



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

GREG ZEBROWSKI
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Vice Chair

PAMELA PEARSON
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes from the Thursday, January 30, 2020 Meeting

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's conference room located at 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA.

Mr. Zebrowski chaired the meeting.

Ms. Vazquez took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Percy Dougherty, Bob Elbich, Mike Gibson, Steven Glickman, Michael Harakal, Kent Herman, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Owen O'Neil, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt, Leonard Lightner, and Donna Wright

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Malissa Davis, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, Darlene Heller, Susan Lawless, Robert Lammi, Carl Manges, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, Pamela Pearson, Tina Smith, and Greg Zebrowski

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Julio Guridy and Amy Zanelli

Northampton County

Janell Connolly, Kevin Lott, William McGee, Spirit Rutzler, and Gerald Yob

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Peter Barnard, Becky Bradley, Mike Donchez, Charles Doyle, Brian Hite, Craig Kackenmeister, Tracy Oscavich, Geoff Reese, Jill Seitz, Samantha Smith, Elena Tucci, and Bethany Vazquez

Public Present: Minal Amin, Wanda Gruber, George Kinney, Donna Kohut, Aubrie Miller, Joe Peterson, Vinny Quinn, Selma Ritter, Tina Roseberry, Lynn Tammaro, Karin Vangeli, Jeff Ward, Jeff Warren, and David Wilson

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

None.

MINUTES

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the minutes of the December 19, 2019 LVPC meeting are attached. Mr. Lammi made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Repasch seconded the motion. With Ms. Wright, Mr. Harakal, Ms. Davis, and Mr. Gibson abstaining from the vote, the minutes pass unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Zebrowski opened the meeting with recognition of the 2019 Lehigh Valley Government Academy Certified Citizen Planners. Ms. Oscavich gave a brief introduction of the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute program, as well as a short review of previous program statistics through the years. Mr. Zebrowski thanked Ms. Oscavich and congratulated the students on their achievement. Mr. Zebrowski then presented each student with their certificate from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. Ms. Roseberry made remarks about the PMPEI Outstanding Education Achievement Award and acknowledged the dedication of those students who have reached this achievement. Ms. Roseberry presented these students with their certificates. Ms. Oscavich announced that a group picture of all the students will occur in the center area of the LVPC office directly following. Mr. Zebrowski thanked the students once more and continued with the meeting's agenda.

Mr. Zebrowski announced that the LVPC has a new Chief Community Planner, Samantha Smith, and asked Ms. Smith to share a little about herself with the Commission.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee

1. City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – 1 Center Square

Mr. Barnard reviewed the Land Use of Regional Significance for the City of Allentown. The proposed development includes construction of a 16-story office building with ground floor retail. This development is generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan because it is located in the Development area of the Land Use Plan and furthers the overall policies of the Plan. The proposed development specifically 'complements the unique history, environment, culture and needs of the Valley'. The proposed development is aligned with redevelopment efforts supported by the LVPC to 'encourage reuse and redevelopment within urban areas'. Mr. Barnard reviewed the additional comments provided by the LVPC with the Commission. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Dreisbach seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. *Upper Saucon Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – DeSales Storage Facility*
Mr. Barnard reviewed the Land Use of Regional Significance for Upper Saucon Township. The proposed development includes construction of an 11,520 sq. ft. storage building in support of the DeSales University Campus. This application is generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan because it is located in the Development area of the Land Use Plan and furthers the overall policies of the Plan. The LVPC commends inclusion of perimeter landscape screening adjacent to the existing residential homes, as well as the overall project design, which provides for expansion of campus functions onto the residual property. Mr. Barnard also reviewed the LVPC recommendation for environmentally sensitive building and landscape design. The LVPC recommended that higher education institutions use environmentally sensitive building and landscape design for facility construction and design to further academic endeavors related to these technologies, enhance the campus setting, demonstrate environmental leadership within the region, and ‘reduce climate change impacts through mitigation and adaptation’. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter as presented to the Commission. Mr. Repasch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. *Upper Macungie Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Warehouse/Cold Storage Buildings (Maximum Height in the LI and LI(L) Districts)*
Mr. Barnard reviewed the zoning ordinance amendment for Upper Macungie Township. The proposed zoning ordinance amendment considers standards pertaining to cold storage buildings, which facilitate both short- and long-term storage of climate sensitive goods and materials. The LVPC found the draft amendment to be generally inconsistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. While the LVPC is supportive of Upper Macungie Township, as well as other municipalities, remaining abreast of economic and industry trends in order to support the changing workforce, the proposed zoning ordinance amendment’s broadness and resulting unknown regional implications is of concern. Yet unidentified effects of a change of this nature on warehousing uses within the region cannot be quantified. The LVPC’s primary concern is framed around potential transportation and quality of life impacts this proposal may have. Mr. Barnard also shared the concerns expressed by the Comprehensive Planning Committee regarding emergency response and related implications. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter as presented to the Commission. Mr. Dougherty seconded the motion. With Ms. Rader abstaining, the motion passed unanimously.

4. *City of Easton – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Comprehensive Reorganization and Rewrite*
Mr. Barnard reviewed the zoning ordinance amendment for the City of Easton. The proposed zoning ordinance amendment considers a comprehensive rewrite, reformatting, and evaluation of the existing ordinance. The draft zoning ordinance is generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. The LVPC, however, has concerns over several proposed changes that are generally inconsistent with the plan.

