



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

STEVEN GLICKMAN
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CHRISTOPHER AMATO
Vice Chair

KEVIN SCHMIDT
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, June 20th, 2023, 12:00 noon AGENDA

THE MEETING CAN BE ACCESSED AT <https://tinyurl.com/LVPC2023> OR VIA PHONE 610-477-5793 Conf ID: 661 345 854#.

Roll Call

New Team Members

1. Mackenzie Geisner – GIS Planning Intern
2. Jahi Heath – Intern
3. Max Kauthen – Intern

Ordinance/Plan Reviews and Information for June 2023:

4. *ACTION ITEM:* Catasauqua, North Catasauqua and Northampton Boroughs and East Allen and Hanover (LC) Townships – River Central Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan (DS)
5. *ACTION ITEM:* Plainfield Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Warehouse and Wholesale Establishments (JS)
6. *ACTION ITEM:* Wind Gap Borough – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Keeping of Chickens (BGR)
7. *ACTION ITEM:* City of Bethlehem – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Environmental Education Centers (JS)
8. *ACTION ITEM:* Williams Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Timber Harvesting (JS)
9. *ACTION ITEM:* Allen Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Agricultural District (JS)
10. *ACTION ITEM:* North Whitehall Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Open Space and Recreation Areas (BGR)
11. *ACTION ITEM:* South Whitehall Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Addition of Zoning Certificate of Use (DS)

Next Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting:
July 25, 2023 at 12:00 pm



STEVEN GLICKMAN
Chair

CHRISTOPHER AMATO
Vice Chair

KEVIN SCHMIDT
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

June XX, 2023

River Central Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
961 Marcon Boulevard - Suite 310
Allentown, PA 18109

**RE: River Central Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan – Final Draft
Boroughs of Catasauqua, North Catasauqua, and Northampton Boroughs,
and Townships of East Allen and Hanover (Lehigh County)**

Dear Steering Committee Members:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, and we encourage your participation. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting if Commission members have any additional comments. Meeting participation details are below:

- *LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting*
 - June 20, 2023, at 12:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- *LVPC Full Commission Meeting*
 - June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>

The Draft River Central Area Multi-Municipal Compressive Plan (Plan) serves to promote several goals and policies outlined in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

The Draft Plan's major goals include: balancing preservation and development; promoting and coordinating a mixed-use transportation region; protecting and enhancing farmland and the farming community; preserving and expanding natural, recreation, cultural and historic resources; enhancing housing opportunities; and strengthening safe, healthy, creative inclusive and livable communities. Additionally, the plan meets all legally required criteria outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for Comprehensive Plans.

The Plan provides a strong vision for the area's future with thorough, in-depth, and well-researched plan content. In addition to outlining the vision for future growth, the LVPC commends the inclusion of innovative tools and practices that address the modern-day

needs of the region, as well as future forces, demonstrating the use of best practices in development patterns and community growth (Policy 1.4 *FutureLV*).

The LVPC offers the following additional comments and recommendations:

The Plan offers a variety of tools to coordinate new development with natural resources and open space, farmland, and the historic heritage prevalent throughout the region. Examples include conservation design consistent with the LVPC's Conservation Guide and Model Regulation. Other recommended tools include transfer of development rights, sustainable housing methods such as cottage housing and conservation design, green infrastructure techniques. All of these are supportive of FutureLV Policy 1.1.

The LVPC commends the inclusion of Goal 1: "Balance preservation and development aligned with appropriate infrastructure." This objective aligns with the overall goal of FutureLV, which emphasizes sustainable growth and development while preserving the region's natural and open spaces. The plan aims to strike a balance between development and preservation by promoting efficient land use, infrastructure investment, and responsible environmental stewardship.

Policy 1.1, "Promote compact development and redevelopment with a mix of uses in designated growth areas" aligns with FutureLV's focus on creating vibrant, walkable communities. The plan encourages directing growth to designated centers and corridors, promoting mixed-use development that combines residential, commercial, and recreational uses. The goal is to reduce sprawl, enhance transportation options, and foster sustainable and livable communities.

