

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKSHOP MEETING NO. 6  
MINUTES  
MAY 13, 2013**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Monday, May 13, 2013 Derry Township Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan workshop meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. in the meeting room of the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA, by Chairman Matt Tunnell.

**ROLL CALL**

Commission Members Present: Matt Tunnell, Chairman; Joyce St. John, Vice Chairwoman; Gregg Mangione, Secretary (*arrived at 6:27 p.m.*)

Commission Members Absent: Ned Wehler; Glenn Rowe

Also Present: Chuck Emerick, Director of Community Development; Brandon Williams, Assistant Director of Community Development; Diane Krug, Dauphin County Planning Commission representative; Jenelle Stumpf, Community Development Secretary

Public Registering Attendance: Ed Uravic, 333 Cedar Avenue; Sandy Ballard, 650 Cocoa Avenue; Dee Myrvang, 720 Cocoa Avenue; Sue Stough, 750 Creek Side Drive; Justin Engle, 430 East Derry Road; Lisa Schirato, 102 West Caracas Avenue

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion made by Vice Chairwoman St. John and seconded by Secretary Mangione, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the April 15, 2013 Comprehensive Plan workshop meeting as written.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Comprehensive Plan review – Community Character and Sense of Place Issues**

Brandon Williams reviewed the following aspects of the draft Sense of Place chapter: chapter goals; chapter objectives (recommendations for future development, preserving rural character and historic resources); implementation strategies (considerations for future development, preservation of rural character); preservation of historic resources; and interrelationships with other chapters.

Vice Chairwoman St. John asked if there are any plans for walkability in the Palmdale area as it is being developed from residential to commercial. It would be nice if people could walk from the motels in that area to the downtown. Chuck Emerick responded that the right-of-way in Palmdale is fairly wide, which is beneficial because it will more easily allow for both on-street bicycle lanes and sidewalk infrastructure.

Chairman Tunnell questioned how Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) will be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Williams stated that the Municipalities Planning Code

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would enable it as an overlay district for new development, so an option might be to identify properties that could be conducive to TNDs in the Future Land Use chapter. Chairman Tunnell asked if there is a way to re-create a TND on vacate land that is located in between large-scale residential developments that have already occurred and incorporate commercial uses, and how that would be implemented into the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Williams commented that consideration should be given to the population around a potential TND site to ensure that the commercial uses could be supported.

Vice Chairwoman St. John stated that it is important to keep in mind that as more and more development occurs, the surrounding infrastructure also needs to be maintained.

Chairman Tunnell stated that some of the buildings in the downtown are currently located about 20 feet back from the street, and the Comprehensive Plan now suggests reducing that setback. He asked how that transition will be made. Mr. Williams responded that there is a way to stagger development, and the build-to line could vary from 5 feet to 15 feet (for example) from the sidewalk. Compatibility with neighboring properties could also be encouraged by requiring that new buildings be built within a certain percentage of the existing neighboring buildings. Mr. Williams thinks a good starting point would be to use buildings such as the former chocolate factory and the Methodist Church as a template for determining what the appropriate build-to line should be. Also, properties that contain buildings that are set back further from the street could be permitted to have outdoor seating areas or courtyards so that the building element would be closer to the build-to line. Justin Engle commented that the sidewalk should also be wider to help bridge the gap.

Sandy Ballard stated that there may be ways to temporarily put in porch-like areas in the front of the buildings, or a bike path in the interior. She added that windows should be provided at street level, and a majority of the ground floor of a building should be some sort of window material. This may not be compatible with some of the historic buildings initially, but we want to get to that point eventually.

Ed Uravic noted that this chapter is very consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Vision Statement. He applauds Township staff for their efforts.

Mr. Engle asked if there are any concerns about the number of locations where mixed uses are desired. We want to avoid a situation where there are scattered, potentially vacant commercial spaces all over, and it pulls away from the possibility of ever creating a town center.

Mr. Uravic asked if there were not the 'ideal' 25 acres available for a TND, would it be possible to expand vertically to accommodate more residential to support the limited commercial? Mr. Williams stated that this could be done without a TND, it would just be considered a mixed use. He added that there are studies regarding the number of people needed within a square mile of a TND to make it successful, and these studies could potentially be incorporated into the chapter language to try to make it more of a site-specific goal rather than just a general objective.

Ms. Ballard offered the following suggestions:

- Under Building Character & Design – Considerations for Future Development, Recommendation #2 – Delete “Where window space is not conducive, standards should be

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*implemented to require innovative design features to prevent large, blank walls along public access areas”, because windows are desired.*

- Under Building Character & Design – Considerations for Future Development, Recommendation #6 - Revise “...with most of the parking being located behind or to the side of buildings.” Ms. Ballard stated that to be clear, it is not equally acceptable for the parking to be located on the side of and behind the structure, it is preferred that the parking is located behind the structure.

Mr. Williams commented that if we are going to promote that, we would have to consider signage to direct people to the appropriate parking areas. Mr. Emerick noted that the 1991 Comprehensive Plan talks about ‘unified parking’ behind the buildings on the north side of Chocolate Avenue, and there is a plan depicting the removal of side setbacks on some of the properties to allow parking to span the back of multiple yards. He thinks that is an efficient way to remove the parking from sight. Currently, parking areas are not allowed to encroach into the side yard setback in this area, and parking would not be able to span from property to property.

- Under Preservation of Open Space & Rural Character, Implementation Strategy #5 – the text “...37% of respondents identified the walking/bike paths in their list of the five most liked features in the Township...” should be revised to remove the percentage and instead state that ‘it’s the fourth highest’ to emphasize that it is a big number, because 37% seems like a low number.
- In the opening paragraph under Implementation – if “reports back to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors” are only done annually and not much happens that year, maybe not as much progress will result. Ms. Ballard suggested that this should be done quarterly or bi-annually.
- Under Building Character & Design – Considerations for Future Development, Implementation Strategy #1 – The text “*It is the intent of this strategy to provide revisions that require compliance with the design standards, rather than recommend a list a guidelines*” should be revised to “...require compliance with specific, measurable design standards with illustrative examples, rather than recommend a list of guidelines.”

Todd Pagliarulo stated that Palmdale, starting in the area of Desserts, Inc. (840 East Chocolate Avenue) now makes a nice gateway into the community. He also commented that he thinks traffic is a good thing because it brings in business, but something has to be done to slow it down to make the area more walkable.

Mr. Urvic noted that streetscape in general has a lot of traffic-calming measures, such as trees.

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Dee Myrvang thinks that we have a vibrant community, which is thanks in part to the Hershey entities. The community enjoys the tourism and the traffic because of the business it brings, but we lost sight of traffic calming and ways to keep the community livable.

Mr. Urvic thinks that public art gives people a reason to be in the downtown, and mention of this should be included in the chapter.

Lisa Schirato commented that a street car system would be an excellent traffic-calming device and would connect the Palmdale area to downtown.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Secretary Mangione, seconded by Vice Chairwoman St. John, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gregg Mangione  
Secretary

Submitted by:

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Jenelle Stumpf  
Community Development Secretary