

Sketch plans for \$50m charter school

The Bethlehem Gadfly Charter Schools, Education, Serious Issues August 12, 2019

(24th in a series on Education and Charter Schools)

Gadfly has been following charter school news because of the budget impact on our Bethlehem Area School District taxes. See the “Charter school” link on the Gadfly sidebar.

Of special interest will be LVA’s request to the BASD for permission to build.

Sarah M. Wojcik and Jacqueline Palochko, “Lehigh Valley Academy prepares to make new school pitch in Bethlehem Township.” Morning Call, August 12, 2019.

The Lehigh Valley Academy Regional Charter School is moving forward with plans to build a school in Bethlehem Township, filing sketch plans with the township last week.

The school, which comes with a preliminary \$50 million price tag and would house kindergarten through 12th grade, was originally planned for Hanover Township, Northampton County, but Lehigh Valley Academy nixed that plan because of “insurmountable zoning issues.” It won’t face that problem at the 58.7-acre Bethlehem Township tract along Hecktown Road, north of Route 22. That’s because the land, owned by the estate of Fred Jaindl, is zoned agricultural and a school is among the permitted uses.

Because LVA is a regional charter school, it needs permission of both Bethlehem Area and Saucon Valley school districts. As of last week, LVA

had not filed a formal request with Bethlehem Area, Superintendent Joseph Roy said. Most of LVA's 1,700 students come from the Bethlehem region.

The sketch plans on file in Bethlehem Township indicate the building could support 1,950 students. The plans show athletic fields at the rear of the building, behind a 326-space parking lot and bus dropoff area. Two parking lots, each with 75 spaces, are in front of the building.