



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 28, 2021 Meeting

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LVPC held a virtual public meeting on January 28, 2021. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on December 28, 2020.

Mr. Zebrowski chaired the meeting.

Ms. Vazquez took Roll Call.

#### Members in Attendance:

##### Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Percy Dougherty, Bob Elbich, Steven Glickman, Michael Harakal, Kent Herman, Jamie Johnson, Leonard Lightner, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Owen O'Neil, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Joshua Seigel, and Kevin Schmidt

##### Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Malissa Davis, Liesel Dreisbach, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, Darlene Heller, Susan Lawless, William McGee, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, Pamela Pearson, Tina Smith, Gerald Yob, and Greg Zebrowski

#### Members Absent:

##### Lehigh County

Mike Gibson, and Ce-Ce Gerlach

##### Northampton County

Bryan Callahan, Janell Connolly, Kevin Lott, Carl Manges, and Spirit Rutzler

**Staff Present:** Matt Assad, Becky Bradley, Charles Doyle, Brian Hite, Craig Kackenmeister, Geoff Reese, Jill Seitz, Samantha Smith and Bethany Vazquez

**Public Present:** Kurt Bresswein, Jeff Ward and Donna Wright

#### COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Mr. Amato expressed concerns for the lack of farmland in the region and the desire to continue to communicate the importance of FutureLV with the communities. Mr. Zebrowski thanked Mr. Amato for his comments.

#### MINUTES

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the minutes of the December 17, 2020 LVPC meeting are attached. Mr. Molchany made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Glickman seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Charles Elliott abstaining.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

### *New Commissioner Introduction*

Mr. Zebrowski welcomed Andrew Elliott as the new Citizen Representative for Northampton County and ask Mr. Elliott to share a few words. Mr. Elliott thanked Mr. Zebrowski and shared his background with the Commission

### *Thank You Donna Wright for your service*

Mr. Zebrowski thanked Ms. Wright for her 11 years of service as a Planning Commissioner. Ms. Wright served in a variety of positions, including as the Comprehensive Committee Chair and on the LVPC Executive Committee for the last 6 years. Mr. Zebrowski shared additional words of sentiment with Ms. Wright and asked Ms. Wright to share a few words. Ms. Wright expressed her gratitude for the work of the Commission. Mr. Zebrowski asked if anyone on the Commission would like to share a few words, Mr. Molchany shared his words of sentiment for Ms. Wright's service.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Transportation Committee**

Mr. Herman gave a brief update on the items covered during the January Transportation Committee Meeting and announced that Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong had a special report for the Commission

#### 1. *Secretary Buttigieg Meeting with Counties*

Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong gave a report on his meeting with incoming Transportation Secretary Mr. Pete Buttigieg and several local government officials around the county. Executive Armstrong stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the infrastructure needs facing the local governments and the region's transportation needs.

### **Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Mr. Melnick presented the January Comprehensive Committee items with staff presenting information.

#### 1. *City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance, Muhlenberg College, Parkway Community Building*

Ms. Seitz reviewed the Land Use of Regional Significance for the City of Allentown. The Muhlenberg College Parkway Community Building Project proposes to construct a three-story office building totaling 20,462 square feet. This proposal is generally consistent with *FutureLV* because it serves to 'expand access to education and job training' (of Policy 4.1) and 'encourages reuse and redevelopment within urban areas' (of Policy 1.1). Ms. Seitz shared additional comments with the Commission. Mr. Glickman inquired about the definition of a rain garden. Ms. Seitz explained that a rain garden acts similarly to a detention pond, but it is more vegetated and works more like a community space. Mr. Amato made a motion to approve the staff comments as presented. Mr. Harakal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 2. *Comprehensive Committee Summary Sheet*

Mr. Melnick stated that the Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet is in the packet for review. Mr. Glickman commented on the City of Bethlehem Ordinance regarding his concern with no provision for demolition preventions or mitigation in the Overlay District to prevent something, not residential related, being built in the district

and noted that he will be voting against that item during the call for votes on the summary sheet. Ms. Lawless inquired about the definition of an Overlay District. Ms. Heller stated that Overlays allow for the underlining zoning to still apply but the overlay allows for specific design and uses in the overlay zones. Ms. Heller also stated that one of the things that the City is doing in the ordinance would be to limit the height requirement in the district to avoid the concerns expressed by Mr. Glickman. Mr. Repasch stated that with the variety of no and abstentions on the summary sheet items should result in a separate vote on each item. Mr. Zebrowski agreed and called for a vote on each item.

