

*January 30, 2014*

**AGENDA**

**PLEDGE**

**ROLL CALL**

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

**MINUTES**

- *Minutes of the December 19, 2013 meeting*

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Comprehensive Planning Committee —  
Report by Chairman**
  1. *FedEx Ground “Flex Hub” Land Development Plans –  
Allen Township*  
Ratification of review letters (see attachment on pp. 6-16)
  2. *Stone Post Meadows – Proposed Zoning Ordinance  
Amendment - Lower Nazareth Township (MPC Review)*  
Ratification of review letter (see attachment on pp. 17-18)
  3. *Lehigh County SALDO Application – Request for 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Extension - Edwin Ziegler Lot Consolidation/Land  
Development Plans – Borough of Slatington*  
Presentation and action (see attachment on pp. 19-20)
  4. *Update of the LVPC Model Floodplain Regulations*  
Presentation and action (see Model Guide)
  5. *MPC Reviews*  
Summary sheet (see attachment on pp. 21-22)
- **Environment Committee —  
Report by Chairman**
  1. *Status Report on Climate and Energy Plans*
  2. *Reviews*  
Summary sheet (see attachment on p. 23)
- **Transportation Committee —  
Report by Chairman**
  1. *Presentation on Draft 2015 and 2016 Unified Planning  
Work Program* (see additional material)

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. *HUD Sustainability Project – Housing Meetings* (see Housing Flyer)

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. *Approval of LVPC 2014 Action Plan* (see additional material)

***CORRESPONDENCE***

1. *Cancer Support Community* (see attachment on p. 24)
2. *Mayor John Callahan, City of Bethlehem* (see attachment on p.25)

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT***

1. *New LVPC Website*
2. *2013 Web Hits* (see additional material)
3. *2014 Planning Partners Education Meeting Schedule* (see additional material)

***ADJOURN***

# *Memo*



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*February 27, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Percy Dougherty  
Steven Glickman  
Armand Greco  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Kenneth McClain  
Christina Morgan  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Peter Schweyer  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
Darlene Heller  
Bob Lammi  
Kevin Lott  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Karen Duerholz, Virginia Haas, Lisa Scheller, Charles Fraust, George Gemmel, Matthew Glennon, Carl Manges, Seth Vaughn and Elinor Warner.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Joe Gurinko, David Berryman, Mike Donchez, Sue Rockwell, Ngozi Obi and Josh Spano.

***Public Present:*** None

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the January 30, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Repasch. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion carried with abstentions by Ms. Pandl and Mr. Lammi.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******East Allen Township – Zoning Map and Ordinance Amendment***

Mr. Berryman said there is a draft letter on pages 10-11 of the agenda attachments. He said the proposal is to create an Age Restricted Community Overlay in the Township's Agricultural/Rural Residential District. The overlay would provide for age restricted homes. In this case, they are single family duplexes with up to four units per acre with the provision of public sewer and water utilities. The majority of East Allen Township, with the exception of a subdivision that was in place prior to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, is recommended for farmland preservation. Mr. Berryman said the LVPC has a history with this particular site and with land in this area of East Allen Township. We have seen many proposals to rezone these properties over the last five or six years to more urban uses. There is no public sewer or water in this area. We recommend it for farmland preservation. Therefore, we find the proposal inconsistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. A project that would provide sewer and water utilities into this area is not something we would like to see. Once sewer and water is provided in this area, there is nothing to stop it from expanding north into the Township.

Also, the density being proposed for this overlay is four units per acre and is qualified as urban development by the County Comprehensive Plan. Further, the proposal is basically a reaction to a developer's desire for the property. Act 537 planning and comprehensive planning have not been completed. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Repasch abstaining.

***Homebuying During Economic Uncertainty: Housing Sales in the Lehigh Valley 2008-2012***

Ms. Bradley thanked Ms. Obi for preparing this report. She analyzed every housing sale in both counties between 2008–2012 at the county, municipal and school district level and by housing type. A copy of the draft report was provided to Commission members. Ms. Obi said housing types analyzed were single family attached, single family detached, condominiums, multi-family, and mobile homes on owner lots. Ms. Obi said this report does not include dollar deed sales, mobile homes on rental lots, and multifamily units over four units, preconstruction sales and multiple sale activity in a given year on a single property. The most recent sale was the sale that was counted. Ms. Obi provided some of the findings of the report.

Ms. Bradley said this baseline data report will actually feed into our Regional Housing Plan which we will have for you in May. We are in the process of setting up a fairly substantial event to release that housing plan in the first or second week of May. We have had a number of people working with us on the development of the Regional Housing Plan from our Envision Consortium group of 13 partners to the Lehigh Valley Realtors Association, Lehigh Valley Association of Home Builders, the development community, and the non-profit housing development community. We are very proud that we were able to pull those private and public

sector folks together to create a real solid housing strategy for the region going forward. Ms. Wright made a motion to release the report to the public. Mr. Schweyer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### *LVEDC Regional Economic Development Plan*

Ms. Bradley said as part of the Regional Sustainability Consortium Group, LVEDC created a draft Regional Economic Development Plan that we recently received. It was circulated to our Consortium Committee. We have had a chance to review it and will be providing our comments. Ms. Bradley said she has met with Don Cunningham to discuss the plan. The one thing we really saw as a flag is that they say the Valley has no infrastructure plan. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is responsible for infrastructure planning. Mr. Cunningham said the plan will be corrected. She said the plan discusses assets and challenges to markets in the region and availability of certain things. They analyzed the types of industries we could support in the region and focused on top industries. This is everything from manufactured things like industrial valves and electronic equipment in component manufacturing to high value business services like data processing, payroll services, life sciences, research and manufacturing that we would be able to support in the community now. Food and beverage processing is also a supportable industry. Ms. Bradley said some of those industries are here now and others we could support in the Lehigh Valley.

Ms. Morgan said the report includes the most frequently asked questions and responses and one of them was what they think are some of the biggest obstacles that inhibit the Lehigh Valley and its ability retain to businesses and investment. The second largest response was fragmented municipalities. She asked what that means. Ms. Bradley said Pennsylvania, compared to other regions in the country, has a lot more units of government. In her hometown in Illinois, the county has a great deal of power, and municipal authorities have very little. The county does a lot of the work and tells the municipalities what to do. Clearly here there is a lot of local authority versus county or state authority as compared to the rest of the country. Mr. Dougherty said most other states have county zoning and SALDO ordinances. That is probably what they are referring to. He said this is a good time to promote consistency in planning at all different levels. We should try to make sure we are consistent going forward with the County Comprehensive Plan and with the townships, boroughs and cities. We really lack consistency in Pennsylvania in planning. Ms. Bradley said at the end of this Envision process the LVPC is responsible for summarizing all 13 partners' work into one document with a rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan in 2015 after the grant ends. She said this is an information item only; no action is needed. Mr. Herman said if anyone has any comments they should be given to Ms. Bradley by next week.

#### *MPC Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there are two summary sheet items on page 12 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Hozza abstaining on item #1.

## ***Environment Committee***

### *Lehigh Valley Energy Profile*

Ms. Bradley thanked Ms. Obi for preparing this document. A copy of the document was provided to Commission members. We recently presented this to the Chamber's Energy and Environment Committee. Their Manufacturing Council is looking for this type of information as well. Ms. Obi said the information in the document is consumption data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration. This is not an official report. There is a disclaimer. It was information packaged for the Environment Committee. She briefly explained the types of information in the document.

Ms. Bradley said this document has generated a great deal of interest. She received a phone call from the Lehigh Valley Auto Dealers' Association. They are interested in working with us to develop a regional plan for electric car charging infrastructure. There will be 13 electric vehicles on the market by next year, and almost every car manufacturer will have one of those products. They want to make sure the infrastructure will be available. Also, the freight industry is converting to compressed natural gas (CNG) very quickly. There are no CNG filling stations readily available to our logistics and freight network. We will be working with them as well. This has been a remarkable opportunity to get a lot of folks involved. Ms. Bradley also received a phone call from Air Products. Ms. Bradley said this document will be on our website as well. Ms. Bradley said we need action to release this to the public. Mr. Glickman made a motion to release the report. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Pandl abstaining.

### *Reviews*

Mr. Repasch said there are three summary sheet items on page 13 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Elliott abstaining on Item #3.

## ***Transportation Committee***

### *2013 TIP Accomplishments/TIP Projects under Construction in 2014*

Mr. Spano said there are four handouts that include the power point presentation, a map of the projects completed in 2013, a map of projects under construction in 2014, and a list of all the projects currently on the TIP. Mr. Spano said the TIP is the locally endorsed list of highway, bridge and transit projects proposed to be implemented with federal assistance. It covers a four year period and is updated every 2 years. The current TIP was adopted in 2012 and it covers 2013-2016. We are currently working on the 2015-2018 update. The TIP must consist of improvements on the Long Range Transportation Plan, cover a period of no less than three years, indicate areas of priority, and include realistic costs for each project.

The LVPC develops a list of major projects at the end of each calendar year. The list consists of projects completed by the end of 2013, those currently under construction, those starting construction in 2014, and other projects in planning. During 2013, 26 projects were completed. Of those, 16 were bridge projects, 5 were highway projects, 3 were transportation enhancement projects and 2 were transit projects. Mr. Spano identified some of the major projects. In comparison, only 19 projects were completed in 2012.

Mr. Spano said there are 15 projects under construction going into 2014. These include 5 bridge projects, 7 highway projects, and 3 transit projects. He identified some of the major projects. In comparison, there were 21 projects under construction going into 2013.

There are 19 projects expected to start construction in 2014. These include 5 bridge projects and 14 highway projects. Mr. Spano identified some of the major projects. In 2013, there were 18 projects expected to start construction. Only 15 of these actually started construction in 2013. He also identified some of the major projects in planning.

Mr. Repasch asked about the costs of these projects. Mr. Spano said the current TIP including transit is about \$305 million. Mr. McClain wanted to recognize PennDOT for doing an excellent job on project delivery in the Lehigh Valley. The Transportation Committee recommended the LVPC send a letter to PennDOT commending them for their hard work and dedication on project delivery.

#### *Transportation Alternatives Program*

Ms. Bradley wanted to let everyone know on a periodic basis we have an opportunity to actually be involved in providing grants to our communities. This is a rare opportunity we have through a partnership with PennDOT and money from the Federal Highway Administration. Mr. Donchez said this program is referred to as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Mr. Donchez said the first round of funding occurred in 1992, and since that period of time, LVTS has awarded 49 projects worth nearly \$19 million in transportation enhancement type funds. These programs fund non-motorized transportation improvements. They include improvements to trails, sidewalks and other forms of transportation that don't necessarily involve the automobile. Other eligible projects include bike paths, bike education programs (K-8), archeological studies that relate to a transportation project, construction of overlooks for viewing areas, and vegetation management. Over a two year period, LVTS will be getting a total of \$1.27 million. LVTS is solely responsible for awarding the funds to chosen applicants. Mr. Donchez highlighted some of the projects that received funding in the past.

We had a kick off meeting yesterday and about 20 different entities attended the workshop. LVPC staff, in conjunction with PennDOT, will be reviewing Lehigh Valley applications for this program. LVTS will be awarding the \$1.27 million to chosen applicants. Mr. Donchez said these programs typically have been very popular in the past. There are typically many more applications we receive than the amount of funding that is available. The application period opens the beginning of February and it closes April 4<sup>th</sup>. Applications have to be submitted electronically to PennDOT, and then PennDOT submits them to the appropriate MPOs by the middle of April. We will be reviewing those applications with PennDOT and will be making a recommendation. LVTS will have the final decision in June. That is the local portion of the program. The state has \$25 million available they can award to applicants anywhere throughout the state. An application can be awarded through us or PennDOT. Mr. Donchez said the application is available on PennDOT's website. Also, our website has a link to the application.

***OLD BUSINESS – None***

***NEW BUSINESS – None***

***CORRESPONDENCE – None***

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT******Municipal Assistance Program Grant for SW Lehigh County***

Ms. Bradley said we have been working with Southwestern Lehigh County to put in a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development to update their existing Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. The group is made up of Lower Macungie, Macungie, Alburtis, Emmaus, Upper Milford and Lower Milford. Ms. Bradley said we offer comprehensive plan writing and update services as well as SALDO and zoning ordinance update services. Ms. Bradley said we can also assist with getting grant money to help with those efforts.

Mr. Herman asked the board if there is anything they want to bring to the attention of the staff. Mr. Dougherty asked if the Transportation Committee or LVTS has given any thought to weigh in on the recommendation in the State Transportation Plan about the \$5 fee for car registrations to be used for local bridges and projects. Ms. Bradley said we have been communicating with Lehigh County directly and have been reviewing the State Act to see how we might provide assistance in that regard. Northampton County hasn't reached out to us on that yet. Mr. Dougherty said in Lehigh County it means \$1.5 million. Some of our bridges are in very bad condition. Most of the bridge money that comes to the counties is from the Liquid Fuels Tax which was based on car registrations in 1929. Ms. Bradley said if the counties decide to take advantage of that program it will require the passage of an ordinance and structure to move that money and prioritize it. Mr. Dougherty said it will mean so much more if LVTS, the Transportation Committee or the whole Commission would make a recommendation to the counties. Ms. Bradley said she and Mr. Gurinko spoke about that today. Mr. Gurinko said he believes the way the program would work is that the county would assess the fee, the fee would be paid to PennDOT and PennDOT would funnel it back to the county. The fee cannot be instituted prior to January 1, 2015. Mr. Gurinko said that money can typically be leveraged as a local match for either state and/or federal funds. Ms. Bradley said you can't think about this money as just fixing bridges now. We have to think about this long-term and when the bridges are fixed and being able to funnel this money toward additional infrastructure projects within the terms of the Act. We are going to prepare a summary and a "how to" for both counties. We'll put that together for the Commission to look at. Mr. Repasch asked about the timing. Ms. Bradley said we will have something for the Commission next month.

Mr. Repasch made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,

Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# *Memo*



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*March 27, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

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Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
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Virginia Haas  
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#### **Northampton County**

Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Karen Dolan  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
Matt Glennon  
George Kinney  
Bob Lammi  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Karen Duerholz, Kenneth McClain, Lisa Scheller, Christen Borso, Charles Fraust, George Gemmel, Darlene Heller, Kevin Lott, Michael Reph and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Joe Gurinko, David Berryman, Sue Rockwell and Josh Spano.

***Public Present:*** Cristiano Lima, WFMZ

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

Mr. Herman welcomed new Commission members George Kinney and Karen Dolan.

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the February 27, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Repasch. Ms. Pandl seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Lower Nazareth Township – Curative Amendment***

Mr. Berryman said there is a draft review letter on pages 7-9 of the agenda attachments. A copy of a section from the PA Municipalities Planning Code on curative amendments was provided to each Commission member. Pennsylvania is the only state in the country that has this type of process where a landowner can challenge an ordinance and offer a cure of an alleged defect in the ordinance. The proposed project is Stone Post Meadows which calls for about 500 apartments on several properties at the intersection of Country Club Road and Hecktown Road. The LVPC previously reviewed a proposed zoning amendment earlier this year. The Township Planning Commission recommended against the amendment. The Township never acted on it. The developer then filed the curative amendment. The developer claims the Township is unlawfully restricting apartments throughout the Township. The cure, however, would only benefit the developer's property. Based on the information presented by the developer, we don't agree that the Township's ordinance is invalid. Also, we find the cure to be technically deficient in several areas. Mr. Berryman reviewed the draft letter. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***East Allen Township – Zoning Map Amendments***

Mr. Berryman said there is a draft review letter on page 10 of the agenda attachments. The Township is proposing to rezone about 15.3 acres west of Route 512 and south of Locust Road from Agricultural/Rural Residential to Planned Commercial. The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. This area is recommended for farmland preservation. He noted that the LVPC completed a similar review in 2010 related to property directly adjacent to the south of the site. That proposal was also found inconsistent with the county plan. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Glennon seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Repasch abstaining.

***MPC Reviews***

Ms. Wright said there are four summary sheet items on page 11 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### *2013 Subdivision and Building Activity Report*

Mr. Berryman said a copy of the report is at each Commission member's place. Since last year, there has been an increase in the number of overall plans received by 20%. Total lots have increased by about 91%, proposed lots are slightly lower and approved lots have increased by over 130%. Approved non-residential development increased by about 288% from 2012 totals. The report shows 10 year trends of the data. Mr. Berryman reviewed the report. A chart was handed out that compares regional unemployment and subdivision activity from 1973 – 2013. As seen in the chart, when there is higher unemployment, there is lower subdivision activity. When there is lower unemployment, there is higher subdivision activity. A new chart was prepared that compares proposed single family dwellings and apartments by unemployment rate and annual average mortgage rate. Since 2008, there have been more apartments proposed than single family dwellings. In the past, no matter how poor the economy, single family units have always been higher. Also, the unemployment rate and mortgage rate cross over in 2008. Despite the lower mortgage rate, more apartments are being proposed. Ms. Dolan asked if this could be people moving into the cities into existing homes. Mr. Berryman said it's possible, but he's trying to find an explanation for the significant drop-off. Ms. Bradley said Gen-X and Gen-Y have more debt than previous generations and are tending to move into existing units. We will be releasing a full housing plan around May 15 that will probably explain some of this. Mr. Glennon noted that even though mortgage rates are low, people aren't qualifying for loans due to tighter regulations on bank loans. Mr. Hozza asked if there is any plan to do a study that looks at single family dwellings being converted to rental units. Ms. Bradley said there are very few municipalities that track rental properties. Allentown and Easton have significant programs for tracking rentals. The data is hard to get without a program in place. Ms. Wright made a motion release the report. Mr. Schweyer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### *Environment Committee*

#### *Northampton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan – Status Report*

Mr. Reese said a copy of the scope of services was at each Commission member's place. We have an agreement with the county to do this work. We've already begun working on this project. Mr. Reese briefly reviewed each task listed in the scope of services. He pointed out that we will be documenting the economic benefits provided by open space resources in a Return on Environment study. This will be done a little differently than what is shown in the scope. The study will be done as a two county effort using separate funding from the HUD Sustainability Program. We will be working with Wildlands Conservancy and a consultant named John Rogers who has done this type of work throughout the state. The study will be completed this year since the HUD project must be completed this year. The schedule for completion of the open space plan is we will have a draft plan this time next year with a final plan by next fall. Ms. Dolan asked how this will impact how open space funds are allocated by the county. Mr. Reese said we don't know for sure yet. We will be evaluating the county's guidelines with county staff. Ms. Dolan asked if the open space referendum is binding or not and if there is an effort to not give out some of the money. Mr. Reese said the Return on Environment study will assign dollar amounts to environmental benefits. One of the main reasons to do this study is to make sure politicians and others understand exactly what you gain dollar-wise, not just environmentally. We are not predetermining how that turns out.