Policy 1.2, "Coordinate industrial development with available road capacity, transit service, and utility infrastructure" supports FutureLV's emphasis, in Goal 1, to create an "...efficient and coordinated development pattern." The plan recognizes the importance of aligning industrial development with existing road capacity, transit service, and utility infrastructure to ensure efficient transportation and utility systems.

The LVPC commends the inclusion of Policy 1.4, "Collaborate land use decision-making across public, private, and governmental entities." This objective aligns with FutureLV's Policy 2.2 which is to provide a safe, well-maintained transportation network to move people and goods efficiently, while capitalizing on existing infrastructure. The policy emphasizes the need for cooperation and coordination among public, private, and governmental entities to ensure that land use decisions are well-informed, transparent, and reflect the shared vision for the region's future. It aims to bridge understanding, foster partnerships, and increase the resilience and quality of life in the River Central region.

Policies 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7 recommend aligning development with sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure. These policies reinforce FutureLV's policy 3.2. which is to minimize environmental impacts of development to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.

The strategic management and minimization of impacts on infrastructure outlined in the plan for the River Central area is commendable. By reviewing zoning and subdivision ordinances, matching land use scales with available sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure capacities, and directing infrastructure-intensive land uses to appropriate areas, the plan addresses the need for balanced growth. Additionally, limiting public sewer and water system expansions to designated development areas and accommodating low-intensity development in exurban areas with on-lot sewage disposal and water supply help ensure efficient use of existing infrastructure.

The plan's emphasis on discouraging infrastructure-intensive land uses in areas served by on-lot sewage disposal or privately owned central sewage facilities is crucial for maintaining the capacity and functionality of these systems. The inclusion of capital improvement programs that prioritize utility infrastructure needs and address drainage problems aligns well with responsible planning and Act 167 stormwater management plans. Moreover, providing adequate service to areas experiencing problems with existing on-lot sewer or water systems or central water supply systems demonstrates a commitment to addressing infrastructure challenges and ensuring the well-being of the community.

To further enhance the plan, it could consider integrating sustainable infrastructure practices and climate change resilience strategies. Collaboration with utility providers and public engagement and education initiatives would also promote transparency, inclusivity, and community understanding. Overall, the plan provides a solid foundation for long-term sustainability, growth, and infrastructure management in the River Central area.

Goal 2, "Promote and coordinate a mixed-transportation region that works for everyone" aligns well with FutureLV plan's goal 2, Connected Mixed-Transportation Region. It emphasizes the importance of promoting transportation options that cater to diverse user needs, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists.

The LVPC commends the inclusion of the Plan's Policy 2.2 which is to "Support the expansion of technology, communications, and utilities to reduce travel demands, optimize traffic flow, and prepare for the next generation of jobs. This policy aligns with FutureLV's Policy 2.5 and recognizes the importance of leveraging advancements in technology, communications, and utility infrastructure to enhance transportation efficiency, reduce congestion, and prepare for future job opportunities.

Plan Policies 2.3 "Mitigate the impacts of freight-based facilities" and 2.4 "Accommodate passenger and freight air travel," recognize the significance of accommodating passenger and freight air travel to connect the Lehigh Valley region to national and global markets, fostering economic growth and mobility.

The LVPC commends the focus on preserving and enhancing farmland through Goal 3, "Protect and enhance farmland and the farming economy" (Policy 3.3 *FutureLV*). Economically supporting local farmers and encouraging local business is

an advancing initiative that will spur economic activity while maintaining the River Central culture.

The LVPC supports Goal 4 of the Draft Plan, “Preserve and expand natural, recreation, cultural and historic resources as essential to quality of life”. The LVPC encourages the conservation and management of natural resources (Policy 3.2 *FutureLV*) and the maintaining of an accessible trail system (of *FutureLV* Goal 5.3) with implementation of recommendations from the *Walk/RollLV: Active Transportation Plan Catalytic Project*. Preserving and enhancing historic/cultural resources is a commendable initiative within the Draft Plan's goals (of Policy 3.1 and 5.4 *FutureLV*).

