



GREG ZEBROWSKI
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Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes from the Thursday, November 18, 2021 Meeting

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, November 18, 2021. The meeting was advertised in the Morning Call on Thursday, July 8th, 2021.

Mr. Zebrowski chaired the meeting.

Ms. Benco took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Bob Elbich, Mike Gibson, Steven Glickman, Michael Harakal, Kent Herman, David Jones, Leonard Lightner, Rick Molchany, Christina Morgan, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt.

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Malissa Davis, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, David O'Connell, Tina Smith, Gerald Yob and Greg Zebrowski.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Geoff Brace, Percy Dougherty, Jamie Johnson, Joyce Moore, Ray O'Connell, Owen O'Neil and Joshua Seigel.

Northampton County

Janell Connolly, Robert Donchez, Andrew Elliott, Darlene Heller, Susan Lawless, Kevin Lott, Carl Manges, Lamont McClure, William McGee, Salvatore Panto, Pamela Pearson and Spirit Rutzler.

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Julie Benco, Becky Bradley, Paul Carafides, Geoff Reese and Jill Seitz.

Public Present: 215-983-2244, Gary Asteak, Justin Barbush, Victor Grande, Tom McMonigle, Monica Wall and Jeff Ward

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

None.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Zebrowski shared that LVPC received The Chamber's 2021 Milestone Award for its 60 years of service and leadership in the economic and community development of the Lehigh Valley. He regretted that he could not attend the event but acknowledged the LVPC and LVTS board members that were able to attend.

MINUTES

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the minutes of the Thursday October 28th, 2021 LVPC meeting are attached, and he then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Melnick made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Molchany seconded the motion. The motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

ACTION ITEM: PennStro Leasing – Glendon Borough

Ms. Bradley informed the Commission that the LVPC currently has two plan reviews for proposed projects in Glendon Borough that the Commission would be voting on. She also informed the Commission of their role in reviewing plans for municipalities that do not have their own adopted Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. She stated that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission acts as the municipal planner, which is a very different process than the review as county planners. Ms. Seitz provided a brief overview of the project and the review against *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. She explained that the proposal generally exhibits consistency with *FutureLV* because it is located in an industrial area, among other reasons. The LVPC strongly recommended that the applicant incorporate sustainability in the project design to minimize environmental impacts of development. Ms. Wall, the Glendon Borough Engineer, gave an overview of the technical review comments and noted that there were no substantial issues with the project during the review. Ms. Wall also presented the waivers that were requested by the applicant. Ms. Seitz asked if Mr. Asteak had anything to add to the review. Mr. Asteak supported the recommendation of the Comprehensive Planning Committee in denying the first waiver request, which asked for the preliminary and final plan to be reviewed simultaneously. The other waiver requests were granted. Mr. Zebrowski echoed Mr. Asteak's comments. Mr. Repasch asked about the traffic on Hilton Street and impacts. Ms. Seitz explained that there would be a minimal amount of traffic in and out of the site. Mr. Zebrowski emphasized Ms. Seitz's comments regarding truck traffic. Mr. Zebrowski called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Ms. Dreisbach made the motion; Mr. Elbich seconded the motion. Motion passed, with Mr. Charles Elliott abstaining.

ACTION ITEM: Chrin Maintenance Building – Glendon Borough

Ms. Seitz provided a brief overview of the project and the review against *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. She explained that the overall intent of the proposal generally exhibits consistency with *FutureLV* and that it is located in an area largely characterized by heavy industrial. The LVPC strongly recommended that the applicant incorporate sustainability in the project design to minimize environmental impacts of development (Policy 3.2). Ms. Wall, the Glendon Borough Engineer, gave an overview of the technical review comments and noted some of the issues with the project. Ms. Wall also presented the waiver that was requested by the applicant, which asked for the preliminary and final plan to be reviewed simultaneously. Mr. Melnick asked if the waiver had been withdrawn. Dave Allen, with EarthRes, responded that the waiver was withdrawn. Mr. Melnick asked for any questions or comments. Mr. Zebrowski asked about the karst geology of the area. Mr. Allen responded regarding the karst geology. Mr. Zebrowski called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Molchany made the motion; Mr. O'Connell seconded the motion. Motion passed, with Mr. Charles Elliott abstaining.