*Resolution for Lehigh County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan*

Ms. Bradley said we are presenting a resolution to apply to DCNR for a grant to offset some of the costs of preparing a Lehigh County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. The scope of work will be similar to the Northampton County scope of work. The resolution must be submitted with the grant application that is due by April 16. We are in the process of preparing the grant for the county. We are making the request this evening for support of the resolution. Mr. Glennon asked if it would be helpful to have letters of support from Lehigh County municipalities. Mr. Reese said yes. Ms. Bradley said what is also important is that without an updated county plan, communities can't receive DCNR funding. Ms. Morgan asked if a letter of support template could be provided to the municipalities. Mr. Reese said we could do that. Mr. Dougherty made a motion to adopt the resolution. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*Status Report on Climate and Energy Elements*

Ms. Rockwell said, under the HUD Sustainability Grant, the LVPC is responsible for preparing climate and energy elements for the County Comprehensive Plan complete with goals, policies and strategies. The current plan does not have these elements. To help with this work, we established an advisory committee. Our Environment Committee is serving in that capacity. We have been meeting on climate and energy since last October. We have prepared a draft climate element and provided it to the Committee for review and comment. We anticipate that we will have a draft for your consideration next month. Mr. Berryman and Ms. Obi are currently working on the energy element and should have a draft to the Committee next month.

*Transportation Committee*

Ms. Bradley announced that Mr. Spano will be leaving the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission to move back home to Pittsburgh. Mr. Spano thanked Commission members for the opportunity, and he has enjoyed working here very much.

*2013 Traffic Trends Report*

Mr. Spano said a copy of the report and the power point presentation is at each Commission member's place. He said the LVPC annually conducts approximately 100 traffic counts throughout Lehigh and Northampton counties under a contract with PennDOT. The counts are useful in monitoring traffic flows, determining traffic background growth rates, calibrating the regional travel demand forecasting model, projecting future traffic volumes, determining road design, allocating federal funds, determining priorities for improvement projects, assessing air quality impacts, and maintaining congestion management systems. In addition, commercial realtors and developers utilize the data for marketing properties. Mr. Spano briefly reviewed the report. Mr. Diacogiannis made a motion to release the report. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*Discussion on Act 89 Registration Surcharge*

Mr. Gurinko said Act 89 was passed in November 2013 by the Pennsylvania Legislature. It provided additional transportation funding in Pennsylvania at the state level which in part matches

federal dollars for transportation. In addition to providing additional funding for highways, bridges and transit, there was about a 60% increase in the amount of money that will go to local units of government under a local fuels program. In addition to that, the legislature provided the counties the capability to have a \$5 surcharge tacked on to the vehicle registrations within that county. PennDOT would collect the money as part of their motor license fund and then rebate that money back to the county.

At last month's Commission meeting, members suggested the Transportation Committee look at making a recommendation to both local counties as to whether it would be fruitful for them to consider applying that surcharge. Mr. Gurinko said the county surcharge is \$5 per vehicle registered within that county. It can't be levied prior to January 1, 2015. The county needs to adopt an ordinance at least 90 days in advance to collect this money. We contacted PennDOT to find out what exactly they had in the way of information regarding not only the ordinance but also how can that money specifically be used. To get an idea of the funding this might provide, Lehigh County had about 224,000 registered drivers in 2012, which would yield about \$1.1 million per year, and Northampton County had about 200,000 registered drivers, which would yield about \$1 million. The Committee earlier debated what kind of information is needed. The Committee was not yet comfortable on making a recommendation given the lack of information on how the money might be used, what restrictions might be placed on the money once it is received from PennDOT, and not having a sample ordinance. PennDOT is working on a sample ordinance. The Committee would like to continue to compile this information and bring it back to the Commission either next month or the end of May with additional information to better consider this topic. Mr. Diacogiannis said the Committee is leaning toward supporting a recommendation to the counties to apply the surcharge. Mr. Dougherty said the information he has is Lehigh County could receive \$1.5 million.

Mr. Gurinko said in Pennsylvania there are no county owned roads but both counties own bridges. Lehigh County owns 47 bridges and Northampton County owns 117 bridges. We promised the Committee we would try to get information on the condition of those bridges in terms of how many are structurally deficient. Ms. Bradley said we don't know what the Office of General Counsel of the State will say the money can be used for. The law just says transportation. We think it will be just for county purposes. Mr. Dougherty said mass transit is excluded. Mr. Herman said this raises an interesting point. If in fact the counties implement this, the question becomes the prioritization of limited resources. Ms. Bradley said all of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are asking if this money is supposed to come through the MPOs because we do the regional prioritization of state and federal money now, or is it going to the counties.

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

### *State of the Lehigh Valley*

Ms. Bradley said we recently sponsored the State of the Lehigh Valley event. About 180 people attended the event. This was a partnership between the colleges and universities and the LVPC. Ms. Bradley said she would provide a link to the report.

*Business Matters – WFMZ, Monday, March 31*

Ms. Bradley said the episode was originally scheduled to run March 24, but was rescheduled to run March 31. Ms. Bradley, Mr. Cunningham, LVEDC; Mr. Napa, Allen Township; and Mr. Heimbach, Hanover Township Lehigh County were the guest speakers discussing the FedEx project.

*Floodplain Management Forum*

Ms. Bradley said we hosted the Floodplain Management Forum last Thursday. About 40 people attended. Speakers included Dan Fitzpatrick, the State Floodplain Manager and Dave Berryman who presented our model floodplain regulations. The Township Planning Directors' Association, in a recent conversation, requested we send the regulations out statewide.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Subdivision Regulations Webinar*

Ms. Bradley said several weeks ago we sponsored the webinar in partnership with the PA Planning Association – Lehigh Valley Chapter. The event was well attended. She thanked Bethlehem Township for hosting the event.

**NEW BUSINESS***Climate + Energy Community Forum*

Ms. Bradley said a climate and energy forum is scheduled for April 17 at the Nurture Nature Center in Easton. We will be presenting our draft climate and energy goals, policies and strategies to start getting public feedback.

*Housing Plan Release*

Ms. Bradley said we have scheduled a public presentation of our housing plan on May 15 at Symphony hall in Allentown. Invitations to the event will be going out shortly. We expect it will be very well attended since there is a significant amount of new information that has never been presented before.

**CORRESPONDENCE***Safe Harbor Easton*

Ms. Bradley said we have a Jeans for a Cause program where staff can wear jeans on Friday for a donation of \$2. Every month staff picks a charity in the region to send the donation. We recently received a thank you letter from Safe Harbor Easton.

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT****Director of Community Planning*

Ms. Bradley reported that we have a new Director of Community Planning that will be starting on May 1. His name is Eric MacAfee. He is originally from Indianapolis, Indiana. He has a degree in English from Northwestern Illinois University, a Master's Degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master's Degree in Design from Harvard University. He is currently working in Detroit. Prior to that, he worked on Superstorm Sandy relief efforts and before that, he worked in Afghanistan on Base planning for four separate Bases – three U.S. and one German. He will be helping communities with zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances and comprehensive plans. He will oversee the subdivision and land development review process.

*Community Awards + Release of Sustainable Communities Final Document*

Ms. Bradley said we are in the process of booking a facility for our Community Awards Ceremony and release of the final Sustainable Communities document. We anticipate holding the event in October or November. We are expecting this to be a fairly large event.

Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting

Submitted by,

Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# *Memo*



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*April 24, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Percy Dougherty  
Steven Glickman  
Virginia Haas  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Christina Morgan  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Lisa Scheller  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
Darlene Heller  
George Kinney  
Bob Lammi  
Kevin Lott  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph

***Members absent:*** Karen Duerholz, Armand Greco, Michael Hefele, Kenneth McClain, Peter Schweyer, Gordon Campbell, Karen Dolan, Charles Fraust, George Gemmel, Matthew Glennon, Thomas Nolan, Lori Sywensky and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Joe Gurinko, David Berryman, Sue Rockwell, Chris Mikkadan and William Deegan.

***Public Present:*** Don Cunningham, LVEDC; Mark Baird and Wayne Price, NRG Energy

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR******MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the March 27, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Dougherty. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Lehigh County SALDO Application – Request for Extension – Edwin Ziegler Minor Subdivision/Land Development Plans, Borough of Slatington***

Mr. Berryman said Mr. Ziegler proposed this plan to the Comprehensive Planning Committee last summer, and the Committee recommended more work be done on the stormwater aspects. In order to handle the stormwater on his site, he needs to use a portion of the adjoining property. This property is owned by a company in New Jersey. The reason for the extension of an additional month is they are still negotiating a lease for the property. The extension request is on page 8 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the extension. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***South Whitehall Township – Draft Zoning Ordinance (MPC Review)***

Mr. Berryman said South Whitehall Township has a draft Zoning Ordinance. Overall, the ordinance is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. A draft review letter and technical comments are on pages 9-11 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Berryman reviewed the draft Zoning Map. The big change is the Rural Holding District (RH) is being replaced by Rural Residential 2 (RR-2) and Rural Residential 3 (RR-3) Zoning Districts. Mr. Berryman said the nature of the area will generally remain rural. The Township is proposing inclusion of “innovation districts” that provide flexibility and creativity in the future layout and design of areas of the Township. We think those are pretty good ideas for the most part. Mr. Berryman reviewed a map of these proposed districts. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the review letter. Ms. Pandl seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ms. Morgan abstaining.

***Lynn Township – Age Qualified Community Overlay District (MPC Review)***

Mr. Berryman said the Township is proposing an Age Qualified Community Overlay District. A draft review letter is on pages 12-13 of the agenda attachments. There has been a history to this type of overlay. In 2005, the LVPC saw a similar idea for an Active Adult Overlay that would have developed a couple of hundred homes on the Olde Homestead golf course in the Township. The LVPC opposed that for the same reasons we oppose the current proposal. However, the Township approved it and then later repealed it. When you think about Lynn Township, you think about farming and the Blue Mountain. The County Comprehensive Plan shows it as largely farmland preservation and natural features. There are not a lot of urban development areas. This particular zoning would allow urban type development. The overlay district would basically be allowed everywhere in the Township. Also, accessory uses can

be placed in the Blue Mountain and/or Agricultural Preservation Zoning Districts. Overall, we have not supported urban development in Lynn Township. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*Portland Borough – Draft Comprehensive Plan (MPC Review)*

Mr. Berryman said a draft review letter is on page 14 of the agenda attachments. The draft plan is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Wright made a motion to approve the review letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Herman abstaining.

*MPC Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there are six summary sheet items on page 15 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Pandl seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Lott abstaining on Item Nos. 1 and 2 and Ms. Pearson abstaining on Item No. 5.

*Report on Housing Study*

Ms. Bradley said we have been working for almost a year on developing a Regional Housing Plan. We are at the point where we are drafting goals, policies and implementation steps. We would like to bring those to the Commission as well as the Housing Advisory Committee and some of the selected partners who have helped work on this housing study. On May 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. we will be hosting an event at Miller Symphony Hall in the Rodale Room. This is designed to be a discussion and to formulate the draft goals, policies and implementation tools, as well as to, provide some information and background data. It is not a meeting where we expect anything to be finalized. We will be soliciting comments and facilitating a discussion at that time. You have an invitation at your place and we hope you can attend.

Mr. Reese briefly reviewed some of the information from the study using a power point presentation. He said there are three parts to the creation of this report. The first part was updating the 2007 Affordable Housing Study. The second was incorporating the data from the Housing Sales Report completed earlier this year for housing sales in Lehigh and Northampton counties from 2008-2012. The third was analyzing the Lehigh Valley's jobs/housing balance.

One of the most important things about the jobs/housing balance is where people work and where they live. There are 186,497 people who both work and live in the Lehigh Valley. There are about 88,000 people that live elsewhere who come to the Lehigh Valley to work. There are 103,000 people who live in the Lehigh Valley but work outside of the Lehigh Valley. We are a net exporter of labor. We are trying to find out if there is enough affordable housing for workers to live close to their jobs. As part of this work, five main jobs centers were located that include 94% of all employees in the Valley. So this is where people work (power point map). Now we have to find where they could live in a reasonable proximity to their jobs. These are housing sheds (power point map). There are five housing sheds that were identified surrounding the job centers. Mr. Reese said transit areas were also identified within a ½ mile from a LANta route in housing sheds 1-3. He briefly explained how all these areas were located.

This data is going to be reported across 13 occupations, which makes it a little bit different than the work done in 2007. We are looking at the entire spectrum of affordability, every occupation and income. We are not just looking at the lower income thresholds of affordability. Mr. Reese identified some of the findings from the study.

Mr. Glickman asked if the study is going to continue and suggest ways to remediate some of the issues. Mr. Reese said yes. The final product will be a strategic housing plan laying out all the specific recommendations to address identified shortcomings. Ms. Pandl asked if this will look at active adult communities. Mr. Reese said we will be having more conversations with our consultant on that topic. Ms. Bradley said the 55 and up community is the number one type of housing being proposed right now. The interesting thing for us is looking at the makeup of our population and where we expect our population projections to go. This is going to be a significant part of the work we'll be talking about going forward on this issue. It will probably be separate from the housing plan as a whole.

### ***Environment Committee***

#### *Status Report on Climate and Energy Elements*

Mr. Lammi said the Environment Committee continues to talk about the climate change and energy components of the plan. We had a good discussion on Tuesday and the draft elements are continuing to evolve. The plan is to present them at the Commission meeting in May. There is a meeting scheduled for June 19 to present them to the public.

#### *Reviews*

Mr. Lammi said there is one summary sheet item on page 16 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Rockwell said the landfill accepts ash generated from the combustion of coal at the Portland Generating Station. The generating station is a coal, natural gas and oil fired electric generating plant. The coal fired section will be closed by June 1, 2014. The deactivation of the coal-burning units eliminates the need for ash disposal at the landfill. The permit modification is to close and cap the landfill. The site will be returned to a natural area. The only comment we have is that a stormwater review may be required per Act 167. The applicant should provide documentation necessary for review determination. Mr. Lammi made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### ***Transportation Committee***

#### *Traffic Safety Plan for the Lehigh Valley 2008-2012*

Mr. Mukkadan presented the Traffic Safety Plan for the Lehigh Valley. A copy of the report was provided to each Commission member. The report has been changed from being more of a statistical report to more of a resource for the municipalities. He said the emphasis is on fatalities and major injuries crashes, the current status and goals, and on significant crash types in the Lehigh Valley. The crash data comes from the PennDOT crash database. We looked at 5 year averages to get a better idea of the trends in traffic safety. The goal is to reduce 5 year fatalities and major injuries averages by 50% by 2030. He briefly reviewed some of the information in the report. He said engineering solutions can't solve all the safety issues. Mr. Mukkadan said we also need to focus on education and enforcement in

order to reduce negative driver behavior. About 80% to 90% of crashes are due to driver behavior. Our next steps will be to continue conducting safety improvement studies. We would like to provide fact sheets to the municipalities on where they stand as far as traffic safety. We will continue to attend Citizens Traffic Advisory Committee meetings. Mr. Mukkadan said this plan is updated biannually. Mr. Hozza asked if there has been any study done on the correlation between the elimination of driver's education in the schools and the increase in crash rates with young drivers. Mr. Mukkadan said he did not know. Mr. Gurinko said that issue came up a few years ago. We looked to see if safety capital funding could be used to subsidize those programs and it can't be. The money is intended for engineering solutions only.

#### *Transportation Alternatives Program*

Ms. Bradley said we previously gave a presentation about this program. It basically provides small amounts of money to communities and school districts for Safe Routes to Schools, sidewalk improvement projects, and crosswalk type projects. We have a budget of \$1.27 million and we have received \$5.42 million worth of requests. We received 22 applications with the majority coming from Lehigh County communities. We will be hosting a 5 minute mini-presentation by all of the applicants on May 13. The Lehigh Valley Transportation Study will be making a decision on who will be awarded those funds on June 4. There are a lot of worthy projects. This will be a difficult decision. Mr. Hozza asked if this will be happening every three years. Ms. Bradley said the funding comes directly from the federal government and the funding is unpredictable. She said right now it's a two year cycle.

#### *TIGER Grant*

Ms. Bradley said this is an interesting public/private partnership the LVPC entered into with the Airport Authority, LANta, Rockefeller Development Group and Lehigh Valley Industrial Parks. Ms. Bradley said TIGER stands for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery. It is a program administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation and you can request anywhere from \$10 million to \$200 million. The project supports the development of a multi-modal corridor around the airport, which is one of our most congested corridors in the region. Our application would not cover improvements to Rt. 22 itself. It would support the transportation network around it – Airport Road, Race Street and Schoenersville Road. It would allow those economic development projects to move forward with things like pedestrian facilities, new bus shelters on Race Street and the widening of that road. It would include intersection improvements along Schoenersville Road from Airport Road to Eighth Avenue in Bethlehem. It would also provide new gateway improvements into the airport facility with the creation of a multi-modal bus, taxi, and hotel shuttle area as well as a new circulation pattern inside the airport itself. Right now our request is for \$38 million, but that could change based on costs from Rockefeller Group on additional pedestrian improvements to assist in reducing fatal crashes on Race Street.

