

MEMO

TO: Jack Cahalan, Township Manager

FROM: Judy Stern Goldstein, ASLA, R.L.A.
Karen M. Mallo, AICP, PP

RE: Applebutter Road Rezoning
Comprehensive Plan Analysis
Boucher and James Project Number: 12-95-200R

DATE: June 18, 2012

In regards to the proposed rezoning of properties in the Applebutter Road area to LI, Light Industrial, we have taken a closer look at the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. We offer the following for your review and consideration.

- In identifying the Opportunities and Challenges in the Comprehensive Plan, the landfill is mentioned in the economic development section. The plan states, "The primary industrial-oriented activity in the Township is a landfill. Current permitting, which generates a significant portion of the community's non-resident tax income, is approaching expiration; depending upon approval for facility expansion, the Township may have to evaluate alternative sources of income. Based upon feedback gained throughout the planning process, many expressed their desire for non-residential business opportunities to be expanded – possibly in areas most accessible to Routes 78 and 378."
- The study area is located in the planning area, identified in the Comprehensive Plan as the "Lehigh Bluff"
- Recommendations and Descriptions of Land Uses are as follows:
 - Business Enterprise
Purpose and typical land use activity: to accommodate larger-scale office, flex space and/or service-oriented uses that also seek to provide compatibility and transition between surrounding industrial and residential land uses. Business enterprise areas should be served by public infrastructure.
 - Industrial
Purpose and typical land use activity: to accommodate generally larger-scale local and/or industrial-oriented industrial, industrial-office and/or service uses. Depending upon the type and intensity of industrial-oriented uses, public infrastructure service may be appropriate.
- The Future Land Use Plans show the area of the current landfill, as Industrial. This also includes land north, south, east and west of the property. An area



immediately to the northeast and northwest of the current landfill is designated as Open Space. Land to the west, beyond the proposed Industrial Land Uses and extending to the Township border along Applebutter Road is designated as Business Enterprise. However, the majority of the study area is designated in the Future Land Use Plan as Industrial. (See Future Land Use Plan attached)

- The ridge/steep slope/wooded area north of the study area and extending west is considered a "regionally significant natural resource".
- A large portion of the study area is included in a Municipal Services boundary in which public water and sewer are to be provided and/or planned.

The study area is proposed to be rezoned from either RA, Rural Agricultural or LM, Light Manufacturing to LI, Light Industrial. Based on the information contained in the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, the proposed zoning change is generally consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan. The Future Land Use Plan identifies this area as Industrial or Enterprise Uses. Natural features, such as topography and woodlands, form a natural buffer from the proposed industrial area to surrounding existing residential uses. Existing industrial uses within and adjacent to the subject area, such as the landfill and those in the City of Bethlehem, further support the change.

In addition, we also examined the Comprehensive plan of the Lehigh Valley...2030, for any additional information related to the study area. We offer the following:

- The Natural Resource Plan identifies portions of the subject area with natural resources, such as woodlands, and steep slopes. The area north and west of the subject area is considered a locally significant natural resource. The area just north and east of the subject site has state-wide significance. While the majority of the study area (landfill and properties immediately west) does not have environmental constraints, small portions of the subject area (sloped and wooded areas) have been assigned medium to high conservation priorities. The very high conservation priority areas lie outside the subject area.
- The Land Use Plan identifies the Study Area as Urban Development. Natural Resources surround the subject area to the north.
- The plan recommends that future economic development (industrial and business development) take place in areas designated as Urban Development due to the current development patterns and placement of public utilities (sewer and water).
- Landfills and Solid Waste Disposal Facilities (and other industrial uses) are considered Land Uses of Regional Significance.
- The subject area is located near rail lines, major highway routes such as Route 412, Route 33, and Route 78 as well as the LANTA service area.



- Public water and sewer are provided to the majority of the study area along Applebutter Road.
- The open space area north of the study area and south of Steel City is designated on the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan as recommended Open Space (Natural Resource Protection). Small portions which mirror those identified in the Natural Resource Plan are also identified as Open Space (Natural Resource Protection). The properties north of the subject site (on the other side of the ridge) are identified as Existing Open Space, Parks or Recreation.

In conclusion, it appears that the proposed zoning change from RA, Rural Agricultural or LM, Light Manufacturing to LI, Light Industrial is also generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the Lehigh Valley...2030 based on its consistent recommendations on the placement of industry and other commercial development. The majority of environmental protection areas identified are on the periphery of the study area.

