

The Northern Lehigh Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan

June 2, 2020 – 5:30 PM, Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the meeting was held virtually.

Steering Committee Attendees:

Dawn Didra – Heidelberg Township
Steve Bachman – Heidelberg Township
Robb A. Werley – Lowhill Township
Brian Carl – Lowhill & Weisenberg Townships
Brian Dietrich – Lynn Township
Todd Weidman – Washington Township
Tony Werley – Weisenberg Township

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Jan Sutermeister

Planning Partners in Attendance:

Charles Doyle – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Bethany Vazquez – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Samantha Smith – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Becky Bradley – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Mahdis Modaresi – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Minutes:

Introductions

Steering Committee attendees took roll call.

Courtesy of the Floor

The Committee shared their municipal experiences during the COVID-19 Pandemic and emergency management planning. Ms. Didra highlights from the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. At PSATS, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Association gave a presentation on emergency management, COVID-19 and what municipalities can do to prepare for the future. Ms. Sutermeister shared that she has noticed that food supply has become an issue since COVID. Mr. Doyle concurred stating that the LVPC has been monitoring changes in supply chain and goods movement.

Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2020

Mr. Doyle reviewed the May meeting minutes with the Committee. The Committee approved with no additional comments.

Northern Lehigh School District

Mr. Doyle stated that the School District will give a presentation at the July 7th Committee meeting. The District asked that the Committee provide questions prior to the meeting, Ms. Smith reviewed the LVPC's suggested questions for the District.

Goals, Policies & Actions Presentation + Discussion

Mr. Doyle, Ms. Vazquez and Ms. Smith reviewed the first draft of the goals, policies and actions for the NL Plan. Next steps for the Plan include: continued interviews with Northern Lehigh School District, emergency responders and utilities; refining land use data sets and reviewing zoning to start General Land Use Plan; circulate individual community maps for mark-up by the municipalities; and going out to the municipalities to check land uses and take photos. Ms. Bradley also stated that the LVPC will continue to advocate for Committee response regarding the plan's goals, policies and actions in order to add more detail or "sub-actions" into the plan. Ms. Bradley also stated that the LVPC will send the presentation to the Committee for mark-ups and comments. Once the LVPC has data sets completed, maps will be created for each community.

Infrastructure Planning – Data Gathering Inventory

Mr. Doyle stated that the LVPC will continue to collect inventory and feedback on municipal infrastructure and will be following up with municipalities should more details need to be collected.

Update on Multimunicipal Planning Timeline + Land Use Planning

Mr. Doyle stated that the LVPC will continue to monitor COVID impacts to the NL Planning process and asked the Committee if they have any anticipated impacts that they would like to discuss. Mr. Bachman stated that municipal tax revenues are sure to be impacted. Ms. Didra stated that communities that have to worry most are those with shopping centers. Ms. Bradley continued by stating that due to the increased agricultural environment of the NL Region, the agriculture is sure to provide some regional stability. Ms. Didra also stated that the Committee should keep in mind the different ways the Committee can work with the public. Mr. Dietrich mentioned that though there may be some stability in the NL region due to agriculture, the small agricultural businesses in the area are being severely impacted by the pandemic. The Committee continued to discuss the current impacts on the agricultural and other small businesses. Ms. Bradley stated that the Committee should consider bringing small businesses and farmers into the Northern Lehigh planning discussion to talk about business issues and needs due to the pandemic.

Adjournment

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by LVPC.