

SAUCON VALLEY PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Date: May 9, 2007
Time: 7:12 p.m.
Location: Lower Saucon Township

A. Call to Order - Priscilla deLeon

B. Roll Call - Present: Priscilla deLeon, Jane Balum, Ed Inghrim, Susan Baxter, Glenn Kern, Jack Cahalan, Guests: Jenny McKenna,

C. Council Of Governments

1. The minutes of the April 11, 2007 meeting of the Saucon Valley Partnership were approved following a motion by Glenn, seconded by Susan.
2. Treasurer's Report - Jack reviewed the April 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 Glenn, the Partnership voted to approve the Treasurer's Report.
3. Jack reviewed the EPD invoice dated May 4, 2007 in the amount of \$5,880.59 for their services April 1-30, 2007 and said that it was in order and he recommended that it be approved for payment. On a motion by Glenn, seconded by Susan, the Partnership voted to approve payment of the invoice. Jane stated that she would like more detail as to what the travel expenses covered. Jack stated that it is to cover mileage, lodging and other supporting expenses. He will ask EPD for more information on this.

D. Citizens On Agenda Items - None

E. Citizens On Non-Agenda Items - None

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

Partnership Review and Discussion of Interactive Workshop Summary

Jack handed out copies of the summary of comments/discussion points from the Interactive Workshop on April 30, 2007 that had been prepared by EPD and stated that our task at tonight's meeting was to go over each of the issues and rank them in order of their importance for the focus of the Multi-Municipal Plan. The Steering Committee discussed each of the issues in depth and ranked them as either "high", "medium", or "low" priorities. Certain issues were struck from the list as not pertinent to the Multi-Municipal Plan. On several issues, the Steering Committee did not understand what the issue meant. The Steering Committee made the following rankings:

I. Schools, Parks, & Civic Amenities

1. Public Issues/Concerns

- a. Potential impacts on recreation facilities upon build-out **HIGH PRIORITY**
- b. Potential impacts of development on school facilities **HIGH PRIORITY**
- c. Automobile traffic's affects on pedestrian and bicycle traffic conditions ~~in Lower Saucon Township~~ **HIGH PRIORITY**
- d. Communication between Lower Saucon Township & Hellertown Borough & **SCHOOL DISTRICT** regarding recreation & civic amenities **HIGH PRIORITY**
- e. Lack of designated pedestrian/bicycle lanes/trails/routes ~~in Hellertown~~ **HIGH PRIORITY**

- f. Insufficient amount of area dedicated to pedestrian/bicycle lanes/trails/routes ~~in Lower Saucon Township~~ *HIGH PRIORITY*
- g. Lack of signage for recreation areas ~~in Hellertown~~ *MEDIUM PRIORITY*
- h. Enhance Hellertown's streetscape *HIGH PRIORITY*
- i. Inadequate number of after school opportunities/programs for kids *LOW PRIORITY*
- j. Lack of publicity for facilities and events *LOW PRIORITY*

2. *Ideas/Suggestions*

- a. Construct ~~amphitheatre~~ *BANDSHELL* for warm weather events such as community theatre, symphonies, etc. *LOW PRIORITY*
- b. Establish trails to connect schools, parks, CBD & neighborhoods *HIGH PRIORITY*
- c. Redevelop theatre on Main Street *HIGH PRIORITY BUT PARKING IS AN ISSUE*
- d. Establishing prices for Pool reflecting residency. *LOW PRIORITY – IS A COG ISSUE*
- e. Construct a Community Center to house gymnasium, indoor courts, ~~weight machines~~, etc. *HIGH PRIORITY MINUS THE WEIGHT MACHINES- SCHOOL HAS THEM*
- f. Establish a centrally located system of schools, recreation & civic amenities *LOW PRIORITY*
- g. Extend use of school campus for Adult education *LOW PRIORITY*
- h. Attract tourism to historic sites ~~and Sears Homes~~. *HIGH PRIORITY*
- i. Construct an Art house cinema. *SAME AS c. ABOVE*
- j. Provide a community Dance/Social Hall *INCLUDE WITH e. ABOVE*
- k. Establish a Community Theatre *INCLUDE WITH c. ABOVE*
- l. Construct Public tennis/handball courts *LOW PRIORITY – SCHOOL HAS THEM*
- m. Provide Wi-Fi access in Hellertown Borough *LOW PRIORITY*
- n. Organize grassroots publicity/coordination promoting Schools, recreation & civic amenities. *SAME AS I j. ON TOP*
- o. Post adequate signage for festival, public events, school events and recreation opportunities. *SAME AS I j. ON TOP*
- p. Televis community meetings *LOW PRIORITY*
- q. Establish facilities fee for usage of school facilities *ALREADY IN PLACE*
- r. Construct a Marquee on Main Street to promote community and school events. *LOW PRIORITY*
- s. Establish a Community Days festival *ALREADY IN PLACE*
- t. Expand and improve the Farmers Market *ALREADY IN PLACE*
- u. Construct an Ice Rink *LOW PRIORITY – PLENTY OF ICE RINKS AROUND*
- v. Joint Commission between Lower Saucon Valley and Hellertown to preserve and promote historical sites *ALREADY THREE (3) GROUPS DOING THIS*