Goal 5, “Enhance housing opportunities for all”, is supportive of Policy 4.5 of *FutureLV* which encourages a wide variety of housing types at diverse and attainable price points to spur social and economic opportunities. The Draft Plan involved community engagement (of Policy 1.4 *FutureLV*) that revealed residents' concern to age in place. The Plan's strategies align with *FutureLV* Policy 5.2 by promoting universal design standards and adapting older housing units to align with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

The LVPC supports the Draft Plan for the inclusion of Goal 6: “Strengthen safe, healthy, creative, inclusive and livable communities.” The LVPC commends the participating municipalities for advocating for sustainability and an enhanced focus on combating climate change (Policy 3.4, 5.4 *FutureLV*).

The Draft Plan's goals to grow the River Central economy aligns with several policies in *FutureLV* that promote sustainability of municipalities (Policy 4.6 *FutureLV*) and strengthen economic resilience and growth (Policy 4.1 and 4.2 *FutureLV*). The special focus of preserving and fortifying arts into the River Central community increases social and cultural opportunities (of Policy 4.2 *FutureLV*) by integrating community arts into public space (of Policy 5.4 *FutureLV*). The LVPC commends the Plan's goal to enhance equity and inclusivity for lower income individuals or marginalized populations through employment and housing opportunities (Policy 4.3 and 4.5 *FutureLV*) and an expansion of access to resources (Policy 5.2 *FutureLV*).

Policy 4.5 and the inset focusing on Trail Towns emphasize the importance of trails to the River Central region and the opportunities for economic development. A regional trail network anchored by the Delaware and Lehigh, September 11 National Memorial, and Nor-Bath Trail, among others, would provide many benefits including greater access to recreational opportunities, fostering community identity, and expanding local economies.

Goal 6.1 of the Plan is to “Promote efficiencies in emergency management.” The Plan notes the difficulties individual emergency service providers face in personnel, funding, equipment and training. The Plan recommends increased coordination between emergency service providers, a regionwide response plan for community emergencies, and collaboration for cost-sharing opportunities for training recruits as well as facilities and equipment. This is an exemplary example of regional collaboration efforts recommended in *FutureLV*.

The LVPC is supportive of the municipalities in the River Central Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan as they look to implement this Plan. The LVPC is available as a resource if Borough or Township staff would like to discuss implementing planning topics or the LVPC's guidance documents.

Municipalities, when considering comprehensive plans and updates, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of the final Multi-Municipal comprehensive plan that is adopted by the Municipalities, per requirements of the MPC.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Dean Severson
Director of Regional Planning



Patrick Osei
Director of Transportation Planning and Data



Joseph Dotta
Community Fellow

cc: Steve Travers, Catasauqua Borough Manager
Robert Nolter, Catasauqua Borough Planning Commission, Chair
Brent M. Green, East Allen Township Manager
Robert Mills, East Allen Township Planning Commission, Chair
Melissa Wehr, Hanover Township Manager
Mark Thomas, Hanover Township, Planning Commission, Chair
Peter Paone, North Catasaqua Borough Council President and Planning Commission Chair
LeRoy Brobst, Northampton Borough Manager
Nicholas Politi, Jr., Northampton Borough Planning Commission, Chair



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Executive Director

June XX, 2023

Mr. Paul Levits, Chairman
Plainfield Township Planning Commission
Municipal Building, 6292 Sullivan Trail
Nazareth, Pennsylvania 18064

**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Warehouse and Wholesale Establishments
Plainfield Township
Northampton County**

Dear Mr. Levits:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) considered the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Both meetings were virtual, and occurred on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - June 20, 2023 at 12:00 PM
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM

The subject application proposes to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance pertaining to warehouses and wholesale establishments, including revised definitions, changing permitted uses in commercial and industrial zoning districts and additional regulations and provisions.

