

CITY OF JOHNSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 2, 2026

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following members of Planning Commission were present for roll call:

Chairman Carthew and Commissioners Grandinetti, Buday, White, Shirt, and Hamacek.

Art Martynuska, City Manager; Dave Williams, Residential Construction Coordinator; Barry Polster, Johnstown Regional Partnership, were also in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS):

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. White motioned to approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2026, Planning Commission meeting.
The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamacek. A roll call vote was taken:

Planning Commission:

Ian Shirt - ABSTAIN

Michael Hamacek - YES

Michael Grandinetti - YES

Donald Buday - ABSTAIN

James White - YES

James Carthew - Chairman - YES

The motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Pleasant Hills Church Conditional Use Application

Chair Carthew noted the application was for a conditional use in an R-1 Residential District. He stated the Planning Commission reviewed a subdivision of the parcel several months earlier and, therefore, had some familiarity with the project. He noted project representatives attended the previous meeting to explain the proposed structure. Chair Carthew sought any questions or concerns regarding the application.

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Mr. Grandinetti asked for details about the public hearing and whether anyone from the church or the public attended. Chair Carthew responded that no one from either the church or the public was present. He noted the Commission received a packet of information from City staff, including the application and site plan.

Chair Carthew noted reviewing the minutes from the subdivision approval meeting and had a question regarding parking. Mr. Grandinetti stated parking was discussed previously, and he requested information from City staff but had not received a response. He was the only dissenting vote during the subdivision approval and his concern related to the parking, not the project itself. He asked whether the issue had since been addressed by the City, the applicant, or the Planning Commission.

Mr. White noted previous comments on the issue. He explained that many churches in the City do not have large parking lots, and vehicles are often parked on nearby streets during services.

Mr. Grandinetti asked when those churches had been established. Mr. White responded that one church near him had likely been there for approximately 40 years.

Chair Carthew had reviewed the zoning ordinance and found that Section 1260.115 requires one off-street parking space for every four permanent seats in a place of worship, to which, Mr. White asked whether that requirement was mandatory. Chair Carthew confirmed it was required under the zoning ordinance.

Mr. White asked whether the requirement applied to all churches, to which, Chair Carthew explained that existing churches would be grandfathered in, but new construction must comply with current code and ordinance requirements. Mr. Hamacek stated changing the use from R-1 likely required consideration of where people would park.

Chair Carthew stated the intent of the ordinance was to concentrate parking. He stated the plans identified 148 permanent seats and dividing 148 by four resulted in a requirement for 37 parking spaces.

Mr. White asked whether the plans provided sufficient parking. Chair Carthew stated, in his interpretation, an adjacent property could satisfy the requirement. He asked whether City staff agreed and referenced an adjacent parcel discussed during the subdivision review.

Mr. Martynuska stated the subdivision involved the former DCNR playground property and part of it had been carved out to provide additional parking.

Mr. Grandinetti stated the parking arrangement had not been discussed during the subdivision review, and no mention had been made of it at that time. He stated, if parking was required by ordinance, it should have been discussed when the subdivision application was reviewed.

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Mr. White asked whether the City was donating property or otherwise allowing the church to use a City-owned parcel for parking, to which, Mr. Grandinetti responded that it was.

Mr. White then asked whether approval could be granted if that arrangement would satisfy the requirement for 37 parking spaces. Mr. Williams stated there were approximately eight parking spaces on the church site. Chair Carthew stated approximately 30 additional spaces would, therefore, be required. Mr. Williams stated the adjacent parcel would easily satisfy that requirement.

Mr. White asked whether the church discussed the cost of paving, striping, and constructing a parking lot. Mr. Martynuska stated those discussions had occurred.

Mr. Hamacek asked about water runoff. Mr. Martynuska responded that engineering would be required.

Mr. Grandinetti stated the process was occurring in reverse order, because parking was now being discussed after the subdivision had already been approved. He stated determining parking compliance was the responsibility of the City, and the Planning Commission should receive a complete application.

Mr. White asked whether the adjacent parcel appeared on the current drawing. Chair Carthew responded that a person could interpret the matter that way but would need to review the subdivision approval documents.

Mr. White asked whether the property was included in the subdivision approval, to which, Chair Carthew responded that it was adjacent to the subdivision.

Mr. White then asked whether the property would need to be conveyed to the church, to which, Chair Carthew responded that it could be conveyed through another subdivision or through a written agreement between the property owners. Mr. Martynuska stated the property could either be conveyed or made available through an agreement allowing the church to use and maintain it.

