

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission
January 15, 2026

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 12 noon, at the Young Peoples Community Center, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Chairwoman Melissa Komar called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Melissa Komar
Charles Koren
Heather McCloskey
Debra Orner
Shawn Veneskey
Diane Waksmunski

ABSENT

Paul Kundrod
Scott Eberhart
Ron Rovansek

STAFF

Mark Lazzari
Colleen Bukowski
Shanna Sosko
Jacob Zerby

GUESTS

Commissioner Thomas Chernisky

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Terry Balog, residing at 1861 Colonel Drake Highway, Ashville, PA 16613, presented public comment regarding Rural Electric Association (REA) acquisition of property belonging to her in Blacklick Township. Ms. Balog provided a brief background of the proposed use of the property for a residential dwelling and REA's intent to acquire a portion of that property through eminent domain for construction of an electric sub-station. Mr. Lazzari stated that although Commission staff cannot provide legal advice, staff will review Blacklick Township ordinances that may apply to this situation, determine if the property is located in a floodplain, and assist in identifying accurate and pertinent County/municipal information as requested. Mr. Lazzari assured Ms. Balog that her public comment will be recorded as an official part of the CCPC January meeting minutes, which are kept on file and publicly posted on the Commission's website.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

Noting that Heather McCloskey was recently appointed to the Planning Commission as a representative of the central region of the County, Ms. Komar officially welcomed Ms. McCloskey to the board. Ms. McCloskey briefly introduced herself and noted that she is looking forward to serving as a member of the Commission.

REORGANIZATION/ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A brief discussion regarding current officers, vacant positions, and duties of each office was held. Ms. Orner made a motion that Charles Koren and Diane Waksmunski be retained as Vice-Chair and Secretary, respectively. The motion was seconded by Mr. Veneskey and passed unanimously. Ms. Komar nominated Paul Kundrod for the position of Treasurer. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, Ms. Komar made a motion that Mr. Kundrod be elected as Commission Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waksmunski and passed unanimously. Mr. Lazzari stated that Ms. Komar has agreed to remain Commission Chair until CCPC by-laws are reviewed and proposed amendments relating to terms of officers approved by the Commission membership.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Veneskey noted that although the November meeting minutes indicated that he was in attendance at the meeting, he was not present at the meeting. On a motion by Dr. Koren, seconded by Ms. Waksmunski, the December 18, 2025 meeting minutes were approved, contingent upon the correction noted by Mr. Veneskey. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The January Treasurer's Report was read by the Executive Director and reviewed by those present. Mr. Lazzari noted that July through September reimbursements from PennDOT for work completed under the 2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program have been received and invoices for work completed in October and November have been submitted. He noted that in addition to normal monthly operating expenses, expenses listed for payment approval included a membership payment to the Cambria Regional Chamber of Commerce. There being no additional comments or questions on the report, Mr. Veneskey made a motion that the January Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Orner and passed unanimously.

Members present briefly discussed the proposed 2026 budget which had previously been reviewed at the November CCPC meeting. Noting that all members were given opportunity to review the budget since the November meeting, Chairwoman Komar inquired if any member wished clarification on budget line items. There being no questions or comments on the proposed budget, Dr. Koren made a motion that the 2026 CCPC budget be approved as prepared by the Executive Director. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rovanseck and passed unanimously.

2024-2025 CCPC Audit

Noting that copies of the 2024-2025 CCPC Audit were distributed to Commission members at the December CCPC meeting for their review, Ms. Komar called for member comment/discussion. There being no questions or comments on the audit, Dr. Koren made a motion that the 2024-2025 CCPC audit, as prepared by BarnesSaly & Company, LLC, be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waksmunski and passed unanimously.

PROJECT UPDATES

The Executive Director provided an end-of-year review of CCPC initiatives and accomplishments. Mr. Lazzari noted his concerted efforts to promote the CCPC as a leader in community and transportation planning, improve collaboration among county and municipal entities, broaden and enhance public outreach, and expand participation in community health and safety initiatives. He highlighted staff transportation planning activities, i.e., coordination of the Twelve-Year and Transportation Improvement Plans; provision of technical assistance to municipalities in support of bicycle and pedestrian projects; preparation and administration of the County's Municipal Infrastructure Assistance Program; coordination of LTAP classes; initiation of the County Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan; and involvement with the County's UAV/drone program. He stated that in addition to transportation planning activities, staff has been very involved with the preparation of the West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Johnstown Housing Authority's Choice Neighborhoods Project.

