Virtual Meeting Protocol

As we can’t see each other and wish to support the public dialogue we need to conduct the meeting a bit differently:

• Voting members who wish to speak will need to say your name before you speak, this includes:
  • Discussion
  • Questions
  • Motions

• The Chair will call for public comment and any participants who wish to speak will need to say your name before you add to the meeting

• Minutes of this meeting are being taken via recording

• The Agenda and meeting materials are available at https://lvpc.org/meetings.html

PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany

Good Evening and welcome to Lehigh Valley Planning Commission’s August 27th, 2020 virtual meeting. The meeting will begin in just a few minutes. My name is Bethany Vazquez and I will be going over some housekeeping items before the virtual meeting begins.

All participants will be muted during the presentation portions of the agenda. To unmute your phone press *6. The agenda and meeting materials, including handouts and this meeting presentation are posted to the LVPC website, lvpc.org, in the meetings section.

As we can’t see each other and wish to support the public dialogue we need to conduct the meeting a bit differently:

• Voting members who wish to speak will need to say your name before you speak, this includes discussion, questions and motions.

• All voting will be done by an abbreviated roll call. The chairman will call for favorable votes, to be made simultaneously.

• Next the Chairman will ask for ‘no’ votes, including the name of each member voting in the negative.
• This will be immediately followed by any abstentions, also including the name of each member who wishes to abstain from voting.
• We hope this will ease the efficiency of voting.
• The Chair, Greg Zebrowski, will call for public comments. Any participants who wish to speak will need to say your name before you speak.
• Minutes of this meeting are being taken via recording.

For those of you participating on your computer, you can also use the Q&A function for questions or comments during the meeting. The Q&A function is shown as a chat bubble on the right side of the screen. Here you can type a question in the box to send it to staff. Questions or comments related to agenda items will be addressed when the Chair asks for public comment.

The LVPC offers a variety of options for public participation throughout and immediately following this virtual meeting. Please send any questions or comments on this evening’s meeting to lvpc@lvpc.org by September 14, 2020.

This virtual meeting was advertised in the Morning Call on Saturday, August 15, 2020 and promoted through LVPC e-news, on the website and on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.
Meeting Agenda

• Roll Call
• Courtesy of Floor
• Chairman’s Report
• Minutes of the July 30, 2020 Commission Meeting
• Comprehensive Planning Committee Report
• Environment Committee Report
• Transportation Committee Report
• Old and New Business
• Communications – Lehigh Valley Business Cycle Column
• Executive Director’s Report – Monthly Subdivision + Land Development Report
• Public Engagement and Participation

Person Speaking: Bethany

On this evening’s agenda is:
  1. Roll Call
  2. Courtesy of the Floor
  3. The Chairman’s Report
  4. Approval of the minutes from the July 30, 2020 Commission Meeting
  5. Committee Business Items
  6. Old and New Business Items
  7. Communications
  8. Executive Director’s Report
  9. Public engagement and participation

I will now turn the meeting over to Greg Zebrowski, Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Chairman.
Who’s Participating

1. Commissioner Roll Call
2. Members of the Public Present
   Please state your name for the record

- Mute and unmute your phone by pressing *6

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Thank you Bethany. Welcome to the August 27th, 2020 Lehigh Valley Planning Commission meeting. I’m Greg Zebrowski, Chairman. Thank you for joining us this evening and participating as the Commission continues to do essential business of the Lehigh Valley. Ms. Bradley, please call roll.

PERSON SPEAKING: Becky Bradley

If you are participating on the phone, please unmute your phone by pressing *6. Also, if you are on your phone and watching the meeting on your computer, please mute your computer speakers to avoid interference or echo. If you have an issue with the mic please let us know you are participating in the meeting chat.

Becky calls roll…and when finished…

Please mute your phone by pressing *6.

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski
We also would like to welcome the members of the public who are participating tonight. Please state your name so we can make sure that your participation is recognized.
Our next agenda item is Courtesy of the Floor. Any members of the public who would like to speak on a specific agenda item should hold your comments until we reach the business you wish to participate in. I will call for public comment on each item on the agenda. Thank you for your patience.

Are there any members of the public who would like to speak on an item not on this evening’s agenda? If so, please state your name and the topic you wish to discuss.

