

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: FOCUSED ASSESSMENT for WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY

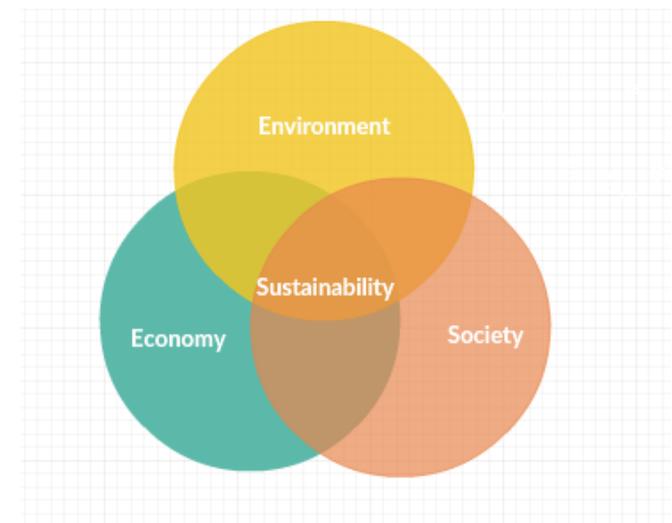
Task Force Review Draft, July 2016

Overview. Between April and May 2016, staff from the Brandywine Conservancy’s Municipal Assistance Program conducted a focused assessment of Westtown Township’s plans, policies, and ordinances (collectively, the “framework”) as these pertain to community sustainability. Using the rapid assessment approach allowed staff to investigate Westtown’s broad and complex framework given limited time and resources, while yielding clear recommendations for future action.

It may also be helpful to define the term “sustainability” (or “sustain” plus “ability”). Sustainability is widely accepted to refer to: *an approach that meets the needs of the existing generation while not compromising the needs of future generations, while protecting the rights of both.* It is also commonly understood to mean *the responsible use of natural resources such that renewable ones are not drawn down beyond their ability to regenerate, and non-renewable ones are used to the minimum possible extent.* For example, applying this definition to the land-use component of Westtown’s environmental framework would mean an approach which *ensures that the Township’s residents can rely on modes of transportation other than single-occupant vehicles for their everyday needs; mixed-use development is permitted by zoning; and the Township has sufficient open space to ensure the enjoyment of the natural world by future generations.*

Sustainability is often represented by the graphic shown here, at the center of the three overlapping circles “environment,” “society,” and “economy.” In Westtown’s case, sustainability is defined at the municipal level; within its broad planning, policy-making, and regulatory framework; and applied to environmental matters. Brandywine Conservancy staff evaluated the Township’s efforts principally (though not totally) within this environmental circle — i.e., how Westtown is achieving the land-use, ecological, and other directly-related aspects of sustainability based on current Township plans, regulations, and strategies. Specifically, we evaluated the following aspects of sustainability: Natural Resource Protection; Water Quality and Quantity; Land Use and Community Character; Climate Change; Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation; Mobility and Transportation; Community Health and Safety; and Food Production and Security.

The primary purpose of this assessment is to inform the Comprehensive Plan Update



effort. Where the Township is found to be weak in one or more aspects of community sustainability, the Plan can supply ideas that when pursued, can help strengthen the Township in this regard. By adopting and then actively implementing the updated Plan, the Board of Supervisors will help to create a more sustainable Westtown. This assessment also identifies Township zoning, subdivision, and stormwater management ordinance provisions that should be revised or refined as part of a comprehensive ordinance update already planned by the Board to start once the new Comprehensive Plan is adopted. Also, we did not evaluate any of the Township's operations as they relate to sustainability (e.g., municipal vehicle types and fuels used; procurement of supplies). Nor did we address the major components of the societal and economic circles (e.g., local economies) given the limited influence a municipality's planning and regulatory efforts have on much larger societal and economic forces. However, many so-called "environmental" components of this assessment clearly relate to societal and economic elements.

It is also worth noting that much of Westtown was designated as "suburban" by Chester County in its *Landscapes* and *Landscapes2* Comprehensive Plans. This designation acknowledged the prevalence of single-family residential subdivisions spread throughout the township, and to some extent, fostered continued low-density development. The Township adopted its 2001 Growth Management Plan and ordinances consistent with the County's vision, and has implemented that plan and ordinances through land development approvals and other actions. This sprawling development pattern presents challenges to some aspects of sustainability.

Methodology. Extensive research and analysis was conducted by Brandywine Conservancy staff to perform the actual assessment, using either the electronic or paper versions of the following Township documents:

- ✓ Westtown Township Act 537 Official Sewage Facilities Plan Special Study: Sewage Needs Of Existing Residences (2012) [*Note, referred to herein as the "Act 537 Plan-Existing Needs"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Growth Management Plan (2001) [*Note, referred to herein as "2001 Growth Plan"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan Update (2014) [*Note, abbreviated herein as "OSRER"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Chapter 132: Sewer System Collection and Conveyance Regulations (2013) [*Note, referred to herein as "Chapter 132"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Chapter 144: Stormwater Management (2013) [*Note, referred to herein as "Chapter 144"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Chapter 170: Zoning (1991) [*Note, referred to herein as "Zoning Ordinance"*]
- ✓ Westtown Township Chapter 149: Subdivision of Land [*Note, referred to herein as "SLDO"*]

The Westtown Township Sustainable Community Assessment has been completed using an iterative process involving the interplay of multiple knowledgeable stakeholders. BC staff explained the Sustainable Community Assessment to the Task Force at the kick off meeting for the Westtown Township Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force on April 28, 2016. Upon completion of its initial draft written assessment, Conservancy staff met with the Township’s Planning Director and the co-chairs of the Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force whose review then further informed this assessment. Comments were also provided by the Conservancy’s co-consultant for this project, Thomas Comitta Associates. Finally, the Task Force was presented with a completed draft assessment in late July 2016 for review and comment.

Results and Recommendations. The results of the rapid assessment of Westtown’s plans, policies, and regulations are provided in the charts that start on the following page. These charts are organized according to the issues evaluated (e.g., natural resources, community health and safety, etc., as previously identified), while the symbols “+” and “x” are used to indicate the strengths and weaknesses, respectively, of the Township’s current plans and regulations within sustainability’s environmental circle. For the same criteria, the letter “n” is used to note a neutral, or adequate, evaluation; i.e., the Township’s efforts are neither significantly strong nor notably weak. *(Note that when a symbol is followed by successive sentences separated with a “;”, the symbol is meant to also apply to those sentences.)* To consider improvements to noted gaps, each chart is followed by a list of recommendations. Some recommendations may address more than one gap.

Each recommendation is characterized in two ways; first, according to its implementation priority as determined by Conservancy and Township input — i.e., short-term (**ST** – within the next three years); long-term (**LT** – beyond three years); and/or **Ongoing** (recommendations currently underway, should continue as such). This is not to say that we discourage the continuation of the Township’s many other current, notable, and successful contributions to sustainability. The second characterization is whether the recommendation removes obstacles to, creates incentives for, or sets standards for achieving sustainability. It is notable that there are a number of recommendations that could fit under more than one of these latter three categories. For example, “Land-Use and Community Character” includes a recommendation to incentivize mixed-use development and re-development in certain areas of the Township. While this recommendation was placed under the “Create Incentives” category, regulations will be needed to create the actual incentives. Finally, a clear vision for Westtown’s sustainable future should directly inform prioritization, implementation, and/or continuation of any of these recommendations along with broad participation from other Township officials, residents, businesses, and other key stakeholders.

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Natural Resource Protection

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
<i>Ch. 132: On-lot Sewage Management</i>	<i>R-1: Residential District (§170-600)</i>	<i>C-1: Neighborhood and Highway Commercial District (§170-1100)</i>	<i>T: Township District (§170-1400)</i>
<i>Ch. 144: Stormwater Management</i>	<i>R-2: Residential District (§170-700)</i>	<i>C-2: Highway Commercial District (§170-11A00)</i>	<i>Flood Plain District (§170-401)</i>
<i>Ch. 149: Subdivision/Land Development</i>	<i>R-3: Residence-Office District (§170-800)</i>	<i>M-U: Multi-Use District (§170-1000)</i>	<i>Steep Slope Conservation District (§170-402)</i>
<i>Ch. 170: Zoning</i>	<i>A/C: Agricultural/Cluster Residential District (§170-500)</i>	<i>POC: Planned Office Campus District (§170-1200)</i>	

<p>Protect: floodplains¹</p> <p>Floodplain protection serves both to protect private property and conserve valuable ecological resources, and should consider downstream properties.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Acknowledges that the Township’s existing floodplain regulations generally prohibit the construction of buildings within the 100 year floodplain.</p> <p>OSRER: + Maps floodplains, hydrology, and wetlands.</p> <p>§170-401: + Alluvial soils included in floodplain definition; soil survey takes precedent when more restrictive than FEMA maps; clear cutting prohibited (except in specific circumstances); + non-conforming structures shall not be expanded or enlarged within floodplains; n Floodplains defined by 100 year flood, district can be revised, amended and modified; n selective cutting of trees allowed, provided that desirable mature shade trees are not totally eliminated; n no new development shall be located within the area measured 75’ landward from top of bank of any watercourse; x Selective cutting allowed up to 25’ from stream.</p> <p>§144-301.S: + Requires compliance with Township’s Floodplain Ordinance for regulated activities.</p>
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¹ The Floodplain Overlay District contained in the Township’s Zoning Ordinance is currently being updated to reflect recent changes in the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Floodplain Maps. The amended ordinance is scheduled to be completed by December 2016.

