



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

STEVEN GLICKMAN
Chair

CHRISTOPHER AMATO
Vice Chair

KEVIN SCHMIDT
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes from the Thursday, February 23, 2023 Meeting

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, February 23, 2023. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on December 28, 2022.

Mr. Glickman chaired the meeting.

Ms. Seitz took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Geoff Brace, Michael Drabenstott, Bob Elbich, Philip Ginder, Steven Glickman, Kent Herman, Dennis Klusaritz, Rick Molchany, Joyce Moore, Christina Morgan, Santo Napoli, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt.

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Charles Elliott, John Gallagher, Judy Haldeman, Rachel Leon, Carl Manges, William McGee, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, Tina Smith, and Tara Zrinski.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Percy Dougherty, Jamie Johnson, David Jones, Owen O'Neil, Joshua Siegel, and Matthew Tuerk.

Northampton County

Jessica Cope, Dan Engle, Darlene Heller, Lamont McClure, Scott Minnich, Edward Nelson, Salvatore Panto, and William Reynolds.

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Becky Bradley, Steve Neratko, Patrick Osei, Jillian Seitz, and Dean Severson.

Public Present: Jeff Ward, Kurt Bresswein, Michael Hirsch, Dhjmbhj (self-identified in meeting), Fred (self-identified in meeting)

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Mr. Amato noted recent press about warehousing in the community and commended Executive McClure and Ms. Bradley for their comments reinforcing the goals of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Mr. Cunningham from the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation was also interviewed as part of the reporting and noted the potential of tying local land use regulations specifically to manufacturing. Mr. Amato noted that the Commission is assisting communities with this, and it is good to see that there is some alignment with the need for sustainable, high-quality employment through manufacturing as it relates to land development.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome New LVPC Commissioners

Mr. Glickman welcomed new members of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Santo Napoli, elected member from the City of Allentown, Michael Drabenstott, citizen member from Allentown, and Judith Haldeman, elected member from Northampton Borough. New members introduced themselves. The Chair also asked each member of the Commission to introduce themselves.

MINUTES

Mr. Glickman stated that the minutes of the Thursday, January 26, 2023, LVPC meeting are attached and Ms. Seitz 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 Ms. Rader, Mr. Drabenstott, Mr. Napoli, and Ms. Haldeman abstaining.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

ACTION ITEM: South Whitehall Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Dorney Park (Project 2024)

Ms. Seitz presented the review of the subject application, which is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Regional Entertainment or Resort Complex category. This project proposes to reutilize the site of a former attraction by constructing features for a new attraction.

Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Manges made the motion; Ms. Morgan seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet

Mr. Melnick presented the Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet, which included three zoning ordinance amendments for Fountain Hill Borough, Whitehall Township and Lower Macungie Township, and a zoning ordinance and map amendment for Lower Saucon Township. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments on the summary sheet. Ms. Moore made the motion; Mr. Manges seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Elbich asked about the minimum lot area proposed in Fountain Hill Borough. Ms. Seitz stated that this lot area reflects existing lot sizes in the applicable area. Ms. Bradley stated that this lot size is common for historic boroughs. Mr. Brace noted that he has experience with his own residence having similar lot sizes to those proposed in Fountain Hill. Mr. Repasch noted that he is a resident of Fountain Hill, and the local comprehensive plan encourages the Borough to align its regulations with the actual community conditions. Mr. Glickman noted that like Mr. Brace he has experienced the same and that historic development pattern considerations should be included in the regulatory considerations of communities. The motion passed.

Environment Committee:

ACTION ITEM: North Whitehall Township – Public Utility Commission Review – Application for Transfer by Sale of the Fairland Sewer Company Wastewater System

Mr. Severson presented a review of the project, which transfers by sale all wastewater assets of Fairland Sewer Company to Mid Atlantic Utility Group, Inc. Mr. Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Mr. Repasch made the motion; Mr. Elbich seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Repasch asked how many customers would be served. Mr. Molchany noted 188 customers would be served. Mr. Klusaritz asked about the company and their ability to manage the system. Mr. Repasch noted the vulnerabilities of privately managed sewer systems and that the Lehigh County Authority has not objected. Mr. Molchany reinforced Mr. Repasch's concerns and noted that compliance is difficult for non-public entities. Mr. Brace noted that its rates are often lower for publicly-owned entities versus privately-owned entities and this can create concerns for the public being served. Mr. Molchany asked about any studies related to costs and management. Mr. Repasch noted examples

of where there are major issues with privately-owned systems. Ms. Bradley noted that recent press on privatization. She noted that the Commission has not taken a formal position on publicly versus privately-owned sewer systems. Mr. Klusaritz noted a recent approval of a development up the road and that this new development was to tie into this facility. He wondered where this transfer leaves that development. Motion passed with Tori Morgan and Dennis Klusaritz abstaining.

