



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, October 26 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, October 26, 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

Steve Glickman, Julio Guridy, Kent Herman, Rick Molchany, Douglas Stewart, Owen O'Neil, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt, Christine Weaver, Donna Wright

Northampton County

Gordon Campbell, Gene Clater, John Diacogiannis, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, Darlene Heller, Bob Lammi, Kevin Lott, David O'Connell, Pam Pearson, Michael Reph, Tina Roseberry

Members absent: Percy Dougherty, Karen Duerholz, Ed Hozza, Christina Morgan, Brad Osborne, Sara Pandl, Julie Thomases, George Gemmel, Tim Herrlinger, Tom Nolan, Hayden Phillips

Staff present: Becky Bradley, Erin Willis, Geoff Reese, Amanda Raudenbush, John von Kerczek, Jill Seitz, Tracy Oscavich, Matt Assad, Mike Donchez, Sue Rockwell

Public present: Lou Gombocz, Jr., WFMZ

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: none

MINUTES

After a brief review, the minutes of the September 2017 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Repasch. Mr. Clater seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ms. Rader, Mr. O'Neil, and Mr. Lott abstaining.

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Dreisbach introduced new commission member Douglas Stewart from the City of Allentown to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Allen Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Northampton Business Center

Ms. Raudenbush talked about reviewing the proposed construction of six warehouses totaling 2,552,700 square feet in an area designated for Rural Development and Natural Resources. The project site is located within the Hokendauqua Creek watershed and has over 70 acres of woodlands which are valued for a number of reasons. The LVPC commends the applicant for avoiding development on the wooded portions of the property. The site also has 13 acres of wetlands as well as extensive presence of hydric soils. The LVPC commends the applicant for coordinating the alignment of Main Access Drive with the electricity transmission lines, thereby minimizing disruption to the wetland features. The mapping provided indicates the extensive presence of karsts in the form of surface depressions on the site. The LVPC advises the applicant to ensure proper geotech testing prior to any land development. The project is proposed for land designated by the General Land Use Map for Rural Development along with some area designated for Natural Resources, which is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed development is inconsistent with the goal of reducing urban sprawl in rural townships and retaining the rural characters of rural areas as well as two policies supporting that goal. Refrain from development of public sewer and water systems except where necessary to resolve existing health problems and plan and zone for land uses that are appropriate is rural areas. The Township should utilize regulatory tools to require bonding and/or reclamation plans related to big-box freight facility structures. The LVPC also recommends that the municipality consider the impacts on surrounding agricultural operations and increased truck traffic on the historic boroughs. The Township should request assurances that all trucks are able to access the site at any time of the day or night and that sufficient amenities are provided within the site to accommodate both the tractor-trailers and drivers and be required to have truck parking on site to allow for staging and overnight stays. Best practices suggest a minimum of one space for each 50 trucks served per day. Driver amenities including showers, food services, sleeping areas, and entertainment and waiting areas should also be considered. Internal sidewalk connectivity to site perimeter sidewalks are given little consideration within the plan. The Township should require the installation of sidewalks and appropriate pedestrian connections between those perimeter sidewalks and building sidewalks. In the event the municipality considers the granting a deferral in the installation of a sidewalk, it is highly recommended that the municipality require the necessary grading for the future installation of the sidewalk. This development is anticipated to generate a total of 4,263 trips per weekday. Of the anticipated traffic, 62% will be cars while the remaining 38% will be trucks. A discrepancy exists between the square footage of Warehouse 2 as depicted in the traffic impact study at 604,500 sq. ft. and the 620,000 sq. ft. as depicted on the plan. This discrepancy should be rectified. In order for LANTA to consider transit service to this location, there must be pedestrian amenities incorporated into the plan that comprehensively connect from Main Access Drive where transit stops can essentially be located, to the main entrances of the several warehouse facilities planned for in the proposed complex. Ms. Roseberry asked if it would be beneficial to add trails instead of sidewalks through the industrial park. Mr. Clater said that the developer is working on walking trails for the industrial park. Mr. Glickman requested to move the Transportation section to the beginning of the letter to show the inconsistency first. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the staff comments along with

the additional recommendations in wording. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Clater abstaining.

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. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Elliott abstaining to #8 Easton City – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Residential Design Standards.

Environment Committee

Monocacy Creek Watershed Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan – Resolution

Mr. Reese talked about the Monocacy Creek Watershed Plan being created for 13 municipalities in both Lehigh and Northampton Counties. The Steering Committee along with the 13 municipalities have looked over the draft plan for comments. Mr. Reese stated that a resolution is attached to the agenda to transmit the draft plan to the Counties for adoption. The plan will then be sent to both Lehigh County and Northampton County for adoption, preferably before the end of the year. It then needs to be approved by the Department of Environmental Protection and ultimately adopted by all 13 municipalities. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Molchany seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Livable Landscapes – Lehigh County Park, Recreation, Open Space, Agricultural + Historic Resources Plan – Resolution

