

SAUCON VALLEY PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Date: April 11, 2007
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Hellertown Borough Hall

A. Call to Order - Priscilla deLeon

B. Roll Call - Present: Priscilla deLeon, Jane Balum, Ed Inghrim, Susan Baxter, Richard Fluck, Glenn Kern, Jack Cahalan, Charlie Luthar, Ira Hiberman. Consultants: Andrew Schwartz, Carolyn Yagle, Steve Deck. Guests: Jenny McKenna, George Howey, John Dowling, Lee Weidner. Gail Noff, Stephanie Kovacs

C. Council Of Governments

1. The minutes of the March 14, 2007 meeting of the Saucon Valley Partnership were approved following a motion by Ed, seconded by Jane.
2. Treasurer's Report - Jack reviewed the March activity for both the general fund account and the multi-municipal local share account. Jack stated that invoices have been submitted to both Northampton County to obtain the \$20,000 they committed to and DCED for 1/3 of the LUPTAP grant funds. On a motion Jane, seconded by Ed, the Partnership voted to approve the Treasurer's Report.

D. Citizens On Agenda Items - None

E. Citizens On Non-Agenda Items

1. J. Michael Schweder, President of the Bethlehem City Council was present to address the Partnership regarding the recommendations that have been made to widen Route 22 to six lanes. Mr. Schweder is a proponent of the return of passenger rail service to the Lehigh Valley, which he felt should be reconnected with the NJ Transit rail line that currently ends in Clinton, NJ. He feels that the Route 22 widening is not feasible due to the number of businesses that would have to be relocated along the route; the number of bridges and overpasses that would have to be rebuilt. He has been visiting with local officials in the region to enlist their support for passenger rail as a more practical alternative to the widening of Route 22. He also feels that LANTA should take the lead in exploring this alternative.
2. John Kingsley, Northampton County Director of the Department of Community & Economic Development, Lori Sywensky, Grants Administrator, and Michael Zumpino from Triad Associates were present to speak to the Partnership regarding the County's plan to submit a 5-year consolidated plan to HUD. By submitting a consolidated plan the County would see an additional \$650,000 in funding from HUD over and above the \$1.2 million that they anticipate receiving in the next Federal Fiscal Year cycle. Lori said that they sent out survey forms to all the municipalities in the County asking them to identify priority projects that this funding could be used for. The funding can be used for projects such as Public Facilities and Improvements (libraries, firehouses, homeless shelters, senior centers, streets, sidewalks, curbs and gutters; water & sewer lines), to eliminate blight, to relocate displaced persons, and rehabilitation of residential, commercial/industrial properties. There was a short discussion concerning the eligibility criteria for projects. Michael pointed out that they would be looking for Census Block Groups in the project areas where more than 42% of the residents are within the low/moderate income range. On a motion by Mayor Fluck and a second by Ed, the Partnership voted to recommend this project to their member bodies.

F. Work Session - Saucon Valley Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan

1. Initial Infrastructure and Transportation Issues and Observations

Steve Deck from Skelly & Loy went over the mapping of the AM and PM Peak Hour Traffic which takes into account local traffic (only trips within the community) that is generated within each of the zones and looks at worst case scenarios. AJ and Carolyn pointed out that the data on these maps comes from 4-5 different data sources including PennDOT and past traffic studies that have been done by developers in the Borough and Township. It does take into account the traffic study done for the 412 widening project and truck traffic to/from the landfill. A trip is the movement of a vehicle in one direction and they only have volumes for PennDOT roads. AJ stated that one of the problems they encountered in collecting this data was that our LVPC is classified as both a “regional” and a “municipal” planning organization (RPO & MPO) and by law they are not required to do a Traffic Model which would normally have most of this information. An additional problem with this is that EPD has not been able to distinguish yet what the “local trips” are from the “passing through trips” from the data they have. They looked at both the AM & PM data to see where growth has occurred so that they could identify where improvements should be made. Steve said that they took AM & PM peak trips to show the percentage increases in trips within the each of the Traffic Analysis Zones on the map. The map is their “first cut” and a “snapshot” of this data so it is subject to change. The objective is to show the impact that our future development (assumes full build out) in certain areas will have on our transportation system and to make recommendations for the type of improvements needed to handle this increased load. Steve said that they will also provide us with information on the scheduling, cost estimates, where we can get funding for these priority projects. AJ stated that they will also recommend that in areas where there will be potential development that we change our ordinances to require developers to set aside the setbacks so that if roads do need to be widened it will not be costly to acquire the property needed.

