

DERRY TOWNSHIP TO HOST A PANEL DISCUSSION REGARDING ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS

Township residents, business owners and other interested parties are invited to the Hershey Public Library on June 30 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm to a panel discussion on the proposed "Master Plan Approval Process" contained within the DRAFT zoning regulations.

The DRAFT zoning ordinance was posted on the Township website on May 4 (<http://www.derrytownship.org/proposed-zoning-ordinance-update>). It was also shared with the public and discussed at length at the June 7 Planning Commission meeting. The meeting scheduled for June 30 is another opportunity for public input into the development of the regulations. The focus of this discussion will be the section of the draft zoning ordinance that would enable a "Master Plan Approval Process" to promote thoughtful development in certain areas of the Township. The Master Plan Approval Process is a planning tool used throughout the country to provide communities and developers the ability to take a more comprehensive look at the planning of development. Use of the Master Plan process yields a combination of creativity, public input and sound engineering and planning practices to ensure an outcome that includes well-planned neighborhoods and centers, coordinated traffic management, interconnected stormwater systems, community services and open space.

Master Plans are a permitted practice to develop planned communities in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) under the provisions for Traditional Neighborhood Development. These provisions include in their objectives the ability to establish a community that contains the following elements: pedestrian-oriented streetscapes with parks, commercial enterprises, civic and public buildings, and other facilities for social activity, recreation and community functions; minimized traffic congestion and reduced road construction; viable public transit alternatives to the automobile; connected pedestrian networks, particularly to provide the elderly and the young with independence of movement by locating most daily activities within walking distance; fostered ability of citizens to come to know each other and to watch over their mutual security; nurtured sense of place and community by providing a setting that encourages the natural intermingling of everyday uses and activities within a recognizable neighborhood; integrated age and income groups and varied ranges of housing types, shops and workplaces to create an authentic community; and, encouraged, on-going, community oriented initiatives. The entire MPC can be found at <http://www.newpa.com/download/pennsylvania-municipalities-planning-code-act-247-of-1968/#.V1g3yf0UVUQ>.

The Village of Hershey is an illustrious example of an early *master* planned community, which is well summarized by the "Hershey Pennsylvania" historical plaque located at along Chocolate Avenue, which reads "*Model industrial town and noted tourism destination established in 1903 and named for its founder, Milton S. Hershey (1857-1945). Hershey's companies developed housing, recreation, education, and cultural facilities, financial*

institutions, public utilities, a transit system, and the world's largest chocolate factory that opened in June, 1905.”

Even in the beginning of the development of the village of Hershey, deed restrictions were used, similar to present day zoning regulations, as a way to ensure the outcome of development. Many of these restrictions were included provisions for sidewalks, front yard setbacks of buildings, types of uses permitted, aesthetics of fences, and bulk, form and value of buildings as a way to ensure the outcome of development.

The panel will include experts in the fields of urban planning, traffic planning, land use and real estate development law, and downtown and neighborhood development. If you have questions or comments related to the DRAFT Zoning Ordinance, please email them to Chuck Emerick at chuckemerick@derrytownship.org.