

Johnstown Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
February 5, 2025

CITY OF JOHNSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, February 5, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 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, and Grandinetti. Laura Huchel and Tomas Casals were absent.

In addition, Codes Enforcement Manager Dave Williams and City Manager Art Martynuska were present. Jason Mash with Mash Engineering was also in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS):**

No comment was offered by members of the public.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Carthew requested a revision to the January 2, 2025 minutes stating that the approval of the December 4, 2024 minutes had Mr. Casals listed as voting. Mr. Casals had abstained from voting as he was not present at the December 4, 2024 meeting.

Mr. White motioned to approve the Minutes of the January 2, 2025 Planning Commission meeting with this revision. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buday. A roll call vote was taken:

**Planning Commission:**

James Carthew – Chairman – YES

James White – YES

Laura Huchel- Absent

Donald Buday – YES

Tomas Casals – Absent

Michael Grandinetti- Abstain

The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Yearly Reorganization Meeting**

Dave Williams reported of a new member, Ian Shirt, who was interested in sitting on the planning commission board.

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Mr. Williams requested commission members notify him of any date changes or extensions that are needed on the City Hall list. He will update the list accordingly.

Mr. Grandinetti made a nomination by acclamation for Chairman Carthew and Vice Chairman White to be reappointed for another year.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**URBAN MURAL PROGRAM**

Mr. Barry Polster was in attendance and provided documentation to further outline and detail the program. It was noted that this is moving forward outside of the Planning Commission. Meetings are taking place with local artists as well as the City. Discussion was held regarding signage and the zoning orders. The murals cannot be an advertisement, but can promote and express the area's history and culture. City Manager Martynuska offered his support to see this program extend citywide and not just in one central location. He added that there have been discussions with Kristen Lamb at the Bottle Works and the Southern Allegheny Museum of Art. The Planning Commission will be sure to oversee agreement negotiations with the property and building owners. The Commission will also review designs to determine the content of proposed murals, advise the City of proposed mural projects, and note the progress made towards their implementation.

**GIS SOFTWARE**

City Manager Martynuska continues to work with Steve Kocsis with Cambria County GIS. He reported on obtaining the license, but it had not moved any further. A new director of DCED, John Rutledge, was hired and scheduled to start on 02/17/2025. City Manager Martynuska noted that Mr. Rutledge has a large governmental background in grants and planning. This will be under Mr. Rutledge's department when he comes on board.

**PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT**

City Manager Martynuska reported on waiting for ServPro to complete cleanup of hazards. He noted that they did go to a federal warehouse in Harrisburg where equipment and industrial dehumidifiers may be purchased. City Manager Martynuska stated, since the remediation effort was performed with the drainage system, there have not been further reports of water in the basement. The odor had also dissipated. City Manager Martynuska reported that City Council does have \$660,000 in ARPA funds that have not been allocated. City Council has approved the use of these funds for upgrades to City Hall, some for the Public Safety Building, and some to the City garages. A contractor recently visited under the technology company, Pitbull, to look at a city-wide access system. The goal is to connect the three fire stations, City Hall, and the City garage into one system to make it more mainstream and secure. Further discussion followed regarding the construction and it was determined the work would be under separate contracts. Discussion was also held regarding additional available properties.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

City Manager Martynuska noted the comprehensive plan and reported on doing very well with Rothschild's. He added that several meetings have occurred with stakeholders. Information has been provided to reach out to additional potential stakeholders. It was noted that there have been discussions of them coming to review the gathered information within the coming months, but again this was not yet definite. City Manager Martynuska mentioned that Cambria County Planning has been aggressively reaching out and involved in meetings with the Rothschild's in reviewing the plan from the requirements. The Planning Commission requested additional information about the gathering meeting, the goals, and would also like to attend.

### **ZONING REVIEW**

The Planning Commission noted that last month there were several questions from Commissioner Huchel regarding zoning.

Dave Williams reported that an inner office memo and the form for the sidewalk program was sent to the City Solicitor for review. He awaited a response on the use of that form or if the matter must be put before Council as an ordinance.

Mr. Williams stated the zoning limitations regarding the sale and adoption of animals. He would refer to the specific zoning designation for the particular area in question, if it was going to be a home-based business, if it was allowable in that area, and the area with the exception of specific businesses being allowable but a minor impact versus a major impact. He would refer to the definitions and the PA Commonwealth law. He did not believe that a kennel license would be required through the state if there are under 26 animals a year. If it exceeds 26 animals, the state then requires a kennel license.

### **MAIN STREET/CENTRAL PARK REVITALIZATION PROJECT**

City Manager Martynuska reported on several meetings over the past couple of weeks regarding the project. He stated the FTA brought it their attention that the Central Park project and the Main Street project cannot be down simultaneously. This was due to the FTA monies for transportation. The City had to go onto the website and separate the information to provide a point of delineation or demarcation. The Central Park project will move forward first since it is being funded with ARPA money that has to be spent by the end of 2026. Mr. Martynuska noted that the consultants WSP got together and had several conference calls with them. They have also been in contact with FTA. The path is moving forward and much input has been received. City Manager Martynuska hoped that construction will commence on Central Park before mid-summer due to environmental issues. He anticipated it would be completed before the end of 2026. If the FTA allows, the City may be able to start Main Street in a remote location and work their way up. They are comfortable with the infrastructure and have had several conversations with RDM. City Manager Martynuska noted signing off on John DeBartola's permit to use the conference center in June, but he will also have the option to move it to Central Park if needed. Central Park will be open to anybody that desires to use it until they turn a blade of grass on construction.

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

The City Manager Martynuska was questioned if there were any plans for the Washington Street parking garage. Also there had been talks about putting in a new Public Safety Building. City Manager Martynuska stated there was not and there was another assessment done of the Main Street East parking garage as they are only able to use 22 spots between floors one and two. The remainder of the building is closed off due to wall damage. They will speak with Jared Blunt to see about getting an engineering firm in again to look at the building.

City Manager Martynuska was questioned about the apartment garage that was entered into an agreement. He noted the City still maintains 99 spots, and the rest are under their contract. If an event occurs and people pay for parking, the City would receive a part of those proceeds.

City Manager Martynuska noted an issue the City is still working through. A vehicle window was broken along Lincoln Street. He was walking in the parking garage and noticed something being off in the stairwell. He reported, in all three parking garages, somebody stole every one of the fire department's brass connection bells. Those valves are valued at \$700, and 49 were stolen. None of the scrap yards have seen the valves, and the only garage missed was along Main Street East. City Manager Martynuska stated the staff will investigate this.

Discussion was held regarding the western strategic relationship.

**RECESS/ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 P.M.