Steve also reviewed the information he had collected so far on the issues of storm water management, sewer and water. He pointed out that the Township is in good shape as they had just adopted a new storm water management ordinance which addresses with the new Act 167 requirements with BMPs for storm water infiltration, etc. Steve briefly reviewed the options for public sewer, on-lot septic systems, package treatment plants and the Act 537 Plan updates done by the City of Bethlehem (2004), the Township (2002) and Borough (1966). He indicated that they are looking into how much sewer capacity we have from the Bethlehem wastewater treatment plant. The amount of sewer capacity that we have determines how many houses that can be built in our municipalities. AJ stated that municipalities now are permitted to use sewer capacity as a “growth management” tool. The consultants were asked to look into the issue of what capacities would be needed by the Township in order to preserve open space areas through the transfer of their development rights (TDRs) to other receiving areas.

Steve displayed maps that showed the current water supplies for the Borough and Township. He said that we are in a good situation in terms of having an adequate water supply. They will be looking into the quality and quantity and will be making water use projections.

2. Interactive Workshop Planning

There was a discussion on the set-up of the Audion Room at the school district for the workshop on April 30, 2007. We are planning for 60-80 attendees. Will need eight (8) tables, chairs for at least 60-80 attendees, a projector, screen on the wall, and an extension cord. Refreshments will be available. The Audion Room is not #19 as indicated in the letter sent out. The school district will put up signs directing people to the Audion Room. Maps will be displayed on the wall. EPD will be arriving around 3:30 p.m. to set up. Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m. Name tags will be available for attendees at a table in the hallway. EPD staff would like the “mayors” to arrive around 4:30 p.m. for a short briefing. Handouts will be available listing the topics that will be discussed at each of the

tables. The rest of the steering committee should arrive between 5-5:15 p.m. At 5:30 p.m. registration will begin as people come in, they can get refreshments and be able to peruse the maps hung up around the room. At 6:00 p.m. there will be a welcome from Priscilla, the Mayor and the Council/School Board Presidents and then AJ will go into two (2) 30 minute Power Point presentations to present background data and list issues that will hopefully provoke discussion at the tables. Between 7:00 and 8:15 p.m. everyone will be at the break-out tables. Maps and tracing materials will be available. People will be encouraged to rotate to other tables if they want to. The approach to the discussion will be to get people to think about how they would like to see their community in the future if they were “king” or “queen” for a day. Between 8:15 – 8:30 p.m. each table will be asked to give a brief presentation of what was discussed at the table. The 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. timeframe will be used to summarize and wrap-up.

At the May SVP meeting on May 9th EPD will summarize the discussions and direction from the workshop.

G. Brief Reports and Discussion Items

1. **Casino Related Issues** - Jack handed out a draft of the Casino Impacts Benefit Grants process that the managers from the Lower Saucon Township, Hellertown, Freemansburg Borough coalition came up with to recommend to the County Executive for the distribution of the \$1.6 million dollars in funding that Northampton County will start receiving in late 2008 as the host county. The draft recommends that the funding be divided up on a 50%/25%/25% basis with the 50% going to the five (5) priority municipalities of Lower Saucon Township, Hellertown, Freemansburg Borough, Bethlehem and Hanover Township. 25% would be reserved for Impacts Mitigation Grants which any Northampton County municipality could apply for but would have to document an impact(s) from the casino. The remaining 25% would be reserved to be distributed to the 31 remaining municipalities besides the priority municipalities and City of Bethlehem. After discussion the members felt that the split should be revised to 60%/20%/20%.
2. **Regional Policing** - Charlie advised that he spoke with Ron Stern from DCED and the two peer consultants assigned by DCED (Chief Brian Ross and Chief Todd Graeff) have been busy reviewing the data that was supplied to them in the questionnaires. We will be setting up individual interviews for each Council member to meet with the peer consultants.
3. **Polk Valley Road Intersection Enhancements** - Jack advised that we held another meeting with the two (2) businesses on the west side of 412 (American Family Services Foundation & McDonald's) and made one last attempt to enlist their participation in improvements to the paper street that runs between their properties. There was no movement in their positions so we will have to move ahead with our original recommendations for the signal at Polk Valley Road and Route 412.
4. **Multi- Municipal Enterprise Zone** – Nothing new to report on this. Jack said that we learned tonight from Mike Zumpino that Triad sent Charlie and him an email that we never received.
5. **Hellertown - Lower Saucon Joint Recycling Facility** - Gail Noff mentioned how pleased she was with how this site was transformed. Charlie said the Borough and Township have been working together to get the improvements in on the site and get DEP approval so it can hopefully open in mid-May. Charlie said that the Borough is getting a tremendous amount of calls
6. **Tax Reassessment** - Will be put on our next agenda. Ed said that they have been asking municipalities and school districts that support this to join the coalition. Each municipality can pass their own resolution.

I. Events Calendar - Priscilla passed out a flyer on a talk this Sunday on the Underground Railroad.

J. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM by a unanimous voice vote.

The next meeting of the Saucon Valley Partnership will be held on May 9, 2007 @ 7:00 p.m. at Lower Saucon Township.