking account as \$158,412.90 and the Money Market Account balance as of October 1, 2025 as \$25,538.49. A brief discussion was held regarding the "Accounts Receivable Comparison" listing on the Financial Statement. Mr. Lazzari stated that he and Ms. Bukowski have been discussing the relevancy of this portion of the report due to the varying factors each month that affect the accounts receivable notation when compared to the monthly balance in the prior year, i.e., number of open contracts, checking account balance, status of contract invoicing, etc. Both Mr. Lazzari and Ms. Bukowski indicated that the comparison was not an accurate measure of the Commission's current financial status and annual

budget preparations ensure the yearly sustainability of the Commission's finances. There was a general consensus among the members present that the Accounts Receivable Comparison is not an integral part of the monthly Financial Statement and can be eliminated if staff so desires. There being no additional comments or questions on the report, Mr. Veneskey made a motion that the October Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kundrod and passed unanimously.

STATUS REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES

Dr. Koren commended Commission staff on the fall edition of the CCPC newsletter recently posted on the Commission's website. Ms. Sosko stated that the publication was provided to the County Commissioners, County planning partners, and the sixty-three municipalities comprising Cambria County. Noting that the document's targeted audience is municipal officials and County boards and authorities, Mr. Lazzari stated that the goal is to provide a quarterly update of the Commission's activities and disseminate information and guidance pertinent to local government, i.e., grant and funding opportunities, LTAP workshops and resources, cooperative initiatives, etc.

Commission staff provided updates on the following initiatives:

- West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Sosko apprised the members of a recent field tour conducted by CCPC staff to provide an opportunity for representatives of the participating municipalities to showcase positive amenities and areas of growth within their respective municipalities, as well as areas needing improvement, that can be addressed in the plan. Mr. Lazzari added that the day provided an opportunity for those attending to interact and discuss cooperative ventures, shared services, and visions for the future growth and development of the West Hills region. Ms. Sosko stated that a community meeting to discuss plan development is scheduled for October 22 and will be structured as an open-house forum with stations to facilitate discussion among residents regarding current concerns and future visions. It was also noted that the consultant is preparing a community survey which will also capture resident input.

- JHA Choice Neighborhoods Project

Mr. Lazzari reported that staff continues to be actively involved with the JHA Choice Neighborhood Program. He stated that as co-applicant for the grant, Commission staff will continue to participate in community events held at the Coopersdale Homes and the surrounding neighborhood designed to foster public involvement in the development of Early Action projects. A brief discussion was held on the Greater Johnstown School District's vision for reuse of the Garfield School, located within the project area. Mr. Lazzari indicated that JHA personnel have been in contact with the GJSD regarding this decision; and in light of the fact that the school district is considering increased use of the

building, redevelopment/reuse of the site is not being considered in the JHA plan development.

- Unified Planning Work Program Budget Amendment

Providing an update on the budget amendment to the 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program, Mr. Zerby reported that the amendment has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and subsequently by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). He reminded Commission members that the amendment reflects a budget revision to redistribute approved funds to allow for the completion of the Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan through PennDOT's open-ended contract with Michael Baker and Associates.

- Cambria County Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Program

Ms. Sosko briefed the members on a recent UAV presentation in which she participated. She stated that the hand-on presentation, coordinated through the County's GIS department, was held at Community Arts Center of Cambria County and focused on educating area youth on the functions and capabilities of drone technology. Ms. Sosko noted that attendees of the community event were very interested in the drone presentation. Commenting on a potential future UAV use, Mr. Zerby indicated that discussions have been initiated with PennDOT personnel regarding the possibility of using UAVs for state bridge inspection activities, particularly difficult to inspect structures such as the McNally Bridge which borders Cambria and Somerset Counties.

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Lazzari reported that although current UPWP reimbursements are being delayed due to the State budget impasse, the Commission's financial resources are stable until the end of this calendar year. He stated that if necessary, pending a continued state budget impasse beyond December 31, 2025, a written strategy will be prepared and presented to the Commission board as to how financial obligations will be addressed going forward.

Providing a brief synopsis of the State Planning Partners Meeting and the PA APA Annual Conference recently by staff members, Mr. Lazzari stated that both events provided opportunities for staff education and networking with other transportation and community development planning partners across the Commonwealth.

Mr. Lazzari apprised the members that he has been in contact with the Commission's health care provider regarding 2026 staff and retiree benefit plans/coverage. He indicated that receipt of a rate proposal is expected in November, with an anticipated 8-12% increase for the upcoming year. Mr. Lazzari stated that 2026 health care benefits will continue to be discussed at forthcoming Commission meetings.

The Executive Director stated that staff has begun discussions on updating the Commission's fee schedule for subdivision, land development, and other reviews conducted by staff as mandated by Pennsylvania's Municipal Planning Code. Noting that the current fee schedule has not been increased

since 2017, Mr. Lazzari stated that an initial review of the schedule indicates that a fee increase is justified based on staff time associated with these reviews and review fees charged by contiguous and similar-sized counties. A brief discussion was held on this initiative culminating with a consensus among those present that staff prepare a revised schedule for formal presentation and approval by the Commission Board.

Mr. Lazzari stated that he prepared a draft budget request to the County Commissioners for 2026. Noting that the draft request was provided to each Commission member, Mr. Lazzari indicated that the 2026 request for \$70,000 in general funds and \$25,000 in liquid fuels funds mirrors the requests submitted in the past several years.

Mr. Lazzari stated that with an increase in large-scale solar development taking place within Cambria County, Ms. Sosko recently attended a seminar on Large Scale Solar Projects sponsored by the Westmoreland County Planning Commission. Ms. Sosko stated that the workshop was geared toward municipal officials and development of municipal ordinances. She also noted that six municipalities in Cambria County have developed and adopted solar ordinances in an effort to properly control development of solar farms within their jurisdiction and to address proper decommissioning of the site when needed.

Mr. Lazzari reported that the 2024-2025 audit has been initiated by BarnesSaly & Company, P.C. Once completed, the document will be presented to the Commission for acceptance and provided to the appropriate funding agencies and the County Commissioners for inclusion in the County's audit report.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Venesky. The motion was seconded by Ms. Orner and passed unanimously.