

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKSHOP MEETING NO. 5
MINUTES
April 15, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

The Monday, April 15, 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

Commission Members Absent: Gregg Mangione, Secretary; 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: Carol Gisselquist, 29 West Governor Road; Ed Uravic, 333 Cedar Avenue; Jan Waybright, 626 Hotel Road; Sandy Ballard, 650 Cocoa Avenue; Brian Shiflett, 1565 Landvater Road; Jonathan M. Crist, 226 West Chocolate Avenue; Phyllis Ingold, 7 Spring Creek Manor; Lisa Schirato, 102 West Caracas Avenue

NEW BUSINESS

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

Brandon Williams reviewed the following topics from his Powerpoint presentation: The 1991 Comprehensive Plan Urban Design Guidelines chapter and Preservation and Revitalization Plan for Chocolate Avenue; and community survey responses, Sense of Place objectives, and planning district objectives regarding the new Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Williams also discussed implementation strategies for the planning district objectives. The first one is to determine appropriate revisions to the current Chocolate Avenue design recommendations and formulate design requirements. He asked for public input as to whether there are any specific building features that should be replicated, and if there are particular buildings that would serve as examples to guide the creation of the design standards.

Sandy Ballard recommended that buildings should be oriented to have the main entrance face Chocolate Avenue; a certain amount of windows should be required on the first floor of the building; and there should be a 'build-to' line that comes up to the sidewalk. She thinks The Hershey Story building and the community building (*14 East Chocolate Avenue*) are good examples of what is desired.

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKSHOP MEETING NO. 5
MINUTES
April 15, 2013**

Carol Gisselquist stated that she likes the idea of creating a façade that sets design standards; however, consideration should be given to using technologies to make buildings energy efficient and future oriented. Density is also a factor in the overall design.

Mr. Emerick stated that he likes the brick pattern on the Press Building, the parking garage, and The Hershey Story building.

Ed Uravic stated that the entrance of the community building is set far back from Chocolate Avenue and this should not be repeated, even though the building and fountain are attractive. Mr. Emerick noted that the open area in front of the building would be a great place for an open-air farm market. Chairman Tunnell asked what the current minimum front yard setback is in the downtown. Mr. Emerick responded that it is 20 feet.

Vice Chairwoman St. John stated that the post office building, the front of the 19 East Chocolate Avenue facility, and the First United Methodist Church all have the same unique stonework, and she would like that look to be repeated. She also thinks building height is an important consideration for a walkable downtown.

Lisa Schirato stated that there used to be a flower shop building located right at Chocolate Avenue, and it had a lot of interesting architectural design elements that might be a good model to use. She added that there are also a lot of limestone walls that are unique to Hershey.

Phyllis Ingold noted that the most unique aspects of Hershey are the chocolate factory and the intersection of Chocolate Avenue and Cocoa Avenue (*because of the street names*). Mr. Emerick mentioned that the Hershey Kiss street light system is also very unique.

Mr. Williams continued his presentation, stating that the next implementation strategies include revising the setback requirements for developed areas, and considering the addition of historic preservation requirements to the Zoning Ordinance for the downtown and village of Hershey.

Chairman Tunnell asked if there are any buildings within the Township that have a historical designation. Mr. Williams thinks the community building does. The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission website lists the entire residential village of Hershey as being eligible.

Jonathan Crist commented that historic rehabilitation tax credits are only available for rehabilitation of existing buildings. Without the tax credits, for the most part the rehabilitation is not completed. Creating a 'new' historic district will not gain the same tax relief as an existing situation would.

Mr. Williams stated that another implementation strategy would be to review the zoning regulations to permit mixed residential and commercial uses in identified areas. He asked for public input regarding other communities that offer mixed uses that the Township should consider as a model for its design requirements.

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKSHOP MEETING NO. 5
MINUTES
April 15, 2013**

Mr. Crist commented that he has not heard any consideration being given to whether or not adequate parking can be provided for a mixed use downtown.

Ms. Ballard suggested that the Township look at Corning, NY, and Lititz, PA. Ms. Schirato suggested New Hope, PA. Brian Shiflett suggested Leesburg and Fredericksburg, VA.

Mr. Williams stated that the next implementation strategy in his presentation is to consider revising zoning regulations to further promote preservation of open spaces, woodlands, and farmlands on the periphery of the Township.

Mr. Urvic recommended that the number of buildings along Hersheypark Drive, particularly from the Giant Center west to Hersheypark Drive's intersection with Mae Street/Walton Avenue, should be limited in order to maintain green space. He added that if there are going to be visitor amenities placed along Hersheypark Drive, they should be limited in number and inspired by agricultural buildings so that the area still feels bucolic and like farmland. Mr. Emerick explained that there are currently buffer areas established by the Zoning Ordinance, and his recommendation would be to incorporate a buffer zone along Hersheypark Drive to regulate building design.

Mr. Williams stated that the next implementation strategy is to continue to provide extensions of the Township trail network. Ms. Ballard suggested that maybe the trails could be viewed as transportation networks that are overseen by the Township Parks and Recreation department and Public Works department. If the public would view the trails for another purpose in addition to recreation, it could help to offset traffic congestion. Vice Chairwoman St. John stated that it is also nice to have nature trails solely for the purpose of recreation.

Mr. Williams asked if there are any specific areas where trail connections should be made. Mr. Urvic stated that residents in the Middletown Road area would like to have access to the bike trail for a safe way to travel to Hummelstown. Vice Chairwoman St. John suggested having trails to the schools. Chairman Tunnell stated that there is a lack of trails to access the Swatara Creek.

Mr. Williams concluded his presentation with the remaining implementation strategies of exploring available options in promoting local businesses that offer services unique to the Township; and establishing more formal partnerships with community organizations that will continue to support and assist with revitalization efforts in the downtown.

Mr. Urvic stated that he thinks streetscape helps a lot with having a sense of place, and that having trees and benches in the downtown would make it much more inviting.

Ms. Schirato thinks a street car system would be beneficial in the downtown area because it would help promote local business and would solve some of the parking dilemmas.

Mr. Crist stated that people keep mentioning the desire for 'mom and pop' businesses, but there is a high price associated with owning property that has a Hershey address. The 'mom and pop' businesses cannot afford to buy property on Chocolate Avenue, and the large businesses do not fit on the small

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKSHOP MEETING NO. 5
MINUTES
April 15, 2013**

lots. He added that most of the downtown Hershey properties have a deed restriction that limits their use to residential only.

Mr. Shiflett commented that the area between Cocoa Avenue and Fishburn Road is undervalued. He would like to see additional commercial growth in this area that is done in a smart fashion and promotes vertical expansion and walkability. It would be nice to have something similar to that in the Middletown Road corridor. Mr. Emerick thinks the same situation applies to the Palmdale area as well.

Ms. Ingold stated that she lives in Springcreek Manor, and the young families near her have expressed their desire for a family-friendly restaurant or diner in Hershey.

Mr. Williams stated that he will draft a Sense of Place chapter for presentation to the Planning Commission in May.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregg Mangione
Secretary

Submitted by:

Jenelle Stumpf
Community Development Secretary