II. Neighborhoods

1. *Public Issues/Concerns*

- a. General lack of “neighborhood” feeling in Lower Saucon Township *HIGH PRIORITY*
- b. Lack of sidewalks in Lower Saucon Township *LOW PRIORITY*
- c. New houses in Lower Saucon are “too large” and “lack character” *LOW PRIORITY*
- d. Large houses are fundamental to supporting the school district *LOW PRIORITY*
- e. Current infrastructure capacities in Lower Saucon not available to support denser housing *LOW PRIORITY*
- f. Biking on Lower Saucon roads is not safe in most areas *MEDIUM PRIORITY*
- g. ~~Number of school aged children is not able to increase significantly~~
- h. ~~Imbalance between number of school buses serving Lower Saucon Township versus those in Hellertown.~~
- i. Single-family homes in Hellertown are being subdivided into two- or multi-family structures. *HIGH PRIORITY*
- j. Pedestrians have a difficult time crossing Main St. in downtown Hellertown. *HIGH PRIORITY*

k. Few “destinations” or “attractions” of any kind throughout the region *HIGH PRIORITY*

2. *Ideas/Suggestions*

a. Develop “neighborhoods” that include public gathering spaces *HIGH PRIORITY*.

b. ~~Examine ways to enhance existing residential areas with gathering spaces.~~ *EXPLORE REDEVELOPMENT OF AREAS FOR COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS – HIGH PRIORITY*

~~i. Leithsville Road~~ *IDENTIFY AREAS*

~~ii. Old Philadelphia Pike~~ *IDENTIFY AREAS*

c. Conduct a corridor study of US 378/Old Philadelphia Pike; emphasis on land use, aesthetics, and connectivity. *HIGH PRIORITY*

d. Reuse old SEPTA line as primary non-vehicular connection between Lower Saucon and Hellertown. *HIGH PRIORITY*

e. Install new signaling devices for pedestrians on Main St. *HIGH PRIORITY*

III. Business Development/Economic Opportunities

1. *Public Issues/Concerns*

a. Hellertown lacks public parking; the only parking available currently is on-street parking on Main Street. *HIGH PRIORITY*

b. There currently exists no unique retail, ~~shoe stores or clothing stores~~ *HIGH PRIORITY*

c. The Comprehensive Plan must address large scale economic development projects; not just concentrating on downtown Hellertown for new businesses. *HIGH PRIORITY*

d. There is no organization in place that focuses on downtown Hellertown on a concentrated basis. *TWO ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON THIS – LOW PRIORITY*

e. Many local residents would support downtown Hellertown if there were stores that provided a unique retail selection. *SAME AS b.*