The new definitions for ‘Warehouse’ and ‘Wholesale Establishment’ create subcategories for small and large developments based on square footage, using a threshold of 50,000 square feet. The LVPC applauds the Township for establishing multiple categories of freight uses, which is a recommended best practice for strategically managing growth and development (of Policy 1.4). This approach will enable the Township to ensure freight facility proposals, which can have a tremendous impact on traffic conditions and residents’ quality of life, are scaled and located appropriately to cause the least impact on the community (of Policy 2.4).

Additionally, the amendment proposes to permit small warehouses and small wholesale establishments by right in commercial and industrial zoning districts. Large warehouses and large wholesale establishments are proposed to be permitted as special exception uses. The designation of large warehouses and large wholesale establishments as a special exception rather than permitted by right in certain districts allows consideration of proposals on a case-by-case basis to determine context-specific reasonable conditions to meet the goals of the Township, the Township’s Comprehensive Plan and the near-completion Slate Belt Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan.

Freight is a continually evolving and growing industry, and by 2040 the flow of freight is projected to increase by 96% (*FutureLV* Freight Special Section). The proposed amendments align with best practices and recommendations included in the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide and serve to minimize freight impacts on residents (of Policy 2.4). The LVPC offers the following commendations on specific ordinance provisions proposed:

Transportation Requirements

The LVPC commends requirement for a traffic impact study, including a truck routing map and identifying necessary signage, which serves to ‘improve the efficiency of infrastructure and avoid traffic incidents’ (of Policy 2.2). The requirement for sufficient off-street queueing space to prevent on-street queueing and requiring site access from an arterial street ensure that development intensity is matched to sustainable infrastructure capacity (of Policy 1.1).

Environmental and Community Design Requirements

The LVPC commends the proposed requirements that ‘minimize environmental impacts of development’ (Policy 3.2), including buffer yard and planting requirements and 100-foot setbacks appropriate for sites abutting residential uses. These requirements mitigate the visual impacts of large-scale buildings that can affect community character and property values, and overall support the physical and mental health of the community (of Policy 5.3).

The proposal includes a maximum building height of 35 feet. For large warehouses, a height of 50 feet is permitted if the proposal includes an exterior access stair tower meeting all Uniform Construction Code and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements. The LVPC commends this provision for promoting safe and secure emergency management (of Policy 5.1).

As the Township continues to evaluate its ordinances to ensure the best possible growth outcomes for the community, the LVPC recommends the following additional provisions that will enhance the quality of freight developments and further ‘support evolution and adaptability of government’ (of Policy 1.1):

Transportation Recommendations:

- Requiring two site access points, especially for large facilities, improves traffic circulation and safety (of Policy 2.2);
- Requiring snow removal equipment to clear off tractor-trailers ensures operators are compliant with the 2006 Pennsylvania Snow/Ice Removal Law and improves safety for other drivers on the road (of Policy 3.2);
- On-site amenities such as driver lounges support driver health and safety (of Policy 5.3);
- Requiring electric charging stations for employees, freight vehicles and trailers ensures that freight-based facilities remain economically viable today and into the future, as the freight industry, in particular, rapidly moves towards alternative fueling technologies over the next few years (Policy 2.5);
- Transit stops and carpool drop-off areas ‘improve mobility and job access’ (Policy 2.3);
- Provisions should be in place that require sidewalk construction along property frontages and connect proposed buildings to parking areas and external sidewalk networks (of Policy 5.1). Bicycle racks also facilitate the ‘last mile’ of commuting workers (of Policy 2.3).

Environmental, Community and Quality of Life Recommendations

- Requiring that buildings be designed with architectural variety breaks up continuous façade and improves development aesthetics (of Policy 5.4);

- Requiring electrical hookups 'reduce greenhouse gas emissions' (of Policy 3.4) and support compliance with the 2008 Pennsylvania Diesel Idling Law;
- On-site public address systems should be limited to not be audible outside of the site (of Policy 5.3);
- As the Township considers the lasting impacts of warehouse uses, the LVPC recommends examining opportunities to incentivize further incorporating sustainable principles into project design to 'minimizing environmental impacts of development' (Policy 3.1).

