



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, July 27 at 7:00pm

LVPC Conference Room

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Minutes

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, July 27, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's conference room located at 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Ms. Dreisbach chaired the meeting.

Ms. Willis took roll call.

Members in attendance:

Lehigh County

Percy Dougherty, Steve Glickman, Kent Herman, Ed Hozza, Rick Molchany, Christina Morgan, David Kimmerly, Owen O'Neil, Sara Pandl, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt, Christine Weaver, Donna Wright

Northampton County

Gordon Campbell, John Diacogiannis, Liesel Dreisbach, George Gemmel, Tim Herrlinger, Bob Lammi, Kevin Lott, Tom Nolan, David O'Connell, Pam Pearson, Hayden Phillips, Michael Reph, Tina Roseberry

Members absent: Karen Duerholz, Julio Guridy, Brad Osborne, Julie Thomases, Gene Clater, Charles Elliott, Darlene Heller

Staff present: Becky Bradley, Erin Willis, George Kinney, Geoff Reese, Amanda Raudenbush, John von Kerczek, Jill Seitz, Tracy Oscavich

Public present: Lou Gombocz, Jr., WFMZ

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: none

MINUTES

After a brief review, the minutes of the June 2017 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Herrlinger. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ms. Pandl, Mr. Glickman, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Morgan, Ms. Rader and Mr. Herrlinger abstaining.

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Bushkill Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Wind Gap Business Center

Ms. Raudenbush talked about receiving an application that proposes the consolidation of two lots and a portion of a third lot on Route 512 just west of Route 33, and the construction of an industrial development consisting of two warehouse buildings, 350,000 sq ft and 215,000 sq ft and one general commercial building of 100,000 sq ft. There are a few issues that have not been addressed in the proposal. There is no indication that there is sewer capacity for this project. The LVPC is not certain of the developer's control of key parcels. The western portion of the site contains Natural Features that include woodlands, wetlands and floodplains that contribute to core habitats recognized under the Natural Heritage Inventory. Additionally, it is the LVPC's understanding that the developer has not yet formally submitted this application to the municipality. But they have submitted to LVPC a full set of engineering plans and a traffic impact study. Ms. Raudenbush had conversations with LANta to make sure everyone is on the same page. The township does know about this project but has yet to have formally submitted plans. The legal obligation for the LVPC is to respond within 30 days. Included in the letter at the recommendation of the Comprehensive Planning Committee is a statement saying that without all the outlining concerns being addressed, the LVPC cannot determine the consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the staff comments. Mr. Dougherty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance/Plan Reviews

Ms. Wright referred the commission to the summary sheet for an overview of the staff comments on other proposed actions requiring LVPC review. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the staff comments. Ms. Pandl seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Pandl and Ms. Wright abstaining #3 – the Multi-Municipal Plan for Southwestern Lehigh County.

Environment Committee

Green Infrastructure Guidelines Draft

Mr. Reese talked about how the Green Infrastructure Guidelines document was prepared in conjunction with the Monocacy Creek Watershed Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan Update. The guidelines state what green infrastructure is along with definitions and the benefits as a whole. Mr. Reese went over some topics within the guideline like the main social benefits of green infrastructure being attachment to place, health and wellness. There's also economic benefits like Return on Environment, climate change mitigation and energy conservation and conserving natural green infrastructure. Environmental benefits include water resources and transportation green infrastructure. Mr. Reese stated designing within context is part of green infrastructure with the principles being creative, flexible, harmonious, local/native, maximize and multi-purpose. Mr. Reese then went over stormwater management along with the non-structural and structural practices to site design. Next up was water balance which refers to the distribution of rainfall into the various components of the water cycle of runoff, groundwater recharge and evaporation/transpiration. Lastly is the Green Infrastructure Site Development and Management Recommendations which is to identify and preserve natural resources on site, design within context and follow the hierarchy of stormwater management practices based on the Monocacy Creek Plan Update model ordinance.

The Steering Committee moved the Monocacy Creek Watershed Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan Update forward, which then goes out to all the municipalities. All comments received will be assembled and the updated plan will come

back to the Full Commission. That updated draft will then be sent to both Counties where public meetings will be held. It will then be adopted by the Counties and then sent to the Department of Environmental Protection where they will approve the draft. All municipalities will then have six months to adopt the plan.