~~f. There are many pedestrian-vehicular conflicts on Main Street.~~

~~g. There are very few quality restaurants; there are more pizza pubs and fast food places; Hellertown needs additional restaurants and cafes. Newest improvement Pondelek which combines a florist and café.~~ *HIGH PRIORITY*

h. Lighting on Main Street is not conducive for pedestrian foot traffic. *HIGH PRIORITY*

i. Many stores close at 5:00 p.m. *HIGH PRIORITY*

2. *Ideas/Suggestions*

a. Concentrate on large economic development projects on 378 and the old spark plug facility *AND OTHER AREAS. HIGH PRIORITY*

b. Key sites for redevelopment in downtown Hellertown include the old theater, Main and Water and the location of the recent fire. *HIGH PRIORITY*

c. Identify areas to the rear of Main Street to be used for public parking lots. *HIGH PRIORITY*

d. Identify buildings on Main Street which could be converted to outdoor cafes and restaurants which would add to the night street life *HIGH PRIORITY*

e. Establish an organization that focuses on Main Street for special events, business retention and recruitment, and marketing *ORGANIZATION ALREADY WORKING ON THIS – LOW PRIORITY*

f. Ensure zoning is adopted to keep unwanted retail out of Main Street such as pawn shops, etc. *BOROUGH COUNCIL ALREADY TAKING STEPS ON THIS - LOW PRIORITY*

~~g. Streetscape Improvements should include pedestrian lighting, and benches~~ *AND TREE LIGHTS; the benches should be on the side streets and not on Main Street. HIGH PRIORITY*

~~h. Make a concerted effort to attract new and unique retail to downtown Hellertown; this could also include shoes and clothing.~~ *HIGH PRIORITY*

i. Encourage restoration of the historic storefronts *HIGH PRIORITY*

- j. New signage is needed on Main Street to identify parking areas, etc. *MEDIUM PRIORITY*
- k. Develop traffic calming projects for downtown Hellertown in order to slow down traffic. *HIGH PRIORITY*
- l. Capitalize on the traffic coming through downtown Hellertown *HIGH PRIORITY*

IV. Open Spaces/Natural Resources

1. Public Issues/Concerns

- a. Notable Characteristics of the community include:
 - i. Open space, unused land, farmland *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - ii. Saucon Creek *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - iii. Low density development *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - iv. Large concentration of steeply wooded slopes w/ habitat *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - v. Water & purity of underground supply *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - vi. Karst Geology *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - vii. Mountains with woods *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - viii. Homeland changes when related to water *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - ix. At night you can see the open space stars - absence of light pollution *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - x. Water supply – balance of well use + springs. Seeking Hellertown supply *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xi. Small town feel in Hellertown once off Main Street *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xii. Lehigh River *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xiii. Wildlife in eastside of Township *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xiv. Buffalo and reindeer *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xv. Fishing in Saucon Creek/ Thomas Iron Work Area *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - xvi. Foxes , animals in Hellertown/Thomas Iron Work Park *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - iii. One ~~user~~ *HEADACHE?* is the landfill and expansion = traffic, other impacts
 - iv. Scenic views are an important asset *AGREE WITH THIS*
- b. Some suggestions in LVPC Greenways Draft Plan were surprises *NOT SURE WHAT THESE WERE?*
 - v. Lack of Connection to D & L corridor *AGREE WITH THIS*
- ~~e. Parking is an issue in Hellertown (Bypass)~~
 - vi. Preservation means restored to original condition/remain untouched; conservation is limiting impacts on resources *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - vii. Limited access to 78 is a good thing *AGREE WITH THIS*
 - viii. Current water resources and sewage resources are factors impacting the extent of future development *AGREE WITH THIS*
- c. How can we make money with natural resources? *AGREE WITH THIS*

2. Ideas/Suggestions

- ~~a. Potential in Hellertown for full services to come back~~
- b. Providing places for children/families *HIGH PRIORITY*
- c. Study the feasibility/possibility of obtaining sections of railroad *HIGH PRIORITY*
- d. Continued protection of historic structures/uses *HIGH PRIORITY*
- e. Identify creative re-use of areas geared toward preservation/conservation *HIGH PRIORITY*
- f. Define the distinctions between preservation and conservation because both are important, but different aspects in Saucon Valley *HIGH PRIORITY*
- g. Encourage agriculture activities *HIGH PRIORITY*
- h. For cluster development, open space needs more connectivity (e.g. greenways) *HIGH PRIORITY*
- i. Address that increased costs of energy are going to be likely, and we need to use our lands accordingly *MEDIUM LOW PRIORITY*