ACTION ITEM: Patriot American Parkway – Lot 2 Warehouses – Land Use of Regional Significance – Hanover Township, Lehigh County

Ms. Seitz reviewed a Land Use of Regional Significance in Hanover Township, Lehigh County proposing to construct two warehouses – one being 200,260 square feet and the other 202,740 square feet at 1108 American Parkway. Ms. Seitz explained that the proposal exhibits inconsistency with *FutureLV* because it fails to take into account the context of development already existing on the site and is unsuitable for the proposed location. Ms. Seitz offered several considerations to assist in the refinement of the preliminary plan that consisted of traffic mitigation strategies, sidewalk connectivity, tractor-trailer parking, ground testing for karsts, and the inclusion of natural landscaping. Mr. Melnick commented on the need for amendments to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Mr. Amato commented on the inconsistency of the proposal. Mr. Zebrowski, Mr. Elbich, Mr. Melnick and Mr. Molchany commented on sustainable and smart development in the region. Mr. Zebrowski called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Ms. Dreisbach made the motion; Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked about the zoning on the site of the proposal and Ms. Seitz responded. Motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet

Mr. Melnick presented the November Comprehensive Committee items. Ms. Benco highlighted the Upper Saucon Township Comprehensive Plan 2020 and commended the plan for putting sustainability front and center. She provided an overview of several sections within the plan that directly tied to *FutureLV* and LVPC guides. Mr. Repasch commended the Upper Saucon Comprehensive Plan and Mr. Zebrowski asked for edits to the City of Allentown Zoning Map Amendment letter to include air quality concerns. Mr. Melnick commented on the neighborhood surrounding the area to be rezoned. Mr. Zebrowski called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the Comprehensive Planning Summary Sheet, with his edits on air quality. Mr. Glickman made the motion, seconded by Mr. Melnick. Motion passed.

Environment Committee:

INFORMATION ITEM: Committee Summary Report

Mr. Repasch summarized the discussion at the November Environment Committee Meeting that highlighted the Delaware River Basin Commission's report on Water Withdrawal and Consumptive Use Estimates and Projections for the Basin.

Transportation Committee:

INFORMATION ITEM: Federal Infrastructure Funding and the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

Mr. Carafides presented an update on the Federal Infrastructure Funding Bill and the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. He provided an overview of federal infrastructure funding and what would potentially be allocated towards Pennsylvania. He also described the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the associated required timeline. Mr. Herman asked for any questions or comments. Mr. Zebrowski asked about the LVTS meeting dates. Mr. Molchany and Ms. Bradley responded about LVTS working meetings to update the TIP and the federal and state financial guidance requirements for the update process.

Old Business:

INFORMATION ITEMS: Activity Reports

Monthly Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinance/Plans Report

Ms. Bradley presented plan and review activity for October, which included 20 Subdivisions, 31 Development proposals, 19 reviews for Stormwater Management, and two Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 72 reviews. The reviews included 503 housing units and 3,247,588 total square feet of non-residential development. Ms. Bradley highlighted a housing trend, in which the LVPC has consistently seen 400-500 proposed units each month. She explained that the new industrial development trend is changing the region and underscores the value and importance of the work that the Commission does. Mr. Zebrowski echoed Ms. Bradley's statements and Mr. Molchany commented regarding the development trends in the region.

Highway Traffic Monitoring

Mr. Carafides presented the Highway Traffic Monitoring report for October. This month's traffic count report showed that mother nature and weather events can dictate travel. Total vehicle traffic on Route 33 south of Route 248 ended October at 75,959 vehicles and traffic on Interstate 78 east of Route 309 ended with 63,972 vehicles. Interstate 78 east of Route 33 ended with 57,629 vehicles and Route 309 remained relatively flat with vehicle volumes, ending with 36,173 vehicles that day. Truck traffic on I-78 east of Route 33 recorded 24,315 trucks and Interstate 78 recorded 20,605 trucks.