The LVPC commends Plainfield Township for taking the initiative to address a regionwide issue and promote best practices in establishing efficient development processes responsive to regional needs (of Policy 1.4) through a well-written and thoughtful zoning ordinance amendment proposal.

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Jillian Seitz
Senior Community Planner

cc: Glenn Borger, Plainfield Township Planning Commission Chair; Mary Ellen DeFranco, Bangor Borough Mayor; Bonnie Due, East Bangor Borough Secretary; Jennifer Smethers, Lower Mount Bethel Township Manager; Robin Zmoda, Pen Argyl Borough Manager; Stephanie Steele, Portland Borough Council President; Kay Bucci, Portland Borough Council Vice President; Heather Fisher, Portland Borough Mayor; Cathy Martino, Roseto Borough Manager; Ed Nelson, Upper Mount Bethel Township Manager; Katie Purdue, Washington Township Secretary; Charles Dertinger, Washington Township Planning Commission Chair; Louise Firestone, Wind Gap Borough Manager



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

Linda Paynter, Chair
Wind Gap Planning Commission
545 E. West Street
Wind Gap, PA 18091

**Re: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance –
Modifying Language Regarding the Keeping of Chickens
Wind Gap Borough
Northampton County**

Dear Ms. Paynter:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, and we encourage your participation. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting if Commission members have any additional comments. Meeting participation details are below:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - June 20, 2023, at 12:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - June 22, 2023, at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>

The subject application proposes a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to modify language regarding the keeping of chickens within the Borough limits, the sanitation requirements, and the prohibition of roosters. The LVPC offers the following comments:

The LVPC commends the Township for updating its ordinances, which demonstrates ‘evolution and adaptability of government’ (*FutureLV* the Regional Plan Policy 1.1) and offers the following comments.

The LVPC recommends that under Section 202 Specific Terms that the terms “Chickens/Hens”, “Rooster”, “Coop”, “Pen”, and “Run” be added and defined.

The LVPC suggests that the Borough consider adding the following language:

“The residence must be occupied by the owner of the property, or the resident must have express written permission from the owner of the property”

And

‘All Non-Commercial Keeping of Livestock must comply with minimum standards of animal care as required by Pennsylvania law, Pa. Code Title 18, regarding animal cruelty provisions’.

The Borough may wish to consider adding to Section 2 vi. which would allow property inspection by zoning / Code Enforcement Officer and Police Officers of the Borough to inspect any property with reasonable notice to the owner, to ensure continued compliance with this Ordinance pertaining to, but not limited to the following:

- i. Odor emanating from the premises to persons and places off the premises;
- ii. Noise emanating or likely to emanate from the premises to persons and places off the premises;

And that “Residents keeping chickens shall be responsible for the extermination of insects, rodents, vermin, or other pests in all areas of premises occupied by chickens including, but not limited to, Coops or Pens.”

Coordinate Land Use Decisions

Bangor Borough, East Bangor, Lower Mount Bethel, Pen Argyl, Plainfield, Portland, Roseto, Upper Mount Bethel, and Washington Township are being included in this review letter to ‘coordinate land use decisions across municipal boundaries’ as part of Policy 1.4.

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)].

Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Bambi Griffin Rivera
Senior Community and Regional Planner

cc: Debra Harbison, Wind Gap Administrative Assistant, Robert Goffredo, Jr., Chair Bangor Borough Planning Commission; Sue Ruggiero, East Bangor Borough Planning Commission; Patrick McInerney, Chair, Lower Mount Bethel Township; Craig Reduzzi, Chair Pen Argyl Borough; Paul Levits Chair, Plainfield Township Planning Commission; Dan Wilkins, Chair, Portland Borough Planning Commission; Domenick DeFranco, Chair, Roseto Borough Planning Commission; David Friedman, Supervisor Upper Mount Bethel Township; Robert Teel, Chair, Upper Mount Bethel Planning Commission; Charles Dertinger, Chair, Washington Township Planning Commission



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

June XX, 2023

Tad J. Miller, City Clerk
City of Bethlehem
10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Environmental Education Centers
City of Bethlehem
Lehigh and Northampton Counties**

Dear Mr. Miller:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) considered the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting, and will consider the subject application at its Full Commission meeting, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter if there are any revisions as a result of the Full Commission meeting. The virtual meeting information is below:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - June 20, 2023 at 12:00 PM
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM

The subject application proposes to amend the City Zoning Ordinance by adding definitions for Community Recreation Center, Environmental Education Center and Nature Preserve, and allows Day Care Centers as an accessory use to Environmental Education Centers. This proposal supports numerous actions on *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, including ‘promote sustainable stewardship of natural lands’ (of Policy 3.1), educate on the benefits of conservation and preservation (of Policy 3.1), educate on the importance of sustainable sewer, water and green infrastructure (of Policy 3.2) and educate on climate change impacts, adaptation and mitigation (of Policy 3.4). Additionally, the amendment aligns with actions and recommendations of the City’s Climate Action Plan that support renewable energy, access to greenways and green spaces and urban farming and local gardens.

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Jillian Seitz

Senior Community Planner

CC: Darlene Heller, Planning and Zoning Director, City of Bethlehem



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

May XX, 2023

Mr. Sean P. Duffy
Grim, Biehn & Thatcher
104 S. Sixth Street
P.O. Box 215
Perkasie, PA 18944-00215

**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Timber Harvesting
Williams Township
Northampton County**

Dear Mr. Duffy:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) considered the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Both meetings were virtual, and occurred on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - June 20, 2023 at 12:00 PM
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM

The subject amendment to the Township Zoning Ordinance proposes definitions and regulations for forestry and timber harvesting. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code enables municipalities to enact zoning in their jurisdictions, with a requirement that timber harvesting shall be a permitted use by right in all zoning districts in every municipality (Section 603(f)). The proposed amendment aligns with this requirement by adding Forestry Activities as a permitted-by-right use and permitted accessory use in all districts.

In 2018, the LVPC released a Memorandum regarding correspondence from the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General (dated April 13, 2016) pertaining to forestry. The memorandum included a review of LVPC’s Model Woodlands Ordinance against the Attorney General’s requirements. The proposed amendments to the Williams Township zoning ordinance align with the considerations outlined in the memorandum. Additionally, the Township’s proposed ordinance is closely modeled after the “Pennsylvania Model Forestry Regulations” developed by the Penn State School of Forest Resources and recommended by the Attorney General. The LVPC commends the Township for using a recommended model ordinance which is a best practice for local governments (of Policy 1.4) and aligns with the intent of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* to “promote sustainable stewardship of natural lands” (of Policy 3.1).

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article I§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please

send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jillian Seitz', written in a cursive style.

Jillian Seitz
Senior Community Planner

CC: Mikal Sabatine, Township Manager
Katherine Faubert, Township Administrative Assistant



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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Executive Director

June XX, 2023

Ms. Ilene Eckhart, Manager
Allen Township
4714 Indian Trail Road
Northampton, PA 18067

**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Agricultural District
Allen Township
Northampton County**

Dear Ms. Eckhart:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) considered the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Both meetings were virtual, and occurred on:

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 - June 20, 2023 at 12:00 PM
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 - June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM

The subject application proposes to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance by adding Banquet Facilities as a permitted accessory use to farming, vineyard and winery uses. This proposal aligns with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* because it provides economic opportunities for farmers, promotes agritainment and agritourism and ‘supports agriculture as an essential component of the regional economy and identity’ (Policy 4.4). Creating new opportunities for farmers also decreases the likelihood that open space lands will be sold for development, which supports preserving farmland and maintaining rural character and open space (Policy 3.3).

