

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the SLATE BELT

July 6, 2023 – 7 PM, Steering Committee Meeting

Steering Committee Attendees:

Bangor: Steve Reider
East Bangor: Jason Huggan
Lower Mount Bethel: Jen Smethers, Sandra Newman
Pen Argyl: Robin Zmoda, Tyler Kemp
Plainfield: Terry Kleintop, Jane Mellert, Don Moore
Portland: Lance Prator
Roseto:
Upper Mount Bethel: David Friedman
Washington:
Wind Gap:

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Judy Henckel – Upper Mount Bethel Township
Millie Beahn – Plainfield Township

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. Roseto, Washington and Wind Gap were not in attendance.

Minutes from the June 1, 2023 Meeting

Ms. Zmoda called for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 1, 2023 meeting. Mr. Prator asked for a correction to the minutes under the discussion of Trail Towns under Old Business. He said the proposed text should reflect all trails. Mr. Prator made the motion to approve the minutes with the correction as noted. Mr. Reider seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. Portland Borough Council Update

Mr. Prator said Borough Council voted to rejoin the Slate Belt planning effort at their June 5, 2023 meeting. The meeting was also attended by LVPC staff and steering committee members.

2. Discussion of Correspondence from Plainfield Township

Copies of the correspondence from the Township solicitor and the Township Committee for the Slate Belt Plan were previously provided with the meeting notice. Ms. Zmoda asked who is on the Township Committee. Mr. Moore replied that it consists of the three representatives on the Steering Committee. Ms. Zmoda said a Comprehensive Plan provides recommendations for land use. Zoning is adopted to implement them. She asked if it was better to address the details with zoning. Ms. Bradley said the details are in the zoning code. For a general land use plan, it is not normal to include the details.

**Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2023**

Ms. Smethers said the Lower Mount Bethel Township Supervisors thought it was not right for just the one land use (landfill) being called out. Ms. Bradley said there is no requirement for infinite land for all uses. Legally, just two parcels are required for a land use. Ms. Mellert asked if the other municipalities take solid waste out of their zoning, how do they provide for it. Ms. Bradley said they already have a landfill. Mr. Moore said that was not their Township solicitor's opinion. Ms. Bradley said she will follow up with the solicitor. Ms. Zmoda said no one can tell Plainfield Township they have to keep having a landfill and asked if this was a deal breaker for the Township. Ms. Smethers said the consultant for their zoning ordinance agrees that if one municipality has a landfill, no one else needs to provide for that use and asked why it should be called out in the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Moore said other comprehensive plans have detailed land use categories. Ms. Bradley said he had asked for what exists for land use. Mr. Moore also said the map insets are not compatible with the General Land Use Plan. Ms. Bradley said the detailed uses in the inset maps are aggregated in the General Land Use Plan. Mr. Moore said the inset maps were supposed to be renamed Future Land Use Plan. Ms. Bradley said that was not correct. Mr. Severson said the maps were titled Existing Land Use Detailed View. Mr. Moore said he talked to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and was told they do not know of any other communities with a plan like this. Ms. Bradley said Denny Puko, a former state planner now retired from DCED, provided training to planning commissions on implementable comprehensive plans, many of which went on to win awards. Mr. Moore displayed the Southwest Lehigh Future Land Use Plan and said he thought they were going to get that type of plan. Their solicitor said the maps didn't make sense to him.

Ms. Zmoda said all communities need to be represented equally and asked how they move forward. She said the LVPC knows the PA Municipalities Planning Code requirements. Ms. Bradley said she would call the Township solicitor.

3. Adoption Timeline

Ms. Bradley said we need to push the adoption timeline out a little. Updated timeline scenarios were provided to the committee with approval by the steering committee during the August, September or October meetings. Mr. Prator made a motion to push it out a month. Ms. Smethers seconded the motion. Ms. Mellert said they have to be careful of the timing due to upcoming elections. Ms. Bradley said probably the September 7th meeting scenario is the more likely scenario. She said it is a risk the later the timeline, but they have the flexibility now. Mr. Kleintop said he doesn't know what might happen with the landfill. He thinks their solicitor was thinking of that issue. Mr. Prator amended the motion for the September meeting. Ms. Zmoda called for the vote, which passed unanimously. Ms. Newman said it might be beneficial for the committee to receive a summary of Ms. Bradley's conversation with the Plainfield solicitor before the August meeting. Ms. Bradley agreed to send a summary.

New Business

1. Intermunicipal Agreement Discussion

Mr. Severson handed out examples of agreements from the Nazareth Area and Northern Lehigh committees. Digital versions of the agreements were emailed out on May 12th. He said he did not have a copy of the final Southwest Lehigh agreement. Mr. Moore asked if he could get a copy. Mr. Severson said he would call the municipalities. Ms. Bradley asked the group if they wanted to start the conversation on the agreement now. She said the municipal councils and

**Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2023**

supervisors will need to review the examples. Ms. Zmoda asked if the homework for the August meeting is to review the examples. Ms. Bradley said yes.

Courtesy of the Floor

1. General Issues and Opportunities Discussion

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

Ms. Rockwell discussed the activity log provided in the meeting packet.

2. Municipal Update

Mr. Friedman said a conditional use application was submitted by RPL for a 1.5 million square foot building on lots 4, 5A and 5B.

Mr. Kleintop said CRG is coming back in and will be at the July Planning Commission meeting. They received a will serve letter for sewer from Wind Gap.

Adjourn

Ms. Zmoda called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Reider made the motion. Mr. Prator seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Attachments

- June 1, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
- Correspondence from Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors
- Correspondence from Plainfield Township Solicitor, David Backenstoe
- Revised Adoption Timeline
- Slate Belt Communities' Activity Log (June 2023)

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by the LVPC.