New Business:

INFORMATION ITEM: Nominations for 2022 LVPC Officers

Mr. Zebrowski noted that the LVPC Officers would need to change in accordance with the Bylaws for 2022 and stated that a Nominating Committee was created. The Nominating Committee includes Dr. Amato, Ms. Dreisbach and Mr. Herman. He asked that if any Commissioners wanted to nominate

themselves or another Commissioner that they contact the Nominating Committee Members by December 1st. He noted that officers will be selected at the annual Full Commission Meeting in December.

INFORMATION ITEM: Virtual 2021 Annual Commission Meeting, Thursday, December 23, 2021, at 11:00am

Ms. Bradley reminded the Commission that the virtual 2021 Annual Commission meeting will be on Thursday, December 23rd at 11:00am.

INFORMATION ITEM: LVPC Awarded \$21.2 Million RAISE Grant

Ms. Bradley announced that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission has been awarded a \$21,158,854 RAISE Grant Award for the Riverside Drive and D&L Trail. Ms. Bradley highlighted the partners involved and some specifics of the multimodal revitalization corridor project. She also announced that US DOT would hold a press conference on Friday, November 19th in Allentown and Deputy Secretary Trottenberg attended for the project. Mr. Amato thanked Representative Susan Wild for her contributions to the project and Ms. Bradley thanked Senator Bob Casey.

Executive Director's Report:

INFORMATION ITEM: Commissioner Participation needed at the General Assembly

Ms. Bradley urged Commissioners to participate in the virtual November 30th Lehigh Valley General Assembly. At the meeting, any representatives from governmental entities within the Lehigh Valley come together to work on broad planning issues and interrelationships between them. She discussed that attendees would receive education about changes in Pennsylvania law, the Municipalities Planning Code, an update on multi-municipal plans and more.

Communications:

INFORMATION ITEM: Business Cycle Column

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Morning Call Business Cycle column that ran in November. The November column explained the new federal infrastructure bill and how traditional transportation funds would be allocated in the region through the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study. He noted that in the next column, Ms. Bradley would continue the campaign to make changes to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code that would shift power that's currently slanted toward developers and give some of it back to the municipal governments. He stated that the next column is scheduled to publish January 2nd.

INFORMATION ITEM: Plan Lehigh Valley radio show on WDIY NPR 88.1FM

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley 30-minute radio show, hosted by Ms. Bradley and Mr. Assad, where they were joined by Gary Asteak, who is one of the region's most active municipal law attorneys, representing several borough and townships on law issues. During the show, they discussed the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and its shortcomings. Mr. Assad informed that the 30-minute show is currently streaming at WDIY.org. He stated that the next show is scheduled to air at 6:30 pm, December 6 and will discuss the new infrastructure bill.

INFORMATION ITEM: WFMZ Business Matters

Mr. Assad informed the Commission that Ms. Bradley has two upcoming TV appearances. The first was scheduled for November 18th at 7:30pm on PBS-39's Lehigh Valley Rising show. He explained that this show looked at the history and present of Lehigh Valley Transportation. The episode is streaming on PBS-39's website. Becky also appeared on Business Matters on WFMZ Channel 69 on Monday, November 22 at 7:30 pm. This show covered growth and development alongside JB Reilly, David Jandl and Nat Hyman, and is streaming at WFMZ.com. Mr. Assad also mentioned that if you missed Senior Community Planner, Jill Seitz's appearance as an expert on Equity and Inclusion on the Business Matters show, that the full show is on the WFMZ's Business Matters webpage.

Public Engagement:

INFORMATION ITEM: Local Technical Assistance Program

Mr. Assad announced that the Local Technical Assistance Program has a full schedule of classes coming up. There were two in-person Winter Maintenance classes in the City of Allentown and Lower Saucon Township in November and multiple virtual classes going into 2022. Anyone can sign up at lvpc.org/ltap or contact Brian Hite.

INFORMATION ITEM: 8th Annual LVPC Gala and Awards

Mr. Assad urged everyone to buy tickets for the 8th Annual Gala + Awards at lvpc.org/lv-awards. This year it will be a 60th Anniversary celebration on the evening of December 9th. It will be a one-hour video, including an appearance by Mr. Zebrowski and a panel of experts who specialize in looking into the future and the 2021 *FutureLV* Heroes Award.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual on December 23rd. Mr. Zebrowski then asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Molchany made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director and
Julie Benco, Regional Planner