

Memo



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June 30, 2016

MINUTES

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 30, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Ms. Liesel Dreisbach chaired the meeting.

Members in attendance:

Lehigh County

Karen Duerholz
Armand Greco
Edward Hozza
Richard Molchany
Kathy Rader
Stephen Repasch
Kevin Schmidt
Donna Wright

Northampton County

Gordon Campbell
Eugene Clater
John Diacogiannis
Liesel Dreisbach
Charles Elliott
George Gemmel
Robert Lammi
Kevin Lott
Thomas Nolan
Pamela Pearson

Members absent: Norman Blatt, Percy Dougherty Steven Glickman, Kent Herman, Christina Morgan, Steven Neratko, Brad Osborne, Sara Pandl, Julie Thomases, Christen Borso, Darlene Heller, Hayden Phillips, Lynn Prior, Michael Reph, Tina Roseberry and Adam Waldron

Staff present: Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, George Kinney, Eric McAfee, Mike Donchez, Sue Rockwell, Tamara Mittman and John von Kerczek

Public Present: Lou Gombocz, Jr., WFMZ; Tim Herrlinger, Northampton County

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR - None

MINUTES

After a brief review, the minutes of the May 26, 2016 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Clater. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Elliott and Mr. Lott abstaining.

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT*Senior Community Planners*

Ms. Dreisbach introduced and welcomed new senior community planners, Tamara Mittman and John von Kerczek, to the LVPC staff.

COMMITTEE REPORTS***Comprehensive Planning Committee****Ordinance Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there are three summary sheet items on page 8 of the agenda attachments. Mr. McAfee said Item #1 is a second resubmission. The amendments are generally of local concern. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Lammi abstaining on Item #3.

Environment Committee - None***Transportation Committee****Draft 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program*

Mr. Donchez said a draft 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document is at each Commission members' place. The TIP is the Lehigh Valley high priority list of multimodal projects for the four-year period: highway, bridge, transit and pedestrian. Even though it's a four-year document, the TIP is updated every other year and is continuously changing due to project cost increases, etc. The document was prepared as a more readable version for public review and comment. The TIP is a \$458 million investment in transportation infrastructure: \$131 million for highway projects, \$183 million for bridge projects and \$144 million for transit projects. Mr. Donchez discussed some of the new projects to the TIP, including the Route 22/13th Street interchange in Easton and the Hill-to-Hill Bridge rehabilitation in Bethlehem.

Mr. Donchez said the TIP was developed jointly with PennDOT to meet financial constraints by the state. We are currently in a 30-day public review and comment period, which began June 14 and ends July 14. Two public meetings are scheduled on July 12: one at 12 pm at the PennDOT District 5 office and one at 6 pm at the LVPC office. The purpose of the meetings is to provide a formal venue for people to comment. He said the draft document is available at six locations: the LVPC office, PennDOT District 5 office, LANta office and the three city libraries. The document is also on the LVPC website.

Mr. Elliott asked about the increase in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding from \$96,000 in FFY2017 to \$661,000. Ms. Bradley said it is lower in FFY2017 because of contracting. PennDOT won't put out TAP contracts to communities for several more months. The communities won't be able to spend the money until late 2017 and into FFY2018.

WalkLV – Sidewalk Inventory

Mr. Kinney provided a power point presentation. He said staff prepared a regional sidewalk inventory, and a copy of the document is at each Commission member's place. The document was presented and released on Monday at a Planning + Pizza event. Mr. Roy Gothie, PennDOT's Bike/Pedestrian Coordinator, presented at the Monday meeting as well. Mr. Kinney discussed the benefits of walking, provided some walking statistics and general sidewalk design criteria.

Ms. Bradley said the document includes all 62 municipalities, most public roads, and uses 2015 aerial photography. The report documents whether sidewalks are on one side of the road, both sides and neither side. It looks at the sidewalk inventory against the existing trail network and bus stops. There are 1,177 miles of sidewalks in Lehigh County and 900 miles in Northampton County. Allentown has the most sidewalks followed by Bethlehem. Whitehall has the most sidewalks of the townships followed by Lower Macungie. The largest connected network of sidewalks is in Nazareth. Ms. Bradley said that, theoretically, between the trail and sidewalk network, you can reach the Appalachian Trail from the center of Allentown. Trails account for 12% of the sidewalk network. We did an analysis to show sidewalk endpoints closest to trails and where we can close the gaps. We looked at sidewalk and transit stop connectivity. Of the 2,683 bus stops, 2,040 (76%) are located in sidewalk corridors. The information in the document can be used for a variety of purposes: identify gaps, prioritize ADA improvements, support official maps, among others.

Ms. Bradley provided a demonstration of the on-line, interactive sidewalk inventory. She said we are in beta testing now through about July 15.

OLD BUSINESS

Transportation Summit with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Bradley thanked Commission members who attended the Transportation Summit. She said regional transportation providers and planners came together at this event. About 200 people were in attendance. The draft Transportation Improvement Program was released during the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Planning + Pizza

Ms. Bradley said our next Planning and Pizza is titled *Stuck in Traffic: Congestion Management* and is scheduled for Friday, July 29th.

BuildLV: Annual Development Report

Ms. Bradley said we are in the process of updating the annual development report. The report will include a look at what's happening in 2016 and what trends we see for the region, both

historic and future. We are partnering with Urban Land Institute again this year to present the report on September 7 at ArtsQuest. The panel will include a representative from Norfolk Southern, a commercial banker who only lends to freight-based developments, a freight expert from PennDOT, and we are working on getting someone from a trucking company that manages a logistics business.

3rd Annual LVPC Awards Gala/Call for Nominations

Ms. Bradley said the award packets were released today. We're now accepting nominations for the annual planning and development awards. This is our 3rd annual awards event, which will be held October 4 at DeSales University. We are working on a keynote speaker.

CORRESPONDENCE - None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Half-Year Activity Report

Ms. Bradley provided a power point presentation. She reviewed the major activities we've accomplished since January 1. Regarding subdivision and development activity through June 10, we've received 100 proposed plans: 52 in Lehigh County and 48 in Northampton County. We received 38 approved plans for Lehigh County and 29 for Northampton County, for a total of 67 approved plans. For non-residential development, 68,841 square feet was approved for commercial, 1.257 million square feet for industrial, 583,000 square feet for office, 52,600 square feet for retail, and 2,800 square feet for public/quasi public. The approved square footage through June 10 is higher than the total approved in 2014. For residential development, over 400 apartments, 66 single family homes, 30 townhouses and 26 twins were approved.

ADJOURN

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

Submitted by,

Susan Rockwell for
Becky Bradley, AICP
Executive Director