

The Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the SLATE BELT

May 4, 2023 – 7 PM, Steering Committee Meeting

Steering Committee Attendees:

Bangor: Marissa Donnelly
East Bangor:
Lower Mount Bethel: Susan Disidore
Pen Argyl: Robin Zmoda
Plainfield: Terry Kleintop, Jane Mellert, Don Moore
Portland: Stephanie Steele
Roseto: Cathy Martino, Carl Renna
Upper Mount Bethel:
Washington: Justin Huratiak
Wind Gap:

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Judy Henckel – Upper Mount Bethel

Planning Partners in Attendance:

Becky Bradley – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Tracy Oscavich – 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 East Bangor, Upper Mount Bethel and Wind Gap, were in attendance.

Minutes from the March 2, 2023 Meeting

Ms. Zmoda called for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2023 meeting. Mr. Renna made the motion. Mr. Moore seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. Updates on Text and Map Edits

Mr. Severson provided the notes from the Borough and Township meetings held in March. The meetings were held to discuss municipal needs and inset maps.

Mr. Severson reviewed the updates to the Plan and the Data Companion, which were provided to the group. The Plan is also on the Slate Belt website. He discussed the big issues added to the Introduction section of the Plan. A new category was added to the Future Land Use Plan to reflect rural residential within farmland preservation areas, and some of the Centers were removed. Inset maps were created for both the Boroughs and the Townships to help make future decisions. Mr. Moore asked if it was possible to provide each community with a copy of their map. Ms. Oscavich said the maps could be viewed on the website.

Mr. Severson said most of the data in the Data Companion has been updated through the American Community Survey 2017-2021 estimates. A Farmland Preservation map is included in

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the Data Companion that shows agricultural easements. The Visual Preference Survey and results have also been added. Mr. Moore asked if student enrollment information could be included. Mr. Severson said we could look into the data.

Ms. Bradley discussed a list of items that could be included in the plan if the steering committee would like. The list is based on discussions with the Boroughs and Townships. Ms. Bradley said sewer capacity was a big issue in Portland related to the RPL project. We could refine some of the policies to make them more specific. Mr. Severson said there was already some discussion of sewer limitations in the Introduction. Mr. Kleintop asked how they deal with the RPL issue. Ms. Bradley said the next item on what it takes to support manufacturing addresses that. Ms. Henckel said the Township is talking about creating a municipal authority related to RPL. Ms. Zmoda asked if these will be recommendations and if the Boroughs will be responsible for dealing with Township development. Ms. Bradley said the discussion with the Townships was more on the cost of infrastructure related to development. Mr. Huratiak said there was also discussion on grants and funding. Being in a multi-municipal plan can help with obtaining grants. Ms. Zmoda said they are reaching out to Plainfield on infrastructure. The Borough can't put funds away to expand or update the treatment plant. They want to collaborate with the Township. Mr. Kleintop noted that the Wind Gap plant has infiltration and inflow issues.

The next item on the list is implementation of community revitalization programs, which is based on discussions with the Boroughs. An inset on appropriate ag uses was discussed with the Townships. The inset would spell out what uses the Townships think are appropriate. An inset on traffic management tools would expand on the discussion already in the TIP section of the Plan. Finally, an inset on trail towns could be included, with a discussion on creating economic development opportunities.

After discussion, the steering committee indicated they would like to include all the items on the list in the Plan.

Mr. Severson said there are also several other items we will be adding to the Plan, including a methodology for the creation of plan maps in the Data Companion, description for Township inset maps and a thank you list of all those that participated in the development of the Plan.

Mr. Moore suggested that, under the Table of Contents, list the names of the municipalities as bullet items under the Existing Land Use Plan heading. Mr. Severson said we can make that change.

2. Project Schedule Update

Mr. Severson provided and discussed an updated project schedule. He also provided a list of municipal meetings for July through August. He asked municipalities to verify the dates and let him know of any corrections.

Next Steps

1. Portland Borough Correspondence

Ms. Steele informed the committee that the Borough Council voted against being part of the planning effort. The Council was not in favor of regionalization of public sewer and water facilities. She said there are new people on the Council that are not familiar with the Plan. Ms. Bradley said that our strategy is to meet with the Council on May 22nd to answer questions. If they pull out of the effort, we will contact the LVPC solicitor to see what happens next.

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Mr. Severson informed the committee that the LVPC review of the RPL project will be done at the Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting on May 23 and the Full Commission meeting on May 25th. We will send out links to the meetings.

2. Elements of an Intermunicipal Agreement

Ms. Bradley said we will email examples of intermunicipal agreements to the steering committee, with discussion at an upcoming meeting on what they want to share, notification about certain land developments and when to collaborate. A committee will need to be established as part of the agreement; however, they have no enforcement role. The agreement can be completed at the same time as plan adoption.

3. Adoption Process

Mr. Severson said the process includes the steering committee making the decision to approve the plan, hopefully by the June meeting, followed by a 45-day comment period, meetings with the elected bodies and action by the municipalities.

Courtesy of the Floor

1. General Issues and Opportunities Discussion

- Known Plan Activity in Slate Belt Communities (March-April 2023)

Ms. Rockwell reviewed the plan activity for the month.

2. Municipal Update

Mr. Kleintop thanked the LVPC for pursuing Climate Planning funding.

Adjourn

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

Attachments

- March 2, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
- Minutes of meeting with Slate Belt Boroughs March 2, 2023
- Minutes of meeting with Slate Belt Townships March 29, 2023
- List of things to consider adding to the Slate Belt Plan
- Moving Towards Adoption Flowchart – Revised
- Municipal meeting dates June-July
- Slate Belt Communities' Activity Log (March-April 2023)

Minutes prepared and respectfully transmitted by the LVPC.