[If someone speaks, after they are done]

Thank you and do we have anyone else?

[continue this until we hear nothing or see nothing in the chat] hearing none let’s proceed with the agenda.]

If you have questions or comments you can also use the Q&A box in you are participating online, as well.
Thank you.
Chairman’s Report
COVID-19 Pandemic and the Commission

Person Speaking: Greg Zebrowski

As the Commission continues to navigate the pandemic, I’m happy to report that our doors have remained open during normal business hours and that all plans and ordinance reviews continue to be processed in accordance with Pennsylvania Law. It’s remarkable because the level of plans and ordinance reviews has remained high and consistent with prior years. If you remember, subdivision and land development, stormwater, and municipal ordinance and plan reviews in 2018 and 2019 were some of the highest volume years for the Commission on record. And, all of this at a time when the nature of development itself is changing: our three cities are all in the midst of a renaissance, our suburbs are growing, densifying and offering more diverse housing options, our farmers are evolving their businesses in partnership with the counties to secure the region’s agricultural future, our outdoor economy is coming into it’s own, while homegrown businesses are adapting and even expanding here. All the while we wrestle with new challenges, some positive and some negative, like warehousing and the burgeoning consumer demand for quick, cheap delivered goods, or the lack of access by many of the region’s students to remote schooling equipment and internet, and the increase in the severity of storm events and the environmental and property damage this creates, as we face a new climate reality.

The LVPC stands as consistent, quality partner and collaborator, as it has for nearly 60
years, even in these uncertain times. The Team, which includes the Commissioners and the Staff, has risen to every challenge we face. You will see how later in the agenda as we analyze and map out the potential affects of the pandemic on housing, and provide new guidance to our municipalities on rapidly emerging new land uses, like high-cube and automated warehousing. At the end of the day, we have and will continue to work towards the vision, goals and objectives laid out by each of you, Northampton County Council, Lehigh County Commissioners, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and US Department of Transportation last year in FutureLV: The Regional Plan. That future region is greener, more equitable, more sustainable, more resilient and more accessible.

Again, thank you for leadership as Commissioners and as professional staff. Regardless of how uncertain the times, the FutureLV is what we make it together.
Minutes

July 30, 2020 Commission Meeting

Review of Roll Call Items

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Included in your packet are the minutes of the July 30, 2020 Commission Meeting beginning on page 3 of your packet. The minutes also include the roll call vote actions by item. Ms. Vazquez will note these votes prior to action on the minutes.

Ms. Vazquez...

PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany Vazquez

Thank you Chairman.
PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany Vazquez

On the July, 2020 virtual LVPC meeting the following actions were voted on:

- June 25 minutes
- Upper Mount Bethel Township – Zoning Ordinance and SALDO Amendment – Planned Industrial Parks
- City of Allentown – zoning Map Amendment – B5 to B/LI District
- Lower Nazareth Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Triple Net Investments
LVPC Full Commission

The July 30, 2020 meeting was moved to a virtual meeting due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, resulting in virtual votes on agenda items.

PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany Vazquez

- North Whitehall Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Schnecksville Elementary School Project No. 2
- Palmer Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Caron NW Quad Lot 4 East
- Comprehensive Committee Summary Sheet
- Environment Committee Summary Sheet
PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany Vazquez

- Adjournment

Over to our Chairman...

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

As a reminder, if you are using the dial in on the phone you can mute and unmute your phone by pressing *6.

I need a motion to approve the minutes from July 30, 2020 Commission Meeting. Commissioners please say your name before making the motion.

[commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion]

Okay do we have a second?

[second commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion]

Do we have any questions or comments?
Hearing none, may we have affirmative votes please?

[Members vote simultaneously.]

Do any members wish to vote ‘no’? If so, please state your name and vote for the record.

Do any members wish to abstain from voting? If so, please state your name and abstention for the record.

[Becky notes whether or not the motion carries.]
Comprehensive Planning Committee

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Our next report is being given by the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Donna Wright, Chair of the Comprehensive Planning Committee will go through this portion of the agenda, with the LVPC Staff presenting:

PERSON SPEAKING: Donna Wright

Thank you Greg.
PERSON SPEAKING: Donna Wright

This item for consideration is a land use of regional significance in South Whitehall Township. This matter begins on page 14 of the Commission meeting packet. Jill Seitz will give us a brief overview of the staff review.