Mr. Grandinetti reiterated that parking should have been addressed earlier, and he supported the project but wanted to know where people would park. Mr. White responded the proposed parking area would be on the newly created parcel.

Mr. Hamacek asked whether the parking lot would be located on the opposite side of the road, to which, Mr. White responded that it would not. Mr. Hamacek stated engineering and other improvements would, therefore, be required.

Mr. Buday asked why parking could not be permitted along Ebensburg Road, because there were no nearby houses. Mr. Martynuska responded that no one had stated parking along the road was prohibited. Mr. Williams responded the zoning code requires parking spaces.

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Chair Carthew stated a variance would be required if the applicant wanted to use another parking arrangement instead of complying directly with the ordinance.

Mr. Hamacek expressed concern about children walking from parked vehicles along the road to the church, to which, Mr. Buday responded that other churches have existed for many years without dedicated parking lots.

Mr. White asked whether the church could seek a variance to allow parking along Ebensburg Road instead of constructing additional parking. Chair Carthew responded that such a request would be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board and could be presented as an alternative parking solution. Mr. White sought to avoid delays that could increase costs for the church and asked whether a variance could provide a solution. Chair Carthew stated it could be a possible solution.

Chair Carthew noted another option would be to approve the conditional use application contingent upon acquiring adjacent property for parking sufficient to satisfy the zoning ordinance.

Mr. White stated he had intended to make such a motion but wanted clarification first. Chair Carthew stated, if approval were granted, City Council would still need to act and construction of the building could occur first while parking improvements could be completed later.

Mr. Grandinetti asked for the City's recommendation. Mr. Martynuska stated, based on discussions regarding parking, the City was comfortable moving forward. He stated the church understood it would need to provide the required number of parking spaces.

Chair Carthew highlighted that the plans showed seating areas labeled with 72 seats and 78 seats, resulting in a total of 148 seats. Mr. Martynuska agreed.

Mr. Buday noted the plans showed several handicap-accessible spaces near the church building. Chair Carthew noted the plans showed seven parking spaces on the church site. Mr. White noted approximately 29 additional parking spaces were needed.

Mr. White made a motion to approve Pleasant Hills Church Conditional Use Application and allow three years for construction of the building, with the provision that the Church work with the City to acquire use of the adjacent property for additional parking in accordance with the code.

Mr. Hamacek clarified that the intent was not to allow parking on the grass.

Mr. Martynuska asked for clarification regarding the zoning ordinance. He stated the ordinance requires off-street parking and questioned whether it specifically requires the parking to be adjacent to the church or simply off-street.

Chair Carthew responded the ordinance only requires off-street parking.

Mr. Martynuska stated parking located across Ebensburg Road, or across the street on William Penn Avenue, could potentially satisfy the requirement if it were used by the church. He further stated parking arrangements could potentially be made with another property owner, and the parking would not necessarily need to be adjacent to the church building.

Chair Carthew restated the motion as approval of the conditional use application contingent upon working with the City of Johnstown to acquire nearby property for parking in compliance with the code, which he noted as Section 1260.115. He explained Section 1260 refers to the chapter or volume of the zoning ordinance and the ordinance is organized into additional chapters and sections.

Mr. Buday discussed whether the road connecting Ebensburg Road to William Penn Avenue could be vacated. Mr. Martynuska noted prior discussions about leaving the roadway open because obtaining a new curb cut onto William Penn Avenue could be difficult due to PennDOT approval requirements. He stated using the existing roadway would provide access to Ebensburg Road and noted the roadway was already paved. Mr. Buday noted the church and the City were the relevant adjoining property owners involved discussions.

Mr. Grandinetti proposed amending the motion. He stated the motion should require the applicant and the City of Johnstown to come to an agreement ensuring that the applicant complies with Article 8, Supplementary Provisions, Schedule T, regarding off-street parking requirements for places of worship. He stated the approval should be conditional upon the applicant coming into compliance with the applicable parking requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Hamacek seconded Mr. White's motion to approve the Pleasant Hills Church Conditional Use Application with the amendments as noted by Mr. Grandinetti. A roll call vote was taken:

Planning Commission:

Ian Shirt - YES

Michael Hamacek - YES

Michael Grandinetti - YES

Donald Buday - YES

James White - YES

James Carthew - Chairman - YES

The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. White questioned the status of the Comprehensive Plan and whether it was approved by City Council. He asked when the City would begin forming committees related to the plan. Mr.

