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Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes from the Thursday, October 27, 2022 Meeting

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, October 27, 2022. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on Wednesday, January 5th, 2022.

Mr. Glickman chaired the meeting.

Ms. Benco took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Geoff Brace, Percy Dougherty, Bob Elbich, Philip Ginder, Steven Glickman, Kent Herman, Rick Molchany, Owen O'Neil, David Petrik, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt.

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Andrew Elliott, John Gallagher, Susan Lawless, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick and Tina Smith.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Jamie Johnson, David Jones, Dennis Klusaritz, Joyce Moore, Christina Morgan, Kathy Rader, Joshua Siegel and Matthew Tuerk.

Northampton County

Jessica Cope, Liesel Dreisbach, Charles Elliott, Dan Engle, Darlene Heller, Carl Manges, Lamont McClure, William McGee, Scott Minnich, Edward Nelson, Salvatore Panto, William Reynolds, Grace Smith, Gerald Yob and Tara Zrinski.

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Julie Benco, Becky Bradley, Steve Neratko and Dean Severson.

Public Present: Glenn Epps, Lynn Rothman and Jeff Ward.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

There were none.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Glickman celebrated that the Executive Committee adopted a proclamation designating October as Community Planning Month in the Lehigh Valley, which recognizes the many valuable contributions made by professional community and regional planners of the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Glickman also acknowledged the passing of Malissa Davis, a member of the LVPC Board from 2018 to 2021 and Bethlehem Township Board of Commissioners member.

MINUTES

Mr. Glickman stated that the minutes of the Thursday, September 22nd, 2022 LVPC meeting are attached and Ms. Benco read the previously voted on agenda items. Mr. Glickman then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Molchany made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Melnick seconded the

motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed, with Mr. Elbich and Mr. Petrik abstaining.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

ACTION ITEM: Allen Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Willow Brook Farm Phase 3 & 4

Mr. Severson provided an overview of the project, which proposes the construction and subdivision of phases three and four of a phased development that would construct 256 apartment units, 27 single-family dwellings, and 225 townhouses at Bullshead Road and Willowbrook Road. Mr. Severson highlighted comments related to multimodal infrastructure accommodations, pedestrian connectivity, safe routes to school, the PennDOT road network, electric vehicle charging and conservation priority areas. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Dougherty made the motion; Ms. Lawless seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Melnick pointed out a paragraph in the letter related to the cost of roads that are not under the jurisdiction of PennDOT and suggested that the language be used in review letters in the future when relevant. Mr. Amato highlighted the project's vicinity to Wayne Grube Park and the hope that the developer listens to the recommendations in the letter. Mr. Glickman expressed support for the intensity and variety of housing within the proposal. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions from the public. There were none. Motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Pen Argyl Borough – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Light Industrial, Commercial District

Mr. Neratko provided an overview of the Pen Argyl Borough Zoning Ordinance Amendment, which proposes amendments that would modify parking requirements for certain uses, and conditionally allow existing buildings within the IL Light Industrial, Commercial District to be converted into apartments. Mr. Neratko highlighted comments related to the location and intensity of development, new housing options, reuse and redevelopment, housing density, infill development, prevention of sprawl and preservation of existing farmland. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Gallagher made the motion; Mr. Melnick 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, which included two Zoning Ordinance Amendments for the City of Bethlehem, one for Williams Township and two for Upper Saucon Township. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the summary sheet. Mr. Repasch made the motion; Mr. Elbich seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. Motion passed.

Environment Committee:

ACTION ITEM: Environment Committee Summary Sheet

Mr. Repasch summarized the Environment Committee meeting and presented the Environment Committee Summary Sheet, which included three Delaware River Basin Commission Reviews in North Whitehall Township, Upper Mount Bethel Township and Forks Township. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the summary sheet. Ms. Lawless made the motion; Mr. Amato seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. Motion passed.

Transportation Committee:

ACTION ITEM: Transportation Committee Summary Sheet

Mr. Herman presented the Transportation Committee Summary Sheet, which included two street vacation petitions in the City of Allentown. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the

summary sheet. Mr. Herman made the motion; Mr. Elbich seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. Motion passed, with Mr. Petrik abstaining.