PERSON SPEAKING: Jill Seitz

Thanks Donna.
PERSON SPEAKING: Jill Seitz

Thanks Donna. The Ridge Farms project located in South Whitehall Township proposes to construct a mixed-use community totaling 870 residential dwellings and 67,200 square feet of commercial space. The wide array of residential dwellings are made up of market-rate and age-restricted single family and twin units, apartments and condominiums. The proposed commercial component includes restaurant, medical office and retail spaces, and also includes 52.9 acres of combined open space and active open space, consisting of trails, playground equipment and bicycle amenities.

The project is generally consistent with FutureLV because it is just outside of a development area, is along two Major Corridors and is in close proximity to a Post-War Center in the Transportation Plan, supporting a logical pattern of development and growth for the Township.

Additional comments you will find in the letter include considerations for long-term management of development pressures on the Township’s rural areas. There are several notable considerations regarding equity implications for attainable housing
and the local business economy. We identify traffic impacts on the roadway network and commend the project for supporting multimodal accessibility. Finally we commend the outdoor recreational benefits included in the project, and encourage further consideration of sustainable design techniques.

That concludes an overview of the staff review.

**PERSON SPEAKING: Donna Wright**

Thank you Jill.

As a reminder, if you are using the dial in on the phone you can mute and unmute your phone by pressing *6. Reminder to anyone who would like to speak to use *6 to unmute your phone.

Is there anyone from the municipality that would like to add context or detail to the review?

Is there anyone from the Commission with comments or questions?

Any members of the public?

*Donna gives any comments and/or moderates discussion...When complete Greg gives vote*

Thank you Jill. I will now turn it over to the Chair, Greg Zebrowski to call for a vote

**PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski**

As a reminder, if you are using the dial in on the phone you can mute and unmute your phone by pressing *6.

I need a motion. Commissioners please say your name before making the motion.

*Commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion*

Okay do we have a second?

*Second commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion*

Do we have any questions or comments?

Hearing none, may we have affirmative votes please?
[Members vote simultaneously.]

Do any members wish to vote ‘no’? If so, please state your name and vote for the record.

Do any members wish to abstain from voting? If so, please state your name and abstention for the record.
PERSON SPEAKING: Donna Wright

The summary sheet, on page 26 of your packet, includes ordinance and map amendment proposals and will be reviewed by staff.

PERSON SPEAKING: Samantha Smith

Thanks Donna.
PERSON SPEAKING: Samantha Smith

Keeping up with the trend of ordinance and map amendment proposals, we have quite a few again this month.

In Freemansburg Borough we received zoning and map amendment proposals for the introduction of overlay districts on Main Street, which was found to be generally consistent with FutureLV. The proposal from Freemansburg Borough is particularly noteworthy. The introduction of overlay districts along the Borough’s Main Street demonstrates the same vision and leadership that is expressed in FutureLV. These districts will allow a mix of modernized uses and increased flexibility that, if applied appropriately through private development, will reinvigorate the Borough. We would like to commend Freemansburg for its excellent proposal.
PERSON SPEAKING: Donna Wright

Thank you Sam.

That completes the Comprehensive Planning Committee Report.

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Thank you Donna.

As a reminder, if you are using the dial in on the phone you can mute and unmute your phone by pressing *6.

I need a motion to approve the project review comments. Commissioners please say your name before making the motion.

[commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion]

Okay do we have a second?
[second commissioner makes motion by saying name and motion]

Do we have any questions or comments?

Hearing none, may we have affirmative votes please?

[Members vote simultaneously.]

Do any members wish to vote ‘no’? If so, please state your name and vote for the record.

Do any members wish to abstain from voting? If so, please state your name and abstention for the record.

[Becky notes whether or not the motion carries.]
PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Our next report is being given by the Environment Committee who met on August 25th.

PERSON SPEAKING: Bob Lammi

Thank you Greg.
COVID-19 Impact on Air Quality

PERSON SPEAKING: Bob Lammi

Up first we have a presentation regarding the impact of COVID-19 on Lehigh Valley air quality by Becky Bradley and Geoff Reese.