<p>Protect: riparian buffers</p> <p>Riparian buffers provide multiple benefits, from stormwater mitigation to wildlife habitat to aesthetics and more. Research has shown that benefits grow as the width of the buffer grows.</p>	<p>OSRER: + Acknowledges the Zoning Ordinance’s riparian setback requirement of 75’; + calls for more specific planting standards.</p> <p>§170-407: + No new principle or accessory building or use, parking or commercial or industrial storage unit area shall be located within 75’ from top of bank of perennial stream; + Reforestation required up to 75’ from top of bank where the majority of existing trees and shrubs are removed; x Inconsistent with more recent regulations of Ch. 144.</p> <p>§144-301.T: + Prohibits disturbance within 75’ from top of bank of all perennial and intermittent waterways, waterbodies, and wetlands.</p>
<p>Protect: woodlands & hedgerows</p> <p>It is hard to overstate the value of mature woodlands, which include wildlife habitat, stormwater mitigation, soil conservation, carbon sequestration, mitigation of temperature extremes, improved property values, and much more.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan and OSRER: + Maps steep slopes and woodlands; OSRER includes protection of woodlands as part of “greenway” and presents the idea of a Township tree commission.</p> <p>§170-404: n Protection of existing vegetation occupying environmentally sensitive areas could be stronger; trees protected from grading impacts, but only to drip line. Roots often extend beyond drip line and compaction of the root zone can damage or kill a tree.</p> <p>§170-408: n Cutting of trees less than 6” d.b.h (diameter breast height) not regulated; + Clear cutting prohibited; permit required for removal of more than 10% of 6”+ trunk diameter; majority of trees within 20’ of lot line, or street right-of-way shall not be cut down or otherwise killed.</p> <p>§149-923, §149-924: + Trees and natural features (including steep slopes) should be protected during the development process; + Compensatory plantings are required when more than ten viable trees will be cut or removed from a property in a tree protection zone.</p>

<p>Protect: prime agricultural soils</p> <p>Prime agricultural soils, essentially a non-renewable resource, produce an extensive array of crops with minimal energy input, and provide other significant benefits, such as infiltration.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Maps prime agricultural soil conditions. OSRER: + Maps prime agricultural soils among others. §170-405: n In any use or development where open space is established, agriculturally suited soils should be placed, whenever possible, in such open space; siting of individual structures on lots should be kept away from agriculturally suited soils wherever possible.</p>
<p>Protect: wetlands & hydric soils</p> <p>Wetlands have been called “the kidneys of the Earth” for their ability to filter pollutants and maintain water quality. They also provide important wildlife habitat and can be a source of beauty.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n Emphasizes the importance of the creek valleys through Westtown and advocates for their preservation; x Does not add or suggest specific measures to protect and preserve creek valleys. OSRER: n Recommends adding a 25’ buffer adjacent to wetlands. §170-403: + Good indicators of wetland used for definition; x No provisions for protecting existing wetlands via buffers. §144-301.T: + Prohibits disturbance within 75’ from top of bank of all perennial and intermittent waterways, waterbodies, and wetlands. §144-301.M: + Prohibits the use of wetlands to meet minimum stormwater regulations.</p>
<p>Protect: steep slopes</p> <p>Steep slopes require protection primarily to prevent soil erosion and to protect downslope areas from flooding, but also provide valuable habitat.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Continue to carefully limit development of moderately sloped lands (15 to 25 percent) and prohibit on very steeply sloped lands of over 25 percent; + Maps steep slopes and woodlands. OSRER: + Maps steep slopes in the Township. §170-402: + Steep slope overlay provisions supersede the requirements of the underlying district; any plans that show areas of slopes greater than 10% must be delineated on the basis of an actual field survey; + Provides protection of prohibitive slopes from development, including clearing for a yard; n Both prohibitive (25%) and precautionary slopes (15-25%) defined; x Minimal restrictions and guidelines with respect to logging and woodcutting on prohibitive slopes; x Allows for uses in precautionary slopes based on underlying zoning (some guidelines established). §149-923: n Trees and natural features (including steep slopes) should be protected during the development process.</p>

<p>Protect: rare species</p> <p>Species biodiversity is crucial to a functional ecosystem.</p>	<p>OSRER: ✗ States that there is no reference to PNDI (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index) or species of special concern in Township ordinances.</p>
<p>Identify, map and protect greenways</p> <p>Greenways represent a unique opportunity to connect disparate areas into one single whole, while also providing a showcase of a place’s ecological wealth. They provide opportunities for recreation and non-vehicular mobility, and also provide wildlife with vital connections between natural areas.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Includes a trails plan (which includes the regional bikeway, proposed trails, major road links into trails, and proposed roadway shoulder improvements.)</p> <p>OSRER: + Greenway corridors mapped on page 79; + Notes that Flexible Development offers the best opportunity for greenway connections and recommends changes to <u>Article IX. Flexible Development</u>; + Recommends that as redevelopment occurs, Westtown should require trails or greenways to be established with the project.</p>

Natural Resource Protection Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Revise zoning ordinance to specifically provide for stream restoration work and other water-dependent uses within required riparian buffer for perennial streams **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Provide technical support to homeowner’s associations seeking to manage common open space with maintenance plans consistent with Township-wide natural resource priority planning (such as GIS mapping of common open space, trails, etc.) **LT**
- ✓ Strengthen existing zoning and SALDO provisions to encourage developers to cluster non-farm residential land uses on non-prime farmlands and to avoid environmentally sensitive lands **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Further limit expansion of structures in Flood Hazard District, and consider limiting type of development permitted by variance or special exception **ST**

- ✓ Strengthen riparian buffer protection by adding 25 feet to the currently required 75-foot buffer for a total buffer of 100 feet. Add a buffer restoration requirement and limit disturbance within the buffer. Apply to intermittent streams. Increase wetland buffer to 50 feet. Establish a modification provision for unique circumstances preventing compliance **ST**
- ✓ Require PNDI (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index) search as part of an applicant’s land use application process and list species of special concern in applicable Township ordinances **ST**
- ✓ Incorporate conservation recommendations from OSRER into applicable Township ordinances **ST**
- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant and tree use, including a list of acceptable species **ST**
- ✓ Strengthen woodland definitions and disturbance standards, including timber harvesting (forestry) **ST**
- ✓ Ensure that natural resources, such as forested riparian buffers, are protected through consistent regulations within Township Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development, and Stormwater Management Ordinances **ST**

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Water Quality and Quantity

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
<i>Ch. 132: On-lot Sewage Management</i>	<i>R-1: Residential District (§170-600)</i>	<i>C-1: Neighborhood and Highway Commercial District (§170-1100)</i>	<i>T: Township District (§170-1400)</i>
<i>Ch. 144: Stormwater Management</i>	<i>R-2: Residential District (§170-700)</i>	<i>C-2: Highway Commercial District (§170-11A00)</i>	<i>Flood Plain District (§170-401)</i>
<i>Ch. 149: Subdivision/Land Development</i>	<i>R-3: Residence-Office District (§170-800)</i>	<i>M-U: Multi-Use District (§170-1000)</i>	<i>Steep Slope Conservation District (§170-402)</i>
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Water Conservation

<p>Ordinance prevents depletion of groundwater and surface water supplies</p> <p>It is important to ensure that water resources are not used at an unsustainable rate, both to protect ecological integrity and to ensure a sustainable water supply for human use.</p>	<p>§144-103, §144-306: + Maximizing groundwater recharge given high priority; + minimize disturbance and maximize implementation of Best Management Practices; + minimize discharge to surface water flow.</p>
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<p>Promote harvested/recycled water (e.g., greywater systems, rain barrels) use</p> <p>Such measures reduce water consumption and save money and energy.</p>	<p>§144-801: + Prohibits some non-stormwater discharges to Township stormwater system.</p>
<p>Identify native and drought-tolerant plants for use in required landscaping plans</p> <p>Native plants are already adapted to the existing hydrologic conditions, and so do not require the extensive watering typical of introduced species.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan + Advocates for native species in landscaping buffers between development.</p> <p>§149-925: x Landscape plan does not require the use of native plants or drought tolerant plants; x inconsistent with stormwater ordinance requirements regarding use of native plants.</p>

