



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

LIESEL DREISBACH
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Vice Chair

JOHN DIACOGIANNIS
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, December 22 at 11:00am

LVPC Conference Room

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Minutes

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, December 22, 2016 at 11:00am 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, Karen Duerholz, Steven Glickman, Armand Greco, Kent Herman, Edward Hozza, Rick Molchany, Christina Morgan, Brad Osborne, Sara Pandl, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt, Christine Weaver, Donna Wright

Northampton County

Gordon Campbell, Gene Clater, John Diacogiannis, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, George Gemmel, Darlene Heller, Tim Herrlinger, Robert Lammi, Thomas Nolan, Pam Pearson, Hayden Phillips, Lynn Prior, Michael Repp, Tina Roseberry

Members absent: Steven Neratko, Julie Thomases, Christen Borso, Kevin Lott, Shawn Martell

Staff present: Becky Bradley, Erin Willis, Alice Lipe, Bowen Liu, Brian Hite, Bruce Rider, Eric McAfee, George Kinney, Geoff Reese, John von Kerczek, Justin Barclay, Mike Donchez, Paul Nohar, Sue Rockwell, Tamara Mittman, Teresa Mackey, Tracy Oscavich, Whitney Burdge

Public present: Lou Gombocz, Jr., WFMZ, Sal Panto

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: none

MINUTES

After a brief review, the minutes of the October 27, 2016 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Lammi. Mr. Herrlinger seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Hozza, Ms. Pearson, Ms. Duerholz and Mr. Elliott abstaining.

After a brief review, the minutes of the November 17, 2016 meeting were moved for approval by Ms. Wright. Mr. Dougherty seconded the motion. The motion carried

with Mr. Gemmel, Mr. Hozza, Ms. Duerholz, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Herrlinger and Ms. Morgan abstaining.

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT

None

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr. Dougherty and Mr. Glickman served as the Nominating Committee and presented their nominations for 2017 LVPC Officers to the Commission. Mr. Dougherty stated that the Nominating Committee had presented the recommendation to the Executive Committee, and that there was agreement that the 2016 Officers, including: Liesel Dreisbach, Chair, Stephen Repasch, Vice Chair and John Diacogiannis, Treasurer were doing excellent work on behalf of the Commission. With no nominations from the floor, Mr. Dougherty made a motion to retain, Ms. Dreisbach as Chair, Mr. Repasch as Vice Chair and Mr. Diacogiannis as Treasurer, each for another one-year term. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Lower Macungie – Land Use of Regional Significance – Anthony Properties

Ms. Mittman talked about the proposed development of a major shopping center in Lower Macungie Township bordering Upper Macungie and South Whitehall. The proposed plan minimizes the negative impacts associated with land developments of regional significance since it is situated at the interchange of I-78 with Route 222. It's on a 35 acre lot with 270,000 square feet of development. This proposed development is consistent with the General Land Use Plan articulated in the County Comprehensive Plan. This site is also located within the Little Lehigh Creek watershed which has fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. The LVPC has received a time extension from the applicant for the review of the project's stormwater management plan until additional materials are submitted. For the Point of Access Study, it is recommended the township ask the developer to explain and account for the inconsistencies in the trip generation. It is also recommended that the developer consider and incorporate pedestrian/bicycle accommodations that connect the development to surrounding properties, where practical, to meet the regional policy for multi-modal improvements. Sidewalks should be required internal to all proposed developments and along the entirety of all subject property frontage. LANta also reviewed the plan and recommends a fully accessible pedestrian network on the proposed project site, ensuring all proposed buildings are connected to the proposed sidewalk of the main interior road. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Herrlinger seconded that motion. The motion passed with Ms. Duerholz abstaining.

Bethlehem City (Northampton) and Lower Saucon Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Majestic Bethlehem Center

Mr. von Kerczek talked about the resubmission of the Majestic Bethlehem Center Land Development Plan. The square feet for this development has been expanded and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies on Land Use and Land Uses of Regional Significance. The LVPC encourages the developers to address the escalating need for overnight tractor trailer parking and stage space. LANTA also reviewed and provided a note on how they currently provide one bus route (#105) along PA Rt. 412/Hellertown Road which deviates into the Majestic Bethlehem Center along Commerce Center Boulevard and stops at an existing facility on Lot 2. According to the plan, the road has been completed to provide access around Lots 1, 2, and 3, in which a bus pullover has been proposed in between Lot 3 and Lot 4. For the new proposed Lot 4, LANTA appreciates the efforts to include a thorough sidewalk and crosswalk network from this proposed bus stop to the main entrance of the proposed Building 4 and encourages continued efforts to include ADA-accessible sidewalks that connects buildings with access roads and parking areas. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the letter. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Easton City – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Dormitory Provisions and Maximum Impervious Coverage

