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**LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Minutes from the Thursday, February 24, 2022 Meeting**

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, February 24, 2022. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mr. Glickman chaired the meeting.

Ms. Benco took Roll Call.

**Members in Attendance:**

**Lehigh County**

Percy Dougherty, Bob Elbich, Steven Glickman, Kent Herman, Dennis Klusaritz, Rick Molchany, Joyce Moore, Christina Morgan, Owen O'Neil, Kathy Rader, Stephen Repasch, Kevin Schmidt and Irene Woodward.

**Northampton County**

Christopher Amato, Liesel Dreisbach, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, John Gallagher, Darlene Heller, William McGee, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, Grace Smith, Tina Smith, Gerald Yob and Tara Zrinski.

**Members Absent:**

**Lehigh County**

Phillips Armstrong, Geoff Brace, Michael Harakal, Jamie Johnson, David Jones, Joshua Siegel and Matthew Tuerk.

**Northampton County**

Jessica Cope, Dan Engle, Susan Lawless, Carl Manges, Lamont McClure, Scott Minnich, Salvatore Panto and William Reynolds.

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

**Public Present:** Dave Allen, Gary Asteak, Kurt Bresswein, Monica Hodges, Diane Kelly, Cynthia Carman Kramer, Tom McMonigle and Jeff Ward.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

None.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. Glickman welcomed the newest member of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission board, Grace Smith. Ms. Smith thanked Mr. Glickman and expressed her excitement to be a part of the Commission. Mr. Glickman next opened the virtual space for each Commissioner to briefly introduce themselves, starting with the members from Lehigh County and then Northampton County. Each Commissioner briefly spoke of their public and professional experience.

## MINUTES

Mr. Glickman stated that the minutes of the Thursday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 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: Chrin Maintenance – Glendon Borough**

Ms. Bradley informed the Commission that the LVPC currently has a plan review for a proposed project in Glendon Borough. 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 submitted final plans for the project. Ms. Wall, the Glendon Borough Engineer, gave an overview of the technical review comments and noted no substantial issues. She discussed the waivers submitted by the applicant, which included pavement widening, sidewalk installation, lot consolidation and hedging around the parking area. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff letter and resolution. Mr. Dougherty made the motion; Ms. Zrinski seconded the motion. Mr. Allen, the project engineer, thanked Ms. Seitz and Ms. Wall for their guidance through the process and discussed the submitted waivers for the lot consolidation and hedging around the parking area. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Ms. Dreisbach asked about the waivers. Mr. Asteak responded on the lot consolidation waiver and asked the project engineer about the reasoning behind the waiver request. Mr. Allen responded. Motion passed, with Mr. Charles Elliott abstaining.

#### **ACTION ITEM: Forks Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Posh Properties - 1900 Sullivan Trail**

Ms. Seitz provided an overview of the project, which proposes the redevelopment of a site containing an existing vacant office building by constructing a commercial center, consisting of an 8,000-square-foot daycare, 3,000-square-foot carwash, 8,600-square-foot office building, 2,736-square-foot bank, 2,250-square-foot retail space and a 2,283-square-foot restaurant with a drive through, totaling 26,931 square feet. Ms. Seitz explained that the proposal is located in an area designated for Development in the General Land Use Plan, within a Post-War Center in the Transportation Plan and along a Major Corridor. Ms. Seitz presented reasons for why the proposal exhibits consistency with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* and aligns with a major goal of the Forks Township Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Amato made the motion; Ms. Moore seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. Motion passed.

#### **ACTION ITEM: Palmer Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – MRP Industrial Main Street**

Ms. Seitz provided an overview of the project, which proposes to develop a vacant 50-acre lot by constructing two warehouse buildings, one being 395,860-square-feet and the other being 249,600-square feet, with related site improvements. The proposal, located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Van Buren Road, generally exhibits consistency with *FutureLV* because this location is suitable for freight mobility while minimizing quality of life impacts to residents (Policy 2.4). However, Ms. Seitz noted aspects of the site design that could be improved, which included truck driver amenities, snow and ice removal, access driveways, ground testing, environmental review, landscaping and sustainable design. Mr. Melnick asked to include the language, "strongly encourage", with the environmental review in the staff letter. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Molchany made the motion; Ms. Zrinski seconded the motion. Mr. Melnick asked to amend the motion to "strongly encourage" an environmental review. Mr. Molchany asked if the Township already agreed to environmental testing or a review. Ms. Seitz responded that the Township is aware of the environmental issues and that is a part of their review. Ms. Bradley emphasized that the letter should stick to the language in *FutureLV*. Ms. Zrinski asked about the soil and ground testing on the site. Ms. Carman Kramer, Palmer Township Planning Director, mentioned that the Township shares similar concerns on the environmental issues and geotechnical survey on the lot. Ms. Zrinski asked about any environmental issues caused by the previous

use of the land. Mr. Molchany emphasized that the decisions are up to the Township and Ms. Carman Kramer mentioned that she does not know of the results of the testing. Ms. Zrinski asked about solar energy on the site and Ms. Bradley responded. Mr. Glickman mentioned a group that he is a part of that discusses warehousing and solar potential on roofs. Motion passed.

***ACTION ITEM: Upper Saucon Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Stadium Enhancements***

Ms. Benco provided an overview of the project, which proposes improvements to the existing athletic stadium adjacent to the Southern Lehigh School District Middle School building located at 3715 Preston Lane. The enhancements proposed to the existing athletic stadium include enlarging the field surface, replacing the track surface, replacing the south grandstands and expanding paving. Ms. Benco noted that the proposal generally exhibits consistency with *FutureLV* because it is located in an area designated for Development in the General Land Use Plan and serves to ‘enhance the long-term viability of assets’ (of Policy 1.3) and ‘support cultural and social programs’ (of Policy 5.2). Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Ms. Zrinski made the motion; Mr. Repasch seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. Motion passed.

***ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet***

Mr. Melnick presented the Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the summary sheet. Ms. Dreisbach made the motion; Mr. Repasch seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Environment Committee:**

***INFORMATION ITEM: Environment Committee Report***

Mr. Repasch provided a summary of the Environment Committee Meeting, which included an overview of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit public hearing by Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection on the 303 Demi Road Warehouse and River Pointe Logistics proposals, as well as a presentation regarding utility-scale solar electricity generation. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

**Transportation Committee:**

***ACTION ITEMS: Street Vacations***

Mr. Carafides presented the proposed street vacation petitions for Summit Street in its entirety from 31st Street to the lot line of the Brass Rail Restaurant in the City of Allentown. Mr. Carafides noted that the frontage of 31st Street should maintain the connectivity of the existing sidewalk to promote the strengthening of sidewalk infrastructure (of Policy 5.3). Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Herman made the motion; Mr. Melnick seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked about the reason for the street vacation. Ms. Woodward, Director of Planning & Zoning for the City of Allentown, answered that the street vacation was recommended as part of the land development. Motion passed, with Ms. Woodward abstaining.

***INFORMATION ITEM: Other Committee Business***

Mr. Carafides provided a summary of the Transportation Committee Meeting, which included a look at the Greenhouse Gas Inventory transportation data and a guest speaker who discussed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Mr. Herman concluded the Transportation Committee Report.

**Old Business:**

***INFORMATION ITEMS: Activity Reports***

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

Ms. Bradley presented plan and review activity for January, which included 12 Subdivisions, 32 Development proposals, 13 reviews for Stormwater Management, and two Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 59 reviews. The reviews included 307 housing units and 1,889,247 square feet of non-

residential development. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Molchany asked about a possible study on housing in the region and Ms. Bradley discussed the previous work done on the housing deficit in the region. Mr. Molchany emphasized the regional issues with housing. Mr. Glickman emphasized how the employment associated with industrial development impacts housing needs. Ms. Bradley discussed these impacts surrounding development and housing. Mr. Amato asked if development can be encouraged to cluster closer towards where housing is. Ms. Bradley discussed how these principles are already in *FutureLV* and how the region is evolving.

### ***Highway Traffic Monitoring***

Mr. Carafides provided the details of the January traffic counts. Route 33 came in at 75,215 vehicles at the end of the month. Interstate 78 East of 309 in Lehigh County came in at 68,833 vehicles and Interstate 78 East of 33 in Northampton County ended the month with 70,271 vehicles. Route 309 north of Coopersburg in Lehigh County came in at 35,899 vehicles. Truck traffic on Interstate 78 east of Route 33 in Northampton County had 24,746 at the end of the month and I-78 east of Route 309 in Lehigh County finished at 21,839 trucks. Mr. Carafides explained that the freight growth via truck traffic will continue to be monitored to understand that freight movements by truck are not only locally providing goods and services but also keeping America supplied especially as the societal reliance on e-commerce becomes the norm. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

### **New Business:**

#### ***INFORMATION ITEM: LVPC Mission and Purposes Annual Review***

Mr. Glickman announced that a Commission Retreat was being planned for April or May for the Commissioners and Staff to go over key documents and rolls of the Commission.

#### ***INFORMATION ITEM: 2021 Annual Report Presentation***

Ms. Bradley and the LVPC staff presented the 2021 Annual Report, which included the highlights of the year, such as the growth in the region, key partnerships and engagement, awards received by LVPC, key initiatives and multi-municipal planning.

### **Communications:**

#### ***INFORMATION ITEM: Business Cycle Column***

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Business Cycle column that was published in the Sunday, February 13th Morning Call. That column detailed the measures that Lehigh Valley municipalities are taking to control development, including the 52 ordinance, official map and zoning code changes they collectively made in 2021 alone. It also makes the case that Comprehensive Planning is more important now than ever because of the development pressures being experienced by the region. He stated that the next column was scheduled to publish March 22, 2022.

#### ***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 which involved a discussion on the Draft Transportation Improvement Program, with special guest, PennDOT District Executive Mike Rebert. The discussion was about what's in the TIP, including key projects such as new interchanges on Routes 309, 191, and 22 and the Cementon Bridge project, and how the four-year TIP is the benefit of about \$80 million from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Job Act. Mr. Assad informed that the 30-minute show is currently streaming at [WDIY.org](http://WDIY.org). He stated that the next show was scheduled to air at 6:30 pm, March 7 and will be about the annual BuildLV Development report and the busy development year that was 2021. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

**Public Engagement:**

***INFORMATION ITEM: 2022 Lehigh Valley Government Academy***

Mr. Assad reminded the Commission that the Lehigh Valley Government Academy Classes are back in 2022, including Zoning Administration on April 4, 11 & 18, Subdivision and Land Development on May 3, 10 & 17, Community Planning on September 7, 14 & 21 and Zoning on October 6, 13 & 20. Anyone can sign up online at [lvpc.org/lvga](http://lvpc.org/lvga). Additionally, Mr. Assad announced that the Local Technical Assistance Program has a full schedule of classes coming up in March. Anyone can sign up at [lvpc.org/ltap](http://lvpc.org/ltap) or contact Brian Hite.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Glickman stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Glickman 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