The votes were noted as followed:

- South Whitehall Township, Zoning Map Amendment
  - Mr. Melnick made the motion to approve the staff comments with Mr. Repasch seconding the motion. Ms. Morgan abstained from the vote and the motion passed.
- Hanover Township (NC), Zoning Ordinance Amendment
  - Mr. Molchany made the motion to approve the staff comments with Mr. Lightner seconding the motion. Ms. Lawless abstained from the vote and the motion passed.
- City of Bethlehem, Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
  - Mr. Repasch made the motion to approve the staff comments with Mr. McGee seconding the motion. Ms. Heller abstained from the vote. Mr. Glickman and Mr. Elbich voted against the motion. The motion passed.

### **Environment Committee**

Mr. Repasch presented the report for the Environment Committee with staff providing information.

#### *1. Environment Committee Summary Sheet*

Mr. Repasch stated that the Environment Committee Summary Sheet is in the packet for review and made a motion to approve the staff comments. Ms. Morgan seconded the motion. With Ms. Rader abstaining from the vote, the motion passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### *1. Monthly Activity Report*

Ms. Bradley presented information on the December Monthly BuildLV: Subdivision and Land Development Report. The report will be distributed publicly around the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month and is available at lvpc.org. Mr. Hite reviewed the Traffic Count data with the Commission as well.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### *1. 2021 LVPC Officers Vote*

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the Commission needed to hold a 2021 LVPC Officer Election and that the Executive Committee met and considered officers to recommend to the Commission. Mr. Herman reported on the recommendations stating and in accordance with the LVPC Bylaws the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer can serve two consecutive one-year terms. The Executive Committee recommended that Mr. Zebrowski, Mr. Glickman and Ms. Pearson be re-elected for the 2021 year in their current roll. Mr. Dougherty made a motion to approve the Executive Committee recommendation for the

2021 LVPC Officers. Mr. McGorry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. *2021 Online Application Update*

Ms. Bradley stated that LVPC has revamped its Subdivision and Land Development Application, which became effective on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2021. This new application enables individuals to use an online form that will guide them through the application process. The application's webpage also includes additional online tools for applications to use including a Q+A section for ease and efficiency. Mr. Kackenmeister, Ms. Seitz and Ms. Smith guided the Commission through the new application and features. Mr. Glickman asked if the Tax ID on the form also auto-fills the address. Ms. Seitz stated that the address is not automatically filled-in but both the address and Tax ID information is a requirement of the application.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

1. *Morning Call Business Cycle Column*

Mr. Assad state that the recent LVPC column published on Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> was in the packet. The next column will be about going green is just as much an investment in our economy as an investment in our environment and is due to be published on Sunday, February 7.

2. *Annual Website Traffic Report*

Mr. Assad stated that the LVPC had just short of 80,000 view of its webpage in 2020. Mr. Kackenmeister stated that the FutureLV page garnered nearly 4,000 views and the DataLV page, particularly the COVID-19 page, had more than 4,000 views and was the busiest page on the website. Mr. Kackenmeister reviewed other popular webpage insights with the Commission.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

1. *Annual BuildLV Activity Report*

Ms. Bradley reviewed the development activity over the 2020 year and stated that the full annual report will be presented to the Commission at the February Meeting.

2. *PennDOT Pathways Program Update*

Ms. Bradley stated that Secretary Gramian gave a testimony at the Senate Transportation Committee meeting regarding the PennDOT Pathways Program, specifically the P3 program proposing the tolling of the state's bridges along the Interstate Highway System. Ms. Bradley continued by stating that Secretary Gramian echoed the Commission's sentiments regarding the need to address equity issues and impacts when considering locations where user fees will be implemented, and the need to have an excess funds raised through the program to stay within the local community where the fees are generated by allowing regional planning organizations allocate those funds to local transportation projects and initiatives. PennDOT will unveil further details on the specific list of bridges in mid-February, which will be followed by a period of public comment. Ms. Bradley stated that further details of the program will be brought before the Commission as they become available.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mr. Assad announced the kick-off of the 2021 Commission Engagement and participation effort with the first Transformative Talks session on the distribution of the COVID-19 Vaccine.

Information on this event can be found at [lvpc.org](http://lvpc.org). Any questions can be referred to [bvazquez@lvpc.org](mailto:bvazquez@lvpc.org) or called in to 610-264-4544.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Zebrowski stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual. Mr. Zebrowski asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Molchany made the motion. Mr. Zebrowski seconded the motion and adjourned.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director

Bethany Vazquez, Program Associate