



Blair Planning

Blair County Planning Commission
Altoona Metropolitan Planning Organization
Blair County Government Advisory Committee

BLAIR PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA January 30, 2025 Meeting Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue Altoona, PA

CALL TO ORDER at 8:30 a.m.

1. Roll Call - to publicly determine which members are present and if a quorum is present.
2. Approval of Minutes - Meeting minutes of combined November-December meeting on December 12, 2024 will be considered for approval.
3. Public Comment Period - Public comment will be received at this time on all matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda. Public comments regarding specific development applications or agenda items will be taken when those items come up for consideration.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

4. 415 Orchard Associates LLC - Landcore Engineering submitted a land development project located at the corner of Orchard Avenue and Sterling Street (within the Orchard Plaza) in the Township of Logan. The proposed project includes construction of a new 3,300 sf quick service restaurant with a drive-thru lane.
5. Leidy Estate Subdivision - Keller Engineers submitted a land subdivision project located off Piney Creek Road in the Township of Woodbury. The proposed project is to reconfigure and merge four (4) parcels into six (6).
6. Staff Level Reviews - Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following applications since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these applications prior to response letters being sent:
 - Antis Township: Ryan & Hess Lot Merger, Woods Lane
 - Antis Township: Miner Subdivision, Riggles Gap Road
 - Woodbury Township: Dilling Lot Line Change, Dilling Drive
 - Woodbury Township: Over Farm Manure Shed, Patience Place Lane

METROPOLITAN CLEARINGHOUSE

7. Staff Level Reviews - Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following requests since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these requests prior to response letters being sent:
 - County of Blair - PA DEP for PennVEST's Emerging Contaminants in Small and Disadvantaged Communities Grant program application
 - City of Altoona - UPMC Altoona, Air Quality State-Only Operating Permit Renewal
 - City of Altoona - Lucknow-Highspire Terminals, Title V Air Quality Operating Permit Renewal

- Duncansville Borough - EADS Group for Duncansville Borough Municipal Authority, Sewage Treatment Plant, NPDES Permit Renewal
- Tyrone Borough - EADS Group for Peoples Natural Gas Co LLC, Hamilton Avenue replacement project, PA DEP general permit application
- Allegheny Township - Sunoco Pipeline, Hollidaysburg Pump Station, PA DEP Air Quality State-Only Operating Permit Renewal
- Antis Township - SWCA Environmental Consultants for SR1 Captura Sage Holdco I, LLC - Blair Frito Solar Development, PA DEP Chapter 102 Permit
- Antis Township - APEX Company for Blair County Humane Society Facility Expansion and Development, Chapter 102 Permit
- Juniata Township - LPR Energy LLC -Hodge Unit Drilling Pad #1, Notice of Intent With Susquehanna River Basin Commission for consumptive use of water for drilling and development of natural gas wells
- North Woodbury Township - Scotch Hills Solutions for Kulp Family Dairy, LLC and F. Kulp Ltd. Partnership, Construction of Agricultural Buildings, Chapter 102 Permit

LONG-RANGE PLANNING

8. APA Planning Trends Report – Presentation of the Planning Trends Report from the American Planning Association discussing emerging trends in communities and planning this decade.

COORDINATION

9. WalkWorks – Update report on Blair Planning partnership with Altoona Family Physician's AmeriCorps student for the Glow Night event at PNG field scheduled for May 10, 2025.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

10. White Oak Hall – contract for the 2025 Holiday Social on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at White Oak Hall, Fort Roberdeau
11. Unified Planning Work Program and Master Grant Agreement FY2025-2027 – Review and approve a Resolution designating David McFarland, Planning Director as the official to execute the Unified Planning Work Program and Master Grant Agreement FY2025-27 and subsequent work orders from the period of January 2025 through June 2027.
12. Planning Director's Report -The Planning Director will present items of relevant information not included above.
13. Planning Commissioner Liaison Forum - This is an opportunity for the Commissions' liaison to make any reports, comments, or findings to the Planning Commission.
14. Planning Commissioners' Forum – This is an opportunity for Planning Commission members to bring items of relevant interest to the attention of the body as a whole.
15. Questions from the Media – This is an opportunity for the media to ask any questions needed to clarify any points made or agenda items discussed during the meeting.

