



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes from the Thursday, March 29, 2018 Meeting

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, March 29, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission’s conference room located at 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Repasch chaired the meeting.

Ms. Leonard took Roll Call – Quorum Obtained.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Bob Elbich, Mike Gibson, Kent Herman, Dennis Hower, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt and Donna Wright.

Northampton County

Debra Bodine, Gordon Campbell, Eugene Clater, Malissa Davis, John Diacogiannis, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, Kevin Lott, William McGee, Pamela Pearson, Tina Smith and Gerald Yob.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Percy Dougherty, Steven Glickman, Julio Guridy, Miriam Huertas, Owen O’Neil, Douglas Stewart and Christine Weaver.

Northampton County

Robert Donchez, Darlene Heller, Robert Lammi, Shawn Martell, Lamont McClure, Mitchell Mogilski and Tina Roseberry.

Staff Present: Becky Bradley, Denise Leonard, Sue Rockwell, Jill Seitz, Tracy Oscavich, Geoff Reese, Mike Donchez, Chandra Parasa, John von Kerczek, Amanda Raudenbush and Matt Assad.

Public Present: Justin Sweitzer

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: No Comments

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Commissioner "Retirement" Recognition

After a brief introduction of all attendees; Mr. Repasch thanked the following commissioners for their service: Ed Hozza, Tom Nolan, Ed Pawloski and Sara Pandl.

FEBRUARY MINUTES

Mr. Repasch stated that the minutes of the February 22, 2018 LVPC meeting are attached. Ms. Dreisbach noted that Ms. Burdge was missing from the attendance section of the minutes. Mr. Schmidt made a motion to accept the minutes as amended by Ms. Dreisbach. Ms. Pearson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Ms. Wright noted that the Comprehensive Planning Committee did not meet on Tuesday, March 27 as the building was closed and agenda items are under consideration by the full commission.

1. Bushkill Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Wind Gap Business Center (Presentation by Jill Seitz)

Due to the timing of the regulatory review period the review letter has been sent out, however, a follow-up may be issued should any comments or changes result from the discussion in this meeting. The project is located in Bushkill Township, Northampton County on Moorestown Road/Route 512 approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of the Route 33 on/off ramps. A review of a similar project on the same site was completed previously, however due to significant changes another review was necessary. The changes include the elimination of Building 3, no consolidation of Lot 3 with access from Professional Drive and the inclusion of on-lot septic system. In addition, the current application proposed the consolidation of two lots consisting of two warehouse buildings: one 350,000 square feet and the other 215,000 square feet. The total square footage exceeded the threshold of 500,000 square feet required to constitute a land use of regional significance. Due to the size and the use of on-lot septic it was determined that the proposal is inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan: The Lehigh Valley...2030*, which recommends that urban development use public sewer systems. The project is located within the Bushkill Creek watershed area. The application proposed no development on the portions of the site designated as Natural Features. Based on the 9th edition trip generation material the proposed development will generate a total of 941 vehicle trips per weekday. The traffic study reveals that the proposed improvements include construction of a new left-turn lane to facilitate traffic. There is not a LANTA fixed route to this area and recommendations were made to the

Township that the proposed project include sidewalk installation. Finally, consideration should be given to mandate that each new distribution center be required to have truck parking on site to allow for staging and overnight stays. Ms. Wright made a motion to accept the staff comments as presented. Mr. Hower seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Ordinance/Plan Reviews Summary Sheet

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 as presented. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Environment Committee:

Mr. Repasch noted that the Environmental Committee also did not meet due to building closure on Tuesday, March 27. Environment Committee agenda items are before the full commission for consideration.

1. Reviews Summary Sheet

Mr. Repasch referred the commission to the summary sheet for an overview of the staff comments on proposed actions requiring LVPC review. Mr. Repasch made a motion to accept the staff comments as presented. Mr. Herman seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Transportation Committee

1. How Transportation Infrastructure Projects are Funded

Mr. Donchez gave a PowerPoint presentation on "How Transportation Infrastructure Projects are Funded." The presentation provided an outline of the organizations that makeup the two voting committees: Technical and Coordinating. The Technical Committee is the advisory committee to the Coordinating Committee. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a federally mandated four year program containing high priority highway, bridge, transit, multi-modal and rail infrastructure projects within the two county region. This is really a ground transportation plan which covers all surface modes of transportation (does not cover air travel). Approximately 80% of the funds that go into the TIP are federal and the remaining 20% can be state, local, private or a combination of funds. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is the traditional vehicle for entry of projects into the TIP. Every four years we will send out a request to the municipalities to let us know what their infrastructure needs are. We are going to combining the Comprehensive Plan with the LRTP. The selection criteria was reviewed and explained as part of the presentation. We will be releasing the draft TIP list of projects Wednesday (April 4) at the Joint LVTS Technical & Coordinating Committee Meeting at Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus. Currently we are in the air quality conformity analysis phase of the project where the projects are being coded, modeled and analyzed for their emissions output. The TIP will be available for a formal

30 day public review and comment period from April 23 through May 22. We will hold two public meetings: May 2 at LVPC (12:00 p.m.) and on May 8 at Bethlehem Public Library (6:30 p.m.). The TIP will go to LVTS for adoption June 6. When adopted it will go to the US Department of Transportation (USDOT). Once USDOT approval is issued (expected late September) then funding will be available October 1 for four years.