Ms. Bradley said we serve as the fiduciary and administrative arm for the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study so we need a resolution that would reaffirm that commitment, particularly as it relates to the TIGER grant itself, to submit the application and to support the project. Mr. Diacogiannis made a motion to adopt the resolution. Mr. Dougherty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***OLD BUSINESS****Lehigh County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan Grant*

Ms. Bradley said she wanted to let the Commission know we submitted the grant application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for this project.

*Presentation of the Regional Economic Development Plan by LVEDC President and CEO Don Cunningham*

Mr. Cunningham said that tonight he will give a quick overview of some of the economic development planning that has gone forward. He noted that everyone should have a copy of the Economic Development Marketing magazine that was recently completed for the Lehigh Valley. This is the first time we've done a comprehensive marketing magazine for outside of the Lehigh Valley. Also, everyone should have a short summary document related to the Garner Economics economic development study of the region. A copy of the full study is on the LVEDC website. The study is part of the HUD sustainability project.

Mr. Cunningham said we needed to look at developing a strategic plan around both attracting companies here and retaining and expanding companies currently in the Lehigh Valley. We had to know our strengths and weaknesses to have a smart strategic plan. The most critical part of the study is what makes us different from everyone else. Mr. Cunningham noted that Garner said they have never seen a region as asset rich as the Lehigh Valley. When the study was done, they came up with 38 strong assets, 11 challenges and 17 indicators that were neutral. Key indicators were access to markets, access to capital, access to resources, labor availability and costs, access to space, quality of life, government impacts on business, regulation and taxation and the region's economic development program and coordination. One of our strengths is our access to markets, which has been driving economic growth over the last 5 years. We are centrally located from the east coast market. We are well positioned to serve international markets. LVEDC is presently working with 14 different prospects. More than one third of the prospects are international. This summer you will probably see some announcements about internationally based companies locating here. The international market is one of our prime opportunities. Our well-defined transportation infrastructure, our quality of life, low crime rates, good schools, our labor dynamic and access to capital are all attractive to potential companies. Some things came up as both strengths and weaknesses. On the government side, infrastructure rules in the economic development world, including the availability of water and sewer resources. The consultant lists some challenges such as skill gaps in work force training. We are working with different organizations to help with this training. Also, companies don't like the percentage of unionization; they want to pay less for salaries. Electricity costs were on the mid- to high end, government impacts on business, traffic carrying capacity on streets and highways, level of state costs to business, unemployment insurance, local business permitting procedures and costs, and on the state level, corporate income tax, and local property tax on the local level. In comparison to adjoining metropolitan counties such as Bucks, Berks, Montgomery, we are a little lower, but when they look at a map of the 67 counties across Pennsylvania of which most are rural, we are higher. The Lehigh Valley can leverage these assets by engaging optimal targets. There are four areas that we feel we can build a future economic development strategy around: 1) high performance manufacturing, 2) high value business services, 3) food and beverage processing, and 4) life sciences research and manufacturing. Mr. Cunningham briefly described each area.

We have been working on all of the marketing around these things; it is very target oriented. We target market to get the most out of our marketing budget. Mr. Cunningham said we have had some great success as a region. At this year's Industrial Asset Management Council we will be one of three areas to be featured at that conference next week. This is basically attended by all of the corporate managers of facilities who make the decisions on relocations and where to expand their businesses. Mr. Cunningham said Ms. Bradley and Mr. Reese have been helping him prepare for a presentation at Princeton University for the I-95 coalition from Maine to Florida about Lehigh Valley development opportunities and economic assets. Also, he will be at the National Industrial Real Estate Conference. They picked two areas of the country to feature at their national conference. This year one is Norfolk, Virginia and the other is the Lehigh Valley. We are very much recognized as a growth area primed for more growth. We are trying to build an economic strategy around how to affect the market and move to some of the things we would like to see grow here using our existing assets. The World Forum for Direct Investment is holding their first conference in the United States in June. It will be held in Philadelphia. We were awarded the only tour outside of Philadelphia.

Mr. Dougherty asked about the big negative in the Garner report of fragmentation. We run into that at the Planning Commission because the state law does not coordinate planning at the county or regional level. He asked what LVEDC is going to do to overcome this, and when you are dealing with prospects, how they interact with you about that. Mr. Cunningham said Pennsylvania is the most municipality heavy state and we are competing with states that have metro governments that have a very simple one stop shop. We tried as a region to create some regional bodies like LVEDC, or LVPC, where you have a shared services model. We try to create as much of a single point of contact to the customers as we can. Mr. Cunningham said fragmentation is a regional question that goes beyond economic development. One simple thing is to consider regionalized services to make things more efficient and more economical. Mr. Dougherty said we need to find a solution to this, to have more cooperation between the counties, municipalities and various agencies. We want to really be a metropolitan area that works together for the benefit of the entire Lehigh Valley. Mr. Cunningham agreed with Mr. Dougherty on this issue and said one part of the point of having a regional economic development agency is to hopefully overcome that. He concluded his presentation.

#### ***NEW BUSINESS – None***

#### ***CORRESPONDENCE***

##### *Lehigh Valley Business*

Ms. Bradley said she was nominated for the 40 under 40 List in the Lehigh Valley Business Journal by the Executive Committee. She was selected for the list. The Commission members congratulated Ms. Bradley.

##### *Meals on Wheels of Northampton County*

Ms. Bradley said we received a thank you letter from Meals on Wheels for our Jeans for a Cause contribution to them.

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT****Bill Deegan, Architect/Urban Designer*

Ms. Bradley introduced Bill Deegan, our new Architectural/Urban Designer. He started about a week ago. He is going to be providing community assistance to municipalities with various projects. If your municipality is looking for technical assistance, please contact us.

*County Planning Directors Association*

Ms. Bradley said Mr. Dougherty asked her to get involved with the County Planning Directors Association. She received a call from the Association, and they asked her to serve on their Executive Committee. Ms. Bradley said yes. She will be more involved with County Planning Directors from around the state.

Ms. Wright made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# *Memo*



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(610) 264-4544

*May 29, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Percy Dougherty  
Steven Glickman  
Armand Greco  
Virginia Haas  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Kenneth McClain  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
George Gemmel  
Matthew Glennon  
Bob Lammi  
Thomas Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Karen Duerholz, Christina Morgan, Stephen Repasch, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Karen Dolan, Charles Elliott, Charles Fraust, Darlene Heller, George Kinney, Kevin Lott, Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, David Berryman, Eric McAfee and Sue Rockwell.

***Public Present:*** Kay and Randy Krapf, Krapf & Sons

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the April 24, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Lammi. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried with abstentions by Mr. Gemmel and Mr. McClain.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Regional Housing Plan Presentation***

Ms. Bradley said on Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup> we had a Regional Housing Plan Meeting at Symphony Hall. She wanted to thank all of the Commission members who attended the meeting. We had 91 people in attendance. It was the first time we held a large off-site event as an organization. We had support from developers, realtors, bankers, elected officials, the Commission, Housing Advisory Committee members, the non-profit community, etc. We learned a lot and got a lot of good feedback. Ms. Bradley gave a brief overview of the power point presentation. The housing plan is one of our deliverables as part of the HUD sustainability grant. Ms. Bradley said it is also the LVPC's responsibility to summarize all our partners' work into a sustainability document. You will see that in early fall. Our deliverables include the Regional Housing Plan, a Model Fair Housing Ordinance, Climate and Energy Elements that will be recommended for the update of the next Comprehensive Plan, a Return on Environment Plan and the Sustainable Communities document.

Ms. Bradley said, as far as the housing plan, we have completed Housing Matters, which is our initial public outreach effort. Public outreach was a very significant effort by us. Our public meetings were held in 15 off-site locations. There were over 100 attendees. We talked about housing 30 times in various meetings here at the LVPC. We conducted various types of surveys and received a lot of responses from a good cross section of the community. We found four main things - people want to live in good quality neighborhoods, they want to be able to afford their home, they want quality schools, and they want to live close to shopping and jobs. We also looked at dwelling ownership as part of the surveys and found that from the on-line and random surveys, Lehigh Valleyians were more likely to own a home than rent. But, we had more renters respond to the self-administered survey. We also developed a housing profile and looked at the jobs-housing relationship and affordability.

From our forecasts, the population will continue to grow by as much as 1% per year through 2040. If you compare population to age, we can expect to see a significant increase in our younger population over the next 20 years. Ms. Bradley said you will also see significant increases in our older population from 2020-2040. The region is also, becoming more diverse. The Hispanic population has significantly increased since 1990. Most segments of our employment are anticipated to grow with the exception of manufacturing and all other employment not shown on the slide. As far as whether people are living in family households or non-family households, between 1990 and 2010, the number of family households shrank from 72% to 68%. The number of non-family households increased from 28% to 32%. The number of people per household is expected to decline from 2.50% to 2.45%, which isn't too much of a decrease over the next 20 years. The Lehigh Valley will continue to be a very family friendly area. We found a lot of people are moving here from New York and New Jersey. We took all

of this baseline information and developed a housing profile. Ms. Bradley said if you own your home in Lehigh County, the median value is \$203,000. Northampton County has a median value of \$220,000. Median value in New Jersey is \$395,000. The medium gross monthly rent in New Jersey is \$1,100, and in the Lehigh Valley it is \$810.

Also, we looked at housing types in the Lehigh Valley. About 56% of our total housing stock is single family detached housing, 22% is attached housing, 13% is multi-family (5+ units), and 9% is 2-4 family units. In Pennsylvania, the vacancy rate is 9.9%, the Lehigh County vacancy rate is 6.1% and the Northampton County vacancy rate is 5.6%. We looked at distressed properties including lender mediated properties, short sales, actual foreclosures and bank owned properties. We also looked at the impact of those distressed properties. About 13% of all homes for sale are in some sort of distress and 17% of closed sales were of distressed properties as well. This gives you an indication of where we are now in relationship to typical sales in the region. Allentown has the highest concentration of those lender mediated properties. They account for almost 25% of their sales and 31% of their closed sales. The Lehigh Valley as a whole has 70% of people owning their homes and 30% renting. This is important information. Different races and ethnicities have different opportunities and/or preferences for housing as revealed in RKG's analysis. Also, if you have more education, you are more likely to own a home. People with less than a high school education are more likely to rent. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development set some standards for what percentage of your income you shouldn't go over in terms of housing costs. They said you shouldn't spend over 30% of your income on housing. We also looked at what HUD defines as very low, low and moderate incomes. We looked at those breakdowns as far as what you should be able to afford from an ownership and rental perspective. In terms of cost burdened owners, in 2000, 61% of the population in the low income group was cost burdened, and 81.5% were elderly. In 2010, less of our elderly population was burdened, but 52% of the very low income group were burdened. We found cost burdening increased at the lower end but decreased in the elderly population. The same goes for renters in the very low income spectrum.

Ms. Bradley said we have five housing authorities in the region. We have 4,100 housing vouchers in circulation and 3,400 managed units. We still have at least 5,400 people on the government assisted housing wait list. Clearly there is a significant demand for low income housing. Next month we will discuss housing affordability and then the jobs-housing balance. She said the housing presentation will be on our website for review.

Mr. Herman said the presentation was very well received and commended staff for the work done. He said it brought many concepts to think about such as if interest rates return to normal, what happens to housing affordability? These are very interesting issues to consider. Mr. McClain asked how the redevelopment in Allentown might affect low income housing availability. Mr. Hefele said he doesn't think anything is happening yet, but they are monitoring it because they have to look out for the existing population. There is some anecdotal evidence that rents and property values are rising, but he hasn't seen it yet.

Ms. Bradley noted that housing size is decreasing. More townhouses are being built and there is a cottage type development being proposed in Allentown. The market has substantially shifted from larger homes to more modestly sized homes. Mr. Dougherty asked about the wait listed population. He asked if we have we broken it down further to see the longevity of residency in the area or are these recent people. Ms. Bradley said specific information is managed through the Housing Authority. Some

of that information is protected. We'll provide what we can. Mr. Herman said he is not sure if the Housing Authorities have the kind of details Mr. Dougherty is looking for. Generally, for the people on the waiting lists, their circumstances can change rapidly. Ms. Bradley said we will be bringing a lot more information next month on affordable housing. Mr. Dougherty said he is looking for the results from the housing study for more direction on where government funding should go. Ms. Bradley said the study may not have the exact information about funding programs he is looking for.

*Lehigh County SALDO Application – Request for Extension – Edwin Ziegler Minor Subdivision/Land Development Plan, Borough of Slatington*

Mr. Berryman said Mr. Ziegler needs to install stormwater facilities on his neighbor's property. For that to happen, they need to sign a lease. The lease has been signed, but they missed our cut off for this month's meeting. The lease document is important because we want to make sure the neighbor is aware that stormwater facilities will be on his property. The applicant will be back for our meeting in June. Ms. Wright made a motion to grant the extension. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*Lynn Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Parcel Rezonings from Agricultural Protection to General Commercial/Industrial (MPC Review)*

Mr. Berryman said there is a packet that includes our draft review letter, an attachment we received from the Township that shows the property, and an aerial image of the properties. The properties are currently zoned Agricultural Preservation. The proposal is to rezone them to General Commercial/Industrial Zoning District, which is one of Lynn's Township more intensive zoning districts. The properties in question are mostly residential in nature. The change will result in several properties becoming non-conforming uses.

Lynn Township has a lot of Agricultural Preservation. According to the County Comprehensive Plan, much of the Township is recommended for Farmland Preservation with limited urban development. The proposal does not meet the three part criteria for expansion of urban development in the county plan. It would also create inconsistent zoning districts at the municipal boundary with Heidelberg Township. Heidelberg Township zoning is Agricultural Preservation. We also note in our letter that we don't believe these properties about the existing Industrial Zoning District. If this would be approved by the Township, it would create a bubble of Industrial surrounded by Agricultural Preservation. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*MPC Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there are 18 summary sheet items on pages 10-12 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. McClain abstaining on Item No. 4 and Mr. Reph abstaining on Item Nos. 1 and 5.

***Environment Committee******Reviews***

Ms. Rockwell said there are six summary sheet items on pages 13-14 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Hozza abstaining on Item No. 3.

***Transportation Committee - None******OLD BUSINESS - None******NEW BUSINESS******Follow us on LinkedIn***

Ms. Bradley said we now are on LinkedIn. If you want to connect with us, we will accept you.

***CORRESPONDENCE******Christ's Church at Lowhill Food Pantry***

Ms. Bradley said on Fridays staff contributes to wear jeans for a cause. We sent money last month to the Lowhill Food Pantry, which deals with rural poverty in Lehigh County. They sent us a nice thank you note for our contribution. We are focusing on veterans and food charities throughout the region.

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT******Welcome Eric McAfee, Director of Community Planning***

Ms. Bradley said we have a new Director of Community Planning, Mr. Eric McAfee. Mr. McAfee joined the staff about two and a half weeks ago. He has worked in Detroit, Afghanistan and New Orleans. He has a lot of disaster planning experience. The Commission welcomed Mr. McAfee.

***Upcoming LVPC Events***

Ms. Bradley said we are updating the Northampton County Livable Landscapes Plan. We have three upcoming public meetings planned in June and you are welcome to attend. Ms. Bradley made the 40 under 40 List and the awards will be presented on June 11. The same evening she will provide a presentation to Lehigh County Commissioners on regional development. There is also a meeting scheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup> at Upper Macungie Township to discuss housing. We will be having a Climate and Energy Meeting at the Nurture Nature Center in Easton on June 19<sup>th</sup>. These are the new elements to be added to the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Bradley will also be at Northampton County on June 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss regional development. We will be teaching a class on housing at the Northeast Pennsylvania

Chapter of Appraisal Institute in Allentown on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Finally, Ms. Bradley and Mr. Gurinko have been doing some teaching at regional colleges.

Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# Memo



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*June 26, 2014*

## **MINUTES**

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 26, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Steven Glickman  
Armand Greco  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Edward Hozza  
Kenneth McClain  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
George Gemmel  
George Kinney  
Bob Lammi  
Thomas Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph

***Members absent:*** Percy Dougherty, Karen Duerholz, Virginia Haas, Ben Howells, Christina Morgan, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Christen Borso, Karen Dolan, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, Kevin Lott, Lori Sywensky, Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Joe Gurinko, David Berryman, Eric McAfee, Ngozi Obi, Sue Rockwell and Gabriel Hurtado.

***Public Present:*** Larry Turoscy, Lehigh Engineering; Louis Gombocz, WFMZ-TV.

## **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the May 29, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Greco. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******MPC Reviews***

Ms. Wright said there are 10 summary sheet items on pages 7–8 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the staff comments. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***Lehigh County SALDO Application – Edwin Ziegler Minor Subdivision/Land Development Plan, Borough of Slatington***

Mr. Berryman said there are a series of three letters that represent Committee action on the plan at Tuesday's meeting. This project is in the Borough of Slatington on Rt. 873 heading out of the Borough. They are proposing an auto parts store on Lot #1 which is currently vacant. They are proposing a truck terminal facility with employee parking on Lot #2. The Borough granted a special exception for the truck terminal. Lot #3 and #4 are existing residential dwellings that have been there quite some time. Since Rt. 873 is a PennDOT road, the applicant secured three highway occupancy permits for the project – there is a driveway proposed for Lot #1, a driveway for Lot #2 and a shared driveway for Lot #3 and #4. The Committee took action on three separate items in regard to this project. The first letter is a request from the applicant for a combined preliminary/final plan application. This means that the Committee and Commission will have the opportunity to review and approve or not approve the plan at one time. The second letter is a request for waivers for the project. There are five waivers that were reviewed at the Committee meeting on Tuesday. The Committee voted to grant the waiver requests. The third letter is for approval by the Commission to grant the applicant conditional combined preliminary/final plan approval subject to the conditions spelled out in the letter. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the combined preliminary/final plan as stated in Letter #1, to grant the five waivers in Letter #2, and the combined preliminary/final lot consolidation plan as presented with conditional approval as stated in Letter #3. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***Regional Housing Plan Presentation***

Ms. Bradley said we have been working to get a draft Regional Housing Plan completed. We have gotten some draft goals back from our consultant, RKG Associates. We would like to present those to you tonight. We had a meeting on Monday with our Housing Advisory Committee where there was some conversation about the preliminary goals. Everyone should have a copy of Chapter 9 from the draft plan that includes the goals and key findings. Mr. McAfee will be going over the key findings of the plan first.