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

<p>Utilize existing public water/sewer lines before expanding or increasing capacity</p> <p>Time expansion of sewage capacity & water supply based on public health needs.</p>	<p>§149-917 (Water Supply): n Public water supply is provided for all uses except for residential single-family detached dwellings on lots of one acre or larger, which may be served by an on-lot water supply.</p> <p>Act 537 Plans: n Township has not expanded sewer service because of high cost of sewer extension and questionable sewage needs.²</p> <p>Act 537 Plans: + Sewage needs analysis is being conducted for the Township. The Township is finalizing the last portion, Phase IV, of their needs analysis.</p>
<p>Has a maintenance program for on-lot disposal systems (OLDS)</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance of OLDS is essential for protecting water quality and ensuring the long-term viability of such systems.</p>	<p>§132-59 - 60 + Requires routine pumping, repair of malfunctioning systems, etc. of existing on-lot septic systems.</p> <p>§149-927: + New subdivisions include requirement for operations & maintenance plan for on-lot septic systems.</p> <p>Ch. 132, Article V.: + Routine maintenance and regular pumping of on-lot sewage disposal systems mandated by ordinance.</p> <p>Act 537 Plan: + On-lot sewage management program implemented.</p>

² Township is waiting on a response from PA DEP regarding their Act 537 Plans.

<p>Ensure the future land-use plan directs any expansion of water, sewer, stormwater capacities</p> <p>Proper growth management links the expansion of public utilities to community-created plans.</p>	<p>§149-927: + When capped sewers are provided, on-site disposal facilities shall also be provided; + If a private or community sewage disposal system (other than individual on-lot) is proposed, the Township shall review and approve the plans and inspect the construction; + Public water supply study required for some development plans.</p> <p>Act 537 Plans: n No expansion of water, sewer and stormwater facilities proposed; + The needs analysis has identified failing on-lot systems and has started to address these issues. The needs analysis and Special Studies will identify possible areas for sewer expansion in the Township.</p>
<p>Update the community's Act 537 plan based on the future land-use plan</p> <p>Since the future land-use plan represents the community's vision, the sewage plan (Act 537 Plan) should be consistent with it.</p>	<p>Act 537 Plans: n No general, Township-wide sewage plan because of high cost of expansion and limited sewerage needs; x Act 537 Plan Special Study (2012) is not consistent with the future land use plan (2001 Growth Plan)³; + Continued use of on-lot systems served by an on-lot management program is consistent with <i>Landscapes 2</i>; + Include repair and replacement plans to eliminate environmental problems caused by failing on-lot systems.</p>
<p>Encourage spray/drip irrigation where use of existing treatment is not an option</p> <p>Spray/drip irrigation ensures the integrity of the local hydrologic cycle better than stream discharge plants, which send water and nutrients downstream, often requiring costly system design, operation, and upgrades.</p>	<p>Act 537 Plan: + Spray/drip irrigation used in the Township; spray/drip irrigation encouraged as repair alternative for individual residential sewage disposal; n Township has limited land left for absorption area sites and other sewage system alternatives.</p>

³ The Comprehensive Plan update currently in progress will address this issue.

Stormwater Management

<p>Implement stormwater BMPs / green infrastructure</p> <p>BMPs, aka “green infrastructure,” represent lower-cost, environmentally-integrated techniques for stormwater management, and can also create community amenities.</p>	<p>§144: + Purpose is to manage stormwater at source, with focus on infiltration and erosion-prevention; + Prioritizes nonstructural and vegetated BMPs.</p> <p>§144-304.C: + Requires the use of native plants.</p>
<p>Require Low Impact Development techniques</p> <p>Low Impact Development (LID) is a design approach that focuses on conservation and use of natural features to protect water quality on-site.</p>	<p>§144-304: + Requires Low-Impact Development (LID) techniques to maximum extent practicable (MEP).</p> <p>§144: + Requires maintenance of pre-development hydrologic balance, use of natural processes and pollution minimization.</p> <p>§149-803: + Requires sediment control during construction, requires that peak rate of runoff after development doesn’t exceed pre-development rates.</p> <p>§170-900 Flexible Development Procedure: + Encourages land development that will respect and conserve natural resources (LID).</p>
<p>Require routine maintenance of stormwater management facilities</p> <p>Like all infrastructure, stormwater management facilities are subject to degradation over time, and therefore benefit from ongoing maintenance.</p>	<p>§144-706: + Maintenance fund to ensure proper functioning of existing stormwater systems.</p> <p>§144-702: + Maintenance plan required.</p> <p>§149-803: + Can require that maintenance responsibilities for stormwater facilities be funded by the HOA; + township has the discretion to require stormwater facilities to be deeded to the township at the time of development; + the Township has the legal right to access all stormwater facilities for inspection and maintenance.</p>

Water Quality and Quantity Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update SLDO (i.e., §149-803) so that it is consistent with Township’s more recent stormwater management ordinance (Ch.144) **ST**
- ✓ Through the Comprehensive Plan Update, ensure consistency between this Plan and the Township-wide sewerage (537) plan **ST**

- ✓ Work through the West Chester Area Council of Governments (COG) to establish regional stormwater management solutions, for example, allowing a new development in one municipality to use an existing stormwater facility on an adjoining site and/or municipality, assuming capacity exists. **ST**
- ✓ Through the COG, explore expanding West Chester Borough’s stream restoration fund as a regional stormwater management authority to help finance stormwater facility retrofits **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Incentivize (and create standards) for water conservation, Township-wide **LT**
- ✓ Provide trees and other supplies for landowners willing to reforest riparian buffers⁴ **ST**
- ✓ Enact voluntary standards to incentivize the use of green roofs as a stormwater best management practice (BMP) **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Ensure Westtown Township meets applicable standards of the federal Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program **Ongoing**
- ✓ Revise SALDO standards (e.g., parking criteria, street width) to include Low Impact Development (LID) approaches that minimize generated stormwater volumes and other potential water-related impacts **ST**
- ✓ Incorporate “green streets” design concepts in the SALDO’s street design standards to minimize runoff and create healthier environment **ST**
- ✓ Establish maximum parking standards to reduce impervious surface, and strengthen shared parking provisions **ST**

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⁴ Riparian buffers are forested lands that border streams, rivers, reservoirs, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies. Forested riparian buffers are the most cost-effective way to filter excess nutrients, sediment, and pesticides from runoff, improve the safety and reliability of the water supply, and reduce flooding.

Land Use and Community Character

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
<i>Ch. 132: On-lot Sewage Management</i>	<i>R-1: Residential District (§170-600)</i>	<i>C-1: Neighborhood and Highway Commercial District (§170-1100)</i>	<i>T: Township District (§170-1400)</i>
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Land-Use Planning

<p>Steer growth and new development to the most appropriate places within community/region</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n Recommends that the Township provide for orderly patterns of development, with particular attention on protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development.</p> <p>Zoning Map: x Most of Township is zoned for, and has formed a relatively low-density suburban development pattern, which has not yet proved to be economically, socially or environmentally sustainable.</p> <p>§149-305: n Allows for flexible development standards to minimize adverse effects on important natural features, scenic views, and historic buildings while promoting traditional village-like development.</p>
<p>Participate in multi-municipal/regional land use planning</p> <p>Many issues are best dealt with on a regional rather than municipal basis, and efficiencies of scale can reduce burden on local budgets.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Participated in the West Chester Regional Planning Commission for over thirty years, although now inactive. Participates in the West Chester Area Council of Governments (COG).</p>

<p>Ensure planning policies and regulations are consistent with regional growth management plans</p> <p>A municipality’s policies and regulations are the tools which implement the local plan, and it only makes sense for them all to work in concert.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n Included a statement of compatibility with the community planning and zoning regulations of adjacent municipalities in effect at the time.</p>
<p>Increase density/intensity in mixed-use urban and suburban areas where appropriate</p> <p>Greater intensity of use and density of population can reduce the per capita cost of infrastructure, helping a municipality’s dollars to go farther, while also promoting a sustainable local economy.</p>	<p>§170-1519: + Flexible Development procedure allows for increased density in R-1 District and AC District.</p> <p>§170-900 Flexible Development Procedure: + Can be used for a neo-traditional village development.</p>
<p>Encourage and/or incentivize infill development and redevelopment of previously-disturbed lands</p> <p>Open space is a resource with limited capacity for regeneration, so it makes sense to encourage infill development and redevelopment of previously-disturbed lands.</p>	<p>Zoning Map, §170: x Majority of the Township zoned for relatively low-density suburban-type development.</p>

