



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 December 21, 2023, Meeting

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, December 21, 2023. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on December 28, 2022.

LVPC Chair Steven Glickman chaired the meeting.

Mr. Joey Dotta took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Michael Drabenstott, Bob Elbich, Philip Ginder, Steven Glickman, Jennifer Gomez, Kent Herman, Joyce Moore, Christina Morgan, Owen O'Neil, Kathy Rader, and Stephen Repasch

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, John Gallagher, John McGorry, Stephen Melnick, Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, and Tina Smith,

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Geoff Brace, Percy Dougherty, Jamie Johnson, Dennis Klusaritz, Rick Molchany, Santo Napoli, Kevin Schmidt and Matthew Tuerk.

Northampton County

Jessica Cope, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, Dan Engle, Judy Haldeman, Darlene Heller, Rachel Leon, Carl Manges, Lamont McClure, William McGee, Scott Minnich, Edward Nelson, Salvatore Panto, William Reynolds, Taiba Sultana and Tara Zrinski.

Staff Present: Joey Dotta, Steve Neratko, Becky Bradley, Matt Assad, Brian Hite, Evan Gardi, Corinne Ruggiero, Susan Rockwell, Susan Myerov, Ben Dinkel, Patrick Osei, Denjam Khadka, Christian Martinez, Mackenzie Geisner, Taylor Beasley, Hannah Milagio, Jill Seitz, Bambi Griffin Rivera and Michelle Anfuso

Public Present: Jeff Ward, Timothy Fisher, Craig Beavers and Kent Baird

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

No members of the public spoke.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Glickman first introduced two new staff members, Director of Environment Planning Susan Myerov and Transportation Planner Ben Dinkel. Each gave a short introduction of their background and their excitement to join the LVPC team.

Chair Glickman updated the Commission on the status of the LVPC's office relocation and shared information on the current construction. Chair Glickman stated that the anticipated move-in date is the end of February, pending no further materials delays. Chair Glickman expressed his thanks towards the

Commission, its officers, and LVPC staff members for their support during his two-year term as Chair, which ended at the close of 2023, as required by Commission term limit by-laws.

MINUTES

Chair Glickman stated that the minutes of the Thursday, November 16, 2023, LVPC meeting are attached, and Mr. Dotta presented the previously voted on agenda items. Chair Glickman then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Elbich made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Drabenstott seconded the motion.

Chair Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed. Commissioner Moore abstained.

ACTION ITEM: Project Review Summary Sheet and Summaries

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

Comprehensive Planning Committee Chair Steve Melnick presented a summary of the Committee meeting that occurred on Tuesday. The meeting included a comprehensive zoning ordinance update for Palmer Township and had Township representatives attend who spoke about how proud they are of their new draft zoning ordinance and the effort to put it together. There were zoning ordinance amendments for Hanover Township (NC), Hanover Township (LC), Wilson Borough, Bushkill Township, Forks Township, and amendments to both the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance of Upper Mount Bethel Township.

Chair Glickman called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Ginder made the motion, and Commissioner Gallagher seconded the motion. Chair Glickman asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen noted a chat that Mr. Baird intended to speak on the comprehensive zoning ordinance update for Palmer Township. Mr. Baird commented that he was proud of the work and thanked the LVPC. Mr. Baird highlighted three changes in the zoning ordinance.

Chair Glickman called for a vote to accept the staff comments. The motion passed. Commissioner Morgan abstained for the Palmer Township vote.

Environment Committee:

Environment Committee Chair Steve Repasch presented a summary of the Committee meeting on Wednesday that went over LVPC & LVTS goals and strategies from various plans and how they relate to the Priority Climate Action Plan, which focuses on transportation decarbonization. Commissioner Repasch also expressed his gratitude to Chair Glickman and the Commission.

Mr. Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Transportation Committee:

Commissioner Herman expressed his gratitude to Chair Glickman and the Commission. Transportation Committee Chair Kent Herman summarized the Committee meeting that occurred hours before that went over the 2025-2028 Transportation improvement Program or TIP Update, Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan, Annual List of Obligated Projects, and the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Study. Commissioner Herman gave a summary of each, and Ms. Bradley spoke specifically about the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Study. Ms. Bradley provided some background and said that the LVPC is working with a consultant and PennDOT to review the study to have it done in the first couple months of 2024.

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

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 November which included 22 Subdivisions, 32 Development proposals, 13 reviews for Stormwater Management, and eight Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 75 reviews on 1,027.5 acres. Thirty of those reviews were in Lehigh County and 45 in Northampton.

In November, the LVPC reviewed 344 total residential units proposed, consisting of 168 single-family detached, two twins and 174 apartments. On the non-residential side, we saw 17,000 square feet commercial, 2,053 square feet retail, 102,750 square feet public/quasi-public, 4,943 square feet recreational and 6.8 million square feet of industrial, nearly all of that warehousing, and most was due to the proposal related to the River Pointe Logistics Industrial Park development in Upper Mount Bethel Township.

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

Highway Traffic Monitoring

Mr. Hite summarized the monthly traffic report which included Route 22 between airport road and the Lehigh River Bridge ending November at 108,951 vehicles, Interstate 78 located just east of Route 309 recording 72,569, and Route 309 near Coopersburg showing 39,003 vehicles. Commercial truck traffic included Interstate 78 east of 309 with 19,784 commercial trucks and Route 22 just east of the Lehigh River Bridge seeing 14,026 commercial trucks.