16. Announcements

- January 30 – Hollidaysburg Comprehensive plan Workshop
- February 2 –Groundhog Day!
- February 3 -DCNR SCORP, Community and Economic Development
- February 5 -Executive Committee
- February 5 -DCNR SCORP, Advancing Health and Wellness
- February 6 -Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- February 6 -Local Emergency Planning Committee
- February 6 -Chamber Policy Committee
- February 6 -Team PA Open House
- February 10 -DCNR SCORP, Supporting Inclusion and Equity
- February 12 -DCNR SCORP, Addressing Infrastructure and Maintenance
- February 17 -President's Day -Blair Planning Commission Office Closed
- February 19 -ARC County Focus Group
- February 19 -DCNR SCORP, Progressing on Sustainability and Climate
- February 26 -HBCC Food for Life Committee

ADJOURNMENT

The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. at the Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, PA



BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

January 30, 2024 Regular Meeting
Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania

CALL TO ORDER – 8:30 P.M.

1. Roll Call --

Members present:

William R. Hall, Chairperson
James M. Dixon, Treasurer
Nicola Ardizzone
Patrick Baechle
Lawrence Carter

Representing:

Townships Collectively
City of Altoona
City of Altoona
Boroughs Collectively
City of Altoona

Members absent:

Herbert Shelow, Sr., Secretary
Benjamin Postles
Thomas M. Holsinger
Linda Smith
Amy Webster, Commissioner

Boroughs Collectively
Townships Collectively
Townships Collectively
Townships Collectively
Commissioner Liaison

Guests:

Walt Frank
Carol Dannenberg

Altoona Mirror
Hollidaysburg Community Watchdog

Staff:

David McFarland III, Planning Director
MacKenzie Caron, Regional Planner
Sherry Socie, Strategic Planner
Wes Burket, Transportation Planner
Rhonda Kelly, Planning Aide

Staff Absent: none

2. Approval of Minutes – A motion was made to approve the Planning Commission minutes of the December 12, 2024 (November-December combined) meeting; motion passed.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the December 12, 2024 meeting, Item #2 on this agenda:

Moved: Nicola Ardizzone

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

3. Public Comment Period – None.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Regional Planner Ms. Caron provided an overview to the Board on the following proposed developments.

4. 415 Orchard Associates, LLC

Location: An out-parcel within Orchard Plaza (Big Lots) at the corner of Orchard Avenue and Sterling Street

Development and Access: A proposed 3,300 sf quick service restaurant with a drive thru and associated parking, landscaping, and drainage improvements. Access to the site is via an interior drive lane in Orchard Plaza that leads to the main access driveway off Orchard Avenue at a signalized intersection. The Board provided comments and voted on the staff actions and recommendations.

Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:

The plan identifies concerns about business losses and vacant properties in the region and the need for a dynamic business environment; this proposed development would impact in a positive way. The Blair Planning Commission finds the proposal is generally consistent with countywide planning efforts as presented in the Alleghenies Ahead Regional Comprehensive Plan, adopted July 31, 2018, which includes comprehensive planning for Blair County.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #4 on this agenda

Moved: James Dixon

Seconded: Nicola Ardizzone

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

5. Leidy Estate Subdivision

Regional Planner Ms. Caron explained that lot mergers are not typically reviewed at Board meetings, however, there are some atypical concerns related to this lot merge to bring to the Board for its opinion.

Location: Piney Creek Road in Woodbury Township

Development and Access: Subdivision of three (3) parcels to be reconfigured into four (4) parcels as follows:

- Existing Lot #1 to be enlarged and become Lot #1R that includes an existing single-family dwelling with an on-lot sewerage system and well.
- Proposed Lot #4 is currently and future use is agricultural.
Proposed Lot #5 (34.267 acres) includes two non-contiguous parts. There is major concern that the larger, 30-acre part does not have public road access. Although a 20-foot easement is proposed at an existing lane (Leidy Lane), it is recommended that there be a legal easement agreement or make the parcel a flag lot. Current and future use of Lot #5 is indicated as recreational.
- Proposed Lot #6 contains two, single-family dwellings, each with an on-lot sewerage system and well.
- Parcels are located within the Canoe Creek Watershed Important Mammal Area. Lot #1R contains steep slopes. Parts of Lots #4 and #6 are designated for agricultural use and contain prime ag soils
- Non-Build form submitted by the developer was not sufficiently completed; as such, the Planning Commission cannot provide a signature until such time that the developer provides a fully completed form.

Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:

In summary, the Blair Planning Commission finds the proposal is generally consistent with countywide planning efforts as presented in the *Alleghenies Ahead* Regional Comprehensive Plan, adopted July 31, 2018, which includes comprehensive planning for Blair County.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #5 on this agenda

Moved: Lawrence Carter

Seconded: Nicola Adrizzone

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

6. Staff Level Reviews – Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following applications since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these applications prior to response letters being sent:

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- Antis Township: Miner Subdivision, Riggles Gap Road
- Woodbury Township: Dilling Lot Line Change, Dilling Drive
- Woodbury Township: Over Farm Manure Shed, Patience Place Lane

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #6 on this agenda

Moved: Nicola Ardizzone

Seconded: Patrick Baechle

Vote: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

METROPOLITAN CLEARINGHOUSE

7. Staff Level Reviews – Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following requests since the last meeting. Commission members are given the opportunity via email to review these requests prior to response letters being sent:

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- Antis Township – APEX Company for Blair County Humane Society Facility Expansion and Development, Chapter 102 Permit
- Juniata Township - LPR Energy LLC -Hodge Unit Drilling Pad #1, Notice of Intent With Susquehanna River Basin Commission for consumptive use of water for drilling and development of natural gas wells
- North Woodbury Township - Scotch Hills Solutions for Kulp Family Dairy, LLC and F. Kulp Ltd. Partnership, Construction of Agricultural Buildings, Chapter 102 Permit

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for listed Items #7 on this agenda

Moved: Lawrence Carter

Seconded: James Dixon

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

LONG-RANGE PLANNING

8. American Planning Association (APA) Trends Report -(available on APA website) –Planning Director Mr. McFarland gave an overview of the report, highlighting current and emerging planning trends and their impact on communities across the Nation. Some of the highlights are as follows:

- Households-Housing

- 9.7 % is the projected increase in population by the year 2100 (in 75 years)

- less than 20% of households are considered a traditional household; and today's households have more pets than children

- \$47,000.00 additional cost to run an average household today than it did five years ago

- **Third Places (Japanese Teishoku Place Theory)** -(1st Place = domicile; 2nd Place = work, 3rd Place = recreate/socialize
There is increased demand for the following in terms of Third Places:
 - publicly-owned Third Places (parks and recreation centers)
 - pet accommodations
 - less car-dependency among the 3 Places (decrease segregated zoning) via walking, biking, public transit
- **Water**
 - regulations are severely outdated.
 - ‘One Water’ is a concept that brings all areas of water regulations under one unified regulation (i.e., stormwater, flooding, water treatment, waste water treatment, etc).
 - average rainfall is decreasing, thus decreasing water availability
 - changing weather patterns affect the ocean current and gulf stream
 - water diversions further affect water resources; diversions such as water power and water cooling, data centers that power the internet and cell phones use water to cool the equipment
- **Work**
 - increased blurring of the line between work and leisure in the last five years and is expected to continue
 - alternate work week patterns; i.e. 4-day work weeks 80 hours spread over 9 days, work-from-home etc.; this impacts the local economy such as restaurants, etc.
 - decreased importance of work roles; people identify themselves less about their career role (I’m an electrician, I am a doctor, etc); work is not who they are but simply something they do. People are identifying more to their projects and/or hobbies
 - working through retirement; for the first time in history the U.S. workforce spans six generations
- **Digital Fatigue**
 - reality concepts are blurred
 - addictive social media validation
 - right-to-be-disconnected laws
 - not using brain power -it’s easy to just look it up
- **Alternate Energy**
 - spiked interest in renewable energy; i.e., windmills, solar, etc.;
 - renewables are not yet able to keep up with demand
 - resurgence for traditional energy because the renewables cannot yet fill the demands
 - renewable energy requires different materials; raw material demand could quadruple in the next 15 years
 - raw material waste; there is not yet a practical and good way to dispose of the waste

Board Member Mr. Baechle commented on the APA Trend report related to water resources. He explained that during a rehabilitative project to plant vegetation at abandoned strip mines a discovery was made that one of the mines had a large volume of water flowing from it at the same rate year-round and could have a positive impact on the draught conditions. Plans are being made to build a filtration treatment plant at the mine shaft and to then direct the clean water into the Kittanning Run and would provide unlimited clean water the reservoirs in the area.

Mr. Baechle questioned if there are discussions on repurposing the large vacant commercial buildings and malls. Mr. McFarland responded there have been discussions on the potential to utilize these buildings for housing, however it is problematic due to the lack of windows to get light/air into the middle of the buildings.

COORDINATION

9. **WalkWorks** – Regional Planner Ms. Caron updated the Board on a partnership event with the AmeriCorps volunteer who is placed with Altoona Family Physician’s and is working on a fund-raiser as a community health initiative for Blair County Family Services. The fund raiser event is scheduled for May 10, 2025.
The event is ‘Glow Night’ and will be held at the PNG field and the Lakemont WalkWorks route. The event is free

to attend; there will be community and food vendors on site as well as games and prizes. Blair Planning Commission is partnering in this event as the kick-off for the Spring WalkWorks program. Ms. Caron welcomed the Board members to attend the event and stated an email invitation will be coming to them at a later date.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

10. White Oak Hall –Planning Director Mr. McFarland is seeking Board authorization to sign a contract with Fort Roberdeau to utilize the White Oak Hall on Thursday, December 12, 2025 for the purpose of the annual combined November-December meeting and Holiday Social.