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Jillian Seitz
Senior Community Planner



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

June 9, 2023

Mr. Brian Horwith, Chair
North Whitehall Planning Commission
3256 Levans Road
Coplay, PA 18037

**Re: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance – 2023-1
North Whitehall Township
Lehigh County**

Dear Mr. Horwith:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, and we encourage your participation. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting if Commission members have any additional comments. Meeting participation details are below:

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The subject application proposes an amendment to its SALDO Ordinance titled. *Ordinance 2023-1* to amend Section **375-72** of the North Whitehall Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance titled “Open Space and Recreation Areas” to amend the amount of recreational land required to be dedicated, and amending Section **204-1** of the North Whitehall Township code of ordinances titled “Fee Established” to update the amount of recreation fees to be paid in lieu of dedication, and amending Section **375-61** of the North Whitehall Township SALDO ordinance titled “Pathways and Bikeways” to require the construction 61 of the North Whitehall Township SALDO ordinance titled “Pathways and Bikeways” to require the construction of walking trails along the perimeter of all subdivisions and land developments where sidewalks are not required.

The LVPC commends the Township for updating its ordinances, which demonstrates 'evolution and adaptability of government' (*FutureLV* the Regional Plan Policy 1.1) and offers the following comments.

The LVPC recommends that, under "**Section 375-72. Open Space and Recreation Areas, D. Suitability of Land Proposed for Dedication**, subsection (n) '*Whether the land is within a '100 Year Floodplain' as defined by official federal floodplain maps,*' that the regulation be expanded to include areas that fall within the 500-year floodplain.

In addition, the LVPC recommends that the Township consider including the following additional factors for the suitability of land proposed for dedication :

1. If the land is part of a Medium or High-Level Natural Resource Conservation Priority Areas based on the Natural Resource Plan. High and Medium Conservation Priority Areas should be used by government agencies to prioritize conservation areas. (*FutureLV* the Regional Plan Page 48), and

2. If the land is in, or part of an area that has 'Natural Heritage Inventory Supporting Landscapes' based on the Natural Heritage Inventory of Lehigh and Northampton Counties, Pennsylvania- Update 2013.

3. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) enables municipalities to accept land or impose fees when they have an adopted recreation plan (§503.11.(iv)). The LVPC recommends ensuring that all provisions of the MPC for adoption of a dedication or fee-in-lieu ordinance have been met.

4. The LVPC encourages the inclusion of American with Disability Act compliant sidewalks with curb cuts for all new subdivisions and land developments as this supports the 'strengthening of sidewalks' of Policy 5.3.

The LVPC commends the Pathways and Bikeways Ordinance to require the construction of walking trails along the perimeter of all subdivisions and land developments where sidewalks are not required as a step toward creating community spaces that promote physical and mental health of Policy 5.3. The LVPC also encourages requiring sidewalks for all new subdivisions and land developments.

4. The LVPS applauds Section **375-61. B Pathways and Bikeways** (2) 'Pathways or Bikeways may be required, in addition to a sidewalk.' The inclusion of this Amendment will 'promote safe routes to school', ensure transportation for all persons', and 'strengthen sidewalk, bike route and trail infrastructure' (of Policies 5.1 and 5.3).

5. The LVPC recommends that the Township clearly distinguish between a bikeway and sharrows. A bikeway is a general term for any trail, path, part of a roadway, surfaced or smooth shoulder or any other travel way that in some manner is specifically designated for bicycle travel; it may be designated for the exclusive use of bicycles, or it may be shared with other transportation modes. Sharrows are pavement markings of a

representation of a bicycle with two chevrons above it, marked on a roadway as a symbol to indicate that motor vehicles and bicycles are to share the lane that improve cycling safety and are often used on streets that are too narrow for traditional bike lanes.