Mr. McAfee said Chapter 2 focuses on the community engagement aspect of the project, titled *Housing Matters*. One of the most telling aspects of the entire process was that, during some

of the community meetings, multiple representatives of the Lehigh Valley Association of Realtors said they were noticing a growing trend that many of the buyers between the ages of 28-35 lacked the necessary 20% down to initiate a potential mortgage. This could have much broader implications not only on their ability to afford housing at a key age when people are starting households, families and settling down, but it also affects whether they choose to be homeowners in the Lehigh Valley or continue to be renters.

Chapter 3 focuses on population and household trends. It includes the numbers and demographics that really make up the Lehigh Valley, not only now but how they have changed over the last 20 years and how they are projected to change over the next 30 years. Overwhelmingly, the population growth from 1980 to 2010 took place in the townships (87%). We do have growth in all 3 of the cities, but it was much more modest. Allentown grew by 11% making it the fastest growing city in Pennsylvania. We expect the Lehigh Valley to become more racially diverse and more and more households will be nonfamily households in the future.

Chapter 4 focuses on the economy. It looks at various industries, impacts wages and income that have shifted over the past several decades. The annual average Lehigh Valley wages are 5% lower than the state as a whole. The household income is actually higher than the state as a whole. Wages may be lower for an individual, but the entire household income is higher. Mr. McAfee said one of the other key considerations is the commuting patterns in the Lehigh Valley that reflect how people look at overall cost of living versus wages. Even though a considerable number of people work and live in the Lehigh Valley, there are also a number of people who commute here but live elsewhere.

Chapter 5 is the housing profile, which constitutes one of our most extensive chapters and certainly one of our most data rich chapters. It looks at things like the median gross rents, which did increase quite a bit since 2000 as did median home values. However, median home values in metro Lehigh Valley are still significantly lower than some of our neighboring metros. Homeownership in the Lehigh Valley is quite high particularly in the townships, at almost 85%. Mr. McAfee said another thing that is really noticeable is the general trend in the preference of certain housing types over others. Single family homes are the most popular at 75.8%. Single family detached are the majority of those homes. The second highest percentage is single family attached.

In Chapter 6, the focus is on housing affordability. We look at all the different housing types and what they have to offer in terms of their variety. We also break it down across the various income groups, usually using the HUD stipulation of Area Median Income (AMI). The AMI can tell you if you are evaluating households that are moderately poor, very poor or extremely poor. We can assess the demands of those households against the supply of housing available in their income range using 30% of their income for rent or mortgage payments. If you spend more than 30% of your income on housing, that is a cost burden. The housing affordability analysis looks at housing types, rental units and makes assessments as to which areas have shortages of housing for various income types and which areas have surpluses. Generally, the middle class population is able to find some kind of single family detached housing. However, when you look to the lower income population, which goes up to the 50% of AMI level, those people are more likely to have to settle for efficiency or one bedroom apartments. This means if you have a household with three or more individuals they are most likely not going to be able to find appropriate size housing they can afford. Also, high income rental undersupply exacerbates low income rental undersupply. What that means is, if there are higher income individuals seeking a certain type of housing and they can't

find that housing, they will ultimately buy down. When they buy down to the next level, they will create more demand at the next income tier and strain the supply.

The Jobs/Housing Balance analysis in Chapter 7 takes this to another level, and it plays specifically to certain types of jobs and their expected earnings. This analysis looks at housing that is available at key job centers in the Lehigh Valley as well as whether or not there is transit available within a certain distance. We looked at this across five key job centers, three of which are spread across Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton. One more job center is in Slatington/Walnutport and the final is in the Slate Belt. All of them have some level of mismatch between housing, employment available and transit access. Job Center 2, which is the largest and includes Allentown and Bethlehem, has significant unmet housing demand, meaning many people will have to commute to much further distances for the jobs available. Mr. McAfee said one final observation is that job and transit center findings reveal a greater likelihood of Lehigh Valley residents commuting out of the Lehigh Valley for work depending on how far east in the Valley they live. Easton is more likely than Allentown to have that New York City influence due to the jobs in northern New Jersey.

Mr. McAfee said Chapter 8 focuses on critical influences on housing markets. We looked at the influence of crime and whether higher crime rates in a jurisdiction have an effect on housing demand. We looked at school performance; better school districts have higher housing demands, driving home values up and also making it more difficult for the lower income population to afford housing in the district. Finally we looked at other creative partnerships in supplying housing, whether it is Section 8 Housing through HUD or employer-assisted housing programs. This broad sweep across these seven chapters helped fuel the ultimate findings we used to formulate our goals and opportunities.

Ms. Obi said there are five goals in the housing plan as recommended by RKG Associates. Ms. Obi briefly identified each of the goals. Mr. Reese said Goals 1 - 4 should look familiar because they are the current goals for housing in the Comprehensive Plan. Anything that appears in bold and italics is new. If it has an asterisk at the end, it will appear again in the Opportunities section of the chapter. Mr. Reese explained the four goals in more detail. Goal #1 has one new strategy that appears in the Opportunities section. Goal #2 has three new strategies, and all three appear in the Opportunities section. Goal #3 has six new strategies, one of which appears in the Opportunities section. Goal #4 has two new strategies, and both are listed again under Opportunities.

Ms. Bradley said according to our consultant, RKG Associates, our current Comprehensive Plan is good. However, we are going to continue to work on housing issues forever. Housing affects all of us. It is an emotional, financial, societal and economic issue. She said the specific needs today are different than they were five years ago or prior to the economic downturn. The consultant said what we need to do is look at our existing environment, how development has changed and how we can coordinate with the nonprofit and for-profit communities, banks and realtors. All these people need to be able to have a long-term discussion under a solid structure on a neutral platform which LVPC is uniquely capable of providing. With that in mind, RKG Associates developed Goal #5 - To create an overarching consortium of housing interests to enhance regional coordination and effectiveness. Ms. Bradley said within the goal, which is brand new to the Comprehensive Plan, there are four specific policies we are recommending. We should look at housing production and sustainability and continually monitor those development patterns and production trends. We should encourage transit-oriented development that supports LANta, mixed-

use development, housing affordability and to work with the community that has specific subregional needs. The next policy is related to housing preservation, revitalization, advocacy and affordability in all of our community types during all periods of a community's life cycle. When we talk about community life cycle, every town, every borough, every city has a trajectory. There are times when economics are good, okay or bad. Our urban communities kept going and are continuing to grow. This is a totally different dynamic than we have ever seen. Since Post WWII America, we have never been in an economy where there is such a great demand for these mixed-use, walkable, multi-modal communities. There has been such a dynamic change, not only in how the Lehigh Valley operates in terms of housing, but how our whole society operates. We need to continue to monitor that. Ms. Bradley said the next policy is on planning and the regulatory environment and how that affects housing development, how we can encourage plans, policies and laws that ensure variety in our housing across all community types. For the final policy, the consultant proposed we look at the impacts of housing finance on how we develop housing and how we support our existing housing. The consultant recommended we create and support public/private development finance in innovative ways to look at housing finance.

In terms of implementation, the consultant suggested we create the Lehigh Valley Housing Study. He explained how this would supplement the work we are doing now. The idea would be we would identify, monitor and coordinate on regional housing issues. We should foster coordination and collaboration with key stakeholders and advocate for equilibrium across all housing issues. RKG said during stakeholder interviews they learned the stakeholders were not communicating with each other or didn't know what the others were doing, and we could be the platform for these discussions to happen. They also recommended we develop a singular, coordinated education outreach and networking effort. We would provide an effective platform for resource development and management to grow the region's competitiveness and eliminate any duplication. However, we need to think about how this fits into the organizational structure of the LVPC. Staff looked at how we can take these policies and strategies and do something at the LVPC to support implementation of these objectives.

Ms. Bradley reviewed the Opportunities for the Regional Housing Plan section of the chapter. Under Opportunity #1, the LVPC can easily provide information support to neighborhood partnership efforts, support Main Street programs and any revitalization activities that encourage stabilization and reuse of underutilized sites. For Opportunity #2, every year we prepare the Subdivision and Building Activity report. She said people don't understand what is being built and sold in the Lehigh Valley. In 2012, only 180 new homes were sold in Lehigh and Northampton counties. This tells you how substantially the housing market has changed; that trend is likely to continue. Getting good information out to people is key to having our elected officials, professionals, and the nonprofit community make good decisions and good policies. We have agreed to augment that annual development and building report with an update of our 2008-2012 home buying report. RKG suggested we build an event around that. For Opportunity #3, one of the implementation tools was to enhance and expand opportunities for nonprofit housing organizations build capacity and collaborate with the private sector. RKG suggested we support the creation of an affordable housing loan consortium. This would bring investors, financial institutions and private individuals together to come up with creative financing tools that would support the rehabilitation of existing housing and support our affordable housing community. Under Opportunity #4, we would increase our level of direct outreach to municipalities on housing issues. We have the professional expertise to provide tailored zoning guides and model ordinances. For Opportunity #5, we want to develop and coordinate a strategic housing rehabilitation program. The Housing

Study would develop a model rehabilitation program translatable to all of our municipalities which would include a property maintenance toolbox and provide specific recommendations on aging-in-place. Opportunity #6 is to promote by-right density increases along commercial corridors. This would be key for a lot of our existing suburban communities where housing development has fallen off significantly. We want them to have opportunities to add value to existing property and therefore to increase tax rateables. We would be able to continue to coordinate with some of our high growth and low growth municipalities to refine or rework their comprehensive plan and official maps. Also, we could talk to them about responsible impact fees and things they need to do to support the continued growth of their community. Opportunity #7 is to monitor regional growth corridors and target municipal outreach to these communities. Ms. Bradley said we will continue to do that through the development of model ordinances. Specifically we are creating a model fair housing ordinance which will be presented to you in a couple of months. This will deal with issues of fairness and access to housing. Lastly, under Opportunity #8 the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission should create a Lehigh Valley Housing Study that brings everybody together on neutral territory to discuss housing issues. We have discussed the formation of the Housing Study with the housing coordinators at both counties. They love it because their work has been specifically focused on the affordability issue. They like the idea of being able to balance affordability with the market rate and have good data to make good decisions.

Mr. Glickman asked what the Housing Committee thought about the study. Ms. Bradley said we only had one person who didn't like it. Everyone else was curious and they really liked the idea that we had credibility as an organization to get the right information out, that our data was solid and we could give that neutrality to an otherwise very competitive environment. Mr. Greco asked to what extent we have done an analysis of the Commission's capacity to do this work. Ms. Bradley said one of the reasons why we didn't talk about these goals sooner is because we didn't know if we could afford to do what was being proposed. We went back and looked at existing staff and decided we could start small. Ms. Bradley said we can start by utilizing an existing position within the organization to specifically address housing issues, not as a full-time job but as a part-time addition to existing tasks. Mr. Glickman asked if the two counties, who said they support this effort, offered any additional means to implement this. Ms. Bradley said no, but she didn't expect it.

Mr. Gemmel said there is nothing in the report about the current number of people who can't find housing and are, in effect, homeless or in shelters. Is that a significant number? Ms. Bradley said that information is going to be in the plan document itself. We were hoping to get a rough preliminary draft to you but we are still in the editing process. The plan is very data heavy for a reason. This is very significant information. There has never been this thorough of an analysis of the region's housing before. Mr. McAfee said the document does not go into just sheer numbers, but is presented as anticipated or perceived racial and ethnic breakdowns of the population, concentrations of poverty by municipality, where the poverty has grown or decreased in the last couple of years. We tried to look at it from a variety of different angles and lenses and form our opinions from that. Mr. Gemmel asked is it that housing simply isn't there, whether it's in the wrong place, needs to be built, or a combination of all three. For example, in the City of Allentown is there sufficient housing, but people don't necessarily want to move into those neighborhoods? Mr. McAfee said yes on both counts. He said Allentown has the highest concentration of affordable housing for the 50% of area median income population. It is one of the municipalities that has shown the least sign of recovering from the 2008 recession, but the population has grown by 11%. It might have something to do with quality of schools and crime rate.

Mr. Gemmel said when realtors say many of their clients have a problem with 20% down, to him, the 20% down is a return to normal. He doesn't know if that is a problem in and of itself. Ms. Bradley said there are a significant number of factors that are affecting the 20-35 year old people being able to afford houses. The debt to income ratio is higher than it has ever been in American history. Mr. Gemmel asked if it was simply the fact they are putting their money to other things rather than saving for a down payment. Ms. Bradley said they have no extra resources. They don't have enough to pay rent, sometimes they have to live with their parents into their 30's because they have taken on so much student loan debt.

Mr. Hozza said Whitehall Township has former factories in 100-year old neighborhoods. They had two proposals in the last two years to convert them to affordable housing. One was a very good legitimate, nonprofit workforce housing proposal where every tenant had to have a job and had to be close to public transportation. It went down in flames due to neighborhood complaints. The feeling is they have enough low to moderate income housing in the Township.

Ms. Bradley said we will get the full report to you as soon as possible and we will take comments through July and then bring the finalized document back to you in August. Mr. Greco said he thinks it is very important that this Board understands whether there are the resources available to accomplish the plan goals, that we're willing to commit ourselves to reorganize to implement this. Ms. Bradley said we did talk to the Executive Committee about this last month. It is only a recommendation now, but as we develop the Strategic Plan, we would figure out to what extent we would get involved with Housing Study activities. She said none of this will happen before next year. Any comments on the housing plan should be addressed to Ms. Bradley.

### ***Environment Committee***

#### ***Preliminary Draft Climate & Energy Document***

Mr. Repasch said everyone should have a copy of the draft Climate and Energy document. It was presented to the Environment and Comprehensive Planning Committees on Tuesday and at several recent public meetings as well. He asked the Commission members to review it and provide any comments to staff. We will be looking for approval in July or August.

### ***Transportation Committee***

#### ***Presentation on Draft 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program***

Mr. Gurinko said there are three sheets in the agenda attachments with information on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP represents the high priority highway, bridge and transit projects which will be using federal and/or state funds to be implemented. It's financially constrained meaning the value of the projects cannot exceed what you would expect to come into the region in terms of funding. The TIP is a four year program that is updated every two years. This particular update covers federal fiscal years 2015-2018.

Mr. Gurinko said with the passage of Act 89 at the state level back in November, the TIP financial resources have grown. The total value of this draft program is more than \$382 million compared to our current four year program, which going into it was valued at just short of \$305 million. Act 89 ramps up over five years. We expect subsequent TIPs will continue to grow until the

Act is fully ramped up. The Lehigh Valley and other areas in the state are seeing significant increases in the value of projects. One of the key things we try to accomplish as we develop the TIP is to get a good list of projects that addresses the many needs. The primary needs are maintenance, mobility and safety. Mr. Gurinko said he thinks 60% - 65%, possibly up to 70%, of these projects are justified on a maintenance basis. This is very heavily skewed toward maintenance. Safety and operations are other major components of this. Mr. Gurinko described some of the major highway projects:

- Rt. 22 Section 400 Phase 2 (Lehigh River Bridge Replacement)
- Rt. 22 Widening

Major safety projects include:

- PA 145/329/ Chestnut Street Intersection
- Rt. 222/Schantz Road/Rt. 863
- SR 248/946 Intersection Safety Improvements
- SR 248/Walnut Drive Intersection

We have a number of operational improvements including:

- Schoenersville Road Corridor
- Lehigh Street Corridor
- Northampton Street Corridor

All three of these projects were studied by LVPC staff and were programmed onto the TIP. Each project includes signal improvements to facilitate traffic flow.

On the bridge side, Mr. Gurinko said we are looking at \$140 million of improvements. Half of that money is taken up by five bridges, four over the Lehigh River, and include:

- Cementon Bridge
- Tilghman Street Bridge
- Coplay/Northampton Bridge
- Fahy Bridge
- 8<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge

On the transit side, again we are looking at a heavy maintenance program. This includes the replacement of 24 heavy duty buses over the four year period and 68 paratransit vans. Again, we are looking at more than \$382 million over four years. We will continue to see an emphasis on maintenance as Pennsylvania tries to reduce its number of structurally deficient bridges and improve road surfaces. Mr. Gurinko said the Transportation Committee voted to recommend the full Commission endorse this list to the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study. Mr. Diacogiannis made a motion to approve the TIP. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. McClain abstaining.

***OLD BUSINESS***

Mr. Herman wanted to recognize Ms. Bradley for her 40 under 40 Award. To give some indication of her activity level, she had to leave the award ceremony to go to Lehigh County for a presentation.

***NEW BUSINESS******Policy & Pizza Meeting***

Ms. Bradley said we tried something new today. We had our first Policy + Pizza meeting specifically on the draft Climate section for the Comprehensive Plan. We had 16 people attend, which was good attendance, and we had a good dialogue with many useful suggestions we hadn't considered. We have two more meetings coming up. One will be to discuss Energy on July 17<sup>th</sup> and the other is to discuss Housing on July 24<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Bradley said the Climate and Energy Forum last week at Nurture Nature Center had 47 people in attendance.

