

CITY OF JOHNSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, April 7, 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 Buday, White, Shirt, and Hamacek.

Commissioners Grandinetti and Casals were absent.

In addition, John Rutledge, Economic Development Director; and Barry Polster were in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS): None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Carthew noted a correction for the March 3, 2026 minutes.

Mr. White motioned to approve the Minutes of the March 3, 2026 Planning Commission meeting with the correction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shirt. A roll call vote was taken:

Planning Commission:

Ian Shirt - YES

Michael Hamacek - YES

Donald Buday – YES

James White - YES

James Carthew – Chairman – YES

The motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS: None

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Carthew noted the 2025 draft Annual Report had been distributed at the prior meeting. He asked for any corrections and noted he had made a few corrections himself.

Mr. Shirt made a motion to approve the draft 2025 Annual Report to be forwarded to City Council for review and approval. The motion was seconded by Chairman Carthew. A roll call vote was taken:

Planning Commission:

Ian Shirt - YES

Michael Hamacek - YES

Donald Buday – YES

James White - YES

James Carthew – Chairman – YES

The motion passed.

It was stated Mr. Hamacek could mention the updated report would be presented to the Council prior to the May City Council meeting for their review.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lincoln Street Garage

Chairman Carthew welcomed Mr. Hamacek to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Hamacek raised concerns regarding a city-owned parking garage. He stated First Summit was preparing to move downtown and was thinking of occupying the garage. He noted Mr. Martynuska and Mr. Capriotti were aware of his concerns but he wanted to ensure the issues were taken care of before First Summit moved downtown.

Chairman Carthew commented he thought the garage in question was to be renovated as part of the Convention Center projects. He added he thought there was PennDOT funding for the garage.

Mr. Hamacek stated there was concrete falling from the ceiling, especially on higher floors.

Chairman Carthew noted the garage in question was about 20 to 25 years old and was a precast, prestressed plank parking garage, which was different from other city garages that had used steel frames that corroded.

Mr. Hamacek reported he had looked at the structure, and it appeared the rebar from the prestressing was only half an inch inside the concrete in places when the rebar should be further in.

Chairman Carthew stated evaluation of the structure and a scope of renovation and repairs was needed. He added the Planning Commission would keep the garage on their radar.

When asked, Mr. Hamacek clarified he was talking about the Lincoln Street garage.

The Commission discussed the age of the garage and who originally built the garage. It was noted the garage was closer to 25 to 30 years old and was built by Sidley Concrete from Ohio. It was suggested foam could be sprayed as a temporary measure until an evaluation could be completed. It was also noted Sidley Concrete was still in business and occasionally returned to caulk the joints.

Mr. Buday suggested to contact Sidley Concrete who may be able to look at the concrete in the garage.

2. Keystone Opportunity Zone

Mr. Hamacek discussed attending the recent meeting for Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) meeting. He noted the KOZ was looking at potentially allocating acreage to both Cambria County and specifically downtown Johnstown. Existing buildings could be used for new businesses that would be exempt from state taxes for ten years.

Mr. Rutledge noted he also attended the meeting. The Commission questioned who locally would coordinate the KOZ. Mr. Rutledge stated he was waiting to find out. It was noted DCED would likely be involved.

Chairman Carthew asked if the Planning Commission would be able to assist DCED.

Mr. Rutledge stated it would be good to have other people involved, especially with 40 acres to administer. It was also noted the comprehensive plan discussed an economic development committee which may also be involved.

3. Pocket Park

Mr. Polster commented there was an upcoming meeting to discuss the first phase of the Pocket Park at the site of the old Dempsey's building. The meeting will include architects and engineers with plans to determine a schedule for work over the summer. He noted he would present whatever is discussed to the Commission at their next meeting.

REPORTS:

1. DCED REPORT- JOHN RUTLEDGE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Regarding the comprehensive plan, Mr. Rutledge reported an open house for the public scheduled for April 25, 2026, at Johnstown High School and a public hearing scheduled April 29, 2026 at the Public Safety Building. After the meetings, he would bring the plan back to the Commission on May 9, 2026, and City Council on May 13, 2026. He noted, to date, there had only been two public comments from members of the Commission and a few comments from City Council members. He added comments had also been received from focus groups, steering committee groups, and neighborhood groups.

Mr. Rutledge stated a new person had been hired in the codes department with another person starting soon. DCED was working to acquire licensing for the GIS system for the new employees. He added Dave Williams had also been training on the software, and a few items had been found that needed to be fixed.

When asked, Mr. Rutledge reviewed the information for the public open house and hearing for the comprehensive plan. He noted the plan had also been sent out to the county, municipalities and legislative offices.

Mr. Polster asked if the advisory committee would be continuing.

Chairman Carthew stated he read the plan as the advisory committee would likely have an ongoing role as implementation teams would need to be established to keep the plan going. It was noted it would make sense for the advisory team members to have a role in the implementation teams.

The question was posed if there had been a professional in planning who looked at the plan to make sure everything was being done exactly as it should be. It was confirmed people from the state assisted admin in setting up an RFP that allowed for a consultant to be hired. In addition, five goals were chosen which are common to comprehensive plans. The state would also continue to provide information as needed.

Comments were made that once the final draft is reviewed, it would be helpful distill the plan into shorter recommendations for priorities for City Council to focus on. It was noted the Commission would have the opportunity to make recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS: - None

RECESS/ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.