<p>Adopt and implement Smart Growth principles</p> <p>Smart growth principles encourage the concentration of development in existing walkable & bikeable communities; transit-oriented development; mixing of uses; a range of housing & transportation options; a sense of place; distinct community boundaries; the preservation of open space and critical environmental resources; and community involvement in land-use decisions.</p>	<p>Zoning Map, §170: x Most areas of Township zoned in a suburban style, which separates uses and encourages car-dependency.</p> <p>§170-900 Flexible Development Procedure: + Provides incentives for historic preservation, restoration/rehabilitation through increased bonus density; minimum of 40% common open space in R1 district where single family detached dwellings are provided (50% where twin dwellings are provided and 60% where multi-family dwellings provided) – 60% in A/C district; generally promotes more sustainable and efficient use of resources.</p>
<p>Allow for Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)</p> <p>TNDs aim to be complete neighborhoods, with a mix of housing types, a network of well-connected streets and blocks, humane public spaces, and have amenities such as stores, schools, and places of worship within walking distance of residences.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Recommends many TND aspects including clustering homes, variety in setbacks, facing homes onto open space, trail systems to connect new development to existing walkable services.</p> <p>§170: n No TND provisions.</p>
<p>Adopt Transferable Development Rights (TDR) ordinance</p> <p>TDRs are a market-based tool, often used for the preservation of farmland and natural areas, by transferring the “development rights” from these areas to areas with the infrastructure to support more intense/dense development.</p>	<p>§170: n TDR has not been included as an option within this Ordinance.</p>

<p>Update municipal comprehensive plan to promote sustainability</p> <p>Municipal sustainability begins with the comprehensive plan, which can help to set the vision and subsequent priorities for sustainability.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Update of this Plan is underway to help create a more sustainable municipality.</p>
<p>Community Character</p>	
<p>Preserve, through zoning and other means, the community’s significant historical and scenic resources</p> <p>A community’s historical resources are its connection to its past and help to define it as a unique place, worthy of respect and stewardship.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Recommends that the Township consider adding historic preservation provisions to the Zoning Ordinance.</p> <p>OSRER: + Westtown has a five-member Historical Commission; + Westtown could integrate some of its historic resources with an interconnected network of open space and trails; x Only one resource within the Township is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>§170-500: + Incentivizes protection of historical and natural resources through flexible development procedure; x No other specific ordinance provision for protecting historic, archaeological, or scenic resources, notably the Brandywine Battlefield National Historic Landmark.</p> <p>§170-2400: + Outlines the Township Historic Commission and its duties.</p>
<p>Encourage and promote, through zoning, the adaptive reuse of historic buildings</p> <p>A key element in historic preservation is the preservation of the usefulness of the historic structure, which often relies on creative reuse opportunities.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Suggests adding such provisions to the Zoning Ordinance.</p> <p>§170-900: + Flexible Development Procedure provides incentives for historic preservation, restoration/rehabilitation through increased bonus density.</p>

<p>Enact ordinances limiting both noise and light pollution</p> <p>The livability of a place can be dramatically affected, for good or ill, but noise and lighting.</p>	<p>§170-1514: + Provisions to protect neighbors and night sky from direct glare and stray light; + Also requires lights in most applications to not cross property boundaries.</p> <p>§170-1515: + Limits noise pollution during the hours of 10pm and 6am, plus Sundays and legal holidays.</p> <p>§149-929, 149-928: + Specific provisions for limiting light pollution in mobile home parks, and noise pollution for property abutting Route 202; + Mobile home parks provide for non-glare lighting.</p>
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Land Use and Community Character Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update Zoning Ordinance to provide for more sustainable (compact, mixed-use, multi-story) types and patterns of growth and development **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Develop mechanisms (e.g., Township- or grant-funded public amenities) to incentivize mixed-use development and redevelopment for identified parcels **Ongoing**
- ✓ Through the Plan Update, establish a future land use plan that shifts development potential from remaining rural, undeveloped parcels to vacant or underdeveloped lands within planned growth areas **ST**
- ✓ Promote permanent protection of remaining farm land and undeveloped parcels **ST**
- ✓ Explore use of Transferable Development Rights (TDR) during the Comprehensive Plan Update Process for preserving land while guiding growth **ST**
- ✓ Adopt additional incentives for scenic, historical, and archaeological conservation **LT**
- ✓ Promote higher-intensity mixed-use nodal development along transportation corridors **Ongoing**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Adjust zoning consistent with the future land use map of the new Westtown Township Comprehensive Plan **ST**
- ✓ Update zoning and subdivision ordinance provisions to provide standards for identification, assessment, and mitigation of impacts to scenic, historic, and archaeological resources **ST**
- ✓ Create overlay zoning that guides sustainable redevelopment and re-use opportunities to appropriate areas of the Township **ST**
- ✓ Establish geographically-defined historic districts or overlays with protection standards for identified historic resources **LT**

- ✓ Adopt specific standards to delay demolition of historic structures until a thorough search for alternatives is conducted, and include provisions to prohibit “demolition by neglect” and to promote protection of historic structures **ST**
- ✓ Amend subdivision ordinance to prohibit omnidirectional lighting, or require such lighting be turned off after 11:00pm **ST**

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Climate Change

All of the recommendations generated in this section have multiple benefits, exceeding that of simply reducing greenhouse gas pollution. For example, the encouragement of transit-oriented development (TOD) primarily has the effects of improving walkability, reducing commute times to work, raising real estate values, making more efficient use of space and limited resources, etc., while also having the ancillary effect of reducing greenhouse gas pollution, primarily through reduced consumption of non-renewable (and expensive) fossil fuels.

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
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Ch. 144: Stormwater Management	R-2: Residential District (§170-700)	C-2: Highway Commercial District (§170-11A00)	Flood Plain District (§170-401)
Ch. 149: Subdivision/Land Development	R-3: Residence-Office District (§170-800)	M-U: Multi-Use District (§170-1000)	Steep Slope Conservation District (§170-402)
Ch. 170: Zoning	A/C: Agricultural/Cluster Residential District (§170-500)	POC: Planned Office Campus District (§170-1200)	

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

<p>Enact ordinances to encourage mixed use/Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs)</p> <p>Mixed-use and transit-oriented development can provide for reduced reliance on fossil fuels, thus also having a positive impact on climate change.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: x Future Land Use Plan/Map does not promote sufficient density to support public transit.</p> <p>Zoning Map: n Encourages mixed-use development patterns although resulting development did not accomplish such goals.</p>
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<p>Enact ordinances to allow live-work units and home-based businesses in residential zoning districts</p> <p>In existing residential districts, a certain degree of “mixed-ness” may be achieved by permitting and encouraging live-work units and home-based businesses. In an economy struggling to provide full employment, opportunities to work at home may allow a person to remain in his/her home.</p>	<p>§170-1605: + Home occupations allowed in residential districts with standards, although live-work units are not specifically called out, they appear to be allowed.</p>
<p>Incentivize green building techniques for new developments and redevelopment projects</p> <p>“Green” buildings have been shown to have greater value, be more affordable to maintain, and to be more attractive to certain demographics.</p>	<p>x No specific planning or ordinance provisions.</p>
<p>Promote and incentivize reforestation on open space</p> <p>Reforestation provides greater habitat, variety of landscape, stormwater mitigation, and a sink for atmospheric carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas pollutant.</p>	<p>x No specific planning or ordinance provisions.</p>

<p>Encourage use of alternative transportation (public transit, bikes, walking)</p> <p>Studies have shown that communities which provide opportunities for non-motorized transport are healthier, happier, and have more disposable income. Such communities also emit fewer greenhouse gas pollutants through their reduced reliance on fossil fuels.</p>	<p>OSRER: + Promotes development of trails and trail connectivity. §170-1615: + Trail easement required in Adult Community Development where necessary to complete a link shown in Township’s Comp. Plan; x No other specific provisions that help to establish pedestrian access throughout the Township. §149-921: + Prioritizes connecting proposed open space with that on adjoining properties.</p>
<p>Develop, adopt and implement a Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is one way a community can consciously reduce its negative impact on the global climate, while also saving energy, reducing per capita infrastructure costs, and therefore saving money.</p>	<p>n Township relies on the regional greenhouse gas audit conducted by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Council (DVRPC).</p>