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Martynuska offered to investigate the matter and provide a response. Mr. White requested the Planning Commission be kept informed as those efforts move forward.

Chair Carthew emphasized the Planning Commission wanted to play a leading role in those discussions and meetings to help ensure that the appropriate personnel, neighborhood representatives, stakeholders, and other entities were involved.

Mr. Martynuska stated the matter had been discussed briefly during a staff meeting earlier that day. He and Mr. Rutledge discussed the next steps involving strategic planning, which he described as the next logical step following completion of the Comprehensive Plan. Chair Carthew requested the Planning Commission be involved, particularly in the formation of the process.

Mr. Hamacek asked for an update regarding the Lincoln Street Parking Garage and concerns about deteriorating concrete. Mr. Martynuska did not know whether Carmen Truscello had the issue evaluated yet.

Chair Carthew noted the matter would continue on the Commission's list of old business items. He thanked Mr. Martynuska for the update regarding the Public Safety Building.

Chair Carthew requested developmental updates concerning the Main Street Revitalization project. Mr. Martynuska reported approximately two to three weeks earlier a meeting was held with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). He explained representatives from the FTA, the City, CamTran, WSP, and consultant Toby Faber participated in the discussion. He stated progress had been made regarding project documentation, and CamTran submitted a letter of non-prejudice in an effort to move planning activities forward prior to grant authorization. He reported the FTA recently acknowledged receipt of additional documentation from the City.

Mr. Martynuska highlighted FTA indicated that authorization could occur in September or early October, which could allow work to begin during the first quarter of the next fiscal year. He added the City was attempting to accelerate that timeline.

Chair Carthew questioned whether the various RAISE grant participants were being brought together after previously becoming disconnected. He noted an effort to keep all of the projects moving in coordination.

Mr. Martynuska responded that FTA's primary questions related to the train station project, rather than the Main Street or CamTran projects. He explained the train station project had been reduced in scope from the original proposal, and the FTA had questions regarding that change. He also noted questions involved Section 106 review, NEPA clearance, and other required processes.

Chair Carthew thanked Mr. Martynuska for the update and asked whether there were any additional questions regarding Main Street.

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Mr. Hamacek asked whether surveys had been conducted to identify areas along Main Street where sidewalks are located above basements. He had not been involved when the project was first evaluated and questioned whether those conditions had been investigated. Mr. Martynuska responded that surveys were conducted not only to identify basements beneath sidewalks but also to locate storm sewers and similar infrastructure. He did not know how each issue would ultimately be handled. Some locations could potentially be filled in or reinforced.

Mr. Hamacek then asked whether building owners would be responsible for addressing those issues. Mr. Martynuska did not know the full answer. He explained that improvements located inside a building, such as ramps extending from an entrance into the structure, would be the responsibility of the building owner. He stated improvements from the sidewalk outward would generally be part of the project. He added, if modifications to a building's access ramp became necessary because of project improvements, those changes would likely be the responsibility of the building owner.

Mr. Hamacek stated many Main Street buildings extend beneath the sidewalk and expressed concern that some property owners may not have the financial resources to address required improvements. He wanted to avoid unexpected issues arising during construction.

Mr. White asked how similar conditions had been handled at Gazebo Place, noting that a comparable issue had existed there. Mr. Martynuska responded the issue at Gazebo Place had not yet been resolved.

Chair Carthew requested updates on the Mom's House project and whether the Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency received a building permit application. Mr. Williams had no update regarding Mom's House. Chair Carthew requested monthly reports from Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency be added to the Planning Commission agenda.

Mr. Martynuska noted permit reports would contain that information. He discussed questions about construction activity at certain locations where no permits were issued, but it was later determined that permits were not required for the type of work being performed.

Chair Carthew stated the Planning Commission should be aware of UCC permits being issued, because permits are part of planning and redevelopment efforts as it considers zoning districts and future planning initiatives.

Mr. White discussed an issue regarding a skills games business located across the street from Valley Printing. Mr. Hamacek responded the business had been operating there for at least two to three years. Mr. White clarified he was referring to the former dance studio location and asked whether the change represented a change of use, to which, Mr. Martynuska responded that it did not, both uses were commercial. Chair Carthew requested the Commission be kept informed on such matters.

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Mr. Polster recalled that a question from a previous meeting regarding whether the approvals granted for Mom's House had expired and asked whether anyone had reviewed the issue. Mr. Martynuska stated the matter had been reviewed. He stated the approval had expired in April. Mr. White explained the project involved a recreation-type facility that would include a gym. Chair Carthew described the project as a multi-use facility.