PERSON SPEAKING: Becky Bradley

The Lehigh Valley Transportation Study has long utilized the US Environmental Protection Agency air quality monitors in the Lehigh Valley to assess the impact of and guide new transportation investments. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, as focus of FUTURELV: The Regional Plan, now has an opportunity to tie this information back to bi-county environmental and public health work, to name a few areas of integration. This is just one example of how the joint planning effort between the counties and LVTS supports the goals of the region overall. Today, Geoff Reese is going to continue discussion of the Commission’s enhanced environmental-air quality project. This will be one of many dialogues to come, through the LVPC Environment Committee and Full Commission on this subject. Over to you Geoff.
Thanks Becky. To briefly review, at the June LVPC meeting we compared the March, April and May Environmental Protection Agency air quality data for ozone and particulate matter 2.5 for 2020 versus 2019 to see the apparent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Generally speaking, the air quality was better in 2020 than 2019.

Ozone and particulate matter 2.5 are pollutants that can have health implications for Lehigh Valley residents, primarily related to breathing and lung function. Ozone is a reflection of tailpipe emissions and can worsen bronchitis, emphysema and asthma and lead to increased medical care. Particulate matter 2.5 is reflective of power generation emissions and consists of small enough particles to enter the lungs and bloodstream. We track ozone and particulate matter data for the transportation program. Other air pollutants will be considered as well. We first intend to more broadly create and understand the context and implications of the data and ultimately routinely report the data to the Commission as it relates to the goals, policies and actions of FutureLV: The Regional Plan, such as reducing transportation related emissions, improving regional air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, among many related actions.

Last month at the Environment Committee meeting we reviewed the longer-term historical data for ozone and particulate matter for Lehigh and Northampton counties to put the 2019 and 2020 information into perspective. The charts were monthly averages for each county for March, April and May individually for ozone and for particulate matter. For ozone, the charts indicated a long-term trend of higher ozone levels for March and April for both counties but a long-term trend of lower ozone levels for May for both counties. For particulate matter, the data indicated a long-term trend of decreasing particulate matter in the air for both counties for March, April and May. These trends are not necessarily what you might expect from the public dialog of air quality in the Lehigh Valley. Another key point is that the data is not typically continuous for each county for each month of the monitoring period – leaving small or sometimes larger gaps in the data. For this month, for the Environment and Transportation committees, we reviewed the same type of information for the months of June and July to continue to build context for the overall trends. For the Commission tonight we’ll just review the data for ozone.
Our first chart is for ozone for June over the period of record of 1980 to 2020. Data for Lehigh County is shown in blue and Northampton County is shown in orange. For this chart, the data is continuous for Lehigh County and there is only a one-year break for Northampton County in 1997. The data varies significantly from year to year, but there is a clear trend toward lower ozone concentrations over time for both counties. The trend lines bear that out with the blue dashed Lehigh County line and the orange dashed Northampton County line showing very similar trends of better air quality. Interestingly, the Lehigh County ozone concentration for June 2019 was lower than the concentration for June 2020, the reverse of what we had seen for the March to May comparisons. However, Northampton County showed a lower ozone concentration for June 2020 than June 2019. The ozone values for both counties for both years were below the overall trend lines for the data.
PERSON SPEAKING: Geoff Reese

Moving on to July ozone data, there is again a gap in the Northampton County data for 1997, but otherwise continuous data throughout the period of record of 1980 to the present. The data shows virtually the same characteristics as the June information, with improving ozone air quality over time for each county and similar relationships between the 2019 and 2020 data.

An interesting comparison is the relationship between March through July in terms of relative ozone concentration over the period of record. Since the data can show fairly wide variations, the easiest comparison is looking at the trend lines for each month. We don’t have a chart for this, but we can look into it for later presentations. The conclusion from looking at this data is, as a general statement, as the months get warmer, the ozone concentrations are higher.

At this point we have established some preliminary relationships for ozone and particulate matter air quality as described above. The data is presented as the raw concentrations of the parameters in the air. What is not apparent from this information is whether these concentrations are harmful to human health. The Environmental Protection Agency website that this data comes from has additional
products that can help us understand. They translate the raw data into an Air Quality Index and identify the air quality across a range of Good to Hazardous. A chart of the Air Quality Index can be created that, although not visually appealing, allows for a fairly quick appreciation of how much data is available plus trends in the data by time of year and trends in the data over time. We can review this information in the coming months.