Transportation Committee:

ACTION ITEM: Transportation Committee Summary Sheet

Mr. Herman presented the Transportation Committee Summary Sheet, which included two street vacations for Salisbury Township and City of Allentown. Mr. Herman made a motion to accept the staff comments for both street vacations. Mr. Glickman asked for a second. Ms. Moore seconded the motion. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Invitation to Participate in Lehigh Valley Transportation Study Transportation Needs Assessment

Mr. Herman provided details about the 19 outreach meetings being held by the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study and invited members of the Commission to participate as important to the update of the long-range transportation plan components of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Outreach meetings will include all local governments, key partners, and the public. Mr. Herman noted that the approach is unique, as most regions do not actively seek comment from partners and governments prior to developing policy and investments. This approach reinforces the commitment to inclusion and equity in both the LVPC and Lehigh Valley Transportation Study's work.

Mr. Glickman noted that these the last three reports are indications of the type of work that the LVPC Committees do. Mr. Molchany noted the connection to *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* and where to find it online and the importance of the document in the Commission's work.

Old Business:

INFORMATION ITEMS: Activity Reports

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

Mr. Neratko presented the plan and review activity for January, which included 13 subdivisions, 26 development proposals, 17 reviews for Stormwater Management, and eight Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 64 reviews. The reviews included 378 housing units and 2,213,971 square feet of non-residential development. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Highway Traffic Monitoring

Mr. Osei provided the details of the January traffic counts. He 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. Mr. Osei noted that the drop in truck traffic in December rebounded in January, reflecting that freight is once again on the move in 2023 after the normal end-of-year holiday downturn. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

New Business:

INFORMATION ITEM: 2022 Annual Report Presentation

Ms. Bradley, Mr. Osei, Mr. Neratko, Ms. Seitz, Mr. Severson and Mr. Assad presented the 2022 Annual Report, which included the highlights of the year, such as the growth in the region, partnerships and engagement, awards received by LVPC, multi-municipal planning, and what lies ahead for key initiatives. Key projects and plans presented included: population and employment projections, regional greenhouse gas inventory, LVTS Transportation Improvement Program update, training and community engagement, annual BuildLV: Development Activity Report, Eastern Pennsylvania Alliance Freight Infrastructure Plan, Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Guide, multi-municipal comprehensive plans, among other items. It is of note, that 2022 was a record year for land development activity and specifics are included in

the Organizational Report. The annual organizational report is required per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to be presented by March 1st of each year and that the Organizational Report serves as meeting this requirement. The report's hard copies will be distributed to the communities and widely as well. The Organizational report is also online at www.lvpc.org in the "Commission" portion of the site.

INFORMATION ITEM: LVPC Finality of Official Action and Commissioner Contact with Staff

Mr. Glickman presented a policy recently adopted by the LVPC Executive Committee formalizing a 60-year operational practice. The purpose of the policy is to maintain transparency in compliance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, and states that official action taken by the Commission is final, Commissioners and staff shall represent official actions as the public opinion of the LVPC, and staff should not be approached in an attempt to influence reviews. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Executive Director's Report:

Ms. Bradley stated that the LVPC is being recognized with the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley's Community Builder Award for 62 years of dedication to the region. The event is on April 4, 2023, from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm at ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks, and anyone interested in attending should email Tracy Oscavich.

Communications and Public Engagement:

INFORMATION ITEM: Business Cycle Column

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Business Cycle column that was published in the Sunday, February 19 Morning Call. That column focuses on the Annual Report, how it means growth, and that with success comes the added challenge of managing all that growth to make sure too much of a good thing doesn't ruin the very reason so many people and businesses want to be here.

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 aired on February 6 and focused on the LVPC's 30-year Population and Employment Forecast.

Joining Ms. Bradley and Mr. Assad was LVPC Economist and Data Scientist David Jan to discuss the forecasts that have the region adding another 100,000 people and 74,000 jobs by 2050, why the Lehigh Valley is growing while most of Pennsylvania regions shrink, and the implications of growth.

Mr. Assad stated that the next show was scheduled to air at 6:30 pm, March 6, and will look at LVPC's 2022 Annual Report and new schedule of in-person training classes.

INFORMATION ITEM: Lehigh Valley Government Academy Classes

Mr. Assad announced that Lehigh Valley Government Academy Classes are back with four courses spread throughout the year. Zoning will be in April, Subdivision and Land Development in October, and Community Planning will have two offerings in May and September.

Mr. Assad noted that Local Technical Assistance Program classes also return to in-person after almost three years of virtual classes. Temporary Traffic Control in Work Zones will be held in April, followed by Erosion and Sediment Control in June. A full schedule of online classes are still available as well. Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Glickman stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual on March 23 at 7pm. 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 Jill Seitz, Senior Community Planner