

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TASK FORCE MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
May 10, 2017 – 7:00 PM

Present

Task Force Members – Bevilacqua, Embick, Foster, Hatton, Kane, Kurth, Pomerantz, Sennett and Van Tine. Absent was Barbacane, Davidson and Yost. Also present was Township Planning Director Chris Patriarca; Jamie Jilozian of the Chester County Planning Commission, John Theilacker and Meredith Mayer of the Brandywine Conservancy; and those mentioned below.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order around 7:00.

Future land use analysis

Mr. Snook started the conversation on the future land use plan and the initial draft goals and objectives for the plan to accomplish. He noted the proposed strategies are not final and will likely be amended further as the process continues to move forward. Mr. Theilacker then stated all of the ultimate goals and strategies will be included at the start of the plan as opposed to incorporated into the individual chapters as is the case in the 2001 plan. Mr. Snook stated the implementation strategies have not been developed, and that the discussion on future land use should help form them. Ms. Meyer stated the future land use can be viewed as the “backbone” of the plan update.

Mr. Sennett asked what the overall layout of the final plan will encompass. Mr. Theilacker stated it is in process and will follow a format generally of an executive summary, a detailed introduction of the Township, a section of goals and objectives, several topical sections and implementation strategies. Mr. Patriarca stated his preference for a focus to be on the three principal areas in order to encourage greater use and understanding of it from the public. Mr. Kane stated there should be more attention given to issues relevant to an aging populace and how best to address this issue. He also expressed a concern with having more coordination with PennDOT and other localities to address traffic issues throughout the area. Mr. Foster expressed his concern with how to pay for the implementation of what is proposed in the plan.

Mr. Bevilacqua stated the elements related to open space should be tied back to the Open Space Plan as well. He further suggested several of the proposed goals should be less specific and more broadly based, with the specifics discussed as part of the plan implementation. Mr. Hatton stated there are too many goals proposed and they should be refined further. Ms. Van Tine agreed that the number of goals should be refined further and prefers for the goals to be very “actively” stated. Mr. Kurth agreed consideration should be given to refining the goals further and that emphasis should be given to the implementation of it as a whole. He further suggested more consideration should be given for the environmental components of the plan. Mr. Sennett stated there should be a goal about funding/financing options and also agrees the goals should be refined further. Mr. Embick noted there was no goal specific to economic development. He further stated there should be more emphasis on open space preservation and acquisition.

Mr. Pomerantz also agreed the goals should be refined further. Specific to the overall wording drafted, he suggested more care should be given as to avoid any accusations of bias as well as better define terms utilized. He further stated consideration needs to be given to providing more suggestions for funding mechanisms. Specific to communications, Mr. Pomerantz suggested a potential goals should be considered on this issue. He further agreed there should be an emphasis on economic development in the plan as well as considerations for municipal authorities. Finally on the issue of trails, he suggested that clear direction and responsibility for this issue should be assigned. Mr. Pomerantz stated consideration should be given to having the implementation recommendations at the start of the plan. Next followed a conversation on the merits of having at least a part-time person in charge of parks and recreation.

Mr. Snook stated the language utilized as carefully selected based on feedback of the CPTF and BOS. Mr. Pomerantz encouraged the consultant team to make the implementation language more declarative. Mr. Patriarca suggested an important implementation measure is for the various boards and commissions being empowered to implement the plan. Mr. Theilacker stated in East Goshen, their BOS requires their commission to both report on what has been and what will be implemented, and further provides line-items in the budget for this function. Mr. Kane noted that Westtown budgets less for parks and recreation than surrounding areas.

Mr. Patriarca stated he views the discussion being had to serve as the foundation of an on-line survey, specifically to have the public react to draft goals and objectives. Mr. Theilacker noted that several of the goals are on-going by nature and should be separate out from the remainder of the listing. Mr. Pomerantz encouraged the final document to have numerous visuals for the public to better understand what is being presented. Mr. Snook stated there will be many graphics included in the final document and that key implementation items having draft budgets. He further stated there will be a "story board" format as part of the executive summary.

Mr. Patriarca asked the CPTF is there was anything in the additional draft that was to "wonky" or "jargony" that may not translate well to the general public. Some of these terms identified by the CPTF included: effective tools, traffic calming, TMDL, and compatible infill. It was suggested a glossary of terms be included with the final plan. Ms. Van Tine suggested the themes be more prominently featured at the start. Mr. Embick emphasized the importance of making the language very simple to understand in order to make it more accessible for the entire community. Mr. Hatton asked how implementation is tracked and measuring what has been accomplished. Mr. Snook stated the recommendations will be very straightforward and easy to understand.

Mr. Snook next led a discussion on goals, objectives and strategies. He stated the overall plan themes can be call out at the beginning, and asked the CPTF for more feedback on this issue. Mr. Pomerantz then provided for this thoughts in this layout. Mr. Sennett liked the idea of having the themes highlighted at the beginning. Mr. Kane asked what goals can be included to address the needs of elderly populations and that it should be encouraged for the differing generations to interact more with one another. Mr. Snook stated he has not seen something specific to this issue as part of other plans he has worked on, but that there is no reason it cannot be addressed as part of the plan. Mr. Theilacker further stated there could be policy recommendations for elderly programs. Mr. Snook noted that in another municipality a space was provided for multi-generational interactions, and Mr. Kurth spoke of a student-senior initiative undertaken in Europe. Mr. Snook suggested that steps can be taken to ensure senior services are not precluded by ordinance and/or participate in other services outside the Township. Mr. Embick noted the MPC allows for community facilities planning as part of the

comprehensive plan.

Mr. Patriarca stated a printed copy of the survey will also be available and that an announcement for it will be included in the summer newsletter. Mr. Snook noted that the survey in East Bradford done as part of their recent comp plan update saw very low participation. Mr. Sennett asked if the consultant team now has a better understanding of how the CPTF would like to see the document compiled. Next followed a general discussion on ordinance incentives to promote implementation of the comprehensive plan as well as a discussion on the merits of establishing a conservancy board and trails committee. Mr. Pomerantz suggested if the CPTF feels these are a priority, then they should be called out in the plan.

Mr. Snook stated the next meeting will include a discussion on the overall format of the ultimate development. Mr. Theilacker asked if what is learned from the BOS meeting will need to be incorporated into the next revision. The CPTF agreed their input is important, but that the consultant team should continue to work on revisions. Mr. Pomerantz then gave a brief overview of what the BOS meeting will encompass.

Public comment

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Patriarca
Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force Secretary