The Air Quality Index charts can be created for any air quality data that is monitored by the Environmental Protection Agency. This can help look beyond ozone and particulate matter to nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide and particulate matter 10. This is additional information we can bring to the committees and Commission over the coming months.

That concludes the presentation.

PERSON SPEAKING: Bob Lammi

Are there any questions or comments for Geoff?

Thank you, Geoff.
Hurricane Isaias Remnant Rainfall Analysis

PERSON SPEAKING: Bob Lammi

Next we have a presentation regarding an analysis of the rainfall of Hurricane Isaias Remnant by Geoff Reese.

PERSON SPEAKING: Geoff Reese

Thank you, Bob.
PERSON SPEAKING: Geoff Reese

The chart we’re looking at, as titled, is the daily rainfall totals at the rain gage at the Lehigh Valley International Airport for a portion of the period of record of 1996 to the present. Labeled are the five highest daily rainfall totals within this period of record. The highest rainfall is October 8, 2005 at 8.71 inches. Next is September 16, 1999 at 6.37 inches, September 30, 2010 at 5.73 inches, July 10, 2010 at 5.67 inches and 4.92 inches on August 4, 2020 associated with Tropical Storm Isaias. Note that these totals represent four of the top five daily rainfalls at this gage dating to 1922, with the other being 5.85 inches on September 27, 1985. Note that the only other of these events associated with a tropical storm was 1999 with Hurricane Floyd. Hurricane Sandy on October 29, 2012 that inflicted about $70 billion in damages across the east coast produced only about 1.5 inches of rain at the airport gage. Storm surge and wind plus more rainfall in other areas contributed to the damages. The data for each day does not necessarily reflect the duration of the storm or even the whole storm in some cases. What is shown is simply the rainfall amount that day from midnight to midnight. This is important to keep in mind as we discuss the historical significance of the events.

The largest daily rainfall total of 8.71 inches in one day would be considered about a
storm with a return period of 200 years. That does not mean it is a storm total that we won’t see for another 185 years! It is a statistical evaluation based on probability. It literally means that rainfall has a 0.5 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. 0.5 percent times 200 years equals 100 percent. Just like a 100-year storm, or flood, has a 1 percent chance each year.

The 4.92 inches of rainfall for Tropical Storm Isaias over one day represents between a 10-year and 25-year return period. Noteworthy is that the storm only lasted about 15 hours, so the actual return period when considering rainfall and duration is about a 25-year event. The impact of the storm was intensified due to rainfall in the preceding days. With as much as 8.28 inches of rain measured at local official rain gages over a three-day period. This 3-day total approaches a 100-year return period.

Looking a little closer at Tropical Storm Isaias, the highest 3 and 6 hour portions of the storm produced 2.85 inches and 4.51 inches of rainfall, respectively, which translate to return periods of 25 years for 3 hours and between 50 and 100 years for 6 hours. This shows that the intensity was such to make smaller drainage areas respond with significant runoff intensity, especially combined with rainfall over the prior few days.
PERSON SPEAKING: Becky Bradley

The resulting damage from having successive days of rainfall can be seen in these bridge photos, as creeks filled and the bridge piers were scoured or undermined. There are three known bridge collapses and significant structural damage to at least a handful more totaling millions of dollars. Costs for repair or replacement are born by taxpayers through federal, state and local taxes. This financial reality, when matched with the environmental, transportation, emergency services, health and community impacts of more severe and frequent storm events, will continue to challenge the region’s resources. One of the key initiatives of FutureLV: The Regional Plan is the reduction of climate change impacts through adaptation and mitigation. In the case this evening, we supporting the implementation strategy of “educating elected officials and the public on climate change impacts.”

That concludes the presentation.

PERSON SPEAKING: Bob Lammi

Are there any questions or comments for Geoff or Becky?
Thank you.
Transportation Committee

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Our next report is being given by the Transportation Committee. Kent Herman, Chair of the Committee will go through this portion of the agenda, with the LVPC Staff presenting:

PERSON SPEAKING: Kent Herman

Thank you Greg.
PERSON SPEAKING: Kent Herman

We have a quick update on traffic counts.