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

New Business:

ACTION ITEM: 2024 Election of LVPC Officers

Chair Glickman noted that the selected slate of officers was unanimously forwarded by the Executive Committee for Full Commission consideration. The nominations were Dr. Chris Amato for Chair, Ms. Tori Morgan for Vice Chair, and Mr. Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen for Treasurer.

Chair Glickman then asked for a motion to approve the election of 2024 officers. Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Repasch seconded the motion.

Chair Glickman asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed. Commissioners Amato, Morgan and Moritz-Chapelliquen abstained.

Chair Glickman thanked his vice chair and treasurer for their support and wished the next slate of officers luck.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2024 LVPC Budget and Workplan

Ms. Bradley presented the recently Executive Committee approved 2024 LVPC Budget and Workplan to the commissioners. Ms. Bradley discussed the LVPC's mission first and several federal regulations the LVPC is subject to follow. Ms. Bradley noted the various county planning program obligations the LVPC are required to conduct and the required training and technical assistance. Next, the bi-county planning partner obligations were reviewed and obligations for Transportation/Metropolitan Planning Programs. Ms. Bradley covered community information and engagement details and the many partnerships of the

LVPC. The 2024 budget revenues were discussed that totaled just under \$5.9 million. Expenses were reviewed and totaled the same amount as revenues at a little less than \$5.9 million.

Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen asked for an example of what the county contributions fund. Ms. Bradley responded that it would be the various county planning program obligations.

ACTION ITEM: 2024 Meeting Calendar

Chair Glickman noted that Full Commission meetings are expected to meet the fourth Thursday of each month at 7 PM, except for November and December. Chair Glickman then asked for a motion to approve the 2024 meeting calendar. Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Elbich seconded the motion.

Chair Glickman asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Repasch asked if the meetings are virtual. Ms. Bradley noted that they are advertised as virtual but that will be reconsidered after the office relocation.

Executive Director's Report:

INFORMATION ITEM: Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code Training – Part 4

Ms. Bradley noted that much of what is included in part four of the training was previously discussed during the budget and workplan presentation part of the meeting. More monthly trainings spanning several topics will be covered in 2024.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Major Transportation Project Regional Leaders Meeting

Ms. Bradley summarized an event that the LVPC hosted on November 28th with several prominent Pennsylvania elected officials. The purpose of the event was to communicate the Lehigh Valley's transportation-related needs and how the LVPC expects to see these needs growing. Ms. Bradley noted that PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll had a better understanding of the Lehigh Valley's transportation needs and was a successful meeting.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Lehigh Valley General Assembly

Ms. Bradley summarized the second General Assembly of 2023 on November 29, which was attended by nearly 50 municipal, school district, community and legislative members from across the region. The meeting included updates on the busy development year, the recently adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan and the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program. There was an update on the House Bill 782 hearings at the LVPC in September, and the progress being made on the efforts to amend the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The meeting discussion included the Priority Climate Action Plan and an overview of what's coming from the LVPC in 2024.

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

Communications and Public Engagement:

INFORMATION ITEM: Morning Call Business Cycle Column

Mr. Assad spoke about the most recent Morning Call column called “Farmland is much more than pretty.” The next column will delve into this year’s List of Obligated Projects – which is PennDOT’s title for all the stuff it got done in 2023. That column publishes New Year’s Eve.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Plan Lehigh Valley radio show on WDIY NPR 88.1FM

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show aired Dec. 4 on WDIY FM 88.1, and it also focused on our farming economy. Ms. Bradley was joined by LVPC Editor Matt Assad and guest dairy farmer Brian Dietrich who has invested \$1 million to automate his farm, where laser-guided robots milk his cows. That 30-minute show is now streaming at LVPC.org and WDIY.org.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Local Technical Assistance Programs

Mr. Hite presented a few virtual training opportunities coming up through the Local Technical Assistance Program starting next year. Only two weeks away will be the Municipal Stormwater Facilities Program class, on January 12 an Introduction to Traffic Studies Class, on January 17 a Stormwater Control Measures class, January 24 an Active Transportation for PA Communities class, and finally to close out January the Traffic Signal Basics on the 30th. All these classes are virtual, free to attend and from 8 AM to Noon.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Build a Better Mousetrap Contest

Mr. Hite presented the Annual Build a Better Mousetrap Innovation Challenge, where our municipalities compete against each other on ideas they came up with to address a common problem, have a unique reuse or repurposing of equipment, or just want to show off a unique process that saves money. The deadline to enter has been extended to Friday, March 1, 2024, and more information can be found on the PennDOT LTAP Website.

Ms. Bradley added that it is a point of pride that a Lehigh Valley community win or place in the top three every year. Mr. Hite noted a previous entry from Whitehall township that won the statewide contest and placed well in the national competition.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Priority Climate Action Plan WorkshopLV: Goals and Policies Discussion

Ms. Ruggiero presented a recap of the WorkshopLV Environment/Transportation meeting that included adopted LVPC and LVTS goals, policies, and strategies from various plans such as FutureLV: The Regional Plan, Livable Landscapes for both Lehigh and Northampton Counties, and Walk/RollLV. Ms. Ruggiero stated the desire to receive input on the goals, policies, and actions that we have highlighted in these plans and create a discussion on what is liked, not liked, what we are missing as well as what has changed that we may need to include. Climate action planning discussions will be continued into 2024, with two more workshops after the new year. One will be on January 17th at 11 AM at the LVPC office, and another one on February 21st at 11 AM which will be virtual.

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Glickman asked for any comments or questions. Commissioner Amato thanked Chair Glickman for his service this past year.

Chair Glickman stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be virtual on January 25th at 7pm. Chair Glickman then asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Ginder made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director and Joey Dotta, Regional Planner