

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH WHITEHALL
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

JOINT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS/PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

REGULAR SESSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 8, 2022

The Joint Board of Commissioners/Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Workshop was held on the above date in the Township Municipal Building located at 4444 Walbert Avenue, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania.

Members in attendance:

Diane Kelly, President Board of Commissioners, and Planning Commission
Mike Wolk, Vice-President Board of Commissioners
Monica Hodges, Board of Commissioners
David Kennedy, Board of Commissioners
Brad Osborne, Board of Commissioners
William H. MacNair, Chairman Planning Commission
Brian Hite, Vice-Chairman Planning Commission
Alan Tope, Secretary Planning Commission
Mark Leuthe, Planning Commission
David Wilson, Planning Commission

Staff members in attendance:

Gregg Adams, Planner
David Manhardt, Director of Community Development
Randy Cope, Interim Township Manager

AGENDA ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER

Chairman MacNair called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. He announced that all meetings are electronically monitored.

AGENDA ITEM #2 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL/MEETING RULES

Chairman MacNair led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Gregg Adams called roll and read the meeting rules.

AGENDA ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman MacNair announced that the minutes of the January 11, 2022, workshop meeting were distributed prior to this evening's meeting for review and comment. Chairman MacNair asked the members if they had any changes to the minutes. Hearing none, Chairman MacNair called for a motion to approve the minutes

as submitted. Mr. Hite made a motion to that effect. Mrs. Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, 6-0.

AGENDA ITEM #5 - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION

OVERALL GOALS

Director Manhardt reviewed the procedures for the evening. He started by reviewing the Guiding Principle for the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update established at the beginning of the Update project:

- *GP1. Protect natural, historical, recreational, scenic, open space, and agricultural, amenities, resources, and assets.*
- *GP2. Coordinate future land use, development, and redevelopment, in sync with the capacity of the road network and utilities to absorb changes.*
- *GP3. Promote an effective continuation of opportunities, facilities and services for open space, parks, recreation, education, public safety, and wellness.*
- *GP4. Promote techniques to limit the sprawling pattern of development, by advocating for land use with more effective smart growth attributes.*
- *GP5. Coordinate with PennDOT, LVPC, and adjoining Municipalities, in order to alleviate existing problems and to avoid future conflicts, and to promote opportunities for alternative transportation such as bus service, ride sharing, bicycling, and walking.*

He then requested comments from the Board of Commissioners members present.

Commissioner Wolk stated that economic issues were not mentioned, that public safety should be emphasized more, and that “Smart Growth” should be defined.

Commissioner Kennedy stated that “Smart Growth” typically is synonymous with limiting sprawl.

Commissioner Kelly stated that both “Smart Growth” and “Sprawl” should be defined and that there should be a focus on redevelopment.

Commissioner Kennedy stated that road capacity is key for determining where development and redevelopment should occur.

Commissioner Hodges stated that repurposing building should be emphasized, and that “Preservation” should be added.

Commissioner Osborne agreed that “Sprawl” and “Smart Growth” should be defined.

Commissioner Wolk agreed that “Preservation” should be added.

Director Manhardt opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. David Burke of 4436 Buck Trail Road stated that the legacy Zoning should be reviewed for consistency with the surrounding neighborhood and utility capacity.

Mr. David Torrey of 1351 Deerfield Drive stated that the Comprehensive Plan should encourage coordination with surrounding municipalities, particularly with regard to warehouse development.

Mr. Lee Solt of 3731 Manchester Road stated that the capacity of the existing roads should be emphasized.

Director Manhardt requested comments from the Planning Commission members present.

Chairman MacNair stated that the definitions of the terms used is important.

Mr. Hite stated that "Public safety" should be added.

Mr. Wilson agreed that the terms to be used should be defined.

Mr. Leuthe read the definitions of "Smart Growth" and "Sprawl" from the Smart Growth America website. He also stated that the Township purchase of property should seriously be considered if preservation is to be a goal.

Director Manhardt then asked the Planning Commission members to rank the Guiding Principles in order of priority.