PERSON SPEAKING: Brian Hite
Thank you Kent, we certainly have some telling news which brings insight into how not only the pandemic has impacted traffic patterns, but also the effects that weather events have on our transportation system...
PERSON SPEAKING: Brian Hite

Something immediately noticeable in this chart is that traffic counts for August 4 were down significantly. As policy for traffic counts, the LVPC chose Tuesdays as a representative day for traffic counts throughout the pandemic. Tuesdays provide a general weekday where traffic counts represent a “normal” situation for vehicle traffic, because unlike Mondays and Fridays, it is not usually affected by people taking long weekends off. It provides our best chance at regular traffic patterns. Well, Tuesday August 4 happened to be the date Hurricane Isaias touched down in our region and people were NOT on the road for this event. Traffic for that day ended up approximately 2/3 of the end of July and even less from pre-COVID levels...
PERSON SPEAKING: Brian Hite

As you can see even truck traffic was slightly down from normal regaining levels, but only slightly as a whole. The truck traffic counts do indicate that a majority of the vehicle classification data for August 4 was attributed to cars, while freight and truck traffic was only at about 90% of its normal levels collectively. This tells us something obvious, but certainly is important to understand in numbers: People avoid driving during major weather events, but the show must go on for freight...we will be keeping you informed and are hoping for no more dips in traffic due to catastrophic events...

PERSON SPEAKING: Kent Herman

Thank you Brian. That concludes the Transportation Committee Report
Old Business

High Cube and Automated Warehousing Guidance

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Moving on to Old Business, we have a report concerning a High-Cube Warehouse Guidance document Lehigh Valley Planning Commission staff have been working towards publishing.
At the last several Commission meetings we have discussed projects and a municipal ordinance change associated with a new type of land use, the high cube warehouse. Through dialogue with municipal officials and industry professionals we also learned that existing warehouses are being automated.

First, high cube warehouses are typically automated buildings as tall as 180 feet, or roughly the height of a 17 to 18 story building. This new type of warehouse is generally being built for specific uses utilizing rack systems that also serve as the building’s structure. The rack system is typically wrapped with a metal skin that serves as the building’s walls. These tall structures typically integrate Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems (ASRS) as the building support structure to
maximum the storage space that’s available to process goods in a more efficient manner than traditional storage systems where people in forklifts pick and move goods. Essentially, automated warehouses are largely staffed by forklift robots or what we are calling “Forkbots.” The warehouse industry is rapidly deploying these automated systems because they have found that the tall intricate racking system increases the efficiency of goods movements into and out of these facilities, increases order accuracy, saves energy and allows faster turnaround times for trucks, theoretically reducing the time a driver has to stage or park.
Simultaneously, high cube and automated warehousing’s substantial building height could change the character of individual and neighboring communities in the region. In this comparative example, you can see the contrast between a 140’ high-cube warehouse and the blast furnaces in Bethlehem. Also, in the upper left hand corner of the slide an image of the 130’ tall Americold high cube warehouse in Rochelle, IL is pictured. This is a preview into the municipal resource and guidance publication we are working on for next Commission meeting. It will outline the issues, opportunities and how municipal governments through zoning, subdivision and land development, and building codes, can handle proposals for high cube and automated warehousing. These facilities are the “real life” implementation of future forces we predicted in FutureLV. In fact, the regional plan notes workforce, planning, zoning and land development disruptions associated with automation. Because this future force has become a present one, we are quickly working to rise to the unique and new challenges they present for our communities and our region.

Person Speaking: Greg Zebrowski

That concludes old business.
PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Moving on to New Business, we have a couple items on the recent housing work of the LVPC...
First up, we have information on eviction and foreclosure prediction work presented by Sam and Jill.

Thank you Greg.

Once we released the Equity Analysis and Map, and in consideration of the Pandemic, through presentation to our partners it became clear that a tool was necessary to help prepare for the inevitable surge of evictions and foreclosures once the current ban is lifted. Instability in housing is directly related to our equity work, and to our housing work as well. So we created an analysis and mapping tool to demonstrate areas of the region likely at increased risk for eviction, for renters, and foreclosure, for owners. The tool uses data at the Census Block level to identify cost-burdened households by percentage and volume for owners and renters. Having the data available in this way allows for our partners, such as the counties, municipalities and non-profits, to more explicitly identify areas of concern.

