

PLAN SLATE BELT



- Bangor • East Bangor • Lower Mount Bethel • Pen Argyl •
- Plainfield • Portland • Roseto • Upper Mount Bethel •
- Washington • Wind Gap •

SLATE BELT MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, November 2, 2023, 7:00 PM
Pen Argyl Borough Hall, 11 North Robinson Avenue, Pen Argyl, PA 18072

AGENDA

Open Meeting

1. Roll Call
2. Minutes
 - September 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Old Business

1. Plan Adoption
 - a. 45-Day Public Review Process
 - i. Comment period: September 18 - November 2, 2023
 - ii. Comments received
 - b. Public Hearings
 - c. Related Correspondence
 - i. Plainfield Township, September 15, 2023
 - ii. Lower Mount Bethel, Upper Mount Bethel, Plainfield, October 30, 2023
2. Intermunicipal Agreement Follow-Up Discussion

New Business

1. Next Meeting:
 - December 7, 2023, 7:00 PM, Pen Argyl Borough Hall

Courtesy of the Floor (For items not covered on the rest of the agenda)

1. General Issues and Opportunities Discussion
 - a. Known "Plan Activity" in Slate Belt Communities
 - i. September - October 2023
2. Municipal Updates

Adjourn

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the SLATE BELT

September 7, 2023 – 7 PM, Steering Committee Meeting

Steering Committee Attendees:

Bangor:	Stephen Reider, James Kresge
East Bangor:	Jason Huggan
Lower Mount Bethel:	Jen Smethers, Sandra Newman, Susan Disidore
Pen Argyl:	Robin Zmoda, Tyler Kemp
Plainfield:	Terry Kleintop, Jane Mellert, Don Moore
Portland:	Lance Prator, Stephanie Steele
Roseto:	Cathy Martino, Carl Renna
Upper Mount Bethel:	
Washington:	
Wind Gap:	George Hinton

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Millie Beahn – Plainfield Township
Paul Levits – Plainfield Township
Karen Pfeiffer – Portland Borough

Planning Partners in Attendance:

Becky Bradley – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Evan Gardi – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Roll Call

Ms. Bradley called the roll. Upper Mount Bethel and Washington townships were not in attendance.

Minutes from the August 3, 2023, Meeting

Ms. Zmoda called for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 3, 2023, meeting. Mr. Reider made the motion. Ms. Smethers seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. Municipal Comments and Plan Revisions

Ms. Bradley noted the draft text changes that were previously made to the plan in response to the August 17, 2023, letter from Plainfield Township.

Mr. Moore said he doesn't like the future land use plan. He also said he would like an individual agreement, so the Township doesn't have to adopt the plan if they don't want to. Ms. Bradley agreed to consult a solicitor regarding the legality of this. Mr. Moore is concerned that if the 45-day comment period starts and they don't agree with something, the comment period will have to restart.

Ms. Zmoda said, starting back in 2019, many detailed maps were prepared and taken back to elected officials for review. She said the complexity of those maps is embedded in plan maps now in an aggregated form, including existing zoning. She said she is looking forward to updating zoning regulations all the way around once the plan is adopted. She noted that the maps as they are in the draft allow each community to amend their zoning code as they need based on the outline in the plan and is what the group has been working towards since the effort started because autonomy is important to everyone.

2. Adoption Process

Ms. Bradley discussed the adoption timeline and provided possible public hearing dates through the end of the year. Mr. Prator said he would like the 45-day review process to begin as soon as possible. Ms. Bradley indicated that the review period could begin as soon as September 18th. The meeting packet also included a draft letter transmitting the plan to contiguous counties, municipalities and school districts per the requirements of the Municipalities Planning Code. In addition, draft adoption resolutions were provided for each municipality. Mr. Prator said he would like to get started with a draft of the intermunicipal agreement. Mr. Reider made a motion to move forward with the 45-day public review and comment period, that was seconded by Mr. Huggan. The motion was carried with no abstentions or objections.

3. Intermunicipal Agreement Follow-Up Discussion

Ms. Bradley reviewed the elements of an Intermunicipal Cooperative Planning Agreement, as provided in the handout. She encouraged each community to discuss this with their Supervisors/Council and to send comments to Sue Rockwell, so they could be assembled for the next meeting's discussion.

