



Lower Milford Township NEWS

Spring/Summer 2018

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“Moderate” equals “Reasonable” equals “Control”

As the saying goes, “All things in moderation.” This is sensible advice, and our community leaders need to keep this concept front and center when comprehensive county and local planning is on the drawing table. In fact, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is currently preparing an update to the Lehigh and Northampton Counties Comprehensive Plan of 2005.

When preparing a comprehensive plan (plan), major categories such as transportation, zoning, environment, agriculture, etc., must be addressed AND hopefully, coordinated to complete an overall and well constructed strategy for the county or municipality. All too often, the plan falls quite short of accomplishing the “comprehensive” goal. Data is collected and publications made available on a variety of “trends;” housing, traffic, population, water quality and quantity, farmland, forests and the list goes on. However, the data is not necessarily used intelligently. We collect data on current truck traffic through the region, crash statistics, projected increase of truck traffic and suggestions to mitigate the problems it causes. In another data compilation, projections for additional warehouse development, the anticipated jobs and speed with which our goods are delivered is publicized, ignoring the traffic crisis that already exists.

A Lehigh Valley Planning Commission article outlining strategies to manage congestion, begs the question, **why add to the congestion before it is relieved?** A recent Morning Call Road Warrior article, examines the problems residents are experiencing with tractor trailers attempting to negotiate local roads while following their GPS. This is an increasing problem in Lower Milford. However, with the continued population increase in the Lehigh Valley, GPS is sending commuter traffic through suburban neighborhoods and rural roads at an ever intensifying rate.

When is an area saturated? When has the Lehigh Valley absorbed our “fair share” of growth? The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation advocates a need for more population growth as stated in the Morning Call March 26, 2018 article, **“Population continues to grow in the Lehigh Valley.”**

What do you think? Does this sound like good planning? Or, is this an example of identifying serious and dangerous conditions but unwilling to make the changes necessary to protect the taxpayers and families of the Lehigh Valley?

The projections for increased warehousing and related traffic coupled with population growth, paints a chaotic picture for the future of the Lehigh Valley and is certainly not a well-planned region that includes all enterprises in moderation. A gentlemen by the name of Anthony Albanese said, **“Short-term thinking is the greatest enemy of good government.”** Let’s not be remembered for short-term profits and leave a legacy of long-term ruin. Our beautiful Lehigh Valley does not deserve it.



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A lovely afternoon in the Lehigh Valley

Celebrate Earth Day!



**Join your neighbors and friends on
Saturday, April 28 from 8 AM to Noon,
for our Annual Lower Milford
Clean-Up Day!**

Everyone is welcome!

**Scouts, Students, Youth Groups
For Community Service**

**Water, Gloves, Vests and Bags are provided. Meet
back at the Township Building for refreshments.**

Contact Public Works Director to sign up!

610-967-4949 extension 112 or email:

publicworks@lowermilford.net

On Sunday afternoon, February 18, Community Baptist Church welcomed the Lower Milford community to the dedication of their new home. Members of the Lower Milford Historical Society attended and were presented with our Elementary School sign and plaque. We welcome the Community Baptist Church family to Lower Milford and appreciate their contribution to the community, now and in the future.



Lower Milford Fire Company News



It will soon be **Carnival time!**

June 13 through 16, Fireworks Friday Night! Live music every night. Bring the family for rides, food, bingo, silent auction, games and much more!



**The new engine is
here and in service**



Your Fire Company asks you to please maintain a clear driveway width of 11 feet to provide access for large equipment



Pennsylvania's Clean and Green Program Act 515 and Act 319

What is the BIG picture?

The Morning Call newspaper recently published a series of articles on Pennsylvania's "Clean and Green" program. The articles describe the intent of enacting Pennsylvania's Act 515 and Act 319 was to provide farmers a deferment from paying realty tax on the land's full assessed value. The word, "deferment" is important because a farmer who develops a portion of the land in violation of their Clean and Green agreement or any of its terms, is subject to paying the full amount of the taxes plus interest, and possibly penalties, for the previous seven years. This is referred to as "rollback taxes." The articles give voice to differing opinions concerning the program's value. Acknowledging that the program began several decades ago, we need to view its current success through a vastly different lens.

Although agricultural and forest lands were the primary beneficiaries of the Clean and Green program, incentives for retaining open space is now vitally important. Open space saves taxpayers money in ways that are not necessarily obvious. For example, undeveloped land recharges the groundwater through absorption. Buildings, driveways, walkways, roads increase stormwater runoff which must be collected in basins and other structures which are costly for municipalities to build and maintain. Open space improves air quality. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission publication of 2014, "Return on Environment," warns in the Executive Summary, . . . "we are facing some very real issues with poor air quality. . ." Open space has no drain on taxpayer resources; no need to expand schools, increase emergency services and infrastructure.

The Morning Call articles quote school and economic development executives' statements concerning the impact to homeowners not enrolled in the Clean and Green program. It is indeed a fact; if one property pays less, another will have to pay more to fill the coffers. However, what happens if the program is denied to large tracts of open space? The property will be at risk for development. One might assume that would be fair to everyone else who has to pay more so the "mansion" owner can get a break. But, there is always a down side. The land is sold, townhouses are built and 150 children are added to the school district. The school district must expand the buildings to accommodate more students, more teachers must be hired, additional student transportation is needed, the park for the development is now the responsibility of the municipality to maintain and repair, the development streets must be maintained by the municipality, additional emergency services are needed for the increase in population along with other costs too numerous to list. **Maybe the real analysis should be focused on how can we NOT afford to support incentives for open space.**

That is the big picture.

Southern Lehigh Public Library

BASKET RAFFLE!

**Purchase Raffle TICKETS
from Feb. 26 - May 19**

**46 beautiful high-quality baskets are on display at
the library**

**DRAWING : SATURDAY, MAY 19 AT
OUR "TEA TIME" EVENT.**

You do not need to be present to win.

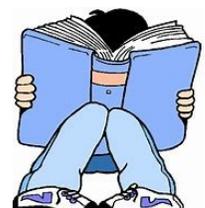
Proceeds go to Friends of SLPL



Visit the Library website at:

<http://www.solehipl.org>

**Explore the many programs, events
and services your
library provides.**





Lower Milford Township

7607 Chestnut Hill Church Road
Coopersburg, PA 18036
phone 610-967-4949
fax 610-967-1013

www.lowermilford.org

Lower Milford Township News
Ellen L. Koplin, Editor

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Committee Meeting

**Thursday, May 3 at 7 PM
Township Building**

**If you would like to help
organize our upcoming
Festival on September 22,
please attend the meeting and
share your ideas and talents.
The Festival is an important
community event and a great
opportunity to socialize with
your neighbors and make new
friends.**

Important Dates

May 28 Memorial Day-Office Closed
Visit the Township Veterans Memorial

July 4 Independence Day-Office Closed

September 3 Labor Day-Office Closed

September 22 Fall Festival

**Visit www.lowermilford.org for
meeting schedule**

**Pennsylvania Primary Election
Tuesday, May 15**

Have a Safe Summer