Mr. Reese stated that formal comments were received from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources regarding the Lehigh Livable Landscapes Plan requesting mostly minor additions and clarifications. The Committee was provided a summary of the comments and proposed staff responses. Once the Full Commission approves the responses, they will be included in the plan for adoption. The final version will be dated October 2017. Mr. Reese stated that a resolution is attached to the agenda to transmit the draft plan to Lehigh County for adoption. The draft plan will be sent to Lehigh County, who will hold a public hearing then ultimately adopt the plan. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Molchany seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Kick-Off

Mr. Reese talked about the previous creation of the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan back in 2013 and how it is mandatory for it to be updated every 5 years to remain eligible for hazard mitigation funding. The kick-off meeting for the plan update with the Planning Committee happened last Thursday at UGI's Auditorium. All municipalities have been asked to sign on and participate throughout the process of this plan update. The municipalities have been asked to fill out and submit their Statement of Intent along with 8 additional worksheets of information by the November meeting. There will be a formal process in identifying what the new plan will list as natural and non-natural hazards. The updated plan must be completed, adopted and approved by October 2018.

Project Review – Summary Sheet

Mr. Repasch refers the commission to the summary sheet where East Allen Township submitted an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Module for Airport Road Lot 1 and also a DRBC review for an application to Renew Approval of Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant

Discharge. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Transportation Committee

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Update

Mr. Donchez stated that the allocation process for TASA closed on September 22nd. 15 applications were submitted through PennDOT totaling over \$10 million. The applications will be ranked and evaluated based upon the ranking criteria previously established. The applicants will be presenting their projects to the LVTS Technical Committee on November 27th. Recommendations will be made to the LVTS Coordinating Committee in December. Then the awards for the local pot of money of \$1.3 million will be given with the balance of projects competing for the state-wide pot of money of \$55 million. The MPOs need to have their decisions by January 5, 2018. These projects must start construction within two years of receiving the award.

OLD BUSINESS

Gala + Awards Preparation

Ms. Oscavich noted that the Lehigh Valley Awards Gala had approx. 240 attendees this year. The following categories had both honorees and a winner. Plan, Planning Policy or Ordinance, Land Development, Open Space, Outdoor Recreation, Revitalization, Transportation Planning, Transportation Infrastructure, Multi-Municipal Planning, and Community of Distinction. An after-event survey was sent out for feedback to be used for next year's event.

National Community Planning Month

Ms. Seitz talked about how the month of October is National Community Planning Month. She showed a PowerPoint presentation on planning and what it is all about. Planning comprehensively addresses the impacts of today's actions on tomorrow's communities. Planners need to consider every possible impact that a project can have on a community from housing and development to the air and water quality, to transportation and health. At the county and regional level, all these intersections are used to create the comprehensive plan. When communities can find ways to work together, it creates a stronger sense of place and enables the region to thrive socially, environmentally and economically. Ultimately, the LVPC coordinates the vision and sets the framework, but also recognize that implementation happens at the municipal level.

The LVPC serves as a guiding role in working with municipalities to develop and implement their goals within scope of the Comprehensive Plan, to ensure that everyone is moving towards a stronger and more resilient Lehigh Valley.

NEW BUSINESS

Organizational Report

Ms. Bradley talked about how this report summarizes the building activity over the last 12 months of the year, gives a summary of the first 6 months of this year and then an outlook of where plan activity is going to go and what's actually happening. It was noted that the LVPC is one of the oldest planning commissions in the nation. Ms. Bradley then went through the timeline in the report with the Full Commission.

CORRESPONDENCE

Iron Works Grand Opening Blast – Thank you note

Ms. Bradley mentioned that Gene Goldfeder, Manager of the Borough of Catasauqua, sent a thank you note for bringing the LVPC CUBE to their Opening Blast. It was a big attraction that brought a lot of great comments to be utilized towards the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Coalition for Appropriate Transportation – Thank you note

Ms. Bradley noted that Scott Slingerland, Executive Director for Coalition for Appropriate Transportation, sent a thank you note for putting together the Lehigh Valley Awards Gala which celebrates transportation, smart land use and development, and open space and recreation.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

None

EVENTS + INFORMATION

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

The upcoming LVGA course is Subdivision + Land Development being held on Wednesday, November 1st, 8th, and 15th.

Future Forces Event

The Future Forces Event will be held on December 6th at Lehigh University.

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) @ LVPC Office

The upcoming Local Technical Assistance Program classes are Roadside Vegetation Control on December 12 from 8am-3pm, Work Zone Temporary Traffic Control on January 30 from 8am-12pm and Stop Signs + Intersection Traffic Control on February 6 from 8am-12pm – all at LVPC.

Muscular Dystrophy Association – Bruce + Paul “Go to Jail” – Report

Staff members, Bruce and Paul, went to “Jail” at Carmel Kitchen where they helped raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Toys for Tots – Donation

The LVPC is asking for donations for Toy for Tots this holiday season. This will help support kids in need and help make their holiday special. Donations will be accepted through December 1st.

ADJOURN

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

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