OLD BUSINESS

1. FutureLV: Regional Comprehensive Plan Update – Ad Hoc Committee

Ms. Oscavich stated that we are updating The Plan for the Lehigh Valley which is the guiding document that directs the way we grow, redevelop and preserve our land. As mentioned, we are merging this to have one plan for the valley. We are creating an Ad Hoc Committee from the Commission along with the LVTS to help us. There will be monthly meetings lasting anywhere from one to two hours depending on business. A Doodle Poll will be sent to determine the first meeting date.

Ms. Oscavich provided an update on our Community Survey which is coming to an end in April.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Walk/Bike LV: Regional Active Transportation Plan

Ms. Bradley provided an update on the release of a RFP for the Bike/Ped Master Plan (Comprehensive Master Plan for Bike & Pedestrian Activity) for the region. We are hoping to have a consultant on board by the end of May and have the project wrapped by June 2019.

2. Regional Housing Market Report

Ms. Seitz gave a PowerPoint presentation on “Regional Housing Market.” This report is traditionally updated every two years from the recession onward. Previously the report was paper-based but will be distributed digitally this year. The home sales data comes from the Lehigh and Northampton County GIS and Assessment Departments. This report contains the overall number of sales and median sales price on the regional, school district and municipal levels. The online report will contain sales numbers for the Lehigh Valley as a whole since 2008. The number of houses sold each year has been steadily increasing since 2011, however the median sales price has remained relatively the same since 2010 with a small uptick in 2016. In 2016, 61% of houses sold were in the middle price point ranging from \$100,000 - \$250,000 with single family detached homes remain the most popular housing type for homeowners. While the single family detached is the most popular housing type it remains the most expensive with the median price at \$211,000 in 2016, which was a significant jump from previous years. The rental market data indicates that the majority of the Lehigh Valley rent prices are between \$500 and \$1,500 with a steady increase each year. The proportion of renter-to-

owner population has increased by an average of .5% each year from 2012 to 2016. The number of approved final plans for single family detached lots decreased by 34% and the number of approved apartment units has increased by 407% in the 5 year period from 2012 to 2016. The majority of renters moved into their homes after 2010 while the majority of homeowners moved into their homes before 2010. The presentation was concluded with a brief walk through of the online report found on our site at lvpc.org/data/lv.html.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. PENNDot Community Safety Program

Ms. Bradley reported that the federal and state government give a variety of entities money for transportation safety. Beginning in 2017, the State Community Safety program has changed so that only counties can apply for these funds. The funds are geared towards behavioral safety topics such as bike/pedestrian education and older and impaired driver classes. We are required to have a traffic safety plan that is updated every two years on the heels of the TIP. Discussions are currently taking place at the county level on how we might be able to scale up programs that exist to continue to deliver high quality behavioral services and weave them into a more comprehensive strategy in the LVPC/LVTS Safety Plan and Infrastructure Investment Strategy that allows us to jointly improve safety.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

1. Planning and Pizza

Ms. Oscavich explained the Planning and Pizza program and recapped the upcoming topics:

- Census 2020 Local Update of Census Address – April 17, 2018
- Transportation Improvement Program – May 2

2. Local Technical Assistant Program (LTAP)

Ms. Oscavich explained the LTAP program and recapped the upcoming topics:

- Managing Utility Cuts – April 8
- Equipment and Worker Safety – April 12

3. LVTS Technical & Coordinating Committees and Freight Advisory Committee – April 4

Ms. Bradley reminded everyone of the upcoming meeting along with a brief introduction of the speakers:

- Erich Zimmerman – National Association of Regional Councils on Federal Infrastructure Funding
- Anne Strauss Weider – North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority on freight movement in her area

- Rudy Husband – Norfolk Southern on rail operations

4. *Other:*

- 2nd Annual Pennsylvania Automated Vehicle Summit – April 9 - 10
- Lehigh Valley Chamber's 2018 Transportation Summit – May 17
- Freight Summit – June 21 – 22
- Women in Transportation and Government - Fall

Adjournment

With no further business Mr. Molchany made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lott seconded the motion.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director and
Denise Leonard, Executive Administrative Assistant