The results of the ranking were:

1. *GP2. Coordinate future land use, development, and redevelopment, in sync with the capacity of the road network and utilities to absorb changes.*
2. *GP3. Promote an effective continuation of opportunities, facilities and services for open space, parks, recreation, education, public safety, and wellness.*
3. *GP4. Promote techniques to limit the sprawling pattern of development, by advocating for land use with more effective smart growth attributes.*
4. *GP1. Protect natural, historical, recreational, scenic, open space, and agricultural, amenities, resources, and assets.*
5. *GP5. Coordinate with PennDOT, LVPC, and adjoining Municipalities, in order to alleviate existing problems and to avoid future conflicts, and to promote opportunities for alternative transportation such as bus service, ride sharing, bicycling, and walking.*

Director Manhardt then opened the floor to comments.

Commissioner Kelly stated that many of the Guiding Principles were interrelated.

Commissioner Wolk stated that they were not mutually exclusive.

Director Manhardt then moved the discussion to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives:

- *CP1. Growth Management: Grow in a harmonious way that maintains the character of the Township by providing a transition from urban to rural areas as demonstrated by the Rural to Urban Transect. Keep the pace of growth consistent with the Township's ability to install infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.*
- *CP2. Innovative Planning & Zoning Tools and Design Techniques. Incorporate state-of-the-art planning and zoning techniques to create attractive neighborhoods, mixed use, and nonresidential areas that promote walkability and are socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable.*
- *CP3. Building and Maintaining Walkable Communities & Villages. Design new neighborhoods and retrofit existing places to be mixed use, walkable places, where daily tasks can be performed within a ½ mile. Emulate the character of existing villages like Cetronia, Greenawalds and Guthsville in new development and celebrate their visual cues. Promote intergenerational neighborhoods.*
- *CP4. Protection of Natural, Historic and Agricultural Resources. Optimize the protection, conservation and preservation of natural resources, historic sites and farmland in a balanced land use approach.*
- *CP5. Parks, Recreation and Open Space.*
- *CP6. Housing Opportunities and Choices. Provide a variety of housing and neighborhood choices for families of all sizes, abilities and income levels in the Township.*
- *CP7. Transportation Efficiency & Effectiveness. Facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods now and as the Township grows. Promote multimodal circulation, particularly walkability, throughout the Township.*
- *CP8. Municipal Infrastructure & Services. Develop performance measures and benchmarks for all municipal services and utilities and expand or refine municipal functions to satisfactorily meet them as the Township grows.*
- *CP9. Economic Viability. Strengthen the tax base through planned land use.*
- *CP10. Regional Coordination. Work with LVPC, Lehigh County, and adjacent municipalities to coordinate and share services where feasible.*

He then requested comments from the Board of Commissioners members present.

Commissioner Kennedy stated that CP1 was no longer harmonious and that the new Comp Plan must bring the Township back on track.

Commissioner Hodges stated that CP1 should include the ability to maintain the existing infrastructure. She stated that CP4 should require a Preservation Plan be put in place.

Commissioner Kelly stated that CP1 should mention ties to an Infrastructure Plan.

Commissioner Wolk stated that the expectations of the 2009 Comp Plan and the 2014 Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed against the outcomes.

Commissioner Kelly stated that periodic reviews of the Comp Plan and the outcomes to date should be added.

Commissioner Wolk agreed, stating that metrics should be added to measure the outcomes.

Director Manhardt opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. David Burke stated that the 2009 Goals and Objectives could be kept for the 2019 Update and that Zoning needs to be better matched to the Infrastructure Plan.

Mr. Lee Solt suggested that, regarding CP10, the Township should reach out to large landowners periodically for previews of their plans.

Director Manhardt requested comments from the Planning Commission members present.

Chairman MacNair inquired as to whether the Township can limit growth. He agreed that infrastructure capacity should be tied to Zoning.

Mr. Hite agreed that land use and infrastructure should be linked.

Mrs. Kelly stated that regional coordination is important, particularly Zoning and neighboring land development plans.

Director Manhardt stated that, due to technical difficulties, the Planning Commissioners would be emailed their ranking exercise for the 2009 Goals and Objectives immediately after tonight's meeting. The results would be presented at the beginning of the next Comprehensive Plan Workshop meeting. He inquired as to "What's Missing" from the list of principles, goals and objectives that were reviewed this evening.

There was no response.

AGENDA ITEM #10 – ADJOURNMENT

Chairman MacNair requested a motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made the motion, Mr. Leuthe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADOPTED THIS DATE:

ATTEST:

Secretary

Chairman