Climate Change Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update the Growth Management Plan to prioritize planning and funding decisions based on clear linkages between transportation, future land use, economic development and energy conservation **ST**
- ✓ Implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **ST**
- ✓ Utilize the Flexible Development Procedure to obtain reforestation of riparian buffers and old farm fields when such development is proposed **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Explore the use of the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) tool to accommodate mixed-use infill development which can increase demand for public transportation and provide for greater walkability **LT**

- ✓ Guide more employment opportunities into mixed-use areas to reduce need for commuting **ST**
- ✓ Incentivize green building techniques **ST**
- ✓ Place a referendum on the local ballot asking for voter support of a modest tax increase to help the Township finance the establishment and maintenance of public trails and sidewalks. **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Enact specific standards to provide for live-work units **ST**
- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant use (e.g., limit the use of non-native species to horticultural varieties for street tree and ground cover lists; allow removal of existing wooded vegetation and replacement with native species in certain situations; add native fruit and nut trees to list(s) of allowed species) **ST**
- ✓ Enact standards to preserve and increase natural carbon sequestration by limiting clearing of, or removal of, woodlands and riparian areas **LT**
- ✓ Consider defining woodlands based on ecological value and enact standards to protect such woodlands **LT**

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Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
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<i>Ch. 144: Stormwater Management</i>	<i>R-2: Residential District (§170-700)</i>	<i>C-2: Highway Commercial District (§170-11A00)</i>	<i>Flood Plain District (§170-401)</i>
<i>Ch. 149: Subdivision/Land Development</i>	<i>R-3: Residence-Office District (§170-800)</i>	<i>M-U: Multi-Use District (§170-1000)</i>	<i>Steep Slope Conservation District (§170-402)</i>
<i>Ch. 170: Zoning</i>	<i>A/C: Agricultural/Cluster Residential District (§170-500)</i>	<i>POC: Planned Office Campus District (§170-1200)</i>	

Renewable Energy

<p>Allow solar panels by-right when accessory to a principal use</p> <p>Solar panels are a widely available renewable energy technology for private property owners; it is important to reduce barriers to their installation whenever possible.</p>	<p>§170-1603: + Several options for renewable systems allowed, some in all districts, including solar systems as accessory use in all districts. Accessory use on historical structure (or one eligible) or within 100’ of structure subject to conditional use approval.</p>
<p>Establish a minimum percentage of solar-oriented lots or buildings in new developments</p> <p>One major barrier to installation of solar systems on roofs is the orientation of the building. In the northern hemisphere, solar works best on south-facing slopes.</p>	<p>§149: n No specific ordinance provisions.</p>

<p>Permit small wind energy conversion systems (WECS) in all zoning districts</p> <p>Small wind energy systems have minimal impacts, and are an important part of the overall energy mix.</p>	<p>§170-1603: + Windmills and similar wind energy conversion systems allowed as accessory use in residential districts.</p>
<p>Add an energy element to the comprehensive plan</p> <p>Energy is the most crucial input to the economy, and it is arguable that comprehensive plans which do not consider energy are not truly comprehensive.</p>	<p>n Plan update will include energy conservation considerations.</p>

Energy Efficiency and Conservation

<p>Encourage new residential/commercial buildings to achieve LEED, Energy Star, or other green building standards</p> <p>In the U.S., buildings are responsible nearly half of all energy consumed. Any effort to reduce total energy consumption, therefore, must include building energy efficiency as a crucial element. Energy-efficient buildings also tend to be more attractive investments and therefore have more stable real estate value.</p>	<p>x No specific ordinance or planning provisions.</p>
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Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Comp Plan Update should include an energy element or energy-related policies (for example, specific renewable energy objectives) and actions **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Provide pilot funding or technical guidance for new residential/commercial buildings to achieve specified LEED, Energy Star, etc. standards **ST**
- ✓ Reduce permit fees for renewable energy systems and highly-efficient green buildings (e.g., LEED-Gold or -Platinum), consistent with overall budgetary picture **ST**
- ✓ Incentivize including solar or other renewable energy systems in new development **LT**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Establish a minimum percentage of solar-oriented lots or buildings in new developments **ST**
- ✓ Establish green building standards for new and renovated development **ST**
- ✓ Establish standards for renewable energy systems when proposed for historic structures **LT**

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Mobility and Transportation

Key Ordinance Short-Cuts	Key Zoning District Abbreviations (from Zoning Map, June 2011)		
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Non-vehicular Transportation

<p>Encourage Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)</p> <p>Mixed-use and transit-oriented development are hallmarks of strong, well-planned communities. By reducing reliance on fossil fuels, they also have a positive impact on climate change.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n No specific provisions, but noted that Westtown should “encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, and support regional efforts to increase use of public transit and carpooling.”</p>
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<p>Establish sidewalks in residential and mixed-use areas</p> <p>Sidewalks are the key element in safe, walkable, livable neighborhoods.</p>	<p>OSRER: +Broadly recommends improving pedestrian amenities. Notes that residents generally have to drive to destination that offer pedestrian amenities and acknowledges that some local roads could be suitable for walking, but necessitate formal features;</p> <p>n The major roads, including South New Street, and Routes 202, 926 and 320, all lack adequate pedestrian amenities. Without trails or sidewalks, pedestrians use the shoulders or walk in the roads.</p> <p>§149-913: +Crosswalks are required to facilitate pedestrian circulation and give access to community facilities in blocks of over 1,000 feet in length, +Crosswalks must be at least four feet wide.</p> <p>§149-406: + Applicant must construct streets with all improvements including sidewalks.</p> <p>§149-916: x Sidewalks, bike paths, and other paths are not required (they may only be required at the discretion of the Township).</p>
<p>Require bike racks at appropriate locations in new/infill developments</p> <p>Appropriately-located bike racks can make cycling significantly easier and more attractive, while also protecting landscaping and infrastructure, which otherwise becomes the default bike “rack.”</p>	<p>OSRER: n Mentions need for bicycle connectivity within the township, but does not address bike racks, even within parks.</p> <p>SLDO: x Bicycle parking not required anywhere.</p>

Roads and Streets

<p>Codify “complete streets” principles in the SLDO and embrace PennDOT’s new Smart Transportation design standards which emphasize context-sensitive design</p> <p>Complete streets are designed and maintained to ensure accessibility to all users, including motorized and non-motorized traffic and public transit. Such streets would include sidewalks, crosswalks, medians and raised crosswalks where necessary, pedestrian signals, bulb-outs, staggered parking, street trees, pervious paving and other green infrastructure measures, etc.</p>	<p>x No specific ordinance provisions.</p>
<p>Limit the creation of new cul-de-sacs</p> <p>Cul-de-sacs discourage connectivity, thus fostering more driving (and fossil fuel consumption) than otherwise would be necessary. Traditional neighborhoods only rarely incorporate these elements.</p>	<p>§170: x No requirement for street connectivity. §149-901: x Allows for cul-de-sacs, though limits their length.</p>
<p>Use future land-use plan to direct expansion of road capacities</p> <p>A well-planned community is one in which the land-use plan and the street plan are coordinated to create the community’s vision for itself.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n Acknowledges planned roadway expansion but does not map roads appropriate for such expansion.</p>

<p>Maximize existing road capacity and efficiency (e.g., travel demand management [TDM], etc.)</p> <p>Often, much can be done to use existing road capacity more efficiently, reducing the need for capital construction costs and ongoing maintenance cost.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan and §149: n Both imply this, but do not specifically enumerate plans/methods of maximizing existing roads.</p>
<p>Plan road improvements to prioritize safety and pedestrian/bike uses</p> <p>A road that has been designed with pedestrians and cyclists in mind is one which attracts such users, which promotes public health, a sense of community, saves energy and money, and can promote and support a human-scale business district.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + As roadway improvements are planned and prioritized, safe facilities for pedestrians and cyclists should be taken into account.</p> <p>OSRER: + Interest in encouraging and promoting multi-use trails, notes that local and major roads lack pedestrian and bike improvements although informal use occurs on roadway shoulders.</p>

Parking

<p>Establish a range of parking standards for commercial uses</p> <p>Appropriate parking standards can have far-reaching impacts on a community's development pattern. Often, maximum parking standards are warranted, rather than minimum, as is provision for shared parking.</p>	<p>§170-1705 n Establishes a minimum (rather than maximum) parking standard for commercial uses (ex: one parking spot for every three seats). This increases the cost of development and tends to add unnecessary impervious surfaces to the watershed.</p>
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<p>Ordinances should promote use of porous pavement, shade trees, landscape buffers in parking lots</p> <p>Such “green infrastructure” elements can result in a vastly superior built environment, from an aesthetic as well as functional point-of-view.</p>	<p>§170-1703: n Allowable use of porous paving is unclear as written.</p> <p>§149-803, §149-922: + Lists pervious paving as a “Best Management Practices to promote groundwater recharge and to minimize pollutants in runoff;” + Landscaping buffers required on exterior of parking areas, parking lot planting islands include plant minimums that increase with the size of the planting island.</p> <p>§144-304: + Includes use of “porous materials” as an option in place of impervious surfaces.</p> <p>§144-201: + Porous pavement areas considered permeable for stormwater runoff calculations.</p>
<p>Permit shared parking in non-residential zoning districts</p> <p>Shared parking, like on-street parking, has multiple benefits, such as the reduction of impervious surface, the reduced cost of development, and the reduced consumption of land.</p>	<p>§170-1706: n Allowable shared parking of up to 50% under certain circumstances, but not many.</p>