Project Review – Summary Sheet

Mr. Repasch refers the commission to the summary sheet where Catasauqua Borough submitted an application to renew approval of existing wastewater treatment plant discharge. Bath Borough Authority submitted an application to renew approval to replace existing wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Weaver abstaining to #1 for Catasauqua Borough and Mr. Reph abstaining to #2 for Bath Borough Authority.

Transportation Committee

Lehigh Valley Freight Facility Tour – The Port of NY/NJ

Ms. Bradley talked about the Port of NY/NJ having a link with the Lehigh Valley through freight movement within the northeast. The Port of NY/NJ wanted to discuss freight logistics of the Lehigh Valley in part because larger container ships can now enter the port. The Panama Canal has also been widened so it can now bring in larger ships as well. There is more direct ocean going freight coming into the Port of NY/NJ than ever before. Because of the online shopping happening, freight movement has increased to our homes and businesses. The LVPC has done a tremendous job in building the highways through the Lehigh Valley which has become the gateway to the northeast. Primarily because of the quick access to I-78 and I-80 along with Route 22 and Route 222, etc. The Port of NY/NJ is too congested and cannot expand roadways which are already too congested along with the railways being congested. The containers need to be taken off the ships as soon as possible with the current turnaround in unloading a ship being 2-3 days. The Port has limited storage capacity which means the best solution would be to get the containers on rail, possibly the Bethlehem Steel yard operated by Lehigh Valley Rail Management. The Port of NY/NJ is exploring short line service so they took a tour of the Lehigh Valley, showing them the manufacturing warehouse logistics in Upper Macungie, took them along Route 222, Route 22, Route 100, Route 412 and I-78 to show them how it's all connected, we showed them the new FedEx facility, LVIP VII, and Lehigh Valley Rail Management. They are very interested in the short line service for international cargo. There needs to be more discussions on what's happening in those warehouse logistic facilities along with how important it is to maintain the existing infrastructure we have and reinvest into them. Discussions were held on warehouses with small and large manufacturing, as well.

OLD BUSINESS

Lehigh Valley Government Academy @ LVPC Office – 5:30pm-9:00pm

Ms. Oscavich stated that the upcoming LVGA courses are Community Planning being held on Tuesday, September 12th, 19th, and 26th. Zoning will be held on Wednesday, October 4th, 11th, and 18th. Subdivision + Land Development will be held on Wednesday, November 1st, 8th, and 15th.

NEW BUSINESS

Lehigh Valley Municipal Officials Guide

Ms. Bradley noted that the updated version the Municipals Officials guide is now out. This guide is updated annually and shared on LVPC's website.

CORRESPONDENCE - None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - None

EVENTS + INFORMATION

LTAP Courses

Ms. Oscavich mentioned that Salt + Snow Management will be held on August 1st from 8:00am-3:00pm and has been sold out. Traffic Sign Basics will be held on September 28th from 8:00am-12:00pm and Stormwater Facility Operation + Maintenance will be held on October 6th from 8:00am-12:00pm, all at the LVPC office.

BuildLV Events

Ms. Oscavich noted that each year the LVPC puts out the annual subdivision and land development report called BuildLV. There will be two events coming up, first with the Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, September 27th in the morning and the second with the Urban Land Institute on Thursday, October 5th.

4th Annual Lehigh Valley Awards Gala – Tuesday, October 17th @ DeSales University

Ms. Oscavich encouraged everyone to save the date for the 4th Annual Lehigh Valley Awards Gala coming up in October. Ms. Bradley noted that there were a lot of applications received for the awards and that there will be at least one LVPC Commissioner asked to judge for each category.

FutureLV – Move Into The Future – Wednesday, December 6th

Ms. Bradley talked about the day-long summit to learn from other people and have a conversation about the Future of the Lehigh Valley which relates to the Comprehensive Plan. Throughout the first half of this year, we have heard a lot of good information related to the Lehigh Valley. There will be experts brought in to talk about specific topics and then the hope is to engage into more in depth conversations for the Comprehensive Plan update. Some of the specific topics include Transit, Technology and Automated Vehicles. She encourages everyone to attend.

ADJOURN

Mr. Lott made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Molchany seconded that motion. Ms. Dreisbach adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,
Erin Willis, Executive Secretary for
Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director