

MINUTES
WEST MANHEIM TOWNSHIP
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC MEETING BY
PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024
7:00 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The Comprehensive Plan Public Meeting held by the West Manheim Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Jim Myers, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. All Planning Commission Members were present.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANS SUMMARY: Chairman Jim Myers introduced Charlie Schmehl from Urban Research and Development Corp. Mr. Schmehl has led the Comprehensive Steering Committee over the past 8 months. Mr. Schmehl gave a presentation on the proposed Comprehensive Plan. He provided a written summary to all those in attendance. He highlighted sections of the summary handout and the map which are attached to these minutes. A few of the main topics included but not limited to transportation, land use, housing plan, traditional neighborhood development, historical preservation, Baltimore Pike appearance, bicycling and trail system, land preservation plan, and recreation park additions.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Myers opened the floor for questions and comments from the audience.

Mike Howser of 2506 Black Rock Road spoke of concerns regarding the Baltimore Pike traffic access and infrastructure. Mr. Schmehl responded stating the plan will use driveway use access management and grouping driveways together as opposed to individual access points. Mr. Howser asked if eminent domain was included in the plans to widen the Baltimore Pike. Mr. Schmehl stated eminent domain is not proposed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Stacey MacNeal of Barley Snyder was in attendance to represent the Werner family which owns properties located at 3140 and 3055 Baltimore Pike. The above-mentioned properties are located on the east and west side of the Baltimore Pike currently zoned Commercial/Industrial. They are opposed to changing the zoning on the east side from the current zoning to residential. Mrs. MacNeal stated reasons why they feel the property should remain as currently zoned to include road frontage, utilities, traffic volume, and consistent with other proposed zoning per the plan. Mr. Schmehl provided a brief follow-up to the discussion.

Mike Hoffman of 2571 Baltimore Pike discussed the proposed trail system and potential security/emergency needs. Mr. Schmehl informed the audience that the Hanover Boro is requesting state money for a detailed study looking into parking areas and trails. The committee has discussed a park ranger program and more manpower in the area which was suggested to the Boro.

Andy Hoffman of 2575 Baltimore Pike asked why the existing trails within the Township Rec Park were included on the map. Mr. Schmehl stated that not all trails are shown on the map. The intent of the trail map was to show the connection of reservoir land A with reservoir land B. This is only a concept plan. Mr. Hoffman questioned why the York County Planning Commission's file for the installation of a pedestrian trail along the Baltimore Pike was not included on the map. The trail was intended to start at Penn Township and run the entire length of the Township on the East side of the Baltimore Pike. Mr. Schmehl responded that the committee felt the Baltimore Pike was not a safe route for bicycling so therefore it was suggested to use Oak Hills Drive. The committee is recommending over time that the sidewalks be installed along the Baltimore Pike. The sidewalk would not be shown on the trail map because it is not a trail. Jim Myers also provided input on the discussion of the installation of sidewalks.

Anneka Bear of 2251 Water Garden Drive expressed concerns regarding transportation. She suggested an all way stop at the intersection of Oak Hills Drive and Fairview Drive along with crosswalks due to visual obstructions and pedestrian use. Mr. Schmehl responded stating that this intersection is on the list for possible future traffic engineered study. Ms. Bear also mentioned the possible future extension of Oak Hills Drive to the Baltimore Pike may encourage speeding. If this is extended, the Township should consider ways to reduce the speed.

Andy Hoffman of 2575 Baltimore Pike questioned the highlighted areas labeled as major community facilities that he feels are mislabeled. Mr. Hoffman also mentioned possible errors in the conservation easements. Mr. Schmehl will review the community facilities and conservation easements to verify accuracy.

Sylvia Shoemaker of 65 Shaffer Circle expressed concerns regarding traffic and school capacity. Jim Myers responded stating the traffic concerns have been increasing over the years because of neighboring municipalities as well as our growth. The intent is to manage the growth and we are unable to stop the growth. Pam Hoffman stated that most of the areas to be developed are approved, but the Comp Plan may help to manage how the lands are developed in the future. Darrell Raubenstine stated the proposed Comprehensive Plan has the school enrollment information and building capacity as provided by the school district. Terry Rynearson stated at the last school board meeting the school district stated they will not build a new school due to the future decrease in student numbers.

Andy Hoffman of 2575 Baltimore Pike questioned if the plan provided provisions for low-income housing or section eight housing. Mr. Schmehl informed the audience that we need to provide a variety of house types. We are not allowed to mandate inclusionary housing per Pennsylvania law. The Township could implement an incentive-based system for housing.

Ruth Neiderer of 497 Laurence Drive thanked the committee for efforts to draft the plan. She questioned if this plan was based on lessons learned from the past and attempting not to repeat the density. Mr. Schmehl informed the audience that the density is decreased compared to the past plan. High density areas are not available due to the fact they have been built.

Darrell Raubenstine, Planning Commission member, stated that the Comprehensive Plans from past years didn't plan for the issues we have today. Each year a plan is updated, the vision of the plan may be changed.

A brief conversation regarding agricultural conservation easements took place.

Andy Hoffman of 2575 Baltimore Pike thanked the volunteers for their efforts.

Tony Vaccare of 51 Yara Way questioned the status of the proposed Traditional Neighborhood Development. Mr. Schmehl provided information on the current status of the proposed development and plans for the TND. A brief conversation regarding the proposed road system took place.

Jim Horak of 879 Impounding Dam Road commented that access roads don't facilitate easy travel through town. Mr. Schmehl provided options to smooth the flow of traffic to include roundabouts, traffic signal work, and turn lanes.

Sylvia Shoemaker of 65 Shaffer Circle questioned if a bypass is an option. Mr. Schmehl stated there is no room for the installation of a bypass.

Jennifer Thornton of 324 El Vista Drive questioned what obstacles are involved with upgrading the Baltimore Pike since it is a state road. Mr. Schmehl suggested that the township acquire the right of way from the property owner and then approach PennDot with the right of way. It is more expensive to do any work on the state road.

Mr. Schmehl informed the audience that additional comments can be emailed to the Township Manager for distribution.

ADJOURNMENT: Jim Myers adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Bair, Recording Secretary