

JOHNSTOWN CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES
Monday, September 30, 2019

City Council met in a stated session for the general transaction of business.
Mayor Frank Janakovic called the workshop to order at 5:00 p.m.

The following members of Council were present:

Mayor Janakovic, Mrs. Mock, Reverend King, Mr. Vitovich (4).
Absent: Mr. Britt (1).

Mrs. Stanton and Mr. Williams were not present at the commencement of the workshop.

George Hayfield, City Manager; Deborah Grass, Act 47 Coordinator; Renee Daly, Cambria County Redevelopment Authority; Katie Kinka, Cambria County Planning Commission Senior Planner; Jacob Zerby, Economic Development Specialist; Carl Beard, Esquire, Solicitor; Melissa Komar, Executive Director, JRA; Representative James Rigby; and Dave Sutor, Tribune Democrat, were also in attendance.

Representative James Rigby addressed Council regarding a letter from PennDOT regarding the placement of bike lanes on Route 403 coming into Ferndale along the James E, Mayer Trail and across the bridge. He stated maintenance would involve repainting the lines as needed. He inquired as to the City's thoughts on the matter.

Mayor Janakovic stated the City is in favor of the project, but funding is the issue. Mr. Vitovich commented on observing designated white bike lanes in other small towns. Ms. Komar noted that Ferndale could also apply for Community Foundation funds for the project. The Mayor suggested that the City and Ferndale collectively apply for project funds.

Mrs. Mock noted the workshop was called to hear from local and county agencies regarding plans and ideas to move the City forward.

Ms. Komar discussed the Iron to Arts Corridor. She delineated the funding sources, including Multimodal funding, the City's portion, and RACP funding, Gautier's portion. She noted, since the Cambria County Redevelopment Authority received \$500,000 through RACP for the project, they would be overseeing the project.

Ms. Daly explained that the Cambria County Redevelopment Authority was going to be the lead for funding sources and is working with Gautier and other entities for all funding sources to bring the project into fruition. She stated

applications have been submitted to the Community Foundation, ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission) Funding, and other sources.

Ms. Daly noted the project starts at the Gautier Mill on Clinton Street and ends in Cambria City over the pedestrian bridge for a total of 3.1 miles (Clinton to Washington to Walnut to Iron). Streetscape enhancements with lighting, pedestrian walkways and crossways, façade improvement on the wall in front of Gautier, and pedestrian lighting on the pedestrian bridge in Cambria City would be included.

Ms. Komar noted four or five open RACPs and Multimodals that the City had never received the match for, so all would be grouped together into one. Council members had questions regarding the project.

Ms. Daly explained the allocation of the Brownfield funding for \$50,000, including Metal Arts enhancements and demolition along Fairfield Avenue.

Ms. Komar noted a portion of the \$50,000 helped to fund an environmental assessment, which was necessary in order to receive the \$2.1 million from the Army Corps of Engineers. She stated PennVEST was very pleased with the project involving federal (\$2.1 million), state (\$5.2 million), local (\$300,000) buy-ins as well as \$50,000 from Brownfield and wants to be a part of the ribbon cutting or groundbreaking event.

Ms. Komar commented that it was hopeful that John Dubnansky, the City's new Economic Development Director, could get the \$1.4 million from CDBG to apply for state funding. Ms. Komar discussed funding for smaller projects up to \$20,000 through the Cambria Somerset Realtors Association.

Ms. Komar noted pending applications, including to the Community Foundation for facades of vacant properties at the upper end of Main Street and for William Penn with regard to blight elimination. With regard to blight elimination, Mr. Hayfield commented that additional contractors could be utilized outside of Cambria County but at a higher cost. It was noted the City has the removal equipment but no operator. Mayor Janakovic suggested that a part-time operator be hired for the demolition. Mr. Vitovich commented that tipping fees at the landfill are also involved in the demolition cost.

Ms. Daly noted \$160,000 was placed into the Community Foundation for the lighting for the Iron to Arts project along Clinton to Washington Streets. She stated a project to wrap the tanks along Iron Street was being considered.

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Ms. Komar discussed the acquisition of two properties from the Cambria County Redevelopment Authority on Sherman Street that would give Goodwill Industries' YouthBuild students the opportunity to remodel the homes and bring them back into reuse.

Mrs. Stanton and Mr. Williams entered the workshop at 5:36 p.m.

Ms. Komar noted PennDOT approval has just been received with regard to the Urban Industrial Site. She indicated two or three companies are definitely interested in the site.

Ms. Kitka provided updates on behalf of the Cambria County Planning Commission with regard to its downtown residential development project similar to a streamlined version of Altoona's Ahead of the Curve strategy. She noted the project's first meeting will be held on October 1, 2019, and anticipated that project taking approximately six months. There are hopes the project will create relationships with local developers and investors willing to take on this pilot project. She noted the project would provide improved and more accessible housing options to encourage families to stay within the community.

It was noted that Winnie Branton, Blight Task Force facilitator, conducted a recent PowerPoint demonstration in Confluence.

Ms. Kitka stated another project she has been working on with Mr. Zerby and the Recreation Economy Committee was the placement of new bike rack locations in the City. Mr. Zerby drafted a resolution regarding the matter, and Mrs. Mock suggested the Solicitor review the resolution. He hoped that moving forward an ordinance can be adopted allowing the bike racks to be placed outside private businesses. A copy of maps and the draft resolution was provided to Council.

She relayed the work of Mike Cook with JWF to acquire some scrap metals to fabricate the bicycle racks. The students at Greater Johnstown High School engineering students would design the racks. Sidewalks with at least nine feet of width were being considered for the project.

Mr. Zerby stated Jarrod Bunk, Hope Cyclery, proposed a bike corral in front of his business and expressed an interest in renting the parking space from the Parking Department. There was further discussion regarding the matter.

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 5:51 p.m.