***CORRESPONDENCE – None.***

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT***

Ms. Bradley said she made the rounds to both counties to present our development patterns and trends as well as transportation in the region and the plans we are working on. Both presentations went well.

Ms. Bradley recognized Gabe Hurtado, our summer intern from Lehigh University. He has been doing a wonderful job for us on the housing plan and other projects.

Ms. Bradley asked anyone who has not filled out the Northampton County Open Space survey to please fill it out and get it back to us. We have been told by Northampton County that they want to know the public's opinion about their parks, recreation and open space.

Mr. Repasch made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# Memo



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*August 28, 2014*

## **MINUTES**

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 28, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Karen Duerholz  
Virginia Haas  
Kent Herman  
Virginia Haas  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
George F. Gemmel  
Kevin Lott  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Percy Dougherty, Steven Glickman, Armand Greco, Michael Hefele, Kenneth McClain, Christina Morgan, Sara Pandl, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Karen Dolan, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, George Kinney, Bob Lammi, Pamela Pearson and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, David Berryman, Eric McAfee, Tracy Oscavich, Gabe Hurtado and Sue Rockwell.

***Public Present:*** None

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

***Welcome New Staff***

Ms. Bradley introduced Ms. Oscavich to the Commission members. She will be doing our grant writing, events management, marketing and communications. Ms. Oscavich said she previously worked at Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation. She is glad to be part of the staff and is looking forward to working with all of you. Ms. Bradley said Ms. Oscavich has a Master's Degree from Lehigh University on Environmental Policies. She has been managing the Land Recycling Initiative and Multi-Million Dollar PPA Grant. Ms. Bradley introduced Mr. Hurtado. Mr. Hurtado joined us this summer as an intern and he recently completed his Master's Degree from Lehigh University in Political Science. He took Bob Freeman's planning class. Mr. Hurtado said he will be a new planner. He will be working on the transportation piece and a lot of traffic counting until December. Mr. Hurtado said he appreciates the opportunity to work with all of you. Ms. Bradley said he has an Undergraduate Degree in Mathematics from Muhlenberg. He is doing statistical work on the Northampton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Survey.

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the July 31, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Nolan. Mr. Lott seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Blatt and Mr. Reph abstaining.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******MPC Reviews***

Ms. Wright said there are 4 summary sheet items on page 6 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Reph abstaining on item #4.

***Draft Regional Housing Plan******Lower Macungie Township – Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan***

Ms. Mackey presented the map from the Lower Macungie Township Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. She said it was a very comprehensive plan. The plan includes specific recommendations for every single park. It also includes a list of non-Township owned parks. The plan compares the parks and facilities themselves to national standards. It looks at administration, personnel, facilities, equipment maintenance, financing and programming. The plan has 118 recommendations. Ms. Mackey said staff found the plan to be generally consistent with the goals and policies of the County Comprehensive Plan. She reviewed the draft review letter on pages 11-12 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the review letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***Regional Housing Plan Presentation***

Ms. Bradley presented the draft Regional Housing Plan. A printed copy of the plan was provided to Commission members. It summarizes the work of RKG Associates, LVPC staff, the Housing Advisory Committee and Comprehensive Planning Committee over one and a half years. She said this is the most comprehensive housing assessment that has ever been done in the Lehigh Valley. It deals with affordable housing and market rate housing as well as the proximity of jobs to the housing stock and where improvements can be made. Mr. Herman asked if there are any instructions for Commission members in terms of handling the report. Ms. Bradley said it is a public document now so Commission members can share it with others. She said staff will be meeting with the Regional Housing Advisory Committee on August 6 to provide more in-depth details from the plan. After the meeting, the plan will be put on the LVPC website. There will be a 30 day public comment period. Comments will be incorporated into the document, and then the plan will be finalized. The final document will be released on a USB stick and will be available on the LVPC website as well.

At last month's meeting, Mr. McAfee presented key findings of the plan. Mr. McAfee again briefly discussed the key findings from Chapters 2-8 of the plan that helped staff form final decisions in the Regional Housing Plan.

Ms. Bradley noted that she and Ms. Obi put together an analysis of Employer-Assisted Housing Programs and how they could work. Staff believes that there are market based solutions to help meet some of that unmet demand and will present a working paper next month that looks at ways these programs can be successful.

Mr. Reese said he would be discussing the goals, policies and strategies from Chapter 9 of the plan. This information was presented to the Commission last month. Again, everything in regular text is an existing goal, policy or strategy from the current Comprehensive Plan. Everything in bold and italics is proposed as new. Over the past month, staff has gone back and tried to do a better job of incorporating all of the information from previous chapters, in terms of the key findings and some of the background information, into the goals, policies and strategies. Mr. Reese reviewed the new changes that are also shown in bold and italics. Mr. Reese said under Goal #1, the second policy has been revised and broadened, looking at all ranges and prices of housing and income. The third policy will be removed. Under Implementation, two new strategies have been added. Under Goal #2, two new policies have been added. Under Goal #3, one new implementation strategy was added. There are no changes under Goal #4. Under Goal #5, the only change made is to the first implementation strategy related to the creation of a Lehigh Valley Housing Study. The new text was added to clarify what was to be accomplished under this strategy. Mr. Reese pointed out that under the Opportunities section, the text is identical as before except partners to be involved and a timeframe have been added to each opportunity.

Ms. Bradley said there is no action needed on this tonight and hopes everyone will have a chance to read it and provide comments next month. Mr. Herman said from what was presented tonight and before, this is a very impressive piece of work and everyone who has worked on this should be commended for their effort.

#### *Policy & Pizza: Housing*

Ms. Bradley said that the last scheduled Policy & Pizza meeting was held on housing on July 24<sup>th</sup>. Twenty people attended the meeting and provided a lot of good comments.

***Environment Committee******Climate and Energy – Status Report***

Mr. Reese said each Commission member should have at their place a copy of the most current goals, policies and strategies associated with both climate and energy. He said it includes comments received up through the Committee meeting on Tuesday. There was one change made to the climate section per the Committee's request. This is not really for discussion tonight. It is still in Committee. He said hopefully the Committee will approve it next month and then it will be placed on the LVPC agenda for approval next month. Mr. Glickman asked whether once this gets approved if it will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Reese said the first thing that it needs to be incorporated into is the final Sustainable Communities document followed by the update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2015.

***Policy + Pizza: Energy***

Mr. McAfee said the Policy & Pizza meeting was held on July 17. As with the climate section, changes have been made to reflect the community feedback from several meetings up through the Environment Committee meeting on Tuesday. This includes the first public meeting held at the Nurture Nature Center on June 19.

***Transportation Committee – None******OLD BUSINESS******Sustainable Communities/Envision Final Document***

Ms. Bradley said as part of the wrap-up of the 2011 HUD Sustainable Communities Consortium effort, the LVPC is responsible for summarizing everyone's work, analyzing it, and putting it into one big plan. This work has begun. There are four subject areas that everyone's documents tie into that really lead into the sustainability conversation. They are: economy, transportation, housing and environment. LVPC staff is in the process of writing the document now. Ms. Bradley said staff has met with almost all of the partners to go over key findings from their reports, goals, and how they relate back to the Comprehensive Plan. One of the other LVPC obligations under the grant is to review everyone's work against the existing Comprehensive Plan and make suggestions for how, as a region, they can be incorporated into the updated Comprehensive Plan.

***October 23<sup>rd</sup> Regional Planning Meeting + Community Awards***

The final Sustainable Communities document will be released at the October 23<sup>rd</sup> event. The first ever Community Awards will also be held that evening. The awards include several categories such as transportation, best ordinance and Community of Distinction. The winning community for the Community of Distinction award will receive highway signs that go in and out of their community. The meeting will be held at Iacocca Hall at Lehigh University. Awards information will be released in August and will be available on the LVPC website.

***Web Hits***

Ms. Bradley said the web hits have been great. There were 381,000 hits for the first two quarters of the year. The population and employment forecasts are some of the more popular hits. The Comprehensive Plan is always popular as well. The Trails Report had a 10,000 increase between the first and second quarters. The model ordinances have the most hits. The stormwater documents and TIP program are also very popular.

### ***NEW BUSINESS***

#### *Basic Courses in Subdivision and Land Development Review and Zoning*

Ms. Bradley said these courses are designed to train zoning hearing board members, planning commissioners, elected officials, municipal staff or any interested people. They are really good training opportunities to learn about how the land use and approval process works. Application forms were provided to each Commission member for their information.

#### *Lehigh Valley Air Show – August 23 & 24*

LVPC staff will be holding a public engagement event at the Air Show to ask people how they envision their transportation future. There will be a staged set that will look like a café. On one of the windows, there will be general information about the Long Range Transportation Plan. On the other window, people will have the opportunity to write what they want their transportation future to be. The information will be collected and made part of the planning exercise. Buttons will be handed out to those that participate. LANta is going to be a partner and will also have some giveaways.

### ***CORRESPONDENCE***

#### *Habitat for Humanity*

Ms. Bradley said staff made a \$60 donation for Habitat for Humanity from the Jeans for a Cause Program.

### ***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – None***

Ms. Wright made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# Memo



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*August 28, 2014*

## **MINUTES**

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 28, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Karen Duerholz  
Virginia Haas  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
George F. Gemmel  
Kevin Lott  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Percy Dougherty, Steven Glickman, Armand Greco, Michael Hefele, Kenneth McClain, Christina Morgan, Sara Pandl, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Karen Dolan, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, George Kinney, Bob Lammi, Pamela Pearson and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, David Berryman, Eric McAfee, Tracy Oscavich, Gabe Hurtado and Sue Rockwell.

***Public Present:*** None

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

***Welcome New Staff***

Ms. Bradley introduced two new staff members. She said Ms. Oscavich will be involved in grant writing, events management, marketing and communications. Ms. Oscavich has a Master's Degree from Lehigh University on Environmental Policies. Mr. Hurtado joined the LVPC this summer as an intern. He recently completed his Master's Degree from Lehigh University in Political Science. He will be our new community planner. He will be working on traffic counting until December. He is also doing statistical work on the Northampton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Survey.

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the July 31, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Nolan. Mr. Lott seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Blatt and Mr. Reph abstaining.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******MPC Reviews***

Ms. Wright said there are 4 summary sheet items on page 6 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Reph abstaining on item #4.

***Draft Regional Housing Plan***

Ms. Bradley said Commission members received a copy of the Draft Regional Housing Plan at the last meeting. A number of comments have been received. Three meetings have been held with the Housing Advisory Committee, some individual meetings with Alan Jennings from CACLV and some other people who specialize in the housing field. There have been some minor revisions to the plan in regards to those comments. A revised plan will be available at the October meeting because we want to have another meeting with the Housing Advisory Committee and Comprehensive Planning Committee to review the changes.

***Environment Committee******Climate and Energy – Status Report***

Mr. Repasch said the Environment Committee met on Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. and then met jointly with the Comprehensive Planning Committee at 12:00 p.m. He said the draft Climate and Energy Elements have been reviewed by the combined Environment and Comprehensive Planning committees for the past several months. At this month's combined meeting, the joint committee recommended the elements be forwarded to the full Commission for adoption. Both elements have also been reviewed by the Transportation Committee, and at tonight's meeting, the Committee also recommended the elements be forwarded to the full Commission for adoption. The staff did a tremendous job putting this together. Mr. Repasch made a motion to adopt the Climate and Energy Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried.

*Reviews*

Mr. Repasch said there is one summary sheet item on page 7 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried.

***Transportation Committee****Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*

Ms. Bradley said, on a four year cycle, we are required by the federal government to prioritize investments through the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study for the next four year period. All of that documentation has been provided to the Commonwealth. They signed it, sent it back and it is at the Federal Highway Administration. There is a whole list of projects available on the LVPC website. Ms. Bradley discussed some of the projects. She said, if the legislature had not passed Act 89 last fall, then the Commonwealth would not have had the required 20% match to the 80% federal funding for transportation. The total value of the TIP is \$383 million.

*Air Show*

Ms. Bradley said the LVPC set up a storefront display at the Air Show. Basic transportation information on the region was provided on one window of the display. We worked with our partners, including both counties, all three cities, the Airport Authority, LANta, PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration to put all of this together. On the other window people were asked where they would like future transportation dollars invested in the Lehigh Valley. This is part of the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan being done through the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, which will be done early next year. The Air Show was a great opportunity to share with the community what is going on with transportation in the region and for them to share their thoughts, which should influence our planning process.

***General****Sustainable Communities Summary Report*

Ms. Bradley said we have been working on the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant for roughly three years. She said the LVPC is charged with taking all of the partners' work and summarizing and comparing it against the Regional Comprehensive Plan to see if there are any new ideas or goals that we can add to the Comprehensive Plan. We are in the process of generating a document that incorporates all of this work. We were able to draw commonalities between the different reports and categorize them under four subject areas: Economy, Environment, Transportation, and Livable Communities. Ms. Bradley said there were a number of projects generated out of the Sustainable Communities initiative. She said we are putting together two page descriptions of each of the projects developed by our partners and are comparing that with our Comprehensive Plan. We are in the process of developing goals. Ms. Bradley said the release date for the document is October 23<sup>rd</sup> so the September Committee meetings are being moved up one week to meet the October 1<sup>st</sup> publication deadline: Environment Committee - Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m., Comprehensive Planning Committee – Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m., and Transportation Committee - Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. We plan on getting a copy

of the full draft of the Sustainable Communities document out by email on Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup> so you will have a chance to review the document. It has to go to the printer by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Our partners did a great job of getting as much information to us as possible, especially since they are not all done with their individual planning efforts, including us.

Ms. Bradley said we discovered some interesting information as part of this work. We looked at how many people live within walking and biking distance of a transit line; schools; park, recreation and open space; and grocery stores. We found that 32% of the region's population live within walking distance or ¼ mile from a bus stop, and 88% live within two miles or biking distance from a bus stop. This tells you about residential density around transit areas. Also, 49% of our population live within walking distance of a school, and 97% live within biking distance or two miles of a school. About 98% live within ¼ mile of parks, recreation and open space, and 97% are within biking distance. Finally, 45% of the population live within ¼ mile of a grocery store, and 93% live within biking distance. This gives us a new perspective on the idea of sustainability and how we manage our built environment. We expected much lower numbers. We will be bringing more information to you at the Committee meetings and the Commission meeting in September. Mr. Repasch asked if the population data on school proximity refers to total or student population. Ms. Bradley said that it's total population. Mr. Herman said the next step is to determine the walkability of a particular area, whether there are sidewalks, etc. Ms. Wright said the biggest issue is, you can be within a ¼ mile, but there is no safe way to get there. Ms. Bradley said that is part of the goal development to come out of this plan. We don't have a sidewalk inventory of the Lehigh Valley. We will be determining if we should undertake a walkability analysis as part of the Long Range Transportation Plan update. Ms. Bradley added that the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges is doing a statistically valid opinion survey as part of this work, and it will be released for the first time as part of this document. The survey asks how people feel about fresh food and transportation access, among a number of other things.

### ***OLD BUSINESS***

#### *Lehigh Valley Awards*

Ms. Bradley said the Lehigh Valley Awards nomination document has been released, and there is a deadline of September 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Oscavich said staff put together the nomination guidelines, criteria and project categories along with an application form. Everything is on our website and ready to be downloaded. She asked everyone to send it out to anyone they know who might be interested in nominating a project. Ms. Oscavich said there are eight project categories: Plan, Planning Policy or Ordinance; Land Development; Revitalization Project; Open Space Project; Environmental Project; Transportation Project; Multi-Municipal Cooperation and Community of Distinction. Ms. Bradley said this will give us an opportunity to honor municipalities for their good work in planning and land use. The Community of Distinction winner will get road signs into their community to designate this honor for 2014. Ms. Bradley said we need some Commission members to serve on the Nomination Review Committee.

***NEW BUSINESS*** – None.

***CORRESPONDENCE*** – None.

***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT****Joe Gurinko's Resignation*

Mr. Herman said he met Mr. Gurinko 20 years ago through work that he did with LANta. He considers him a friend through this work and the time he spent on the Transportation Committee. He said Ms. Bradley has called Mr. Gurinko a Rock Star of Transportation and that certainly epitomized a person who is very knowledgeable and well-respected. He will be missed by the Commission. Mr. Herman said he was unable to attend the meeting tonight. Ms. Bradley said Mr. Gurinko was out of state enjoying himself. She said he worked here for 33 years. He was a wonderful person who contributed so much, not only to the Lehigh Valley, but shortly after she started, they had a very tough conversation last year at the state level because small rural areas were going to receive a decrease in funding from the federal government. Mr. Gurinko worked really hard with a statewide group to figure out how to develop a more equitable distribution of the resources. It tells you how much he actually cares about Pennsylvania, transportation and being fair. The staff loved him, and he will be truly missed.

Ms. Wright made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# Memo



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*September 25, 2014*

## **MINUTES**

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, September 25, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Percy Dougherty  
Armand Greco  
Virginia Haas  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Edward Hozza  
Christina Morgan  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Charles Elliott  
George F. Gemmel  
Darlene Heller  
George Kinney  
Bob Lammi  
Kevin Lott  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Lori Sywensky  
Seth Vaughn

***Members absent:*** Karen Duerholz, Steven Glickman, Kenneth McClain, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Christen Borso, Karen Dolan, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon and Michael Reph.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Eric McAfee, Mike Donchez, Sue Rockwell and Tracy Oscavich.

