



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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June 25, 2021

Michael P. Hanlon
435 West Hamilton Street
Allentown PA 18101
Michael.Hanlon@AllentownPA.gov

RE: **Street Vacation**
West Sycamore Street from North Brick Street to West Allen Street
City of Allentown
Lehigh County

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject amendment at its Transportation Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, please see the meeting details below to attend. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting should the Commission have any additional comments.

- LVPC Transportation Planning Committee Meeting
 - June 24th, 2021 at 5:30 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - June 24th, 2021 at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.htm>

Mr. Hanlon,

The proposed street vacation was submitted by Justin D. Gross, Project Manager, on behalf Lehigh Engineering Associates for a portion of West Sycamore Street east of North Brick Street to West Allen Street.

West Sycamore Street is essentially a spur east of North Brick Street. Per Mr. Gross' application, the existing dwellings along the north side of West Sycamore Street are planned to be razed, therefore road-frontage access is no longer required for these parcels.

The proposed street vacation, submitted for recommendations under Section 304 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, was reviewed for general consistency with the intent of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

Street vacation requests require all property owners to agree to the vacation, along with the City. Mr. Gross noted that all properties along this portion of West Sycamore Street are owned by the Waterfront Development Company and therefore consent to the vacation request.

For context, West Sycamore Street is a local road, owned by the City of Allentown. The area where West Sycamore Street ends is in the Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay district, where a portion of the redevelopment of Riverside Drive project is planned.



Image Courtesy of Google Street View



Image Courtesy of Lehigh County Parcel Viewer
The request does call for the vacation of the street with utilities. The City should consider the impact of the removal of the fire hydrant on West Sycamore Street (as seen on the picture on the left) that sits in front of 19 West Sycamore Street. This is the only hydrant that serves this block and the adjacent residences on the west side of North Brick Street. In addition, the utility pole on the northeast corner of North Brick Street and West Sycamore also provides service to the residences a block north of this location along the east side of North Brick Street.

By way of reference, Policy 2.2 of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, encourages the enhancement of incident management strategies to promote a safe, well-maintained transportation network while capitalizing on existing infrastructure. Policy 5.1 promotes safe and secure community design and emergency management by enhancing planning and emergency response efforts. The City should work with the developer, if this has not already occurred to coordinate utility easements and fire service.

In closing, it has been confirmed with Mark Jaendl of the Waterfront Development Company, that the street, once vacated, will be incorporated into the Waterfront Development site. It is of note the Waterfront Development was reviewed by the Commission and found consistent with the *Regional Plan*. Because this vacation request is in conjunction with the larger Waterfront Development project, it is also consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Specifically, the construction of Riverside Drive and the Waterfront Development project's internal street system connecting to the City's grid. This objective is consistent with *FutureLV: Policy 2.1* which calls for the development of mixed-transportation network by establishing mixed-transportation corridors; *Policy 2.2* by encouraging an interconnected street network; and *Policy 2.3* by enhancing transit connections to improve mobility by linking job and population centers, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and strengthening mixed transportation access. The larger project and it's associated trail, road and transit connections accomplish this.

We appreciate the City's consideration of these goals in as much as it relates to the vacation request of West Sycamore Street.

Sincerely,

Becky A. Bradley, AICP
Executive Director

Brian Hite
Senior Traffic Technician