- j. We need to promote our assets – getting the word out *HIGH PRIORITY*
- k. Build businesses on natural resource assets *NOT SURE WHAT THIS MEANS?*
- ~~l. We have to have something unique to get people from outside~~
- m. Identify natural resources that are potentially important to future business and economic development *HIGH PRIORITY*
- n. Grow smartly *HIGH PRIORITY*
- o. Offer support services/business that can get people here for a block of time *HIGH PRIORITY*
- p. Consider land use/views/impacts from across Bethlehem line *AND REGIONALLY – HIGH PRIORITY*
- q. Maintain density in LST similar to the way it is as much as legally possible *BEING DONE*
- r. Address our dependency on Bethlehem for infrastructure expansion and there is no desire to put in treatment plant *HIGH PRIORITY*
- s. Continued protection of existing natural resources is desired *HIGH PRIORITY*
- t. Recognition of what resources are out there and why they are important *HIGH PRIORITY*
- u. Hydrology study needed of southeast (Springtown gets portion of water from Lower Saucon Township) *HIGH PRIORITY*

V. Infrastructure/Transportation

1. Public Issues/Concerns

- 1. Township more preservation-minded than pro-growth *NOT SURE WHAT THIS MEANS?*
 - a. Concerns for (cost effectiveness: *CONCERN ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS?*) of sewer extensions in the Township
 - b. There are sewer extensions pending south of Hellertown on Route 412, which is the area of greatest known need at this time *HIGH PRIORITY*
 - c. There are concerns about available capacity at Bethlehem plant (537 Plan underway) *HIGH PRIORITY*
- 2. There is a competition between groups for aesthetics vs. practicability (water/sewer) *NOT SURE WHAT THIS MEANS?*
- 3. There is currently good communication between authorities to minimize pressure lines, etc. and this level of communication needs to be maintained *HIGH PRIORITY*
 - a. Route 412 *AND 378* most significant traffic concern, especially after the casino is developed *HIGH PRIORITY*
 - b. There are very limited bike/ped. facilities that are safe in both the Borough and Township *REPEATED ITEM*

2. Ideas/Suggestions

- a. Available sewer capacity should be focused on problem areas & in fill *HIGH PRIORITY*
- b. There is a possible need for specific casino-related lanes or facilities *NOT SURE IS NEEDED OR CAN BE DONE*
- c. More frequent and convenient bus service needed, possibly more, smaller buses/vans *HIGH PRIORITY*
- d. Gateway signs should be installed in several areas including: 378, 412, Leithsville, and Hellertown *HIGH PRIORITY*
- e. Consideration should be given to a 412 “bypass” along RR *LOW PRIORITY*
 - has been studied before & eliminated *AGREE*
 - widening 412 at 78 was preferred, but hasn’t happened *412 WIDENING IS PLANNED ON BETHLEHEM SIDE OF RT 78*
- f. Major sewer collection lines represent possible bike/ped pathways *NEED MORE INFO ON THIS – HIGH PRIORITY*

- g. There is a need to widen/improve shoulders, etc. to facilitate safe bike and pedestrian pathways *DON'T THINK THIS IS FEASIBLE – LOW PRIORITY*