Mr. Barclay talked about the proposed amendments to the zoning code of the City of Easton and how the plan was previously reviewed by the Comprehensive Planning Committee at its previously scheduled meeting. We have found both consistencies and inconsistencies with the inconsistencies being outlined in the amended letter. The LVPC notes that the CH/INS-1 T district is within the National Register of Historical Places which means you need a lot of consideration when you are conducting any modifications to that particular region. Any future development in that area should not reduce the availability of affordable housing within the College Hill neighborhood. Also, modifying the Maximum Impervious Coverage from 50% to 100% raises the concern of stormwater management. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the letter. Mr. Clater seconded that motion.

Mr. Panto expressed concern about the letter and asked if we considered the fact that the college owns the homes and has for over 25 years. He said that we are talking about 2 blocks of National Register of Historical Places. These 2 blocks were not what they were considering historic, it was the big, large majestic homes that was used as criteria. He was curious on LVPC's recommendations when Lehigh University's dormitories stretched into the South Bethlehem neighborhood. He notes that the previous letter has been changed to reflect some people's comments in the Comprehensive Planning Committee's previous meeting. He said the college is the city's largest entity for employment and taxes. The college needs to grow and the city is willing to let them grow within the confines of what they already purchased. In Mr. Panto's 28 years of owning a business on College Hill, he has never seen it occupied with children, only young adults and professionals so he believes our affordable housing issue is moot. He sees nothing the city can do to stop this and he's wondering why the planning commission is.

Mr. Hozza spoke in regards to the fair housing, based on the recent issue with Whitehall Township and the federal Supreme Court ruling, you must provide fair housing in every district in your community. This must be shown to the federal government under the current guidelines.

Ms. Bradley stated that there was concern from a citizen about fair housing from a group of elderly people on College Hill, also, maintenance of affordable housing, which is why the committee added that into the letter. Mr. Panto stated the reason that was a concern is the citizens want to stay in place in their current home, not buy another home.

Ms. Bradley said that there was a question posed that no one was here to answer and that is if the dormitory proposals do go forward, will that then undo your National Register District status because so many buildings have been demolished in the District?

The motion passed with Mr. Herman, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Hoza and Ms. Duerholz abstaining.

Ordinance/Plan Reviews

Mr. McAfee talked about the summary sheet's main items – (1) Draft Comprehensive Plan for Bethlehem Township regarding the update of their 2004 Comprehensive Plan; (2) Land Use Assumptions Report for Lehigh Township regarding the update of the April 2008 LUAR; (3) Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Review for Allen Township and North Whitehall Township regarding the reconstruct of 4.5 miles of Transmission Line to interconnect new Siegfried substation; (4) Zoning Ordinance Amendments for Lower Macungie Township regarding exempts existing/proposed uses and structures owned by the Township from zoning stipulations; (5) Zoning Map Amendments for East Allen Township regarding a resubmission on adding an additional parcel; (6) Zoning, SALDO and Stormwater Management Ordinance Amendments for Lower Macungie Township regarding various signage, setbacks, new definitions and infiltration practices. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the summary sheet. Mr. Herrlinger seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Nolan abstaining to item #1.

Environment Committee

Governor's Advisory Board for Community Development – Water Resources

Ms. Bradley stated how she and Mr. Reese attended the Governor's Advisory Board for Community Development and her subgroup focuses on water and water related issues. They've been able to work with the Governor directly to be able to come up with issues and areas of focus that we think a variety of state agencies can work on and partner together on. The next step is to figure out best practices and how those partnerships and relationships can happen. Mr. Reese stated they were able to present the information to the Governor and were able to talk a little bit about the MS4 program, which is the municipal program regarding the storm/sewer system and the quality associated with the discharges from that. The Governor seemed very interested in exploring any ideas we may come up with to move the issues forward more efficiently and effectively. For Integrated Water Resources Planning, LVPC created a document called 1H2O which laid out a number of recommendations that will be used to help update the state water plan and contribute to the Advisory Board's work.

Transportation Committee

Megaregions

Mr. Kinney talked about attending the Mid-Atlantic Megaregions conference where it was stated how the states should work together over state lines to get more coordinated planning, particularly along the I-95 corridor. The two biggest topics of the conference were freight movement and autonomous vehicles. Mr. Kinney showed a video to the Transportation Committee about an automated truck which made a 120 mile run in Colorado. The technology is arriving much faster than people expect and from a policy

perspective American Traffic Research Institute put out one of the first policy papers on automated vehicle technology.

