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Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes from the Thursday, October 23, 2025, Meeting

The LVPC held a public meeting on Thursday, October 23, 2025. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on January 8th, 2025.

LVPC Chair Dr. Chris Amato chaired the meeting.

Mr. Christian Martinez took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Bob Elbich, Philip Ginder, Steve Glickman, Jennifer Gomez, John Inglis, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Santo Napoli, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt.

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, Cathy Fletcher, Judith Haldeman, Carl Manges, John McGorry, Steve Melnick, Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, Tina Smith and Jean Versteeg.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Ron Beitler, Percy Dougherty, Michael Drabenstott, Sunny Ghai, Kent Herman, Diane Kelly, Dennis Klusaritz, Owen O'Neil and Matthew Tuerk.

Northampton County

Jessica Cope, John Gallagher, Ken Kraft, Rachel Leon, Lamont McClure, Scott Minnich, Edward Nelson, Salvatore Panto, Jr., J. William Reynolds, and Crystal Rose.

Staff Present: Becky A. Bradley, David Cohen, Jillian Seitz, Matt Assad, Susan Myerov, Christian Martinez, Samantha Pearson and Subham Kharel.

Public Present:

Philip Gianficaro, Craig Beavers, Basel Yandem, Allan Johnson, Steve Althouse, James Preston and Jane Mellert.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen thanked everyone for voting in a competition to help the Wilson Area Family Center receive a grant.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Amato announced that the LVPC Executive Committee adopted the LVPC Organizational Strategic Plan on Thursday, October 16th and he thanked everyone who participated in the project.

MINUTES

Chair Amato stated that the minutes of the Thursday, September 25, 2025, LVPC meeting are attached. Chair Amato asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Melnick made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Repasch seconded the motion.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed. Commissioners Morgan and C. Elliott abstained.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Plainfield Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Waste Disposal Tonnage

Ms. Seitz presented a review of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment from Plainfield Township, which amends the *Specific Standards for Conditional Uses – Sanitary Landfills*, to increase the specified limit of waste disposal to an average of 2,750 tons per day, to reflect the landfill's current operating volumes as permitted by DEP. The staff review noted that maintaining regulatory consistency with state oversight helps ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of a regionally significant solid waste facility, contributing to 'the fiscal health and sustainability of municipalities,' of *FutureLV* Policy 4.6.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff review. Commissioner Manges made the motion, and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner C. Elliott recommended adding language to the letter saying, "The LVPC invites the Township to examine the question of whether its proposed ordinance is preempted by the Solid Waste Management Act."

Commissioner C. Elliott motioned and Commissioner Glickman seconded on the letter amendment.

Further comment was provided by Chair Amato, Commissioner Versteeg, and by a member of the public, Jane Mellert, who read a comment letter submitted to LVPC and commissioners by herself.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments, including the amended letter language. The motion passed.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Plainfield Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Grand Central Landfill East Expansion

Ms. Seitz and Ms. Myerov presented a review of a proposed expansion of a landfill in Plainfield Township. The proposed expanded landfill area is approximately 95 acres out of the 211-acre site. The LVPC provided recommendations, including that the Township pursue assurances that the proposed landfill area will not encroach on surrounding natural resources in the future, and that the Township ensure that air quality, groundwater, odor, and noise impacts are thoroughly evaluated and mitigated, especially for nearby residential areas, schools, and community facilities.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff review. Commissioner Repasch made the motion and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Jane Mellert, from the public, commented that the LVPC letter was premature, but the LVPC's Ms. Bradley provided context that if the LVPC didn't provide the letter within 30 days, it would by default be deemed consistent with the regional plan, according to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Mr. Melnick reemphasized a point raised during the Comp Planning Committee meeting earlier in the week that environmental hazards must be mitigated. Commissioner Melnick suggested an amendment for a minimum environmental monitoring be done "on a frequent basis, such as one year or less"

Mr. Melnick issued the motion. Repasch seconded the motion.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee Chair Melnick briefed the Commission on the Comprehensive Committee Summary Sheet that featured a curative amendment in North Whitehall Township and a zoning map amendment in Whitehall Township.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the summary sheet. Commissioner Elbich made the motion, and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. Commissioners Ginder and Schmidt abstained. The motion passed.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Whitehall Township – Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan Review

Mr. Martinez presented a review of the public draft of Whitehall Township's Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan, which was developed to provide physically and financially sustainable parks and recreational opportunities for a variety of users. The staff review noted that the draft plan exhibits various consistencies with LVPC plans, while also providing recommendations to identify additional trail connections in the plan text and maps.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff review. Commissioner Morgan made the motion, and Commissioner Elbich seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Ginder abstained. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Environment Committee Summary Sheet

Commissioner Repasch briefed the Commission on Environment Committee's business that included two Delaware River Basin Commission items involving a wastewater treatment plant and discharge renewal in Heidelberg Township and a groundwater withdrawal modification of an existing well and of existing non-contact cooling water discharge in Lower Nazareth Township.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the summary sheet. Commissioner Melnick made the motion, and Commissioner Schmidt seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Street Vacation Request – Salisbury Township

Ms. Bradley presented a street vacation petition review for a portion of unopened E. Trout Street between S. Gilmore Street. and S. Halstead Street in Salisbury Township. The proposed location does not have any roadway infrastructure currently built and has existing property in the right-of-way. The staff review recommended that the utilities intersecting the proposed street vacation remain accessible in the event of maintenance or repair, of *FutureLV* Policy 5.1.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff review. Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen made the motion and Commissioner Repasch seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

INFORMATION ITEM: Employment Centers Preview and Lehigh Valley Awards Gala

Mr. Kharel presented initial findings from the employment trends observed in the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Kharel described employment change over time, where the Lehigh Valley's employment centers are located and the commuter movements in and out of the region.

Ms. Pearson presented that the release of the population and employment projections will be at the LVPC's 2025 Lehigh Valley Awards Gala, and she provided information on the event's awards, thanked sponsors, and encouraged people to reserve their spot to attend.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

NEW BUSINESS:

INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM: National Community Planning Month

Ms. Seitz celebrated National Community Planning Month by describing the importance of planning and thanking the LVPC Commissioners for their essential role in implementing *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Bradley described the issue of truck parking in the region, which the LVPC addressed through a truck parking plan in 2020. This month, PennDOT Secretary Michael Carroll came to the William Penn Highway park-and-ride lot on October 9, to announce that PennDOT would be creating 30 truck parking spots in the William Penn park-and-ride lot and 18 spots at locations in Weisenberg Township, Bethlehem and Williams Township.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Ms. Bradley then promoted the Lehigh Valley General Assembly, which will feature a panel on utility challenges created by our growth and rapid technology advancements. Updates will also be provided on development in the region so far in 2025 and on current LVPC projects. Mr. Amato emphasized importance of commissioners attending general assembly.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Ms. Seitz presented the Quarter 3 Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinances/Plans Report, where she gave updates on plan activity, residential units proposed, and non-residential square footage proposed.

Ms. Bradley then presented the Quarter 3 Traffic Report and described total vehicle traffic and truck traffic counts on some of the region's most used roadways.

Chair Amato notified the Commission that monthly reports are featured in each Commissioner's packet. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Chair Amato notified the Commission that items for communications and public engagement are featured in the meeting packet. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Amato stated that the next LVPC meeting will be on Thursday, November 20 at 7 pm. Chair Amato then asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Molchany made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director and Christian Martinez, Environmental Planner