Dr. Koren commented that the end-of-year review was an excellent addition to the monthly status reports and suggested that a similar overview be presented to Commission members on a semi-annual basis.

STATUS REPORTS

West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Sosko provided an update on the West Hills Regional Plan. She stated that in addition to participation in weekly calls with members of the Stuart Group, staff continues to keep municipal officials abreast of planning activities initiated and proposed by the consultant, i.e., community profile and focus group formation. She noted that, at the request of a Project Team representing Lower Yoder Township, she and Mr. Lazzari will be attending a Township Supervisors meeting to provide an update on the regional plan.

Johnstown Housing Authority Choice Neighborhoods Project

Ms. Sosko reported that staff continues to participate in Project Team and HUD calls, as well as working group calls to discuss neighborhood housing priorities and design concepts. She indicated that current focus continues to center on identifying an Early Action Project. In response to Ms. McCloskey's request for additional information on this initiative, Mr. Lazzari stated that the Johnstown Housing Authority and the CCPC, as co-applicant for the project, received grant funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy for Johnstown's West End Neighborhood focusing on the re-envisioning of public housing (Coopersdale Homes) in the neighborhood.

Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan

Explaining that this plan is being funded through the Commission's 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program, Mr. Zerby stated that the project management team is comprised of CCPC staff and members of the Michael Baker consulting team. He further explained that an advisory committee was formed consisting of representatives from CamTran, the Center for Population and Health, JARI, Area Agency on Aging, and the Planning Commission, with Dr. Koren representing the

CCPC. Mr. Zerby stated that the advisory committee will assist in guiding the direction of the plan to ensure that public transportation services are accessible to persons with disabilities, low income individuals, and senior citizens in the County; strategies to improve these services are developed; and coordination of public transit with County human service providers is fostered. He also indicated that in an effort to garner additional input for the plan, smaller focus groups, i.e., education and health care providers, will be interviewed and a public outreach survey will be developed.

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Municipal Infrastructure Assistance Program

Mr. Lazzari stated that Commission staff revised application forms for the County's Municipal Infrastructure Assistance Program to be more inclusive of drainage projects and to include a liability waiver clause. Mr. Zerby stated that the Winter 2026 application round is anticipated to begin in February.

CamTran Local Funding Match

Mr. Lazzari stated that, as reported at the December CCPC meeting, the Director of the Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran) requested the County Commissioners to task CCPC staff with updating the local match allocation formula for municipalities being serviced by CamTran. Citing last month's discussion and concern with the Commissions involvement with this initiative, Ms. Komar reported that she, as Commission Chair, Mark Lazzari, and Jacob Zerby met with the County Commissioners to discuss this request and recommended that the County advertise a Request for Proposals (RFP) from transportation planning consultants to develop a funding scenario for transit services which would include CamTran, Cambria County, municipalities, and possible other funding sources benefitting from public transportation. Mr. Lazzari stated that Commission staff will offer to assist the Commissioners in the preparation of the RFP. Mr. Lazzari stated that Commission staff is scheduled to meet with the Commissioners and CamTran representatives on January 21st to discuss the RFP recommendation. He indicated that an update on the situation will be presented at the February CCPC meeting.

Transportation Working Groups Initiative

Mr. Zerby informed the members that staff is considering spearheading a new initiative to form working groups among all transportation-related agencies to foster networking among public and private transportation providers, i.e., transit, rail, air; freight/trucking companies; bicycle and pedestrian trail groups; etc. He explained that formation of these leadership groups would foster coordination among the entities in identifying transportation needs, would assist in identifying future projects for the TIP, and would improve the overall transportation system in the County. Both Dr. Koren and Mr. Veneskey suggested that the County's Emergency Management office may be a valuable source in identifying agencies interested in participating with the working groups.

Dr. Koren inquired about the Planning Commission's role in the review of the Sheetz Rebuild Land Development Plan in Cambria Township. Ms. Sosko explained that the PA Municipal Planning Code (MPC) mandates County Planning Commission review of subdivision and land development applications submitted to municipalities that have adopted ordinances. She and Mr. Zerby

noted that although CCPC comments are advisory in nature and final approval/disapproval of applications remains with the governing municipality, CCPC staff review ensures that conformity with municipal ordinances and with the goals and objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan. CCPC staff also noted that because many of the County's municipalities do not have active planning commissions and/or zoning boards, CCPC staff lends planning expertise to the municipality.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ms. Waksmunski, seconded by Dr. Koren. Motion passed unanimously.