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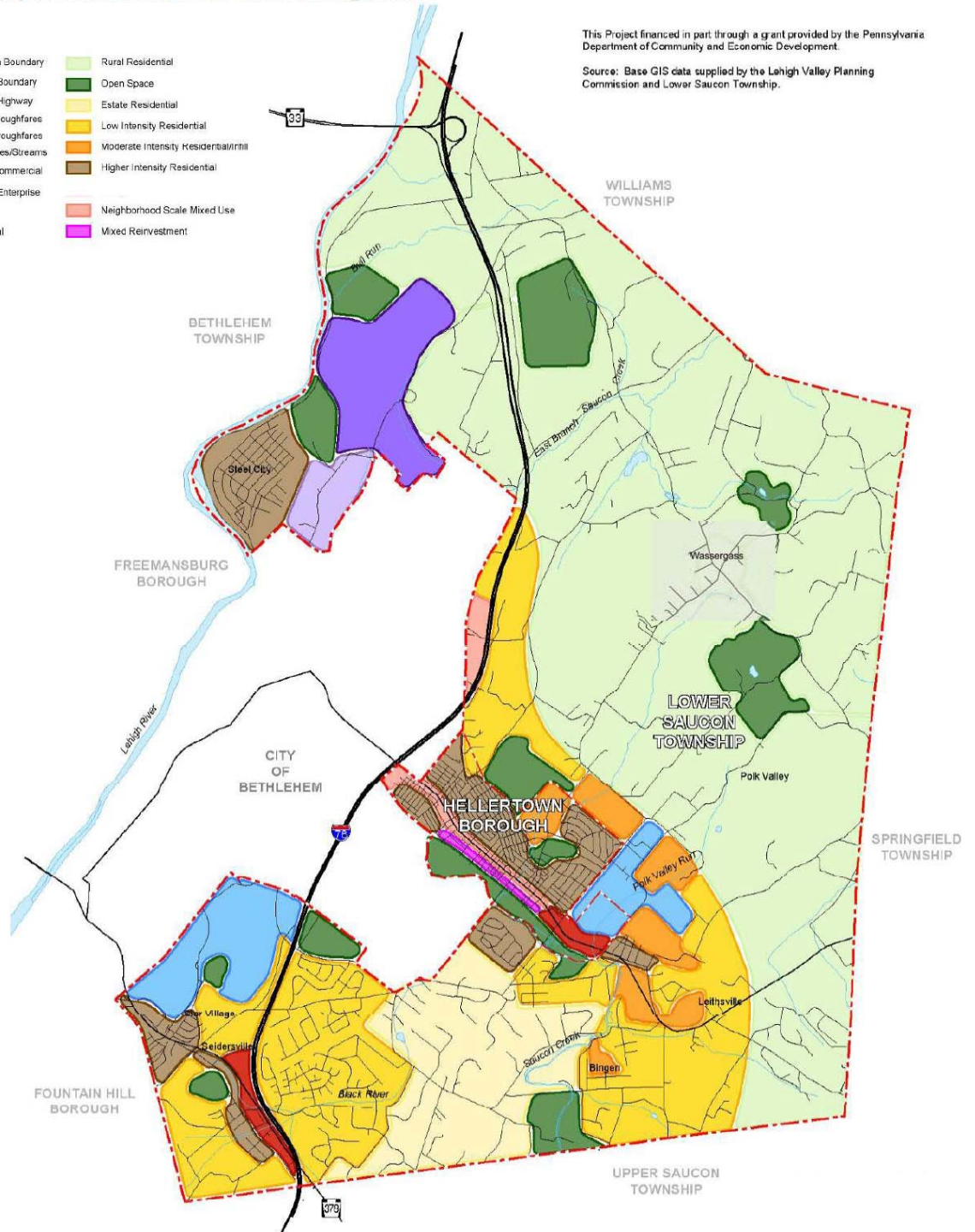
Boucher & James, Inc.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Recommendations

Map 2: Future Land Use and Housing Plan

LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Study Area Boundary | Rural Residential |
| Municipal Boundary | Open Space |
| Interstate Highway | Estate Residential |
| Major Thoroughfare | Low Intensity Residential |
| Minor Thoroughfare | Moderate Intensity Residential/Infill |
| Rivers/Lakes/Streams | Higher Intensity Residential |
| General Commercial | Neighborhood Scale Mixed Use |
| Business Enterprise | Mixed Reinvestment |
| Industrial | |
| Institutional | |



This Project financed in part through a grant provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Source: Base GIS data supplied by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and Lower Saucon Township.