I’m going to turn it over to Jill now to do a quick demonstration of the mapping tool.
PERSON SPEAKING: Jill Seitz

[Jill demonstrates how to use the map.]

Regional Data:
Cost-Burdened Renter Households: 39,985 = 49% of all renters
Cost-Burdened Owner Households: 31,180 = 18% of all owners
Total Cost-Burdened in Region: 71,165 = 28% of all households

Renter Household Total: 80,819
Owner Household Total: 171,312
Regional Household Total: 252,131

PERSON SPEAKING: Samantha Smith

Our goal with this tool is to ensure that the municipalities, counties and non-profit partners are armed with good information to make fiscal decisions in terms of housing and household assistance, as we move into whatever the next phases of the COVID-19 Pandemic bring us.
PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski
Thank you Sam and Jill. Next Jill will discuss update on the Lehigh Valley Housing Needs Analysis. Jill, take it away.

PERSON SPEAKING: Jill Seitz

Thanks Greg.

Furthering conversations we’ve had surrounding housing attainability impacts on the Region resulting from COVID, we have been continually evaluating our Housing Needs Analysis to determine how the data can be most useful to the community in the same way as the Eviction and Foreclosure Prediction tool.

The housing needs analysis has been an ongoing initiative to quantify what the Region’s housing needs are, by directly comparing the number of households in the Region at various income levels to the number and cost of existing housing units, essentially comparing supply and demand. We also have been working to determine how this relates to employment data by industry and commuter patterns, since housing attainability is so strongly dependent on the incomes of households.
Identifying the Region’s current housing needs originally came out of Housing Working Group discussions earlier this year, but following our community conversations we’re recognizing the immense need for interactive data and mapping that is customizable to support a range of different community needs and efforts. The analysis is all being done at the school district and municipal level, so that it is most useful to support the work of our local governments and community groups, and we’re looking at how we can tie the housing deeds data to the eviction and foreclosure prediction tool we’ve already created and have received such great feedback on.

PERSON SPEAKING: Samantha Smith

Our initial plan for the Lehigh Valley Housing Needs Analysis was to develop a report that could be distributed to our partners for their use. COVID’s impact on our region has played a key role in reshaping the analysis, and what it looks like, as we respond to our communities and realize the true power of, and need for, information in these rapidly-changing times. We are working to tie together all of the housing work that Jill referenced, as well as the equity analysis, and eviction and foreclosure tool and evaluation, in order to provide a cumulative and interactive housing analysis. Both equity and foreclosure and eviction risk are critical to consideration when addressing the Valley’s housing needs. While this puzzle keeps getting bigger, we’re continuing to adjust our vision of the housing analysis and expand partnerships so that we can accommodate the region’s needs.

One partnership we’re looking forward to sharing with you is ours with the Federal Reserve. We have been in coordination with the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia in regards to related work we’re doing on these fronts and will be exchanging data. The data they’ve collected will supplement the equity analysis which, in turn, will add to the robust data we continue to collect for the housing analysis.

In fact, at the next Housing Working Group meeting the Federal Reserve will be making a presentation on what their analysis has found. As it relates to the Pandemic our work, which you just heard about, has been focused on at risk housing. The Federal Reserve’s work centers around
employment risk. We hope that you’re as excited as we are to hear what they have to say, particularly about COVID’s impact on housing. The next WorkshopLV: Housing Working Group meeting is scheduled for September 10 at 4pm and is virtual.
Communications

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

Moving on to Communications, we have a couple of items to cover. Mr. Assad...

PERSON SPEAKING: Matt Assad

Thank you Chairman
PERSON SPEAKING: Matt Assad
In your packet on page 34 you will see the LVPC column that ran in the Morning Call on Sunday August 9. In the column, Becky talked about some of the things we can expect in a post-pandemic Lehigh Valley, including a transition to more mixed-use neighborhoods, probably more warehouses to handle an increase in online shopping, more outdoor recreation and unfortunately the realization that the pandemic drop in traffic would not last. The next column will talk about the LVPC’s new Foreclosure and Eviction tool you just heard about, and how it can be used to help direct aid to the places that need it the most. It’s due to be published Sept. 13, but will probably show up online a few days before that.