Section **C. Construction (5)** states that “Pathways and Bikeways may be located within the street right-of-way’. This could be interpreted to include a sharrow within a right-of-way to meet this requirement, which would not be equally accessible for pedestrians and may not meet the intension of the proposed ordinance amendment.

6. The LVPC suggests that Section **375.61. C. (4)** be altered to include a list of ADA accessible materials. Mulch is not ADA accessible, although some natural materials such as crushed, washed gravel that are packed and tamped can provide a satisfactory material to work with when creating a pathway that is accessible to pedestrians, including those using a mobility device or tool such as a wheelchair, walker, scooter, or a White Cane which allow people who are blind, DeafBlind, or visually impaired to navigate. Resin-bound gravels are the most accessible because they are durable and have traction sufficient to prevent falls and do not collect water on their surface. Self-binding rocks also keep together much like resin-coated options, adhering to one another as they are rolled over and are a good option to create a natural yet accessible pathway as the rocks are small enough to be easily navigated by people both walking, and rolling as well as using other mobility devises. Insuring that the materials used in such a pathway would ‘incorporate universal design and ensure accessibility for all persons’ (of Policy 5.2).

7. The LVPC recommends that the grade that the Township would consider inaccessible be included within **Section 375.61. C. (4)**. This additional wording should state that ‘if the slope meets or exceeds the listed grade the Board of Supervisors may determine that the slope could be reasonably overcome by using a switchback pathway to rectify the limitations of the landform and create an accessible pathway if safe and reasonable for the intended purpose and location.’

8. The LVPC commends the inclusion within **Section 375.61. C. (6)** that pathways and bikeways located away from street shall be adequately lighted which supports the ‘promotion of pedestrian scale lighting’ (of Policy 5.3).

9. The LVPC suggests that the Township consider additional wording to include when the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) provide transportation to any site of a future or proposed path/bikeway that would allow the Township to use the opportunity to incorporate any improvements to increase accessibility such as 10x6 concrete pads fronting any paths or 5’ concert pads between any walkways and curbs for bus stop landing pads as recommended by LANTA.

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania

Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)].

Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, enclosed in a thin yellow rectangular border. The signature is cursive and reads "Bambi Griffin Rivera".

Bambi Griffin Rivera
Senior Community and Regional Planner

cc: Jessica Koenig, North Whitehall Secretary/Treasurer
Jane Kelly, Planning Secretary
Jeffery Mauer, Zoning Officer/Codes Administer



STEVEN GLICKMAN
Chair

CHRISTOPHER AMATO
Vice Chair

KEVIN SCHMIDT
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

June XX, 2023

Gregg Adams, Planner, Community Development Department
South Whitehall Township
4444 Walbert Avenue
Allentown, PA 18104-1699

**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Addition of Zoning Certificate of Use
South Whitehall Township
Lehigh County**

Dear Steering Committee Members:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, and we encourage your participation. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting if Commission members have any additional comments. Meeting participation details are below:

- *LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting*
 - *June 20, 2023, at 12:00 PM*
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- *LVPC Full Commission Meeting*
 - *June 22, 2023 at 7:00 PM*
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>

The Draft zoning ordinance amendment proposes to add Section 350-13(f), creating a Zoning Certificate of Use. The Township has noted a limitation in its existing ordinances. Currently, the Township only has requirements for the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy which follows compliance with the minimum standards of the state building code. However, the Certificate of Occupancy cannot be withheld if the building or structure does not comply with other Township regulations or lacks approvals from other outside agencies. The Certificate of Use certifies that a project or building/structure is in compliance with the municipal zoning ordinance and all other applicable ordinances, rules, and regulations. The Certificate of Use would be issued after the Zoning Permit is issued and all conditions of approval (if any) are approved.

These proposed amendments demonstrate 'evolution and adaptability of government' (of Policy 1.1).

Municipalities, when considering ordinance amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article I§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC. If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean Severson".

Dean Severson
Director of Regional Planning

Cc: Tom Petrucci, Township Manager
David Manhardt, Township Director of Community Development