Mr. Barnard reviewed the LVPC's recommendations to complement and strengthen the draft zoning ordinance amendment. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter as presented to the Commission. Mr. McGorry seconded the motion. With Mr. Manges and Mr. Elliott abstaining, the motion passed unanimously.

5. *City of Easton – Comprehensive Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Amendment*

Mr. Barnard reviewed the comprehensive subdivision and land development ordinance amendment for the City of Easton. The proposed subdivision and land development ordinance amendment considers a comprehensive rewrite, reformatting, and evaluation of the City's subdivision and land development ordinance overall. The LVPC staff found the draft amendment to be generally consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the letter as presented to the Commission. Mr. Melnick seconded the motion. With Mr. Manges and Mr. Elliott abstaining, the motion passed unanimously.

6. *Project Review, Summary Sheet*

Ms. Wright reviewed the Comprehensive Planning Committee project summary sheet. Ms. Wright stated that if there are no questions from the Commission she would like to make a motion to approve the staff comments. Mr. Manges seconded the motion. With Ms. Heller abstaining from the vote on the items pertaining to the City of Bethlehem, the motion passed unanimously.

7. *WorkshopLV: Housing Survey*

Mr. Barnard presented housing survey results from the abridged poll sent to the Commission. Mr. Barnard explained that the top priority for the Commission is increasing housing costs and reviewed the variety of issues contained within that one priority. Mr. Barnard continued to explain the process of polling the WorkshopLV: Housing group and the steps the LVPC has taken to ensure proper representation in the results. The next WorkshopLV: Housing meeting will take place at the LVPC office on February 13th beginning at 4:00 pm. Following that meeting, on February 26th, the LVPC will be holding a Data + Donuts event to discuss the recent housing sales data with the community, beginning at 8:30 am at the LVPC office.

Environment Committee

1. *Francis E. Walter Dam Re-Evaluation*

Mr. Reese gave a brief overview of the Francis E. Walter Dam Re-Evaluation Study and stated the Commission can go to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia website for more information.

2. *Ordinance Review, Summary Sheet*

Mr. Lammi reviewed the Environment Committee ordinance summary sheet. Mr. Lammi stated that due to his need to abstain from item two in the sheet, he will need another commissioner to make a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr.

Melnick made the motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Pearson seconded the motion. With Mr. Lammi and Ms. Morgan abstaining from the City of Easton's application to renew approval of existing discharge from the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority item and Ms. Wright abstaining from the Lower Milford Township application to renew approval of existing Dan Schantz Farm and Greenhouse groundwater withdrawal item, the motion passed unanimously.

Transportation Committee

1. Transit Planning and FutureLV: The Regional Plan

Mr. O'Neil discussed the broad goals of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as they relate to transit and LANTA's role as an organization. Mr. O'Neil reviewed key recommendations of LANTA's plan known as the 'Moving LANTA Forward' Plan. This is a strategic plan that was created in response to the 2005 Regional Comprehensive Plan. Mr. O'Neil gave a brief summary of the concept of a bus rapid transit system and its implications for the region, as well as discussed the LANTA enhanced bus/bus rapid transit study and its results/recommendations. Mr. O'Neil continued the presentation by reviewing an implementation plan that resulted from the study, as well as a brief review of the 2013-2025 financial outlook report as it relates to transit planning.

OLD BUSINESS

1. FutureLV

Ms. Bradley announced that *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* has been accepted by the United States Department of Transportation. Ms. Bradley also announced that the Plan has been printed and staff handed out a copy of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* to each Commissioner.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Pennsylvania Ethics Commission Statement of Financial Interest

Ms. Bradley reminded the Commission of the need for a copy of their statements of financial interest. Ms. Bradley announced that copies can be sent to Ms. Halper.

2. 2020 LVPC Training and Partnership Program

Ms. Bradley briefly reviewed the 2020 LVPC Training + Partnership Program Brochure with the Commission.

3. PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center Press Conference on Air Quality

Mr. Zebrowski gave a brief summary of the press conference and shared that the conference highlighted various concerns of the Commission and the impacts of air quality on the health of the community. Ms. Bradley also shared some brief highlights of data collected in the report referenced by Mr. Zebrowski. The report can be found at

https://pennenvironmentcenter.org/sites/environment/files/reports/PA_TroubleintheAir_print.pdf.

COMMUNICATION

1. Toys for Tots: Certificate of Appreciation

Ms. Bradley shared a recognition letter and certificate of appreciation received by the Toys for Tots organization. Ms. Bradley thanked the Commission for their donations.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Monthly BuildLV: Subdivision and Land Development Report

Ms. Bradley presented information on the December Monthly BuildLV: Subdivision and Land Development Report. The report will be distributed publicly around the 15th of each month and is available at lvpc.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INVITATIONS TO ATTEND THE FOLLOWING WERE MADE:

1. Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) @ LVPC Office, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

The upcoming LTAP course is Pedestrian and Crosswalks – March 5th.

2. WorkshopLV: Multimodal

The next WorkshopLV: Multimodal meeting will occur on February 26th at the LVPC office beginning at 3:00 pm.

3. WorkshopLV: Freight

The next WorkshopLV: Freight (Freight Advisory Committee) meeting will occur at the LVPC office on April 1st beginning at 10:00 am.

4. Northampton County Climate Summit

The County of Northampton will be holding a Climate Summit on May 20th at Lehigh University Iacocca Conference Center beginning at 8:30 am.

Adjournment

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

Submitted by:
Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director
Bethany Vazquez, Program Associate