New Business

1. Next Meeting

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at the Pen Argyl Borough Hall.

Courtesy of the Floor

1. General Issues and Opportunities Discussion

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

The Activity Log for August was provided in the meeting packet. There were two Zoning Ordinance Amendments for August.

2. Municipal Update

Mr. Prator said the Northern Tier ambulance service is getting together for a feasibility study to reduce response times. The estimated cost of the study is \$160,000. Wind Gap has their own service. Currently, Portland has Suburban EMS, which is understaffed.

Adjourn

Ms. Zmoda adjourned the meeting.

Attachments

- August 3, 2023, Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
- Adoption To Do List
- Public Hearing Dates

Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2023

- 45-Day Comment Letter
- Draft Municipal Adoption Resolutions
- Elements of an Intermunicipal Cooperative Planning Agreement for Implementation of Multi-Municipal Plan
- Slate Belt Communities' Activity Log (August 2023)

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by the LVPC.

Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors



6292 Sullivan Trail
Nazareth, Penna. 18064

Phone 610-759-6944

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September 15, 2023

Ms. Robin Zmoda, Chairperson
Plan Slate Belt Steering Committee

Re: 45-day review period of Draft Plan Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan

Dear Ms. Zmoda,

Plainfield Township understands that at the September 7, 2023, Plan Slate Belt Steering Committee meeting a vote was held to move forward with a 45-day review period, in consideration of adoption of the draft Plan Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan. The period is to commence on September 18, 2023.

In response, at the September 13, 2023, meeting of the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors, a motion was passed to move forward with entering the 45-day review period to consider adoption of the draft Plan Slate Belt Comprehensive Plan, with the following conditions:

1. That an explanation be provided for why the vote by the Steering Committee to move forward was not done by roll call vote. Plainfield Township believes that a vote of this importance and consequence merits a definitive vote.

It is reported that two municipalities present, Lower Mt Bethel Township and Plainfield Township, did not vote. Furthermore, it is the understanding of Plainfield Township that initially during this project, votes had to be unanimous to pass, with all ten municipalities participating. In the last one to two years, this policy was changed to require a unanimous vote by all municipalities present. All municipalities present did not vote.

2. That an explanation be given for why all municipalities were not given the opportunity to vote. It is Plainfield Township's understanding that no representatives were present from Upper Mt. Bethel Township or Washington Township. Plainfield Township believes that a decision to move forward into this phase of the project, which is required to meet strict MPC requirements, should have required that all municipalities voted. The result is that none of the four townships in Plan Slate Belt voted to move forward, only the boroughs did.

3. That the planning consultant LVPC, address Plainfield Township’s concerns regarding the “Future Land Use Plan and Future Land Use – Detailed Inset” maps, identified in our letter of August 31, 2023 and as voiced at the September 7, 2023 Steering Committee meeting, prior to the vote to move forward.

Plainfield Township believes that the map “insets” added to the May 2023 draft do not represent future land use, and do not satisfy the request to add developed future land use categories to the Plan. This concern was first raised over a year ago. The insets appear to represent detailed categories of existing land use. If this concern is not addressed to the satisfaction of Plainfield Township, it will impact Plainfield Township’s ability to complete the 45-day review cycle effectively and satisfactorily, and the Township may ultimately not be able to adopt the Plan.

Given the timing of the 45-day review period, Plainfield requests that these items be addressed as quickly as possible so as to not delay the review period and plan adoption.

Respectfully,

Plainfield Township
Board of Supervisors

Cc: Jennifer Smethers, Co-chairman, Plan Slate Belt Steering Committee
Susan Rockwell, LVPC
Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors, individually

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 30, 2023

To: Becky Bradley, LVPC Executive Director
Robin Zmoda, Plan Slate Belt Chairwoman, Pen Argyl Borough Manager

From: Lower Mount Bethel Township, Plainfield Township, and Upper Mount Bethel Township

Reference: Plan Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

On Tuesday, October 10, 2023, the Plan Slate Belt Steering Committee members from the townships of Lower Mount Bethel, Plainfield and Upper Mount Bethel (Washington Township was included but was unable to attend) met to discuss the concerns raised by Plainfield Township in their letter dated September 15, 2023. The townships further discussed their thoughts regarding how best to move forward with the Plan Slate Belt Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan (Plan).