Trails

<p>Require the establishment and maintenance of pedestrian/bike trails that connect to public facilities, parks, open space, schools, business/shopping</p> <p>Multi-use trails are a crucial element in a region's transportation network, and encourage walking and cycling for work, play and shopping. Trails have also been shown to significantly increase adjacent real estate values.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Specifically recommends development of a local trail system with connection to a larger greenway network, also maps the conceptual system in a Trails Plan.</p> <p>OSRER: + Calls for master plans for the four primary Township parks (Oakbourne, Larchbourne, Pennwood and Tyson) as well as a <i>Township-wide Trails Master Plan</i>. Recommends that the plans should prioritize trail rehabilitation and new construction, link the park trails into a larger network, and propose trail rerouting as needed in order to connect to the surrounding community. Also notes that the township has great potential and opportunity for a rail trail.</p> <p>§170-1615 + Trail easement required in Adult Community Development where necessary to complete a link shown in Township's Comp. Plan.</p> <p>§149-921: +Design standard prioritizes contiguous parcels for open space to allow for trail connections; +design standards provisions for pedestrian pathways for general public use to create linked pathway systems within the Township.</p>
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Mobility and Transportation Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Adopt Official Map to meet new Comprehensive Plan's transportation goals with respect to the circulation system such as increased connectivity, reduced congestion, integrated trails system, etc. **ST**
- ✓ Prioritize safety improvements on roads, along with public transportation options and non-automotive mobility options in Comprehensive Plan Update **ST**
- ✓ Amend ZO and SLDO to require street connectivity whenever possible and prohibit cul-de-sacs in most situations **LT**
- ✓ Prioritize planning and funding decisions based on clear linkages between transportation and future land use in Comprehensive Plan Update **ST**
- ✓ Adopt policies to maximize existing road capacity through traffic calming, carpooling, etc. **ST**
- ✓ Implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Institute zoning ordinance amendments that promote "smart growth", i.e., encouraging more efficient use of land within the Township, increase the mix of uses, allow for compatible infill, and increase demand for public transportation **ST**

- ✓ Add transit alternatives (e.g., park 'n' ride lots, bus transit stations, etc.) at key locations within the Township, and work closely with regional employers and the metropolitan planning organization for making pertinent funding decisions **LT**
- ✓ Increase opportunities within the Township's Zoning Ordinance for use of shared parking **ST**
- ✓ Place a referendum on the local ballot asking for voter support of a modest tax increase to help the Township finance the establishment and maintenance of public trails and sidewalks. **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Require sidewalks (6' min width) for new developments to promote pedestrian safety and mobility, as well as to establish connections to planned or existing trails **ST**
- ✓ Require bicycle parking for all new and expanded non-residential development **ST**
- ✓ Amend subdivision and land development standards to require consideration of "complete streets" for more densely developed portions of the Township, and "green streets" principles **LT**
- ✓ Revise parking and street design standards where appropriate to minimize the amount of pavement, creating less stormwater runoff **ST**
- ✓ Strongly encourage the use of porous pavement in off-street parking lots as a stormwater management/BMP **ST**
- ✓ Consistent with other recommendations above, require landscaping of commercial and institutional parking lots to create shade in warmer months, and heavy landscaping of buffers used for screening **ST**

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Community Health and Safety

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Community Health and Safety

<p>Require street trees and sidewalks in residential and mixed-use areas</p> <p>In addition to making for a more inviting environment for pedestrians, such amenities have been shown to improve public health.</p>	<p>§170: + Although Westtown already requires that substantial landscaping be planted as part of new development, the requirements do not specify that deciduous canopy trees need to be placed close to streets if they do not already exist. Street trees should be required.</p> <p>§149-925.G: n Requires minimum number of street trees in new development, requires that trees be planted between five and 15 feet from the street right of way although alternative locations and species can be approved by the township.</p>
<p>Provide adequate active and passive recreational opportunities</p> <p>Exercise is a key element in an individual’s health, and it has been shown that people exercise more regularly when given opportunity’s to do so close to home and work.</p>	<p>OSRER: + Westtown Township owns and maintains 22 park and open space properties, containing approximately 318 acres; + Numerous provisions for active and passive recreational facilities, including linkages to neighboring municipalities; + Several short- and long-term actions focus on parks and other recreational facilities; n Notes that increased funding and volunteer support needed for parks.</p> <p>§149-921: + Requires recreation fees for new development if the new development cannot adequately provide common open space that meets all SLDO requirements;</p> <p>x Fee-in-lieu rate is minimal and needs to be amended to reflect today’s recreational costs.</p>

Solid Waste and Recycling

<p>Require recycling centers/stations in new developments over a certain size</p> <p>In our modern society, the production of waste is nearly unavoidable, but there are many ways in which it can be minimized and, in some instances, eliminated. Recycling permits the more efficient use of natural resources, while also encouraging a more beautiful, livable environment.</p>	<p>§140-Article 1: + Includes a mandatory Township-wide recycling program that includes leaf pick-up three times per year.</p>
<p>Adopt a construction debris demolition ordinance or require construction waste management plan</p> <p>A great deal of the waste generated by our modern society comes from development and redevelopment. A municipality can significantly reduce this waste stream by requiring construction waste to be reused or recycled.</p>	<p>SLDO: n Specifically prohibits on-site burying and burning of construction debris.</p>
<p>Require salvage/material recycling in demolition permit or land development approval</p> <p>Much of the waste generated from development and redevelopment isn't waste at all, and can be recycled back into productive use.</p>	<p>n No specific ordinance requirements.</p>

Housing Diversity and Accessibility

<p>Create incentives to promote a diverse housing supply that includes affordable housing</p> <p>A diverse community is a much more robust community, both economically and socially.</p>	<p>170-1608: n Conversion of older, large, single family residences into two-family or multi-family dwelling allowed, but owner must reside in building. x Little promotion of diverse housing stock or “work-force housing.”</p>
<p>Locate housing within walking distance of businesses, services, employment centers, public transportation</p> <p>Such a development pattern encourages walking and cycling, which can greatly improve the public’s health, rather than driving, which reduces it.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: n Stated that greater connectivity needed between residences, parks, and schools. Zoning Map: n Most of Township zoned for single uses, with distinct separation of uses, a pattern that is more dependent on vehicles for traveling to and from such uses. §170-1200 POC Planned Office Campus District: n Allows for single family detached residential dwellings under R1 standards – promotes potential for walkable work-home commute.</p>
<p>Permit smaller lot sizes in appropriate residential zoning districts</p> <p>Smaller lot sizes can promote greater diversity of uses, which a complete neighborhood must have and which promotes walking and cycling.</p>	<p>§170-901 Flexible Development Procedure: + Increased density allows for smaller lot sizes in R-1 and A/C Districts.</p>
<p>Permit accessory dwelling units (in addition to primary residence) on residential lots</p> <p>One way to provide affordable housing is to permit accessory dwelling units. Often called “in-law quarters,” they may also allow extended families to live close together, which has numerous public and private benefits.</p>	<p>§170-1603: + Accessory dwellings allowed on residential lots.</p>

<p>Permit second-story (and greater) residential uses in commercial and mixed-use zoning districts</p> <p>Perhaps the one element which most simply distinguishes towns and villages from residential areas is the existence of vertical mixing of uses, with retail/offices/etc. on the ground floor and homes above. Such patterns also promote walking and cycling, which improves the public health.</p>	<p>§170-800: + Professional offices in combination with multi-family residential use, in the form of either apartment or townhouse dwellings, allowed as conditional use in R-3 Residence-Office District; x No other specific provisions for multi-family residential above non-residential structures.</p>
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Community Health and Safety Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Implement OSRER recommendations regarding recreational facility planning, provision, and management **Ongoing**
- ✓ Assess and analyze workforce housing needs as part of Comprehensive Plan update, with future consideration of the establishment of regulatory incentives (e.g., density bonuses for construction of dedicated units) **Ongoing**
- ✓ Continue to implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **Ongoing**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Institute inclusionary housing zoning provisions which require a certain percentage of new homes to be affordable to families within a certain range of median income; this can be incentivized by permitting fewer homes without the inclusionary element **LT**
- ✓ Institute ordinance amendments that provide incentives to developers for helping to establish village greens, pocket parks, and other civic spaces within the Township’s more densely settled areas **LT**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Pursue ordinance revisions to institute ECHO (Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity) and other accessory housing opportunities in all appropriate zoning districts **LT**
- ✓ Require sidewalks (6’ min width), to promote pedestrian safety and mobility, as well as to establish connections to planned or existing trails **ST**