Chair Carthew stated the project was presented to the Planning Commission in June of the previous year by ABD Construction. The Commission was attempting to track projects it approved to determine whether they were moving forward.

Mr. Polster stated, if no construction occurred within 180 days, the project would need to be reviewed again. Chair Carthew stated some excavation work had occurred shortly after approval, but no work had occurred since July or August. Mr. Hamacek stated, if ground had been broken, the applicant might qualify for an extension.

Mr. Martynuska stated he and Mr. Williams were recently conducting field reviews throughout the City to identify buildings requiring demolition. During those inspections, no construction activity was occurring at the Mom's House site. If construction had been underway, they would have checked whether new approvals were required because the previous approval had expired in April.

Mr. White referred back to the business across from Valley Printing and stated, based on the earlier discussion, it appeared the business had been operating legally for several years.

Mr. Martynuska reported that renovation work at the former bank building across from the library had been stopped, because construction had begun without a permit. He stated a stop-work order had been issued approximately two weeks earlier, and the owner had since obtained the required permit.

Mr. Martynuska also reported that another stop-work order was recently issued for a property on Market Street, because no permit had been obtained. He did not know the final outcome of either project.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Hamacek requested updates regarding the former B&L Wine Seller property and how the project was progressing. Mr. Martynuska reviewed the May property transfer records and noted the B&L Wine Seller property was among the 35 property transfers recorded within the City during that month. The transaction had been completed. He reported the new owners had been in City Hall at least twice and met with Code Enforcement staff.

Mr. Hamacek stated the owners were planning to open a brisket or barbecue-style restaurant at the location. Chair Carthew stated the proposed business would not involve a change in use classification and would remain within the same C-1 zoning category. Mr. Buday

personally knew the purchasers. He stated the business would serve items such as ribs and other barbecue foods and would be operating under their own liquor license.

OLD BUSINESS:

Returning to Old Business, Mr. Grandinetti stated, until recently, he had been unaware that Mr. Williams and Mr. Martynuska were no longer part of the Codes Department. He regularly directed questions to them, because he believed they were the appropriate individuals to answer code-related questions.

Chair Carthew stated it was largely a matter of perception. Mr. Williams had worked in Codes for many years before the organizational change.

Mr. Grandinetti stated, in his view, the permit itself is less important than the permitted use of a property. He stated the more important consideration is whether the proposed use is allowed within the zoning district, how the occupancy is classified, and how the use relates to the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Hamacek stated questions should be answered when applications are presented to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Grandinetti stated, when applications are submitted, the Planning Commission should have access and have the ability to review the applicable zoning requirements. He expressed concern that members of the Planning Commission did not have copies of the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Grandinetti stated the Planning Commission recently adopted the Comprehensive Plan, yet most members did not possess copies of either the zoning ordinance or the Municipalities Planning Code. He had independently downloaded and printed those documents after joining the Planning Commission. He argued that members are expected to make decisions regarding zoning and land use matters and should therefore have access to the governing documents.

Mr. Grandinetti made a motion that the City of Johnstown provide all current and future members of the Planning Commission with copies of the current zoning ordinance and the current Municipalities Planning Code. Mr. White seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Planning Commission:

Ian Shirt - YES

Michael Hamacek - YES

Michael Grandinetti - YES

Donald Buday - YES

James White - YES

James Carthew - Chairman - YES

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The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Buday stated the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan identifies the City's zoning ordinance as needing revision. He described the effort as a major project.

Mr. Grandinetti responded that Planning Commission members need access to the zoning ordinance in order to review and understand it. Chair Carthew stated, once members receive copies of the ordinance, the Commission can begin discussing zoning updates under New Business or through workshops focused on specific topics.

Chair Carthew suggested one potential starting point be the hillside regulations and issues related to the Conservancy District. He suggested beginning with manageable topics rather than attempting to revise everything at once.

Mr. Grandinetti asked what the Commission intended to accomplish in the first, third, and fifth years of the process. Chair Carthew responded that those objectives should be developed as part of the strategic planning process that would follow adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Buday stated the City should begin by reviewing major transportation corridors as far as zoning. He cited Strayer Street, as an example, noting that multiple zoning classifications exist along the same corridor. He suggested evaluating corridors such as Route 56, Maple Avenue, Cooper Avenue, and Menoher Boulevard and considering more consistent zoning classifications. He stated commercial zoning classifications could still permit residential development while providing greater flexibility for future commercial investment.