In regard to the Plainfield Township letter, Lower Mount Bethel and Plainfield Townships agreed that the motion to move forward with the 45-day review period passed due to their failures to vote on the motion. While both townships were not in agreement with the motion, neither municipality spoke out against it. Since the chairwoman did not hear any dissent, she rightly concluded all members agreed.

According to the Intermunicipal Agreement signed by all municipalities at the start of this endeavor, all votes must be unanimous. Early on in the development of the Plan, all votes were conducted by roll call vote. However, over time, that protocol was abandoned. The townships respectfully request Voting Protocol/Procedures be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

As you all know, the townships have been concerned about moving forward too quickly with the process of adoption. During our extemporaneous meeting, Lower Mount Bethel, Plainfield and Upper Mount Bethel Townships identified the following concerns we feel need to be addressed before moving forward with the Plan adoption:

1. The Implementation Agreement for the coordination of zoning needs to be completed. This was to be worked on during the 45-day review, but little has been done. The townships would like to have a draft of the document to see the opinions of all townships and boroughs in the coordination efforts.
2. The cost of the zoning coordination efforts needs to be known in order for municipalities to prepare and budget properly for the expense. This question will undoubtedly be asked by our boards and we need to be able to respond correctly.
3. The concerns regarding the Future Land Use map need to be addressed. As it stands, the map does not accurately reflect true future land uses.
4. The inconsistencies identified in a few of the maps need to be addressed so each map speaks to the other maps in the Plan.
5. The upcoming election will have an impact on some members of the steering committee's ability to get the Plan approved. In addition, the approaching holidays will create delays.

The townships believe the above concerns need to be addressed by the steering committee as a whole before the adoption process moves forward. We further suggest that we hit the pause button until the beginning of 2024 to ensure all issues are resolved before taking the Plan to our boards for adoption. We do have some apprehension that our current boards will not approve the Plan as it stands.

INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT
FOR THE SLATE BELT MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THIS AGREEMENT made this 8 day of August, 2019, by and between: (i) the BOROUGHS of Bangor, East Bangor, Pen Argyl, Roseto, Portland and Wind Gap; (ii) the TOWNSHIPS of Plainfield, Washington, Lower Mount Bethel and Upper Mount Bethel; (iii) Northampton County, Department of Community and Economic Development; and (iv) Slate Belt Rising, a subsidiary of the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley ("SBR") (collectively, the "Participants") for the undertaking of a cooperative planning project (the "Project").

WHEREAS, the goal of the Project is to create the Slate Belt COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (the "Plan") and include topics in accordance with section 301 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), and

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed among the parties hereto that:

1. The above purpose clause is hereby made a part of this agreement by this reference.
2. The Municipalities and Funding Participants shall form a Steering Committee consisting of no more than three (3) members from each municipality and include at least one Elected Official. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Steering Committee recommendations shall be by unanimous consent of the members present with respect to the content of the Plan. A Chair and Vice Chair shall be selected from among the Steering Committee members to run the meeting and serve as contact for the Consultant. Final adoption of the Plan shall be the province of the governing bodies of each municipality, following review and comment by each municipality's Planning

Commission, governing body and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, in accordance with section 302 of the MPC.

3. A representative from Northampton County and a representative from Slate Belt Rising, Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley shall be advisors to the Steering Committee.

4. The Participants shall provide available data and reports to the Steering Committee that are relevant to the preparation of the Plan.

5. The Participants hereby authorize the Steering Committee to engage the LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (the "Consultant") to provide consulting services to execute the Project per a contracted scope of services and associated agreement at a cost not to exceed that set forth in paragraph (5a) below.