- ✓ Adjust the recreational fee-in-lieu rate for new development that does not meet SLDO requirements for on-site open space. Rate should reflect current costs for the Township to develop public recreational facilities. **ST**
- ✓ Adopt a construction debris demolition ordinance or require construction waste management plan **LT**
- ✓ Require salvage/material recycling in demolition permit (or land development approval) **LT**
- ✓ Enact standards to specifically allow accessory dwelling units, as well as second-story and higher residential uses over commercial uses **ST**

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Food Production and Security

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Ch. 170: Zoning	A/C: Agricultural/Cluster Residential District (§170-500)	POC: Planned Office Campus District (§170-1200)	

<p>Incentivize the permanent preservation of agricultural lands</p> <p>Agricultural lands are a non-renewable resource that in a world of ever-increasing population warrant protection.</p>	<p>+ The Township has an active Agricultural Security Areas Committee and several large properties that participate in the ASA program through Chester County.</p> <p>2001 Growth Plan: + Encourages the preservation of farmland where practical.</p> <p>Zoning Ordinance: x With the exception of the Flexible Development option, no special zoning attention given to the preservation of existing agricultural lands.</p>
<p>Permit a contextually appropriate range of agricultural uses</p> <p>One way to steward the agricultural economy is to permit it to diversify by allowing complementary uses.</p>	<p>2001 Growth Plan: + Allow complementary activities (including bed and breakfast inns, horseback riding academies, nature day camps, and other special events) that provide supplemental income that helps preserve farmland.</p> <p>Zoning Ordinance: + Agricultural uses permitted by right in A/C, R-1, and R-2 Districts.</p>

<p>Permit farmer’s markets, farm stands, community gardens in public/open spaces, residential vegetable gardens</p> <p>These are all key elements in the agricultural economy, and in particular help to promote the <i>culture</i> of agriculture.</p>	<p>§170-1603: + Display and sale of farm products allowed in R-1 on a lot or contiguous lot of at least 5 acres. If less than 5 acres, use may occur on a lot where annual agricultural revenue exceeds \$2,000.</p> <p>OSRER: + Community garden offered in Oakbourne Park; + Recommends review of organic and sustainable agriculture—the Township should determine whether there is an interest in encouraging organic or otherwise sustainable agriculture. This could include a reduced use of pesticides or herbicides, the implementation of an integrated pest management system or other measures intended to benefit the local ecology. Any changes in policy would then need to be incorporated into the lease agreements with the farmers.</p>
<p>Permit small-scale farming uses (e.g., egg production) w/ complementary structures in all residential or mixed-residential zoning districts</p> <p>Small plots and micro-animal operations are capable of producing a great deal of food for families and their neighbors, thus representing an important element of food security.</p>	<p>§170-600 R-1: + Allows agricultural use by right and farm-related business as special exception.</p> <p>§170-700 R-2: + Allows agricultural use by right.</p> <p>§170-1516: n Provisions are unclear on the keeping of poultry for egg production within residential zones.</p> <p>§149-921: + Open space can be used for an approved agricultural use.</p>
<p>Permit small-scale manufacture of food products within appropriate zoning districts</p> <p>Such operations help to promote local foods and support a local economy, while also providing food security.</p>	<p>n No specific ordinance provisions, though this is not specifically discouraged.</p>

<p>Allow composting as part of gardening and small-scale farming uses</p> <p>Composting is a way to divert one of the primary sources of municipal waste away from the waste stream and back into productive use: soil. All sustainable agricultural operations, as well as home gardens, much incorporate composting.</p>	<p>n No specific ordinance provisions, though composting is not specifically discouraged.</p>
<p>Require or encourage fruit and nut trees as part of landscaping requirements</p> <p>Another important piece of the food security puzzle is “edible landscaping.” Native fruit and nut trees can provide a food source for humans as well as birds and other wildlife.</p>	<p>n Native species encouraged, but not required; would benefit from an explicit “native food tree list.”</p>

Food Production and Security Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Permit small-scale food-product manufacture in appropriate districts and as home business **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, shift development potential from remaining rural, undeveloped parcels to vacant or underdeveloped lands within planned growth areas **ST**
- ✓ Promote permanent protection of remaining farm land and undeveloped parcels **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Permit farmer’s markets in commercial zoning districts **ST**

- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant use (e.g., eliminate non-native species (except horticultural varieties) from street tree and ground cover lists; allow removal of existing wooded vegetation and replacement with native species in certain situations; add native fruit and nut trees to list(s) of allowed species) **ST**
- ✓ Enact specific standards to allow live-work units **ST**
- ✓ Enact standards defining scale and limitations to small-scale food production in residential districts **LT**

+++++

Conclusions and Summary

Westtown Township has taken specific steps toward achieving greater sustainability at the municipal level, and within the realm of its policies, plans, and regulations related to environmental, societal and economic issues. Specifically and through its clear and forward-thinking efforts, the Township has: been successful in enabling property owners' use of renewable energy systems when accessory to residential and commercial uses through recent regulatory ordinance amendments; has recently enacted stormwater management regulations that require groundwater recharge and use of other best management practices; and has recently updated its township-wide plan for the protection of open space and environmental resources, and the provision of Township and regional recreational facilities. The Township has also made good progress planning for future trails and greenways, and through recent land development reviews, has increased its ability to obtain public trail dedications, other transportation-related improvements, and cultural resource protection.

Still, there is much room for improvement on the Township's path to greater sustainability. The recommendations by aspect of sustainability contained within the previous pages are summarized below:

Natural Resource Protection Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Revise zoning ordinance to specifically provide for stream restoration work and other water-dependent uses within required riparian buffer for perennial streams **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Provide technical support to homeowner's associations seeking to manage common open space with maintenance plans consistent with Township-wide natural resource priority planning (such as GIS mapping of common open space, trails, etc.) **LT**

- ✓ Strengthen existing zoning and SALDO provisions to encourage developers to cluster non-farm residential land uses on non-prime farmlands and to avoid environmentally sensitive lands **ST**
- ✓ Place a referendum on the local ballot asking for voter support of a modest tax increase to help the Township finance the establishment and maintenance of public trails and sidewalks.

Enact Standards

- ✓ Further limit expansion of structures in Flood Hazard District, and consider limiting type of development permitted by variance or special exception **ST**
- ✓ Strengthen riparian buffer protection by adding 25 feet to the currently required 75-foot buffer for a total buffer of 100 feet. Add a buffer restoration requirement and limit disturbance within the buffer. Apply to intermittent streams. Increase wetland buffer to 50 feet. Establish a modification provision for unique circumstances preventing compliance **ST**
- ✓ Require PNDI (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index) search as part of an applicant's land use application process and list species of special concern in applicable Township ordinances **ST**
- ✓ Incorporate conservation recommendations from OSRER into applicable Township ordinances **ST**
- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant and tree use, including a list of acceptable species **ST**
- ✓ Strengthen woodland definitions and disturbance standards, including timber harvesting (forestry) **ST**
- ✓ Ensure that natural resources, such as forested riparian buffers, are protected through consistent regulations within Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development, and Stormwater Management Ordinances **ST**

Water Quality and Quantity Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update SLDO (i.e., §149-803) so that it is consistent with Township's more recent stormwater management ordinance (Ch.144) **ST**
- ✓ Through the Comprehensive Plan Update, insure consistency between the Update and the Township-wide sewerage (537) plan **ST**
- ✓ Work through the West Chester Area Council of Governments (COG) to establish regional stormwater management solutions, for example, allowing a new development in one municipality to use an existing stormwater facility on an adjoining site and/or municipality, assuming capacity exists.
- ✓ Through the COG, explore expanding West Chester Borough's stream restoration fund as a regional stormwater management authority to help finance stormwater facility retrofits **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Incentivize (and create standards) for water conservation, Township-wide **LT**
- ✓ Provide trees and other supplies for landowners willing to reforest riparian buffers⁵ **ST**
- ✓ Enact voluntary standards to incentivize the use of green roofs as a stormwater best management practice (BMP) **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Ensure Westtown Township meets applicable standards of the federal Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program **Ongoing**
- ✓ Revise SALDO standards (e.g., parking criteria, street width) to include Low Impact Development (LID) approaches that minimize generated stormwater volumes and other potential water-related impacts **ST**
- ✓ Incorporate “green streets” design concepts in the SALDO’s street design standards to minimize runoff and create healthier environment **ST**
- ✓ Establish maximum parking standards to reduce impervious surface, and strengthen shared parking provisions **ST**

Land Use and Community Character Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update Zoning Ordinance to provide for more sustainable types and patterns of growth and development **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Develop mechanisms (e.g., Township- or grant-funded public amenities) to incentivize mixed-use development and redevelopment for identified parcels **Ongoing**
- ✓ Promote opportunities that permit the shift of development potential from remaining rural, undeveloped parcels to vacant or underdeveloped lands within planned growth areas **ST**
- ✓ Promote permanent protection of remaining farm land and undeveloped parcels **ST**
- ✓ Explore use of Transferable Development Rights (TDR) during the Comprehensive Plan Update Process for preserving land while guiding growth **ST**
- ✓ Adopt additional incentives for scenic, historical, and archaeological conservation **LT**

⁵ Riparian buffers are forested lands that border streams, rivers, reservoirs, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies. Forested riparian buffers are the most cost-effective way to filter excess nutrients, sediment, and pesticides from runoff, improve the safety and reliability of the water supply, and reduce flooding.