VI. Community Services/Fiscal Resources

1. Public Issues/Concerns

- a. Aging community - Attracting different age groups *HIGH PRIORITY*
- b. Lack of understanding of firefighters being volunteers/need for volunteers (Volunteers problem across the board) *HIGH PRIORITY*
- c. Elderly /Childless – How can SVSD support? *MEDIUM PRIORITY*
- d. Services
 - 5 volunteer fire companies / training 1 yr. requirement *UNDERSTOOD -HIGH PRIORITY*
 - 1 career EMS (some volunteer also) *UNDERSTOOD - HIGH PRIORITY*
 - 2 Full-time police FORCES – *UNDERSTOOD - HIGH PRIORITY*
 - 1 free (*FREE?*) library – HALA (no money from LST) *UNDERSTOOD – BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*
- f. Range of Costs between communities for police, EMS and fire *UNDERSTOOD - HIGH PRIORITY*
- g. Water System - includes Fire + other Comm. Service *DON'T UNDERSTAND*
- h. Sewer Capacity *HIGH PRIORITY*
- i. ~~LST Police— Training; Traffic; Increasing volume but controlled response time about same.~~
- j. More “white collar” crime today – ~~LST police in control range~~ *AGREE*
- k. More hazmat calls for fire Co; more paperwork *AGREE*
- l. Library will become stagnant w/ time w/o funding *UNDERSTOOD – BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*
- m. Gangs and transient population affecting crime *HIGH PRIORITY*
- n. Drugs – supply + demand. Value of sale > NYC *HIGH PRIORITY*
- o. Community Library – never will be research library access PA – keeps all library service areas in “\$” equal LST gives \$ 150,000 to Bethlehem library. *UNDERSTOOD – BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*
- p. All community services are seeking same funds/same methods *AGREE – HIGH PRIORITY*
- q. Recycling – Future issue w/ leaf collection cost (?) in LST *UNDERWAY – HIGH PRIORITY*
- r. Collection by borough of recyclables as garbage *UNDERWAY – HIGH PRIORITY*
- s. 412 corridor to become more of an issue w/ population growth *HIGH PRIORITY*
- t. Borough housing still expense vs. Bethlehem/Freemansburg. If we want to attract a younger age group what do we need to do? *HIGH PRIORITY*

2. Ideas/Suggestions

- a. Within 10 yrs, consolidation and career/combination in Fire Co. *AGREE*
- b. SVCC targeting seniors and children *HIGH PRIORITY*
- c. Need more for teens to do and get them involved *COMBINE WITH b. HIGH PRIORITY*
- d. Need volunteers/trained staff to address needs *COMBINE WITH b. HIGH PRIORITY*
- e. Functional consolidation of services, with proper study – for example, nature of fire calls vary throughout region *HIGH PRIORITY*
- f. Cost/Benefit analysis needed of consolidation of functional services – Fire/Police/ Public Works *COMBINE WITH e. HIGH PRIORITY*
- g. Possibly improve level of service by functional consolidation *COMBINE WITH e. HIGH PRIORITY*
- h. Rescue and M.V.A needs increasing w/ casino *HIGH PRIORITY*
- i. Library must expand physical plant; maintain technology *AGREE BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*

- j. Identify additional funding sources because there is a funding source issue for all community services *COMBINE WITH i. BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*
- k. Library (and others) looking to municipalities and SVSD for funding Options to taxes? *COMBINE WITH i. BUT MAY NOT BE ISSUE FOR COMP PLAN*
- l. Job creation to make young people stay or come to Saucon Valley *HIGH PRIORITY*

G. Brief Reports and Discussion Items

- 1. **Casino Related Issues** - Jack stated that the draft Casino Impacts Benefit Grants process had been adopted by the Councils of Lower Saucon Township, Hellertown, and Freemansburg Borough and we are getting ready to send it to the County Executive.
- 2. **Regional Policing** - Jack stated that we will be setting up individual interviews for each Council member to meet with the peer consultants.
- 3. **Polk Valley Road Intersection Enhancements** - Nothing new to report on this.
- 4. **Multi- Municipal Enterprise Zone** - Jack reported that Charlie had heard that the City of Bethlehem had signed off on the draft Memorandum of Agreement that Triad Associates had prepared. We had indicated to Triad after the last Partnership meeting that we were still interested in the Joint Enterprise Zone concept.
- 5. **Hellertown - Lower Saucon Compost Center** - Jack stated that if DEP approved the operating permit they were hoping that the Compost Center would be opened on May 18-19, 2007.
- 6. **Tax Reassessment** - Ed Inghrim said he is planning to meeting with Slate Belt COG on May 23rd about this issue. On May 21st he will be part of a panel discussion which includes Ryan Conrad and Ron Angle on Channel 69. Jack asked if Ed was looking for a resolution from the Partnership to support this effort? Ed said that he would send a copy of a draft resolution to Jack & Charlie to put on a future SVP agenda.

I. Events Calendar

J. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 PM by a unanimous voice vote.

The next meeting of the Saucon Valley Partnership will be held on June 13, 2007 @ 7:00 p.m. at the Saucon Valley School District