Old Business:

INFORMATION ITEMS: Activity Reports

Highway Traffic Monitoring

Ms. Bradley provided the details of the September traffic counts, which showed a relatively flat level of traffic across all four of the continuous traffic counters. She presented the vehicle counts for State Route 33, Interstate-78, State Route 309 and State Route 22, as well as the truck counts for Interstate-78 and State Route 22. Ms. Bradley also reported on the direction of travel for smaller passenger vehicles versus larger commercial vehicles on the road. She pointed out that on September 14th the Lehigh Valley had more trucks going eastbound than westbound on both Route 22 and Interstate 78. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Elbich asked about the progress on PennDOT placing a counter on Interstate 78 and Ms. Bradley answered that requests were sent to PennDOT for a variety of locations and added that it would be some time before permanent counters could be put in due to the potential future widening of Interstate 78.

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

Mr. Neratko presented the plan and review activity for September, which included 17 Subdivisions, 32 Development proposals, 22 reviews for Stormwater Management, and three Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 74 reviews. The reviews included 397 housing units and 1,049,243 square feet of non-residential development, which is on par with what LVPC reviewed last year during September and double what was reviewed two and three years ago. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Third Quarter Activity Report and Year-End Outlook

Ms. Bradley presented the bi-county review activity from 2019 through the third quarter of 2022. She provided an overview of the specific review activity for subdivision and land development plans, housing units, non-residential square feet, stormwater, municipal ordinance, plans and maps, traffic impact studies, Department of Environmental Protection permitted projects, sewage, water and solid waste, government funding grants, street vacations, traffic counts and Local Technical Assistance Program "Tech Assists".

New Business:

INFORMATION ITEM: 9th Annual LVPC Outlook and Awards

Ms. Assad reminded that the in-person 9th Annual Lehigh Valley Outlook and Awards will be held on November 15th from 8 – 10AM at the Lehigh University Mountain Top Campus. He summarized what the event will entail, including the Community of Distinction and the *FutureLV* Heroes Awards, as well as the release of new data on housing, greenhouse gas emissions, traffic trends, population and employment projections and development trends. He mentioned that tickets can be found at lvpc.org/lv-awards.

Communications and Public Engagement:

INFORMATION ITEM: Business Cycle Column

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Business Cycle column that was published in the Sunday, October 23rd Morning Call. That column focuses on growth management, why the Lehigh Valley is in a growth spurt, what municipalities can and cannot do about it, and what strategies are being used by the LVPC and communities across the region to control it. He stated that the next column is scheduled to publish December 4th, 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 that focused on growth management. Becky Bradley and Matt Assad were joined by Lehigh County Commissioner, Geoff Brace,

and discussed how quickly the region is growing and the barriers that municipalities face in slowing the development coming to their communities. He stated that the next show was scheduled to air at 6:30 pm, November 7th and will focus on the environment and climate action, and include Northampton County Councilwoman, Tara Zrinski, and LVPC Regional Planner, Julie Benco.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2022 Lehigh Valley Government Academy

Mr. Assad acknowledged that LVPC just closed a very successful 2022 Lehigh Valley Government Academy season, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute. He mentioned that 111 seats were filled for the four academy courses of Zoning Administration, Subdivision and Land Development, Community Planning and Zoning.

INFORMATION ITEM: PMPEI Online Learning: Building a Strong Planning Commission

Mr. Assad announced that anyone who would like to take advantage of the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute training, can sign up for two classes in November: “Building a Strong Planning Commission”, 6:30 to 8 pm, November 1, and “Limits To Zoning”, 6:30 to 8 pm, November 14. The classes are \$25 and there is a full schedule of virtual classes at pmpei.org.

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Grants

Mr. Assad announced that the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is now offering grants of \$100,000 to \$3 million for projects designed to promote transportation alternatives and improve pedestrian safety. He informed that the Multimodal Transportation Fund is open to municipal governments, businesses or transportation agencies for development, rehabilitation and enhancement of existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development. A local match of 30% is required and applications are due by 4 pm, November 14. More information and the application can be found on the PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Page.

INFORMATION ITEM: Local Technical Assistance Program

Mr. Assad announced that the Local Technical Assistance Program has a full schedule of classes coming up through November and December. Anyone can sign up at lvpc.org/ltap or contact Brian Hite.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Glickman stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual on November 17th. 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