

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the SLATE BELT

February 2, 2023 – 7 PM, Steering Committee Meeting

Steering Committee Attendees:

Bangor:	Steve Reider, Marissa Donnelly
East Bangor:	Jason Huggan
Lower Mount Bethel:	Jen Smethers, Susan Disidore, Sandra Newman
Pen Argyl:	Janell Connolly
Plainfield:	Terry Kleintop, Jane Mellert, Don Moore
Portland:	Lance Prator, Heather Fischer, Stephanie Steele
Roseto:	
Upper Mount Bethel:	David Friedman
Washington:	
Wind Gap:	Louise Firestone

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Millie Beahn – Plainfield
Judy Henckel – Upper Mount Bethel
Wesley Smith – Wind Gap

Planning Partners in Attendance:

Becky Bradley – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Dean Severson – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Sue Rockwell – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Roll Call

Ms. Rockwell called roll. All municipalities, except Roseto and Washington, were in attendance.

Minutes from the January 4, 2023 Meeting

Ms. Smethers called for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 4, 2023 meeting. Mr. Friedman made the motion. Mr. Prator seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. Status of Municipal Public Meetings

Mr. Severson said the public meeting with Plainfield Township has yet to be scheduled.

2. Project Schedule Update

Mr. Severson said the schedule attached to the meeting packet was revised to reflect the timing of the proposed revisions to the text and maps, with the March/April meetings for discussion of the revisions. He asked the committee about the timing of the Implementation Agreement. Mr. Moore said he believes it should be done simultaneously with completion of the final draft plan but was not sure if that will be an issue with timing. Ms. Bradley said it would be more efficient to complete them at the same time. The committee can start working on the agreement during the 45-day plan comment period. Ms. Smethers asked who drafts the agreement, the LVPC or the municipalities. Ms. Bradley said either way. The LVPC assisted solicitors for the Northern Lehigh and Nazareth Area municipalities with drafting their agreements. Ms. Smethers asked if

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the LVPC could send the committee copies of the other agreements. Ms. Bradley said we can, however, they are still in progress. Mr. Moore asked if the schedule will be revised again to reflect this. Mr. Severson said we will update the schedule.

Mr. Severson said some of the plan edits will be sent out prior to the March meeting, which will include additional demographic detail in the introduction and additional spotlight on some of the issues in the region. Map edits will include more detail on the Future Land Use Plan in the urban areas as well as the rest of the region. We have created existing land use maps and have incorporated the information previously provided by municipalities in their Where Do You Wish to Grow maps. We will be contacting municipalities to see if there are any other areas they want to highlight. The existing land use maps were created by using county assessment data, with adjustments made for our own purpose. One issue involves how to map rural residential uses. These are parcels that are greater than ten acres with a residence on them, however many of them are farms. Ms. Bradley said we met with Plainfield Township on February 1st and discussed the mapping. We will need to meet with the rest of the municipalities as well through the end of February.

Mr. Kleintop said the region is not doing well with sewer capacity. Mr. Severson said that will be highlighted in the plan. Ms. Bradley said any text edits will be done through track changes so the committee can see what has been added or changed.

3. Meeting Schedule and Location

Mr. Severson said this is an information item that reflects the changes in meeting date and location. The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 2nd at the Jerry Brunetti Welcome Center. The April 6th and May 4th meetings will be held at the William Pensyl Social Hall at 111 State Street in Portland.

Next Steps

Courtesy of the Floor

1. General Issues and Opportunities Discussion

- Known Plan Activity in Slate Belt Communities (January 2023)

Ms. Rockwell reviewed the plan activity for the month.

2. Municipal Update

Ms. Steele asked how public attendance has been at the public meetings. Mr. Severson said they have mostly just been attended by the planning commission members. In some instances, such as in Upper Mount Bethel, there was other business on the agenda that brought people to the meeting.

Ms. Beahn raised concerns about the use of preserved farmland for sludge application and was looking for suggestions on who to talk to. Ms. Mellert said it is a problem across the state. Ms. Bradley suggested she reach out to the new state administration, including the Department of Agriculture.

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Mr. Kleintop said he heard about a comprehensive stormwater policy review/update being done by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Ms. Bradley said we would check on that and get back to the group. She informed the group that the LVPC is looking to update all the stormwater ordinances in the Lehigh Valley at one time, possibly beginning in 2024. We are working on putting together a coalition to do the work and have the Federal Emergency Management Agency on board.

Mr. Kleintop also informed the group that the February 13th meeting with CRG has been cancelled.

Adjourn

Ms. Smethers called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Moore made the motion. Mr. Friedman seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Attachments

- January 4, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
- Moving Towards Adoption Flowchart
- Slate Belt Communities' Activity Log (January 2023)

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by the LVPC.