- ✓ Promote higher-intensity mixed-use nodal development along transportation corridors **Ongoing**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Adjust zoning consistent with the future land use map of the new Westtown Township Comprehensive Plan **ST**
- ✓ Update zoning and subdivision ordinance provisions to provide standards for identification, assessment, and mitigation of impacts to scenic, historic, and archaeological resources **ST**
- ✓ Create overlay zoning that guides sustainable redevelopment and re-use opportunities to appropriate areas of the Township **ST**
- ✓ Establish geographically-defined historic districts or overlays with protection standards for identified historic resources **LT**
- ✓ Adopt specific standards to delay demolition of historic structures until a thorough search for alternatives is conducted, and include provisions to prohibit “demolition by neglect” and to promote protection of historic structures **ST**
- ✓ Amend subdivision ordinance to prohibit omnidirectional lighting, or require such lighting be turned off after 11:00pm **ST**

Climate Change Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Update the Growth Management Plan to prioritize planning and funding decisions based on clear linkages between transportation, future land use, economic development and energy conservation **ST**
- ✓ Implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **ST**
- ✓ Utilize the Flexible Development Procedure to obtain reforestation of riparian buffers and old farm fields when such development is proposed **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Explore the use of the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) tool to accommodate mixed-use infill development which can increase demand for public transportation and provide for greater walkability **LT**
- ✓ Guide more employment opportunities into mixed-use areas to reduce need for commuting **ST**
- ✓ Incentivize green building techniques **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Enact specific standards to provide for live-work units **ST**

- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant use (e.g., limit the use of non-native species to horticultural varieties for street tree and ground cover lists; allow removal of existing wooded vegetation and replacement with native species in certain situations; add native fruit and nut trees to list(s) of allowed species) **ST**
- ✓ Enact standards to preserve and increase natural carbon sequestration by limiting clearing of, or removal of, woodlands and riparian areas **LT**
- ✓ Consider defining woodlands based on ecological value and enact standards to protect such woodlands **LT**

Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Comp Plan Update should include an energy element or energy-related policies (for example, specific renewable energy objectives) and actions **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Provide pilot funding or technical guidance for new residential/commercial buildings to achieve specified LEED, Energy Star, etc. standards **ST**
- ✓ Reduce permit fees for renewable energy systems and highly-efficient green buildings (e.g., LEED-Gold or -Platinum), consistent with overall budgetary picture **ST**
- ✓ Incentivize including solar or other renewable energy systems in new development **LT**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Establish a minimum percentage of solar-oriented lots or buildings in new developments **ST**
- ✓ Establish green building standards for new and renovated development **ST**
- ✓ Establish standards for renewable energy systems when proposed for historic structures **LT**

Mobility and Transportation Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Adopt Official Map to meet new Comprehensive Plan's transportation goals with respect to the circulation system such as increased connectivity, reduced congestion, integrated trails system, etc. **ST**
- ✓ Prioritize safety improvements on roads, along with public transportation options and non-automotive mobility options in Comprehensive Plan Update **ST**
- ✓ Amend ZO and SLDO to require street connectivity whenever possible and prohibit cul-de-sacs in most situations **LT**
- ✓ Prioritize planning and funding decisions based on clear linkages between transportation and future land use in Comprehensive Plan Update **ST**
- ✓ Adopt policies to maximize existing road capacity through traffic calming, carpooling, etc. **ST**
- ✓ Continue to implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Institute zoning ordinance amendments that promote "smart growth" – i.e., encouraging more efficient use of land within the Township, increase the mix of uses, allow for compatible infill, and increase demand for public transportation **ST**
- ✓ Add transit alternatives (e.g., park 'n' ride lots, bus transit stations, etc.) at key locations within the Township, and work closely with regional employers and the metropolitan planning organization for making pertinent funding decisions **LT**
- ✓ Increase opportunities within the Township's Zoning Ordinance for use of shared parking **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Require sidewalks (6' min width) for new developments to promote pedestrian safety and mobility, as well as to establish connections to planned or existing trails **ST**
- ✓ Require bicycle parking for all new and expanded non-residential development **ST**
- ✓ Amend subdivision and land development standards to require consideration of "complete streets" for more densely developed portions of the Township, and "green streets" principles **LT**
- ✓ Revise parking and street design standards where appropriate to minimize the amount of pavement, creating less stormwater runoff **ST**
- ✓ Strongly encourage the use of porous pavement in off-street parking lots as a stormwater management/BMP **ST**
- ✓ Consistent with other recommendations above, require landscaping of commercial and institutional parking lots to create shade in warmer months, and heavy landscaping of buffers used for screening **ST**

Community Health and Safety Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Implement OSRER recommendations regarding recreational facility planning, provision, and management **Ongoing**
- ✓ Assess and analyze workforce housing needs as part of Comprehensive Plan update, with future consideration of the establishment of regulatory incentives (e.g., density bonuses for construction of dedicated units) **Ongoing**
- ✓ Continue to implement trail expansion/extension/connection recommendations of the OSRER **Ongoing**

Create Incentives

- ✓ Institute inclusionary housing zoning provisions which require a certain percentage of new homes to be affordable to families within a certain range of median income; this can be incentivized by permitting fewer homes without the inclusionary element **LT**
- ✓ Institute ordinance amendments that provide incentives to developers for helping to establish village greens, pocket parks, and other civic spaces within the Township's more densely settled areas **LT**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Pursue ordinance revisions to institute ECHO (Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity) and other accessory housing opportunities in all appropriate zoning districts **LT**
- ✓ Require sidewalks (6' min width), to promote pedestrian safety and mobility, as well as to establish connections to planned or existing trails **ST**
- ✓ Adjust the recreational fee-in-lieu rate for new development that does not meet SLDO requirements for on-site open space. Rate should reflect current costs for the Township to develop public recreational facilities. **ST**
- ✓ Adopt a construction debris demolition ordinance or require construction waste management plan **LT**
- ✓ Require salvage/material recycling in demolition permit (or land development approval) **LT**
- ✓ Enact standards to specifically allow accessory dwelling units, as well as second-story and higher residential uses over commercial uses **ST**

Food Production and Security Recommendations

Remove Obstacles

- ✓ Permit small-scale food-product manufacture in appropriate districts and as home businesses **ST**

Create Incentives

- ✓ As part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, establish a future land use plan that shifts development potential from remaining rural, undeveloped parcels to vacant or underdeveloped lands within planned growth areas **ST**
- ✓ Promote permanent protection of remaining farm land and undeveloped parcels **ST**

Enact Standards

- ✓ Permit farmer's markets in commercial zoning districts **ST**
- ✓ Establish Township-wide standards for native plant use (e.g., eliminate non-native species (except horticultural varieties) from street tree and ground cover lists; allow removal of existing wooded vegetation and replacement with native species in certain situations; add native fruit and nut trees to list(s) of allowed species) **ST**
- ✓ Enact specific standards to allow live-work units **ST**
- ✓ Enact standards defining scale and limitations to small-scale food production in residential districts **LT**

Decisions regarding which of these recommendations to implement, or which are even feasible, should be considered first by the Task Force, with assistance by Township staff and the Plan Update consultant team, in developing the Comprehensive Plan Update. Thereafter, the Planning Commission should review those decisions, and forward its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Ultimately, final approval for any recommendation rests with the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors. Conservancy staff is ready to answer questions, provide additional information, and otherwise assist as the Township proceeds forward with implementation.