Mr. White stated the Commission agreed to obtain copies of the zoning ordinance and Municipalities Planning Code. He suggested, once those materials were available, the Planning Commission establish a committee or ad hoc group to systematically review the ordinance and develop recommendations. He stated continued discussion alone would not result in progress.

Mr. Hamacek stated the Planning Commission needs to be informed whenever apartments or similar developments are proposed, so that members remain aware of changes occurring throughout the City.

Chair Carthew reinforced his earlier request that representatives from Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency attend Planning Commission meetings. He asked Mr. Martynuska whether a representative could attend monthly meetings, provide reports, and participate in discussions related to planning and zoning. Mr. Grandinetti suggested being cautious of that proposal because of comments made at a previous meeting. Mr. Grandinetti was concerned about receiving a response from an organization hired to enforce regulations.

Chair Carthew stated Laurel is involved in plan review, permit issuance, and zoning review for the City, and those functions are directly related to planning and redevelopment. He stated the agency should be represented at Planning Commission meetings.

Mr. White agreed that Laurel representatives should attend on a monthly basis.

Mr. Grandinetti questioned why the Planning Commission had not been receiving reports from Laurel concerning zoning reviews and projects. Mr. White stated Laurel representatives could attend the next meeting and answer questions directly.

Chair Carthew stated the Planning Commission should receive and review the reports, and access to permit and code information would assist the Planning Commission in future zoning and planning efforts.

Mr. White stated the Commission should move forward with its requests. He noted the City Manager agreed to provide the zoning ordinance and Municipalities Planning Code. The Commission also requested regular attendance by Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency representatives, so that members could ask questions and receive information directly.

Mr. Martynuska stated attendance at Planning Commission meetings is part of Laurel's agreement with the City. He noted Laurel representatives regularly attend City Council meetings.

Mr. White noted attendance at Planning Commission meetings would be in addition to those Council meetings.

Mr. Hamacek stated, when businesses contact Laurel, they should be directed to the zoning ordinance and informed of applicable requirements. Referring to the proposed barbecue restaurant discussed earlier, he stated applicants should receive guidance regarding zoning compliance before proceeding with a project.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Acknowledge the resignation of Tomas Casals

Chair Carthew reported that the Commission received an email providing notification of Mr. Casals's resignation. Chair Carthew thanked Mr. Casals for his service and wished him well in his future endeavors. He asked whether there were any questions or comments regarding the resignation and requested that City Council be notified of the vacancy.

Chair Carthew noted the Planning Commission currently had six members, and it would be beneficial to fill the seventh position.

Mr. Martynuska reported the City received one application in response to its advertisement seeking members for boards and commissions. He stated the application would be

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forwarded to City Council for review and consideration. Another advertisement had been recently placed, but no additional applications were received for any boards or commissions. There was currently one individual interested in serving on the Planning Commission.

Mr. Polster asked whether City Council determines who fills the vacancy and whether a City Council member could be appointed to the Planning Commission. Chair Carthew noted a member of the Zoning Hearing Board could not serve on the Planning Commission.

Mr. Martynuska provided an update on the new KOZ legislation affecting Cambria County. He stated a meeting was recently held involving representatives from the City, the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority (JRA), JARI, the Cambria County Commissioners, and Southern Alleghenies Planning. He explained the legislation applies only to Cambria County as written regarding population and geographic requirements.

Mr. Martynuska stated the law authorizes the creation of an additional 300 acres of KOZ-designated property within Cambria County, with a minimum of 40 acres required to be designated within the City of Johnstown. He explained, if the City does not designate at least 40 acres, no acreage elsewhere in Cambria County can be designated under the new law.

Mr. Martynuska stated the approval process differs from the existing KOZ program, because this new law does not require approval from the City. Instead, applications are processed through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the legislative process in Harrisburg. He noted, however, that businesses approved under this new KOZ designation would continue to pay local and county taxes while receiving exemptions from state income taxes and state sales taxes related to construction and development activities.

Mr. Martynuska stated the participating agencies began identifying potential properties within the City that could qualify for designation. He noted a limited timeframe for applications, which must be submitted by October unless the deadline is extended.

Mr. Martynuska explained that businesses seeking to participate must meet expansion requirements. He stated a business may qualify by expanding within an existing building rather than expanding its physical footprint. As an example, he stated a business occupying one floor of a four-story building could qualify by expanding into additional floors and increasing its occupied space by more than 50 percent.