Thank you
Executive Director’s Report

Subdivision and Land Development Report

Person Speaking: Greg Zebrowski

Ms. Bradley, your report...

Person Speaking: Becky Bradley

Thank you.
Thank you. The Commission releases a monthly report on subdivision and land development activity in the Lehigh Valley. The July report is on page 37 of your packet. Last month, we reviewed 15 subdivision and land development plans and 36 development proposals, totaling 405.1 acres. Of note, 534 new housing units were proposed, including 92 single-family detached, 2 twins and 432 Apartments. Nearly 457,000 sq. feet of commercial, 112,869 sq. ft. of public quasi-public, 134,511 sq. feet of office space, 2,300 sq. feet of retail and roughly 1.275 million sq feet of industrial/warehouse development was proposed in a single month. For perspective, during the entire first six months of 2020, a little over 2,000 new housing units were proposed and slightly over 2.2 million square feet of warehouse. If you look at the Year to Date graph in the slide you’ll see that July 2020 development proposals are consistent with those in 2019. This indicates that development activity generally continued to accelerate, even as the pandemic should have slowed new proposals to some extent, consistent with the Northeast US Market. Instead the Lehigh Valley continues to see development pressure. Outside of a major economic slide nationally or globally, it is likely that we will continue to experience this pressure. This underscores the value of the work of the Commission, you as Commissioners, myself and the Team as staff, and the value and vision of FutureLV: The Regional Plan. The leadership that we are collectively showing along with Lehigh County Commissioners, Northampton
County Council, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and even the US Department of Transportation is invaluable and necessary now more than ever, as we simultaneously navigate a pandemic, unprecedented growth pressures, and resources that are more and more limited.

I’ll be speaking about how these trends affect our present and future and how the regional plan guides us forward at the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Lehigh Valley Commercial Real Estate Outlook on September 15th. Any Commissioners who wish to attend virtually should contact Beth.

Thank you.
Given the COVID-19 Pandemic we have some updates about our Public Engagement and Participation that Bethany Vazquez will provide.

PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany

Thank you Chairman.
Public Engagement and Participation

1. Planning + Pizza: Multimunicipal Cooperation, September 9th
   • Via Web: http://tiny.cc/PP0909
   • Via Phone: 1-872-239-5796, Conference ID: 128 070 844#

2. WorkshopLV: Housing, September 10th
   • Via Web: http://tiny.cc/WKH0910
   • Via Phone: 1-872-239-5796, Conference ID: 462 725 848#

3. Lehigh Valley Mayors and Municipal Officials Reception - RESCHEDULED
   • September 9th @ ArtsQuest SteelStacks (101 Founders Way, Bethlehem, PA 18015), 5:00 – 7:30 pm

4. Lehigh Valley Commercial Real Estate Outlook – RESCHEDULED
   • September 15th, VIRTUAL PLATFORM
   • Email bvazquez@lvpc.org if you would like a virtual seat, space limited

5. 7th Annual LVPC Gala and Awards – MOVING TO VIRTUAL PLATFORM
   • October 13, 2020 @ 5:30 pm

PERSON SPEAKING: Bethany Vazquez

Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, the LVPC will continually monitor orders from the Governor. In the back of the meeting packet is a list of the meetings that we anticipate on a virtual platform or postponing due to need to maintain social distance. Of note is the September 9th Planning and Pizza on Multimunicipal Cooperation and our September 10th WorkshopLV: Housing meeting, which is still going on next month.

We will continue to update meeting locations as we gather updated information on public meeting guidelines.

Thank you.
Next Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Meeting:

Thursday, September 24, 7:00 pm
Virtually via Microsoft teams
Via Web: http://tiny.cc/FC0924
Via Phone: 1-872-239-5796, Conference ID: 540 602 346#

Please check lvpc.org or call 610-264-4544 for more information

PERSON SPEAKING: Greg Zebrowski

The next LVPC meeting will be held virtually on September 24th at 7:00 pm.

Now may I have a motion to adjourn?

[motion to adjourn]

Meeting adjourned.