5a. The Participants shall share in the cost of the Project according to the following table:

Project Funders and Funding	
Lehigh Valley Planning Commission In-Kind Services	\$ 20,300.00
Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley	\$ 45,000.00
Northampton County	\$ 62,500.00
Bangor Borough	\$ 9,176.69
East Bangor Borough	\$ 2,039.65
Lower Mount Bethel Township	\$ 5,396.72
Pen Argyl Borough	\$ 6,256.44
Plainfield Township	\$ 10,682.06
Portland Borough	\$ 903.22
Roseto Borough	\$ 2,727.08
Upper Mount Bethel Township	\$ 11,670.56
Washington Township	\$ 8,913.90
Wind Gap Borough	\$ 4,733.66
Total Project Cost	\$ 190,300.00

5b. Any Participant that withdraws from the this agreement shall nonetheless be liable and responsible for the payment of such Participant's respective funding share as listed in the table set forth above in Paragraph 5a.

6. The Slate Belt Rising, Community Action Committee of Lehigh Valley agrees to accept responsibility for applying for and administering the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development grant funds.

7. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, as Consultant, will bill each Participant based on work completed. Project Funders, including the Participants, Slate Belt Rising, Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Northampton County, and Consultant will remit payment as requested.

8. A schedule of Steering Committee meetings shall be agreed upon and publically advertised.

9. The Steering Committee shall update the Plan and shall forward the updated Plan to the governing bodies of each municipality.

10. The Steering Committee shall develop the Plan to be compatible across the municipal boundaries of the Participants.

11. The Steering Committee shall give due consideration to the Zoning Ordinances of the Participants, as well as the Comprehensive Plans for Lehigh and Northampton Counties in the preparation of the Plan update.

12. The Participants shall commence public hearings within ninety (90) days of receipt of the final draft Plan to solicit public opinion and shall then act upon the Plan pursuant to the MPC.

13. Changes to this intermunicipal agreement must be mutually agreed to by the parties hereto and confirmed in writing prior to performance of said changes.

14. This agreement is subject to, and the Participants shall comply with, all applicable laws and/or regulations, including, without limitation, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968) (as may have been amended or modified to date) (collectively, the "Applicable Laws"). The Participants shall comply fully with all Applicable Laws.

[Signature Pages Follow]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF and intending to be legally bound hereby, the parties hereto have set their hands and seals as indicated below.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF BANGOR

James W. Kresge
Name: James W. Kresge
Title: Council President

Date: 7/17/19

BOROUGH OF EAST BANGOR

Derek Towell
Name: Derek Towell
Title: Mayor

Date: 8/8/19

BOROUGH OF PEN ARGYL

Robin Zmoda
Name: Robin Zmoda
Title: Borough Manager

Date: 7/17/19

BOROUGH OF PORTLAND

Stephanie D. Steele
Name: Stephanie D. Steele
Title: Council President

Date: 7/17/2019

BOROUGH OF ROSETO

Cathy Martino
Name: Cathy Martino
Title: Borough Manager

Date: 7/17/19

BOROUGH OF WIND GAP

David A. Hoss
Name: David A Hoss
Title: Council President


Date: 7-17-19

LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP


Name: Sandra Newman
Title: Vice Chair BofS


Date: 7/17/19

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP


Name: Thomas K. Petrucci
Title: Township Manager

Date: 7/17/2019

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP


Name: Robert D. Smith
Title: Chairman Board of Supervisors

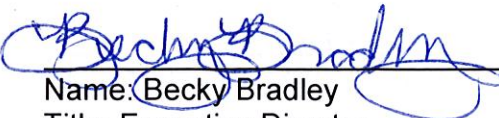
Date: 7/17/19

UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP


Name: Anthony DeFazio
Title: BofS

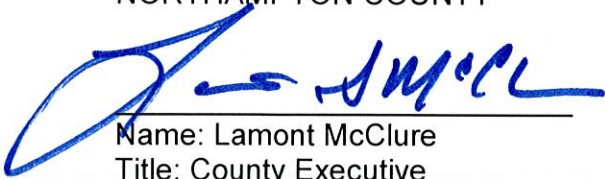
Date: 7/17/19

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION


Name: Becky Bradley
Title: Executive Director

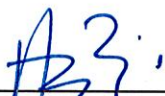
Date: 7/16/19

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY


Name: Lamont McClure
Title: County Executive

Date: 7/31/19

COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY


Name: Alan Jennings
Title: Executive Director

Date: 080619