***Public Present:*** Holly Edinger, Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the August 28, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Ms. Sywensky. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Lammi, Ms. Pandl and Ms. Morgan abstaining.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Lower Macungie Township – Proposed Rezoning (Route 100 and Spring Creek Road)***

Mr. McAfee said the area subject to the proposed rezoning is referred to as the Double D property at the northeast quadrant of Route 100 and Spring Creek Road. The proposal is to rezone 5.3 acres from Semi-Rural to Commercial. This is one of many requested rezonings we are expecting to see in this area. A mixture of uses are located in this area including commercial, semi-rural, some agricultural preservation, as well as some residential. There is more activity anticipated with both the smart growth plan and the update of the Southwestern Lehigh Comprehensive Plan that the Township will be working on. The Township should complete work on these two projects before approving any rezoning requests. Ms. Pandl said they are seeing a lot of pressure to rezone in the western part of the Township. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the draft review letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ms. Pandl abstaining.

***Draft Monroe County Comprehensive Plan***

Mr. McAfee said we received the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan update for review. He briefly reviewed the draft review letter on pages 8-9 of the agenda attachments. He said our main issue with the plan is related to the Blue Mountain/Kittatinny Ridge along the border of our two counties. The LPVC, in its Comprehensive Plan, recommends preserving the Mountain and protecting it from development. We recommend the Monroe County Plan designate the Monroe County side of the Mountain for conservation and natural feature protection rather than land use categories that could promote future development of the Mountain. Also, the County should work with the municipalities along the Mountain to improve and enhance its protection through zoning ordinances and other planning tools. In the Open Space, Greenway and Recreation Plan component of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, the Mountain is not displayed on the Natural and Cultural Resources Inventory map, but is displayed as a conservation area on the Areas of Interest for Preservation map. However, the map lacks the features to be preserved. There is also little discussion about the different conservation implementation strategies that can be used for protection purposes, such as acquisition and easements, regulatory measures and best management practices.

The plan mentions the Susquehanna-Roseland power line that cuts through the Delaware Water Gap, as well as the fund which PP&L and PSE&G contributed to “in order to mitigate unavoidable impacts on federal lands”. According to the plan, some acquisition of land has already taken place through development of this fund, and as an adjacent county, it would be helpful to be informed of future land acquisitions, or if similar land acquisition funds will grow if additional utilities are proposed in natural areas.

Mr. Elliott said there was an amendment to the State Appalachian Trail Law several years ago that required municipalities to enact zoning to protect the trail. He asked if the draft plan

recognizes that obligation. Mr. McAfee said it doesn't seem that it does; the reference to the Appalachian Trail is pretty scant. The plan has more references to tourism as an economic benefit rather than protection. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the draft review letter. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### *MPC Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there are four summary sheet items on page 10 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried with Mr. Diacogiannis abstaining on item #4.

### *Environment Committee - None*

### *Transportation Committee*

#### *Northampton County Council of Governments Traffic Safety Plan*

Mr. Donchez said, back in April, staff brought before the LVPC the Traffic Safety Report for the Lehigh Valley. This report is updated every two years. The report identifies high priority crash locations, intersections and high frequency crash corridors. This information is determined through an analysis of PennDOT data. We analyze the data to determine where the crashes are located, what corridors, what intersections and we use it to develop the report. The source of the data comes from police reports. The report becomes a programming tool for us. A few weeks ago, we made a presentation at the Northampton County Council of Governments meeting held on September 15, 2014. The presentation was very well received. There were emergency services providers in attendance, so the information was very helpful to them. This is part of our continuing outreach effort. The report is available on our website and hard copies are available.

### *General*

#### *Draft Sustainable Communities Summary Report*

Ms. Bradley said, after approximately three years of work under the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant, ten plans and projects were completed throughout the Lehigh Valley. A copy of the report was provided to Commission members. In addition to the LVPC, the partners involved include LVEDC (who was responsible for managing the financial aspects of the grant); Lehigh and Northampton counties; the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton; LANta; Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley; Lehigh Valley Research Consortium and Nurture Nature Center. The group came together to add to the existing County Comprehensive Plan. For our efforts, we prepared the Regional Housing Plan for which we will have a final draft next month. We are also working on a Model Fair Housing Ordinance, and we completed the Energy and Climate additions to the Comprehensive Plan. We are working on a Return on Environment study that will be completed by the end of the year. The Sustainable Communities document summarizes all of the partner efforts. There is a two page spread for every plan or project that was completed, and those that are not completed are explained in the back of the document. Ultimately the goal was to review all of these projects and reports and develop new goals that are not currently in our Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Bradley said the quality of our partners' work made it easy for us to develop 31 new suggested goals for the region. They add to the sustainability ideals already embedded in the Comprehensive Plan. Everything in the document is organized under four categories: Economy,

Environment, Transportation and Livable Communities. Also, there are six HUD Livability Principles that we were required to review and discuss as part of the initiative.

We are hoping to use this document as a platform to begin the update of the Comprehensive Plan, which will kick off on January 1, 2015. The Comprehensive Plan update will go through a long public participation process. Mr. Herman recognized Ms. Edinger and LVEDC's efforts under the grant along with all of our staff and Commission members. Ms. Bradley said the report will be presented at the October 23<sup>rd</sup> event. Mr. Repasch asked about the measurability of the goals. Ms. Bradley said everyone did their separate pieces, so they are ultimately responsible for the implementation of those goals. On the Comprehensive Planning side, we will come up with the policies and implementation strategies. Ms. Bradley said we will continue to measure those things that we have always measured, such as changes in land use and development patterns.

Mr. Herman asked if there is any direct relationship between this and what HUD may or may not do, in terms of this community, to use this as a tool for Federal assistance. Ms. Sywensky said there actually was a second phase when this funding was approved through Congress. There was an adjunct funding source available at that time. If you were successful under this grant, you could receive up to \$5 million for implementation initiatives. However, the year after we were awarded this grant, Congress expressly forbade HUD to put any money into anything related to sustainability in the Federal budget. Ms. Sywensky said they have opportunities through HUD to apply for discretionary funds. They intend to further proposals through the work that was produced here. Ms. Bradley said, if you are a designated sustainability region, you can use that to get additional points on any Federal applications. Mr. Lammi made a motion to approve the Draft Sustainable Communities Summary Report. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

### *2014 Lehigh Valley Awards*

Ms. Oscavich said each Commission member has an invitation at their seat to the first LVPC Annual Awards Event where we will also be unveiling the sustainability document. The registration form is at [www.lvpc.org](http://www.lvpc.org). We have already received a few inquiries and interest in the awards. Ms. Bradley said we are hoping to have 250 attendees. We are mailing 1,500 invitations between tomorrow and Monday. We are inviting all of our local government officials, legislators and partners. It will also be open to the public.

### *Local Government Academy Courses*

Ms. Bradley said we had the final evening of the Local Government Academy zoning course earlier this week. The class was full, and the subdivision class to be held in October will be full. We are planning to hold these classes every year instead of every two years.

## ***NEW BUSINESS***

### *Hanover Township (L) – LVPC Response to SALDO Amendment Adoption*

Ms. Bradley said we noticed in the public notice section of a newspaper that Hanover Township (L) advertised a public hearing for a SALDO amendment. Most municipalities follow the state law and send us any proposed changes to their zoning, SALDO and comprehensive plans for

review. Unfortunately, Hanover Township (L) had the public hearing and adopted an amendment to their SALDO without sending a copy to us for review. Ms. Bradley said this happens occasionally, and normally, if it hasn't been adopted, we can call them and get a copy to review. In this case it was adopted. We are letting them know that, if they are really serious about this change, they actually need to go through the formal process. If they do not follow the proper procedures, they are opening themselves up to a curative amendment. This could invalidate that section of their SALDO or possibly their entire ordinance. We want to send them a letter to give them the opportunity to correct the situation. Ms. Bradley reviewed a draft letter to the municipality on page 11 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Herman said he thinks this is the best way to handle the issue. Mr. Elliott asked if they have new staff at their office who didn't know the procedure. Ms. Bradley said it seems to be a simple oversight. Ms. Sywensky made a motion to send the letter. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### ***CORRESPONDENCE***

#### *Jeans for a Cause*

Ms. Bradley said we collected money for the staff Jeans for a Cause program and donated the money to the Easton Area Public Library and the Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living. We received thank you letters from both organizations.

### ***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – None***

Mr. Herman wanted to congratulate Owen O'Neil on his promotion as the new Executive Director for LANta. Mr. Greco will be mentoring him until his retirement in January. Mr. Herman said he attended a function of the Lehigh County Housing Authority many years ago. There was a Board member named Robert Horney who served on the board for 22 years. Mr. Herman said there is often difficulty in getting good people to serve on boards and commissions. He thanked the LVPC Commission members for their service.

Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# *Memo*



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*October 30, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 30, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Steven Glickman  
Armand Greco  
Virginia Haas  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Sara Pandl  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Donna Wright

#### **Northampton County**

Christen Borso  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
Bob Lammi  
Kevin Lott  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Norman Blatt, Percy Dougherty, Karen Duerholz, Ben Howells, Edward Hozza, Kenneth McClain, Christina Morgan, Lisa Scheller, Peter Schweyer, Gordon Campbell, Charles Elliott, Charles Fraust, George F. Gemmel, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, George Kinney and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Eric McAfee and Sue Rockwell.

***Public Present:*** Randy Kraft, WFMZ Reporter

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the September 25, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Greco. Ms. Sywensky seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Glickman abstaining.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Regional Housing Plan***

Ms. Bradley said we added comments to the Housing Plan that we received over the past few months and updated some of the data. We also held a recent Housing Advisory Committee meeting and those comments were added to the Housing Plan document. You have at your place our first ever release of a plan on USB, which costs less than a hard copy to print. We are requesting that the Planning Commission officially adopt the Housing Plan as our regional strategy going forward. Again, it recommends the creation of a Regional Housing Study to keep the conversation going with the affordable housing community, municipal governments, realtors, developers, etc. We see that going forward initially as a quarterly meeting to discuss issues. We did a little restructuring of Chapter 9 so it reads a little easier. It is so hard to make a data heavy plan digestible in a sound bite. Housing is a very complicated and emotional issue. Ms. Sywensky asked if the comments made at the recent Advisory Committee meeting were addressed in the plan in some way. Ms. Bradley said that many of them have been addressed. Ms. Bradley requested a motion for approval. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the Regional Housing Plan. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***Draft Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan (MPC Review)***

Mr. McAfee said we have a draft letter on pages 6-7 of the agenda attachments. He said the second paragraph of the letter helps explain how we approached the three sections of community, environment and transportation. This is a fairly unconventionally structured comprehensive plan. Staff agreed this was a much more difficult document to approach from a fully pragmatic, internal usage perspective. We don't know how easy it would be to use this document to complete an MPC review. This is why we created the second paragraph in the letter. We want to let them know this is how we interpreted their document. When we broke it into the three parts, we looked at the continuity based on our shared boundary along Upper Hanover Township in Montgomery County and Lower Milford Township in Lehigh County. We can see a fair amount of similarities in terms of initiatives for protection of agricultural land and open space.

Mr. Reese said, in terms of the environmental aspects of the plan, there is a lengthy paragraph in the draft letter dealing with the minor details of how the Montgomery County plan relates to our Regional Comprehensive Plan land use perspective for that rather short boundary. The common boundary is pretty compatible in terms of what they recommend on their side and what our Comprehensive Plan recommends on our side, which is basically rural areas, farmland preservation and natural features preservation. There are some details that are not exactly the same between the two sides. They have a trail proposed that would abut Lower Milford Township. There is no similar trail proposed on our side. This is one of the things we could have a conversation about with the two townships involved to see if there are opportunities to make them compatible. There are very minor

differences on the two sides, but they are generally compatible in terms of open space and farmland preservation.

Mr. McAfee said, in terms of transportation planning, one of the most interesting aspects of this plan really illuminated on the impact of an aging population and transportation. The plan addresses the widening of I-476 to improve traffic congestion and travel times. Mr. Repasch asked if there is anything we learned from the plan that we can use. Mr. McAfee said yes. While both sides of the boundary are compatible, Montgomery County takes their agricultural preservation to a higher level than we do. As we update our Comprehensive Plan, we might want to consider whether we want to do that as well. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*Moore Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Streamside Setback Areas (MPC Review)*

Mr. McAfee said the letter presented on pages 8-9 has changed fairly significantly from the letter presented to the Comprehensive Planning Committee on Tuesday. We are dealing with a Streamside Setback regulation that fundamentally is not in violation of our Comprehensive Plan. However, Moore Township did not make any specific set-asides to accommodate their numerous High Quality Cold Water Streams that have historically been subject to a higher degree of Riparian Buffer Protection under Chapter 102 of the State Code. We recommend the Township carry that level of protection to those streams. It was pointed out to us at the Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting that the recent passage (eight days ago) of a new State Act to a certain extent replaced the Chapter 102 150-foot riparian buffer requirement with one that essentially eliminates the buffer with best practices or alternative strategies. This Act, which was signed into law, is now awaiting DEP's response on how the enforcement of this Act will be integrated into its overview. At this point, they have not yet articulated their response. They intend to do so within the 60-day time period required from passage of the law. The third paragraph in the letter states that Moore Township should remain attuned to the evolving regulations. They should adopt a uniform 100-foot buffer, acknowledging that DEP regulations may dictate more stringent requirements for High Quality Cold Water Streams. This process is still evolving based on the affirmation of House Bill 1565. At this point, Moore Township should evaluate DEP's response to the State over the next 60 days in order to consider the potentially distinct riparian buffers or alternative regulations to Exceptional Value and High Quality Cold Water Stream within its jurisdiction. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the staff letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. Mr. Repasch asked if we have a position on the law. Mr. McAfee said we do reference in both our Model Riparian Buffer Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan compliance with Chapter 102, which required the 150-foot buffer. The general perception is that this new law will weaken the riparian buffer setback requirement. Mr. Reese said, when you look at the data to determine how much of a buffer is enough, the information is all over the place. One thing is clear: more is always better. We were surprised that the law was initially passed with the 150-foot buffer requirement. The new law seems to give DEP some discretionary ability to uphold the buffer requirement unless an applicant can prove that they can otherwise protect the environment in a similar way that a buffer could. Ms. Sywensky asked what is being said about this, if anything, at the Statewide Planning Association level. Ms. Bradley said this issue will be discussed at the next County Planning Directors' Association meeting, and she will report back to the Commission on this. Mr. Herman called for the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

*Hanover Township (L) - SALDO Amendment – Submission of Traffic Studies (MPC Review)*

Mr. McAfee said the letter on pages 10-11 has already gone out due to a 30 day response requirement. We received the already approved ordinance from Hanover Township, Lehigh County, hand delivered on the day of the Commission meeting last month. This is our response letter to the already approved ordinance amendment. However, if the Commission has any additional feedback, we can submit that as well. As it currently stands, the SALDO amendment that was passed two months ago by the Township was a simple addition to Subsection K, which states that if a development or subdivision is estimated to generate more than 500 new vehicle trips per day, a traffic impact study must be prepared in consultation with the Township Engineer. Our response to that is, while not in violation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Comprehensive Plan certainly encourages municipalities to minimize negative impacts associated with subdivisions and land developments of regional significance and impact. The qualifications for a “land use of regional significance” are quite high and include industrial parks greater than 100 acres or residential developments of over 500 units. In encouraging the alleviation and mitigation of traffic congestion, the LVPC uses a threshold of 1,500 average daily trips as the standard by which a developer should prepare traffic studies. A cut-off of 500 daily vehicle trips, or approximately 20 trips per hour, as stipulated in the ordinance amendment No. 568, is an unusually low threshold for requiring traffic studies, which could potentially thwart further development in the Township. The LVPC encourages the Township to consider this as it seeks to monitor the impact of new growth and development within its boundaries. Ms. Bradley said the entirety of the Township is within the urban growth corridor of the County Comprehensive Plan. She said we saw this area as a good place to develop. We are concerned that this will push development out past the fringes. Ms. Sywensky asked if this was in response to development outside of the township. Ms. Bradley said it is likely. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments that have already been sent. Mr. Hefele seconded the motion. Ms. Bradley said the thing we are worried about is now Hanover Township is open to challenge to their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance because it doesn't appear that they followed the requirements of the PA MPC for amendment adoption. Mr. Herman called for the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

*Lynn Township – Wertman Farms, Minor Subdivision Plan (MPC Review)*

Mr. McAfee said this application does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan as indicated in the review letter on page 12. We think it is a very telling situation. As shown on the plan on the board, the far western boundary is Moserville Road, and slightly to the east is Route 309, which in Lynn Township is the primary corridor. It is the only section that is not zoned for Agricultural Protection. The proposed subdivision divides the parcel into two, almost equal sized parcels that are near the urban boundary shown on the General Land Use map of the County Comprehensive Plan. This is a trend we are seeing in townships where they are skirting the Agricultural Protection recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. This trend of incremental subdivisions could render this area as no longer valid for commercial agriculture purposes. Mr. Herman asked if the use will change with this subdivision. Mr. McAfee said it is just a subdivision right now. Ms. Bradley said there is likely something else coming. She said this area is in a Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan that has been a great success story of agricultural multimunicipal planning in the Lehigh Valley. The Township has a huge percentage of land in Agricultural Preservation. They have some new supervisors who are very pro development. This could potentially undo the agricultural zoning that has kept property values high. We are going to be watching that area very closely. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the staff letter. Ms. Sywensky seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*MPC Reviews*

Ms. Wright said there is one summary sheet item on page 13 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*Environment Committee**Reviews*

Mr. Repasch said there is one summary sheet item on page 14 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Pearson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*Transportation Committee – None***OLD BUSINESS***ILV & Lehigh Valley Awards*

Mr. Herman said the Lehigh Valley Awards event was a wonderful evening. Ms. Bradley and the staff did a wonderful job. Mr. Lammi said the ILV publication was extremely professional and well done. Mr. Repasch agreed and said he hopes this report does not go unnoticed. Ms. Dreisbach said she wished there had been some media coverage at the event to get our message out, although there was an article that came out later. Mr. Nolan said Bethlehem Township was very pleased to have received two honoree awards that will be proudly discussed and displayed at an upcoming board meeting and brought to the attention of residents.