Mr. Martynuska further explained that both property owners and tenants within a designated KOZ could qualify for state income tax exemptions. He stated the program could apply to residential projects, including single-family housing developments, apartments, condominiums, and other residential uses. He cited an example of residential development in Conemaugh Borough and noted both developers and residents could benefit from the state tax exemption for a period of ten years.

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Mr. Martynuska stated existing KOZ properties would be affected by the new legislation. He added that existing KOZ properties nearing the end of their designation period could potentially seek extensions under the new provisions.

Mr. Grandinetti asked who would determine which properties would be designated. Mr. Martynuska explained that representatives from the City, JARI, the JRA, Southern Alleghenies Planning, and the County Commissioners were working together to identify potential properties. He and the City Manager were reviewing sites throughout the City, including properties, such as the former Car Barns, the former Moose Building, and other redevelopment opportunities.

Mr. Martynuska noted the former Penelec building was being considered. The final application must be submitted through an economic development agency. In Cambria County, Southern Alleghenies Planning is expected to serve that role. He noted the legislation only requires that applications be submitted through an economic development agency and suggested that applicants could potentially seek assistance from other qualifying agencies if necessary.

Mr. Grandinetti asked how much acreage was allocated to the City. Mr. Martynuska responded the City must designate a minimum of 40 acres. Mr. Hamacek stated, if the City does not reach the required 40-acre threshold, the remainder of the County would be unable to access the additional 300 acres authorized under the legislation.

Mr. Martynuska stated representatives from the City, JARI, the JRA, Southern Alleghenies Planning, the Cambria County Commissioners, and other regional organizations were participating in the discussions.

Mr. Grandinetti asked how an existing business owner would access the program. Mr. Martynuska stated business owners could contact the City or Southern Alleghenies Planning directly, and there were multiple avenues for obtaining information and pursuing an application.

Chair Carthew added that Southern Alleghenies Planning would assist applicants with the application process.

Mr. Hamacek asked about eligibility requirements for vacant buildings and future tenants. Mr. Martynuska noted Southern Alleghenies Planning would be able to provide guidance regarding timing and eligibility requirements.

Mr. Buday asked whether the former U.S. Steel properties were being considered. Mr. Martynuska stated those properties and possible future expansions had been discussed as potential candidates.

Mr. White asked how acreage would be calculated for multi-story buildings. Mr. Martynuska explained that upper floors could be included in the calculations.

Mr. Martynuska stated the program requires expansion rather than simple renovation.

Mr. Grandinetti noted businesses would still be responsible for paying taxes to the City, County, and School District. Mr. Martynuska added that local taxing bodies could choose to create separate incentive agreements, such as payment-in-lieu-of-tax arrangements, if they wished to encourage participation.

Mr. Grandinetti returned to the discussion of the former Penelec building and asked whether the KOZ designation would remain with the property if ownership changed. Mr. Martynuska stated he did not know the answer.

Mr. Hamacek asked whether tenants moving into a vacant building could qualify without triggering expansion requirements. Mr. Martynuska was uncertain about the specific eligibility details but noted one of the incentives was the exemption from state income tax for eligible occupants.

Mr. Hamacek compared the incentive to states that do not impose state income taxes and noted the exemption could be attractive to prospective residents and businesses.

Chair Carthew stated the exemption period would last for ten years.

Mr. Martynuska stated there were many moving parts to the legislation and emphasized the relatively short timeline for applications. He noted Southern Alleghenies Planning was assisting with the process and stated, although he had initially been skeptical, the program could provide opportunities for development.

Mr. Hamacek asked whether all 40 acres had to be immediately occupied by projects. Mr. Martynuska responded the acreage first needs to be designated, and then projects can be pursued within those designated areas.

Chair Carthew summarized the current effort was focused on identifying and designating qualifying properties.

Mr. Grandinetti asked whether the ten-year KOZ period begins when the designation is approved and whether later applicants would receive shorter benefits. Mr. Martynuska stated the application deadline is currently October of this year and no new applications could be submitted after that point unless the application window is extended.

Mr. Grandinetti asked whether Cypress was still a KOZ property. Mr. Martynuska responded it was not, and plans currently call for a business park at that location.

Mr. Polster referenced another former KOZ site near Walnut Grove. Mr. Martynuska stated the site was discussed, as well as many large properties throughout the City and County that could potentially qualify. He stated examples discussed included the former Moose

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Building, the Car Barns, former U.S. Steel properties, vacant Rite Aid buildings, and other redevelopment sites.

REPORTS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

None.

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.