

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the SLATE BELT

March 4, 2020 – 7 PM, Weona Park Community Center, 25 S. Main Street, Pen Argyl, PA 18072

Steering Committee Attendees:

Bangor: James Kresge
East Bangor: Susan Ruggiero
L. Mt. Bethel: Susan Disidore, Jen Smethers, Sandra Newman
Pen Argyl: Robin Zmoda, Janell Connolly, Jeffrey Fox
Plainfield: Tom Petrucci, Stephen Hurni, Terry Kleintop
Portland: Stephanie Steele
Roseto: Carl Renna, Cathy Martino, Joe Angelini
U. Mt. Bethel: Anthony DeFranco
Washington: Robert Smith, John Buck, Justin Huratiak
Wind Gap: George Hinton, Louise Firestone, David Hess

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Judith Henckel – Upper Mount Bethel Township
Ed Nelson – Upper Mount Bethel Township
Ethan Habrial – Pen Argyl Borough
Paul Levits – Plainfield Township
Dave Friedman – Upper Mount Bethel Open Space Advisory Board
Nancy Dischinat – Workforce Board Lehigh Valley
Gina Kormanik – Workforce Board Lehigh Valley
Linda Stubits – Nazareth Area School District
Joe Vasko – Nazareth Area School District
Eric Sampson – Pen Argyl School District
Bob Rutt – Pen Argyl School District
Brian Fenstermaker – Senator Scavello
Andrew Kleiner – Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation
Karianne Gelinas – Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation

Planning Partners in Attendance:

Becky Bradley – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Tracy Oscavich – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Sue Rockwell – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
David Towsey – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Simon Okumu – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Mahdis Modaresi – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Stephen Reider – Slate Belt Rising
Mark Hartney – Northampton County

Roll Call

Ms. Rockwell took roll call.

Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2020

Courtesy of the Floor

Ms. Bradley informed the committee that Peter Barnard has resigned from the LVPC and that she would be taking over as project manager for the Plan Slate Belt effort.

Minutes from the February 5th Meeting

Mr. Petrucci called for a vote on the February 5, 2020 meeting minutes, which are attached to the agenda. Mr. Hurni made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Steele seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business

Policy Development - Economic Development

Ms. Bradley said that the notes from the economic development roundtable discussion, held during the February 4th meeting, are attached to the agenda. She recommended that committee members review the notes and inform staff if anything is missing.

New Business

2020 Census

Ms. Oscavich said that mailings to participate in the 2020 Census will be going out soon, starting in March. Ms. Bradley said that the census count is important for a number of reasons, including for road, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and federal funding is based on population. The Bureau will no longer be preparing population estimates as before, so a complete decennial count is necessary. Ms. Bradley encouraged everyone to complete the census form.

Policy Development – Education and Workforce Development

Ms. Bradley said that work on the policy section of the plan has begun. Education and workforce development was identified by the Steering Committee as a priority for the Slate Belt. Ms. Bradley said that representatives from the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley and school districts were invited to attend the meeting to provide input on the topic. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

For the meeting, attendees were separated into three groups to focus the discussion on education and workforce development in the Slate Belt. An exercise sheet was provided to each attendee to facilitate the discussion. Each group was asked to select a presenter and a note taker. The discussion focused on three main topics:

- What does it mean to have a good education?
- What are desirable jobs for your current and future residents?
- What types of skills are critical to the Slate Belt workforce?

After an hour, each group reported out on their discussions to the larger group. All notes taken were collected at the end of the meeting and will be compiled to provide input on education and workforce development policies.

Next Steps

Policy Development – Shared Services

Mr. Petrucci said that the next Steering Committee meeting will focus on shared services, with representatives from these organizations to be invited for a group discussion.

Site Tour

Ms. Bradley said a tour will be scheduled with communities in the Southwest Lehigh area over the next few months, including Upper and Lower Macungie Townships and Upper Milford Township. These communities have agreed to host the Slate Belt communities on a tour to share the positive and negative impacts of growth and development in the area.

Adjourn

Mr. Petrucci called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kresge made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Smethers seconded the motion.

Attachments

- February 5, 2020 Steering Committee Minutes
- Economic Development Roundtable Notes
- Slate Belt Education and Workforce Development Exercise Sheet

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by the LVPC.