Mr. Repasch said, while this is off topic, at some point we will have to talk about the gas pipeline being proposed through Bethlehem Township. Mr. Nolan said the Township has started the process, and many workshops have been scheduled to discuss it. Ms. Bradley said we have met with Berks and Bucks counties on the pipeline issue. She said we have been working with Berks County to develop county-wide ordinances to take to both County Councils on the pipeline issue. Northern counties want to get their shale gas to major markets such as Trenton and Philadelphia. They will have to do that via some semblance of transportation, whether it is by pipeline, truck or train. The pipeline is very real. Ms. Bradley and Mr. Reese met with PennEast, a conglomerate formed by UGI Energy Services, a few weeks ago. They actually showed us where they planned to construct the pipeline. Some of the things that really struck us is they want to run this along major infrastructure like part of Rt. 33. That will limit development along that corridor. It has a real implication for Bethlehem Township, much more so than a lot of the other places. They will run it under Rt. 22, I-78 and the Lehigh River. It is a proposed 36 inch pressurized pipeline. It is regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation. They are proposing cutoff switches every 2 ½ miles. It is essentially a pressurized gas tube buried roughly 3 feet underneath the surface. There are some real security concerns with that. Ms. Bradley said Mayor Pawlowski approached us and said what happened in Allentown was just a residential distribution line. This is a transmission line. He really hopes the Commission will pay attention to this. We will continue to watch this. PennEast did make the filing that allows municipalities to become party to the development of this pipeline. Chester County, who has had gas pipelines and large transmission lines constructed in the past, is really the Pennsylvania example. Also, we are working with Albright College in Berks County to develop an

ordinance. This is one of five possible pipelines being planned through the region. We plan on bringing more information to the Commission on this soon. Chester County has been very helpful to us. They regulate pipelines similar to stormwater.

Ms. Bradley said we are going to look for a larger facility for the Lehigh Valley Awards event next year. We had 274 people registered. It was wonderful to be able to recognize people in the Lehigh Valley for all of their hard work. Ms. Bradley said the 1LV publication, our first bound, in-house publication, is available upon request. Mr. Herman asked if we sent this to our neighbors. Ms. Bradley said we could. Mr. Lammi said it is a wonderful publication and copies should be sent to the municipalities who did not attend the event. Ms. Bradley agreed and added that the document is on our website. She also said that Holly Edinger from Envision Lehigh Valley has scheduled five meetings across the Valley to get the word out. The first meeting will be held at Bangor Borough next Monday.

### *Web Hits*

Ms. Bradley said we have had 9,881 web hits just on the Lehigh Valley awards since October. Our web traffic has been good. The Appalachian Trail Guide hits have gone up by 600 or 700. Our Comprehensive Plan and Lehigh Valley Trails Report are getting a high number of hits. The Regional Housing Plan had over 9,700 hits just as a draft plan. Stormwater plans also continue to be popular.

### *Local Government Academy Update*

Mr. McAfee said we have engaged a number of municipal officials over the past few months who want to learn more about zoning and subdivision review. The zoning course was held in September, and the subdivision course was held in October. They have been remarkably successful, with 29 attending zoning and 25 attending the subdivision course. The Comprehensive Planning Committee on Tuesday asked to see if there was a way we could find out how the participants learned about the courses. We asked the participants at last night's subdivision class. Email was the most successful way to notify people about the course. A couple of attendees heard about it from Ms. Bradley, and one person saw it on our website. There wasn't much response for the Air Show, where we really gave the courses a big push. Mr. McAfee said in the future we may wish to offer the courses more often based on their recent level of success.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### *Training Opportunities*

Ms. Bradley said we have several upcoming training courses that will be held at the LVPC office. We are having training on Integrating Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) Coordination into PennDOT's new Access Management Program. She said this is really designed for municipal officials and engineers to sit down with PennDOT and learn how to expedite the new HOP process, as well as the new rules and regulations. Only two of these training sessions will be held within the state. We were able to partner with PPA and PennDOT to host it at our office next Thursday.

Ms. Bradley said the LTAP classes, which are run through a contract with PennDOT, are designed for municipal officials, public works employees, as well as planners and engineers. They are usually well attended. Upcoming courses include stormwater facility operation and

maintenance, Americans with Disabilities Act as it relates to transportation projects, and an engineering and traffic studies course that will teach participants how to review traffic impact studies.

Lastly, we have been working with Congressman Dent to get the EPA to come here for a meeting. We are very close to having a date for our municipal governments to come and learn about Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations. This is a growing issue for our communities. They are required to take responsibility for things like stormwater outfalls and the impacts associated with those. We are the only place in the United States getting direct EPA training, hopefully either before or right after Thanksgiving. The first meeting held with Congressman Dent had municipal officials and engineers from all over. The room was full. Mr. Reese added that the reason we had the first meeting several months ago was that the EPA, for the first time that anyone can remember, decided to get involved in the NPDES permit program, which is a federal program. In Pennsylvania, DEP manages this program. EPA decided to look at the municipal annual reports recently and wrote letters saying that people were not complying with their own permits. People were upset about that and we had Congressman Dent here to talk about it. DEP was also in attendance. Mr. Reese said, as he understands it, between EPA and DEP, they haven't quite gotten this figured out yet. In Pennsylvania, the program is handled differently region by region.

### ***CORRESPONDENCE***

#### *DCNR Grant Award – Lehigh County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan*

Ms. Bradley said we were able to secure a \$40,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the update of the Lehigh County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. This will dovetail with the Northampton County plan we are working on now. When both are completed, we will have two current county plans.

#### *DCED Grant Award – Southwestern Lehigh Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan*

Ms. Bradley said we were also able to secure a \$90,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for the update of the multimunicipal comprehensive plan for the Southwestern Lehigh area, which includes Lower Macungie, Lower Milford and Upper Milford townships, and Emmaus, Macungie and Alburtis boroughs. We will begin that work next year.

#### *Levitt Pavilion Steel Stacks*

Ms. Bradley said we received a thank you letter for the staff donation through our Jeans for a Cause Fund for a concert at the Levitt Pavilion that will benefit Veterans' causes.

### ***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – None***

Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# *Memo*



961 MARCON BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18109  
(610) 264-4544

*November 20, 2014*

## ***MINUTES***

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, November 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

### ***Members in attendance:***

#### **Lehigh County**

Norman Blatt  
Steve Glickman  
Virginia Haas  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Benjamin Howells  
Christina Morgan  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch

#### **Northampton County**

Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
George Gemmel  
George Kinney  
Robert Lammi  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky

***Members absent:*** Percy Dougherty, Karen Duerholz, Armand Greco, Edward Hozza, Kenneth McClain, Sara Pandl, Lisa Scheller, Donna Wright, Christen Borso, Charles Elliott, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, Kevin Lott, Thomas Nolan, Pamela Pearson and Seth Vaughn.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Eric McAfee and Sue Rockwell.

***Public Present:*** None

Mr. Herman read a resignation letter from Peter Schweyer. He was recently elected to the PA General Assembly.

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Repasch. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Gemmel, Mr. Blatt and Ms. Morgan abstaining.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Emmaus & Upper Milford/Lower Macungie Twps. – The Fields at Indian Creek Adult Community/Lot Consolidation***

Mr. McAfee said this parcel was formerly a golf course and, with the current proposal, will be subdivided into an age restricted community. The review letter is on pages 8-9 of the agenda attachments. The project does not violate the Comprehensive Plan, but we have considerable concerns about it. The overall road configuration allows only one entrance to the development along Indian Creek Road, which is a rural two lane street with considerable visibility problems. As this road becomes increasingly saturated with development, there will be a back up of cars on a very steep grade where Indian Creek Road intersects Cedar Crest Boulevard. All of the traffic will be on a road that has the least capacity to handle it. Also, within the overall plan the sidewalks are only on one side of the street, and in some cases, there are no sidewalks on either side. There is a considerable lack of pedestrian access. Another concern is related to open space. While the plans indicate open space set-asides, it's not clear where open space that can be enjoyed by residents begins and ends. It appears that some of the areas considered open space include stormwater management facilities.

Mr. McAfee said the biggest concern with this development is that the backs of lots 11-40 are in the easement of the extension of the PA Turnpike. These lots have very small backyards. If the Turnpike is ever widened, these homes will have almost no backyard or most likely will have to be demolished. Ms. Bradley said we are working on the MPO side with the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission on their Long Range Transportation Plan. She said we heard this week it is anticipated that the Turnpike will be widened-out through the Allentown interchange; however, the timing is unknown. Literally the backs of lots 11-40 hit the current Turnpike right-of-way line, so those homes would have to be condemned. Ms. Bradley said on Tuesday, as part of the Southwestern Lehigh Comprehensive Planning group meeting, she met with all three municipal planning commission chairs after the meeting. They all have significant concerns regarding this plan. They are setting up a joint planning commission meeting in the near future to work with the developer to try to come up with a better plan. It's a matter of getting the design and layout in a place that works for the community. Ms. Bradley said all of the municipalities are trying to help the developers make this plan work. Mr. Glickman suggested we send the developer and municipalities a copy of our street connectivity guide. Ms. Bradley said we could do that. Ms. Dreisbach made a motion to approve sending the letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*East Allen Township – Zoning Ordinance/Map Amendment – Age Qualified Residential Community Overlay District*

Mr. McAfee said the map amendment involves three different parcels owned by the Jaindl family, for a total of 77 acres. The parcels are located at the border of Hanover Township (N) along Bath Pike and Steuben Road. The LVPC reviewed a previous version of this proposal in March or April of this year. The draft review letter is on pages 10-11 of the agenda attachments. As with our previous review, the proposed development, combined with the entry of public sewer and water utilities into the area, is inconsistent with the farmland preservation policies of the County Comprehensive Plan and the Township's own zoning, which is the reason for the overlay district.

Mr. McAfee said he spoke with Ms. Seiple, the Township Manager, about this proposal. She said she would like to work with us on this. Currently the Comprehensive Plan classifies East Allen as a rural township. She said she would like to see the southern half of the Township classified suburban and the northern half classified as rural. Mr. McAfee said there are still a number of places in the Township that are suitable for urban development, recognizing that most of the Township is in agricultural preservation. One of these areas is west of Weaversville Road, just south of Colony Drive. It is not suitable for housing because of FAA regulations, but it would be suitable for commercial development. Mr. McAfee said he will include a copy of the General Land Use Map from the County Comprehensive Plan with the review letter. The Land Use Map identifies those areas recommended for urban development so the Township can think strategically about how they can harness the maximum potential from their most suitable developable land. Ms. Dreisbach made a motion to approve the draft letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Repasch abstaining. Ms. Sywensky suggested a copy of the letter be provided to the Township Planning Director.

*Salisbury Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Various*

Mr. McAfee said the draft review letter on pages 12-16 was discussed at the Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday. The yellow highlights indicate changes that mostly reflect Committee comments. This is a widespread update of their ordinance. The most significant change is that they are proposing two new overlay districts: a Health Care Overlay District and a Transitional Overlay District. Mr. McAfee said at the time he prepared this letter, he hadn't received an actual copy of the zoning ordinance with these proposed districts. However, shortly before the Comprehensive Planning meeting, he received a copy, which is included in your packets. Mr. McAfee altered the letter in accordance with the map. The map indicates that the two zoning overlay districts are in a portion of Salisbury Township that is suitable for urban development. A major concern with this is that they both abut two other municipalities, and they should be mindful of that.

Another concern is related to the details of the overlay districts in Section 1005, Open Land Requirements, in which they talk about features that may be set aside as open land. This includes stormwater management ponds holding a permanent pool of water, which actually contradicts their own zoning ordinance. Their definition of open space says that open space should not include stormwater detention or retention basins unless such an area has been designed and will be maintained in a manner that will be suitable for recreational uses for most of the year or will serve as a scenic ecological asset. Section 1005 makes no reference of that requirement. Ms. Dreisbach made a motion to approve the draft letter. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. Mr. Herman said, in terms of these letters, we may want to develop some consistency of who the letter is addressed to,

no matter who it comes from. He thinks it should be addressed to a professional manager, with a copy to the engineer, solicitor and all the supervisors or commissioners. In this way, the LVPC is disseminating the information the best it can. Mr. Herman called for the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

### *Reviews*

Ms. Dreisbach said there five summary sheets item on page 17 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Dreisbach made a motion to approve the comments. Mr. Gemmel seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Reph abstaining on Item No. 2.

### ***Environment Committee***

#### *Reviews*

Mr. Repasch said there are three summary sheet items on page 18 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Repasch made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Herman abstaining on Item No. 1.

#### *Return on Environment*

Mr. Reese said each Commission member should have a draft copy of the Return on Environment study. This report came to us from a series of consultants, including Wildlands Conservancy. They provided us with a version of the report about a month ago. The report was a little long so staff has been working to shorten it and make it as clear and concise as possible. The version you have in front of you is a very draft version.

Mr. Reese said the study includes an Executive Summary that identifies the four main economic values for which we assigned numbers. The first is natural system services, meaning what does nature provide to us in terms of environmental services and how do we assign dollar values to them? We also looked at air quality and how natural systems provide air quality services to us, primarily in the form of avoided healthcare costs provided by trees. It also looks at outdoor recreation and the economic impact to the economy associated with that. This is not just the funds people spend themselves to recreate, but also the ripple effect on the economy from those expenditures. The fourth issue is property values. Within the study we look at the increase in property values associated with proximity to protected open space. The rest of the document includes an introduction that describes the overall report as it was prepared. There is a short section in the report on the place of the Lehigh Valley and what is important about the Valley. We also look at open space consumers. Beginning on page 18, there is a fairly extensive section on the State of the Lehigh Valley Environment, which looks at environmental features such as air and water quality. There is a section dealing with open space trends and the impact within the Lehigh Valley. Those trends begin on page 44. The final section deals with all the particulars of how we pieced together the numbers to develop the overall economic impacts of open space.

In terms of the overall schedule, we are in a bit of a pinch. This is one of the last documents that we have to complete under the HUD funding. All that work needs to be completed by the end of the year. We circulated this document on Tuesday to the Environment Committee. We also have a Partnership Committee and Advisory Committee separate from this Commission that are working on the document. We will be meeting with them on December 4<sup>th</sup> to go over the document and to

receive comments. If at all possible, we will bring a revised report to the Environment Committee and the Commission next month to adopt the document. Mr. Reph asked if the economic impact from people who come through the Valley to reach ski areas outside the Valley was considered. Mr. Reese said we only looked at activities that are covered in the Lehigh Valley, but we do have an opportunity to consider off-site facilities in the narrative. Mr. Repasch complimented the staff on a job well done.

### ***Transportation Committee***

#### ***Act 89 – Vehicle Registration Fee Update***

Ms. Bradley said we discussed this topic with the Transportation Committee and the full Commission this past spring. She said Act 89 is a transportation bill passed about a year ago that funded the state's portion of the 80% federal money that goes into our road, bridge and transit network. Part of that Act included an optional \$5 registration fee that the counties could choose, or not choose, to adopt toward road and bridge improvements. Both counties own bridges, but they don't own roads. Over the last year, the PA Department of Transportation has worked closely with the County Commissioners' Association of Pennsylvania and the County Planning Directors' Association, and they jointly came up with an ordinance so that if the counties would like to adopt that \$5 registration fee they could. This just came out last week. Ms. Bradley said she met with both County Executives and their engineering staff about a month ago. This new information will be helpful for the counties to decide whether they would like to pursue this. Mr. Diacogiannis asked if the draft ordinance was available when she met with them. Ms. Bradley said it was not, however we had just received some guidance. The state law is really general so they had to have attorneys from the PA Department of Transportation make some interpretations of what they can spend the money on, how it would be collected, how it would be distributed, so that had just come out. Both counties should have the ordinance now. Ms. Bradley said Lehigh County responded that they got it, and she will check with Northampton County. Mr. Diacogiannis said the Transportation Committee feels we should encourage both counties to seriously consider adopting the ordinance.

#### ***Long Range Transportation Plan Project Collection & Analysis***

Ms. Bradley said two things are going on with long range transportation plans. One, we received a draft of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan. This will allow us to finish up the update of our Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. We have thirty days to comment on the state plan. We have agreed to send a link to the state plan to the Transportation Committee. We can send a link to the Commission as well.

PennDOT's focus for the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure is system preservation--investing in the existing infrastructure we have now, personal and freight mobility, safety, which has always been a strong regional focus in the Lehigh Valley as has system preservation, and stewardship--long term planning for the Commonwealth's infrastructure. The state is also anticipated to release a follow up document, possibly by the end of the year: a separate freight plan. We are the only region in the state that is also doing a Regional Freight Plan. We are excited about these initiatives coming together. You will hear more on our regional effort soon.

***OLD BUSINESS - None***

***NEW BUSINESS - None***

***CORRESPONDENCE - None******EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT***

*December Meeting and Commission Photo: Thursday, December 18, 11:00 a.m. – LVPC Office*

Ms. Bradley reminded the Commission members that the December meeting is on Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. We will also be taking the Commission Photo and hosting a luncheon for the Commission.

*Toys for Tots*

We are an official Toys for Tots location and are presently collecting toys for the program. Please feel free to bring a toy for the collection.

Mr. Gemmel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Repasch seconded the motion. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director

# Memo



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*December 18, 2014*

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, December 18, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. in the LVPC Conference Room, 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Kent Herman chaired the meeting.

***Members in attendance:***

**Lehigh County**

Percy Dougherty  
Karen Duerholz  
Steven Glickman  
Armand Greco  
Michael Hefele  
Kent Herman  
Ben Howells  
Kenneth McClain  
Christina Morgan  
Kathy Rader  
Stephen Repasch  
Lisa Scheller  
Donna Wright

**Northampton County**

Gordon Campbell  
John Diacogiannis  
Liesel Dreisbach  
George Gemmel  
George Kinney  
Robert Lammi  
Thomas J. Nolan  
Pamela Pearson  
Michael Reph  
Lori Sywensky  
Seth Vaughn

***Members absent:*** Norman Blatt, Virginia Haas, Edward Hozza, Sara Pandl, Christen Borso, Charles Elliott, Charles Fraust, Matthew Glennon, Darlene Heller, and Kevin Lott.