Motion: To authorize the Planning Director to sign the contract for Item #10 on this agenda

Moved: Patrick Baechle

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

11. Unified Planning Work Program and Master Grant Agreement FY2025-2027 – Transportation Planner Wes Burket is seeking Board authorization to designate Mr. McFarland as the official to execute the Unified Planning Work Program and Master Grant Agreement for FY2025-2027 and subsequent work orders for the period of January 2025 through June 2027.

Motion: To authorize the Planning Director to execute Agreements for Item #11 on this agenda

Moved: James Dixon

Seconded: Nicole Ardizzone

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

12. Planning Director's Report – Mr. McFarland explained that the Planning Commission would like to partner with Healthy Blair County Coalition to sponsor a Summit talk to address the deficiencies in the food system; he noted that the Commission is heavily involved in the Food For Life Program as well. The sponsorship amount is \$500.00.

Motion: To approve a \$500.00 sponsorship for Item #12 on this agenda

Moved: Nicole Ardizzone

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

Chairman Hall asked for an update on the change in Board appointments. Mr. McFarland responded that it is in process.

Chairman Hall asked for an update on the local share invoices related to some municipal resistance. Mr. McFarland explained there are two line items appearing on the invoice, per capita and equitable share; some municipalities only paid the per capita. A review of the Commission's founding documents state that local share must be equally assessed, basically all or nothing. Chairman Hall commented that if municipalities do not pay, any work/assistance they ask for/required should be billed under a separate fee structure; he pointed out other impacts on these municipalities, such as the MPO / liquid fuels assistance and stated the municipalities need to be aware. Chairman Hall directed Mr. McFarland to write letters to the municipalities to explain these concerns. Chairman Hall also directed Mr. McFarland to establish an alternative fee structure for those municipalities that choose not become paying members. Mr. McFarland stated that the fee structure has been established.

Mr. McFarland informed the Board that the Planning Commission will begin scheduling the municipal outreach meetings and that these will be completed in regional groups throughout the County instead of individual municipalities. He requested/invited the Board members to attend the outreach meeting that is scheduled for their

regional assignment; Mr. McFarland will reach out to the members to provide meeting details as the meeting is scheduled in their corresponding region.

Mr. McFarland informed the Board that he received a voice mail asking if the Planning Commission would consider moving the Board meetings among the various municipalities. This was something the Board did some ten or so years ago but did not seem to be well-attended. Mr. McFarland said it is something to consider for next year but that this year the meetings have been set and already advertised.

Mr. McFarland informed the Board officially that Sherry Socie will be returning to the Planning Commission as the Strategic Planner on Monday, February 3, 2025.

13. County Commissioner Liaison Forum -Chief Clerk/County Commissioner Sherry Socie reported that Commissioner Webster was out of town today and that there were no comments to convey at this time.
14. Planning Commissioners' Forum – No comment at this time.
15. Question From the Media – Mr. Frank asked for clarification if the invoices for the municipalities are two separate invoices; Mr. McFarland explained that it is one invoice with two line items and that some municipalities want to pick and choose which item the pay; to which he further stated they cannot do. Mr. Frank asked about a deadline to pay. Mr. McFarland stated the invoice indicates a due date of March 31, 2025; however, the agreement states payment is to be received by June 30.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

16. Upcoming Events:

- January 30 – Hollidaysburg Comprehensive plan Workshop
- February 2 –Groundhog Day!
- February 3 -DCNR SCORP, Community and Economic Development
- February 5 -Executive Committee
- February 5 -DCNR SCORP, Advancing Health and Wellness
- February 6 -Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- February 6 -Local Emergency Planning Committee
- February 6 -Chamber Policy Committee
- February 6 -Team PA Open House
- February 10 -DCNR SCORP, Supporting Inclusion and Equity
- February 12 -DCNR SCORP, Addressing Infrastructure and Maintenance
- February 17 -President's Day -Blair Planning Commission Office Closed
- February 19 -ARC County Focus Group
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- February 26 -HBCC Food for Life Committee

ADJOURNMENT

The next Planning Commission Board meeting is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at the Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, PA

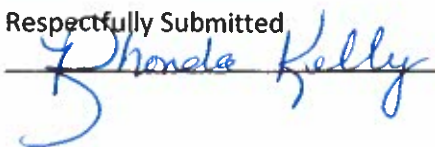
Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Moved: Lawrence Carter

Seconded: Nicola Ardizzone

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

Respectfully Submitted



Date Minutes Approved

 February 27, 2025