Ms. Bradley stated that the plan is to bring more of this information back as they receive it. Mr. Molchany asked if this is replacing the MPOs. Ms. Bradley said that the MPO ruling did pass and that we will be addressing the issue going into 2020-2024. It does not require us to be absorbed into anyone or to change our boundaries but there will be some ways that we have to collaborate with others, which we already do, but involves additional coordination as it involves interstate commerce.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

2017 LVPC Work Plan + Budget

Ms. Bradley talked about our 2017 Work Plan stating how we are always seeking grants and have a pretty significant communications program. Our events, meetings and training is key to not only helping our municipal governments but our community as a whole, talking about the information we have and getting feedback from the public. Something new for 2017 is we are partnering with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce who can provide event platforms that are much less costly than us doing it ourselves. We spend a significant amount time on Community Assistance & Participation. We are completing the Southwest Lehigh Comprehensive Plan which is six communities in Southwest Lehigh. We wrote the Nazareth Areas Council of Government multimunicipal plan over 10 years ago and they now want an updated plan. Recently we've been working with the Slate Belt to develop a first time ever multimunicipal comprehensive plan which will kick off in 2017. Northwest Lehigh also came to us and would like to update their multimunicipal plan. It is now possible to have roughly half of the regions communities in a multimunicipal situation which is a tremendous improvement from prior years. We serve in an advisory capacity to the Northampton County Open Space Advisory Board. We also are on the Sterling Raber Farmland Preservation Board in Lehigh County in an advisory capacity. We have a 24 month schedule for our own Comprehensive Plan which has already started. We see every subdivision and land development plan, zoning ordinances, stormwater reviews, etc. Earlier this year, we finished the regional sidewalk inventory which was our first use of the ARCGIS Online which is a 24 hour interactive platform for the public. We're committed to putting more data onto this platform as we go forward with the FutureLV Regional Comp Plan update along with farmland information as we conclude the work with Lehigh County and adding some Northampton County info in. We are also updating the stormwater management plan for the Monocacy Creek area with the City of Bethlehem. In transportation, we are continuing our freight work and will also be working with LANta to update their Human Services Coordination Plan. We just learned that for our traffic counting program, our Senior Planning Technician, Brian Hite, has a 99.46% accuracy rate according to PennDOT.

Ms. Bradley stated that each item we went over in the work plan is attached to a budget line. For Community and Environment planning, we are owed yet for the Southwest Lehigh Comp Plan along with a small amount from PA Humanities Council and will be receiving amounts from the City of Bethlehem for the Monocacy Creek Plan Update. The Transportation program is funded through the US Department of Transportation which is passed through to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, then passed through to LVPC. They make up roughly half of the budget. We have a multi-year contract with them. We anticipate slightly higher revenue for subdivision reviews for 2017. Lehigh and Northampton

County make up roughly the other half of our budget. Revenues total \$2,446,517.00. Expenses total \$2,446,517.00 which gives a balanced budget. We also have established a reserve fund so we can apply for additional grants which we hope to carry on from year to year. For the copier, money was moved from the 2016 budget to the 2017 budget so we are able to make that purchase. Mr. Molchany made a motion to accept the work plan and budget. Mr. Lammi seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2017 LVPC + Committee Meeting Dates

Ms. Dreisbach stated in the packet is a list of the 2017 Committee dates/times. Mr. Herrlinger made a motion to approve the dates. Ms. Pearson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Climate Action

Ms. Bradley stated that we received a thank you note from the Climate Action group in the Lehigh Valley. They had asked us to come and talk about climate and energy goals that we developed back in 2014. Some of the people after the presentation were really excited about what we are doing at LVPC and now they are attending some of our FutureLV meetings. We had people at the FutureLV kick-off along with the Planning + Pizza so the presentation to Climate Action helped introduce new voices to our table.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FutureLV Kick-Off – General Session – January 31st @ 6:00pm

Ms. Bradley stated there is a night time Planning + Pizza for FutureLV at 6:00pm on January 31st to accommodate requests to hold one outside normal business hours. There will also be Strategy Labs with more specific topics of discussion to further our data collection.

On a side note, Ms. Dreisbach mentioned that Alice Lipe is retiring at the end of 2016 after 20+ years of working for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. She was presented with a frame and scroll showcasing all the publications (215) she was involved in over her career here.

COMMISSION PHOTOGRAPH + LUNCH

Ms. Dreisbach mentioned that directly after the meeting, there will be a commission photo along with lunch.

ADJOURN

Mr. Gemmel 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