***Staff present:*** Becky Bradley, Geoff Reese, Eric McAfee, Ngozi Obi, Gabe Hurtado, William Deegan, Tracy Oscavich, Sue Rockwell, Lynette Romig, Dave Manhardt, Michael Donchez, Teresa Mackey, Travis Bartholomew and Alice Lipe.

***Public Present:*** Joyce Marin, Renew LV

***COURTESY OF THE FLOOR***

***MINUTES***

After a brief review, the minutes of the November 20, 2014 meeting were moved for approval by Ms. Sywensky. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. McClain, Mr. Nolan and Ms. Wright abstaining.

***REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE***

Mr. Dougherty said the Nominating Committee supports the current slate of officers for the year 2015. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Herman thanked the Nominating Committee for their support. Mr. Herman also thanked the Committee Chairs, Ms. Bradley and the LVPC staff for all of their hard work this year.

***COMMITTEE REPORTS******Comprehensive Planning Committee******Portland Borough - SALDO – Amendments & Updates***

Mr. McAfee said we received SALDO and Zoning Ordinance amendments for review from Portland Borough. We also recently reviewed their Comprehensive Plan in the spring. The documents are generally very solid, with a few concerns regarding some of their definitions. Portland being a Borough, there might have been a little bit of overemphasis on the suitability of on-lot sewage systems. In general, the stormwater considerations are fine. The two ordinances are not in violation of our Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter on pages 7-10 of the agenda attachments. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Herman abstaining.

***Portland Borough – Zoning Ordinance – Amendments & Updates***

Ms. Wright said the previous comments also apply to the Zoning Ordinance amendments. She made a motion to approve the letter on pages 11-13. Mr. Dougherty seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Herman abstaining.

***Whitehall Twp. – SALDO Amendment – Low Impact Roadway Standards***

Mr. McAfee said this could become an ongoing consideration as we see both municipalities and developers try to accommodate stormwater management through the reduction of impervious surface, but at the same time, overemphasizing the reduction of impervious surface that they end up reducing the standards of their own road performance, as well as other stormwater management strategies that are more design-focused and sophisticated.

Whitehall Township is proposing a low impact roadway standard, which in some cases could be highly suitable, but for a township as urbanized as Whitehall, we generally do not think this is a desirable feature, particularly as this roadway standard was trying to serve housing developments with one acre lots or more. This will also sacrifice higher caliber stormwater management, as well as sidewalks, curbs and pedestrian connectivity. We are trying to reconcile Whitehall's desire to protect what open space it has left, particularly in the far northern tier of the Township, with where this will be suitable. It is really only suitable in areas that can be classified as

natural features. We encourage the Township to implement this standard, if at all, only in zoning classifications that would align with that. Mr. McAfee said the changes shown on the letter on pages 14-15 are based on recommendations from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Howells seconded the motion. Ms. Sywensky asked what a low impact roadway is. Mr. McAfee said it is essentially a road that is considered a lane and a half cartway. Mr. Gemmel asked if the concern is simply carrying capacity. Mr. McAfee said they also are not going to have any sidewalks. Mr. Herman called for the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

### *Ordinance Reviews*

Ms. Dreisbach said there are two summary sheets item on page 16 of the agenda attachments. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the comments. Ms. Rader seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Reph abstaining on Item No. 2.

### *Environment Committee*

#### *PennEast Pipeline Update*

Mr. Repasch said the Environment Committee had a joint meeting with the Comprehensive Planning Committee where we had a presentation by representatives from PennEast Pipeline. They are proposing a project to run a pipeline from Wilkes-Barre down to Trenton, New Jersey. They gave an informative review of the process and timeline. It was for discussion only. A few people from Lower Saucon Township who are opposed to the project attended the meeting and provided comments. Our staff will be reviewing this project in the future and will offer comments at the appropriate time. Ms. Sywensky said she saw in the paper that one of our communities was waiting to hear from the Planning Commission before taking a position on whether to support or oppose the pipeline. She asked if it was the LVPC's intent on taking a position. Mr. Repasch said any position we take will be based on how it relates to the Comprehensive Plan. He said we don't know enough about it yet.

Ms. Bradley said the League of Women Voters provided Albright College with a grant that will help the Berks, Lehigh Valley and Bucks County Planning Commissions with getting fair, balanced and accurate information on what it takes to construct a pipeline. We received information from that effort, and we are going to put that out to the communities before Christmas. They need to get good information so they can start making decisions. One misunderstanding is that the LVPC and the municipalities can stop the pipeline. It is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. We have no authority to stop the pipeline. It is more an issue of how we make the pipeline part of our community in a productive manner.

#### *Return on Environment*

Mr. Reese said a copy of the report was provided to each Commission member. He said this is an effort that is largely accomplished between the LVPC and Wildlands Conservancy. Three sub-consultants also worked on the project: Keystone Conservation Trust, 4ward Planning, Inc. and Econsult Solutions, Inc.

Mr. Reese briefly reviewed each section of the report. He said the introduction talks about what we are trying to accomplish. It talks about open space and how it is an integral part of the

Lehigh Valley's quality of life, health and lower cost of living. The LVPC, both counties and the municipalities have long appreciated the environmental and social value of open space. What we have not done before is define the economic value of open space. That is the purpose of this report. We looked at the monetary value of four different components: natural system services, air quality, outdoor recreation and property value.

Mr. Reese said natural system services are those services that nature provides to us at no cost. They include water supply, water quality, disturbance (flood) mitigation, wildlife habitat, pollination, biological control and soil formation/retention. If we didn't have these services, we would have to find another way to provide them, which would be very costly. The average annual value of these services provided by open space is estimated at \$355.5 million for the Lehigh Valley.

The air quality section is all about trees. Trees remove pollutants from the atmosphere. The air pollutant removal benefit, mostly associated with reduced healthcare costs, is valued at about \$48 million annually. Trees also sequester carbon and then store it. The service for carbon storage is valued at \$2.2 million annually, and the service for sequestration is about \$3.6 million annually. The total air quality benefit from trees is valued at \$54 million annually.

Open space in the Lehigh Valley provides a desirable place for many free and low-cost outdoor recreational activities that improve the quality of life and health for Lehigh Valley residents and visitors. Only the outdoor recreation activities with the highest participation rates were included in the report: fishing, hunting, walking, running, biking, camp-based recreation, water-based recreation, trail-based recreation, wildlife viewing, birding and nature study/outdoor recreation. Mr. Reese briefly explained the methodology used to determine the economic contribution of outdoor recreation. Economic contribution is divided into three components: direct, indirect and induced. He briefly described each component. The total expected economic contribution of outdoor recreation is about \$800 million per year.

The final section deals with property value. A recent detailed economic analysis conducted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) found that property values are higher because of a home's proximity to open space. We prepared existing property value data for single family homes only from county assessment data and identified distance to protected open space, both directly adjacent and within ¼ mile. By combining the DVRPC percent added value with actual Lehigh Valley property values, the average premium afforded to each single family home located within ¼ mile of protected open space is \$14,600. Based on a total of 127,850 single family homes located in proximity to protected open space in the Lehigh Valley, the total real estate premium is \$1.8 billion.

Mr. Reese said that the report was reviewed with the Return on Environment Advisory and Partnership committees, as well as the Environment Committee, and comments were incorporated into the report. At Tuesday's meeting, the Environment Committee recommended the report be brought to the Commission for approval.

Mr. Vaughn asked about the recent dam removal study done on two dams in Northampton County. Mr. Reese said the focus of that study was only on the passage of fish. The only feasible option found was removal of both dams. He said the study is still under consideration, but we've been told that it will be at least a decade before it comes to any conclusion. Ms. Bradley said at the time the study was released the City of Easton was not in favor of it, nor were some of the cultural facilities that would be impacted by it. In all likelihood, it's not going to happen. Mr. Vaughn said it

seems like the Return on Environment study favors dam removal. Ms. Bradley said dam removal in general can be good. Each proposal would have to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Herman said there are two considerations. We need an official action to release the report. There may be things in this report that we don't all agree with, but the approval to release the report is not necessarily a personal endorsement. It means that the work has been completed, and the Commission is satisfied that the report complies with the program requirements. The second thing is he'd like to hear from Commission members about what the distribution and presentation of the report should be. Ms. Scheller suggested we put it online. Mr. Repasch said at Tuesday's Committee meeting, we talked about preparing a press release. Ms. Bradley said if the release of the report is approved we will put it on our website. Mr. Dougherty made a motion to approve release of the report. Mr. Lammi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### ***Transportation Committee***

#### ***Statewide TAP & Multimodal Transportation Fund Awards Announcement***

Mr. Donchez said on page 17 there is a spreadsheet showing the distribution of funds under two PennDOT programs. The first program is the Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). This program funds off-network type trail, bicycle, sidewalk, pedestrian, crosswalk and ADA program upgrade types of projects. The program primarily focuses on the bicycle and pedestrian community. There were two parts of the TAP program. The first part was money that the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS) had available to it. They had about \$1.3 million to award to local applicants under the program to be funded for their various improvements. LVTS awarded that money earlier this year. The second part of the program was money that PennDOT had available to itself statewide to award to applicants at their own discretion. Three projects within the Lehigh Valley were awarded money as shown on the spreadsheet. Mr. Donchez briefly described the projects. He said about \$965,000 was awarded through PennDOT for the TAP program.

Mr. Donchez said a second program was announced and applicants funded earlier this year. It is called the Multimodal Transportation Fund Program. This program is very similar to the TAP program, with some minor differences. There were six projects in the Lehigh Valley that were awarded funding as shown on the spreadsheet. Mr. Donchez briefly described the projects. A total of about \$5.5 million was awarded locally under the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Fund Program. Mr. Herman asked if this was a competitive process. Mr. Donchez said it was a statewide competitive process. Mr. Donchez said PennDOT will fund construction 100%. Also, PennDOT considers the local match to be engineering services that are provided by the municipality. He said staff did not have any review function on these applications. They were awarded solely through the state. Mr. Vaughn asked how each of these projects was decided. Mr. Donchez said they were municipal decisions.

***OLD BUSINESS - None***

***NEW BUSINESS******2015 LVPC Work Plan & Budget***

Ms. Bradley said every year we prepare a work plan that is tied back to a budget. You have a copy of the budget and work plan and a memo that summarizes both documents. This was presented to and voted on by the Executive Committee on December 10. Our plan for 2015 is linked to a balanced cash-based budget that totals \$2.612 million. The key work plan tasks for next year include the kickoff of the Regional Comprehensive Plan Update. Our real deliverables next year as it relates to the Comprehensive Plan, which should be complete in 2016, is the release of the comprehensive data and report card on land use, employment and population in the Lehigh Valley at the Annual Lehigh Valley Awards and Planning Forum, which will be held on October 1, 2015. We plan to complete the Northampton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan, as well as the Long Range Transportation Plan. A first ever Comprehensive Freight Movement Plan will be completed, and we will hold a regional Freight Forum around the findings of that document. This is critical to moving funding towards our freight, which is the largest growing area of the region's economy.

Early next year, we will update the Model Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, which will include a section on fair housing, affordable housing and zoning and what is the difference between them. We want to finish the formation of the Lehigh Valley Housing Study and continue our annual housing analysis. We are working on completing the Catasauqua Borough Urban Design Strategy, as well as beginning the Southwest Lehigh Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan. We will begin the Nazareth Area Council of Governments Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan Analysis Report. We will begin the transition to ArcGIS on-line, which is web interactive mapping tool, as well as complete the Lehigh Corridor Congestion Management Study that we began this year. We are going to be flying and processing new digital aerial photography for the Lehigh Valley, which is critical not only to our Comprehensive Plan Update in figuring out land use and development patterns, but is key to the Travel Demand Model that is tied to the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the \$3.3 billion worth of road, bridge, highway and transit funds that are moved through the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study.

We are up for our Federal Highway Administration Certification Review. We need to prepare for that. LANta and PennDOT will also be reviewed. We will complete the annual Subdivision and Land Development report. We are the only entity in the region that actually sees every subdivision action, land development action, every zoning change and every new comprehensive plan. We have been tracking that since the 1960's. We think it is important to communicate that information in a broader way. We want to do that through a series of outreach activities and hold a small event to get that information out. As far as municipal education, we would like to continue the Local Technical Assistance Program or LTAP, Local Government Academy, and do some data and donut/policy and pizza sessions where we have new information to communicate to people and get feedback. We will continue to do direct training with the municipalities.

Ms. Bradley said, as far as key revenue sources for our Lehigh and Northampton county planning agency functions, we will continue to recover the end of the Envision Lehigh Valley Consortium work. We have billed out for that work, and we will not receive payment for that until January. That will be a revenue source for 2015 for both Return on Environment and the balance of the work we had done previously. We will receive \$80,000 from Northampton County for the

Livable Landscapes Open Space Plan. A new revenue source is \$90,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for the Southwest Lehigh Comprehensive Plan. We also included \$135,000 in Subdivision and Land Development revenue. For the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) functions and Federal Highway functions we perform we will receive \$1.1 million from PennDOT. We will receive \$12,892 for the LTAP program and \$60,000 for the aerial photography project. We have requested our annual allocation of \$425,000 from each county. This money has been put in those budgets.

Our key expenses include \$1.7 million in salary, health insurance and pension costs, \$184,226 for other activities and \$480,905 for office equipment, staff training and any public participation. Due to the additional revenue we received from the HUD Sustainability Grant, we were able to set aside money to meet the contractual obligations of our lease in this facility. We set aside \$250,000 for office renovations. Mr. Herman said the Executive Committee spent time reviewing both of those matters at the December meeting and unanimously approved the work plan and budget.

Mr. Greco asked about the status of the two hires for the Transportation section. Ms. Bradley said we have interviewed candidates by phone and in person for the Travel Demand Modeler. Yesterday we made a selection as a team. We have also completed all but one interview for the Director of Transportation Planning. The last interview is this afternoon, and we hope to have a decision to present to the Executive Committee in January.

Ms. Sywensky asked if the Commission is responsible for the upkeep of the office. Mr. Herman said the landlord is responsible for a small portion of the work, but the bulk of the work is to make some livability changes to the space. Ms. Bradley said the carpet has been here for over 20 years. The landlord is only responsible for \$3,000 to \$5,000 of the work. In order to continue to get the over \$1.1 million of MPO money, we need to be ADA compliant. We do not have an ADA compliant service counter, kitchen or cubicles. In order for us to get our next Unified Planning Work Program, which will be negotiated next year, we have to make those improvements to our facility. We used the benefit of the HUD program to set aside those dollars in capital reserve between the end of last year and this year to fund those renovations. Ms. Sywensky asked about the possibility of moving to another space with those upgrades. Mr. Herman said the lease was just recently renewed. Ms. Bradley said we did look at other spaces, and it would cost exponentially more than what we will put into this space.

Ms. Sywensky asked if the Inclusionary Zoning Guidance item on the work program was the same as the Fair Housing training. Ms. Bradley said yes. We have a Model Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that includes some fair housing issues where they intersect with zoning, but it doesn't explain what the difference is between affordable housing and fair housing and what you can do under Pennsylvania law as it relates to zoning. We are writing that up and explaining it so people can see what their responsibilities are. We want to take the model out to the communities after LVPC approval of the model changes and do more municipal education. Mr. Vaughn asked about the \$5,500 telephone and internet increase. He said that is a significant increase. Ms. Bradley said we currently are having an IT replacement done. Literally, our operation was run on a residential modem. Our server has completely collapsed and it doesn't allow us to work. In order for us to be able to completely run the office, we had to invest in IT infrastructure that had been disinvested in for over a decade. That means we will have higher costs in terms of data movement and system backup. This had to be done. Mr. Gemmel made a motion to approve the 2015 work plan and budget. Mr. Greco seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*2015 LVPC & Committee Meeting Dates*

Mr. Herman asked the Commission to review the listing of the 2015 LVPC and Committee meeting dates. Mr. Greco made a motion to approve the meeting dates. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***CORRESPONDENCE - None******EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT****University of Pennsylvania Lehigh Valley Studies*

Ms. Bradley said we had the opportunity to work with the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Design in their second year of Landscape Architecture Studio to tackle some difficult issues in the Lehigh Valley. Their studio is organized around solving problems where the natural environment intersects with the built environment and practical concerns including land use, public policy, real estate, development, regional economy, nature and ecology. We met with them and gave them a tour of Brownfield sites and quarries. We had a two hour discussion and they went back and came up with a series of projects. They wanted to make new connections with our infrastructure, economy, science and any social cultural attributes we had in the region that were specific to us, as well as artistic attributes. They selected projects around landfills, pipelines, quarries, urbanization along waterways, the growth of freight-based industry in the region, as well as reindustrialization. One of the ideas was the plan for a quarry improvement zone and how to link the natural capital of our quarry industry with our heritage, as well as our transportation and water resources. This gives you an idea of the level of detail and the quality of the work product. We worked with them on global issues of sprawl and development and how we could promote the idea of sustainability and reinforce the Lehigh Valley Urban Growth Development Area we have in our Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Bradley said they looked at things like greenway and utility corridors and how this tied back to our Greenways Plan. Ms. Bradley went on to briefly discuss some of the additional projects. She said they came up with some really innovative ideas. We hope to continue this partnership with the University of Pennsylvania for many years and possibly get an intern to work with us.

*Commission Recognition*

Ms. Bradley wanted to thank all of the Commission members for their support throughout the year. It has been a great year of transition. The staff here has done a terrific job this past year.

Mr. Glickman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Herman adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Kathleen Sauerzopf for  
Becky Bradley  
Executive Director