

East Fallowfield Township  
Planning Commission Workshop and Comprehensive Plan meeting  
Approved October 20, 2014 minutes  
6:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Dennis Crook, Chairman, Planning Commission  
John Schwab, Vice Chairman, Planning Commission  
Richard Agatone, Planning Commission  
Garth Monaghan, Planning Commission  
Joe Perzan, Planning Commission  
Jim Durborow, Planning Commission  
Mark Toth, Board of Supervisors  
Jeanne Berlin  
Ray Ott, Ray Ott & Associates  
Susan Elks, AICP, Chester County Planning Commission

Not Present:

Jim Weeks  
Joe McCormick  
Jim Petro  
Arthur DeLeo

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order.

Hope Community -

Dawn Crawford, resident of Brook Crossing, reported that she asked questions at a previous Board of Supervisors meeting and it was suggested she attend a Planning Commission meeting. Ray Ott asked Ms. Crawford what questions she had asked at the Board of Supervisors meeting. Ms. Crawford stated she had questions about the Hope Community and that she has been hearing conflicting information. Dawn Crawford asked if there are any plans to change the zoning along with the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate the Hope Community. She stated there are meeting minutes stating they could accommodate Mr. Sisk's zoning change request. Mr. Ott said that we are in the midst of developing the plan and there is no intent to change the zoning. Ms. Crawford said Mr. Sisk attended a Planning Commission Workshop/Comprehensive Plan meeting to request Hope Community be included in the Comprehensive Plan. This was after the Board turned down Mr. Sisk's request to change zoning. Dennis Crook said Mr. Sisk presented a sketch plan to the Planning Commission for their opinion. First and foremost, it does not comply with the present zoning. Dennis Crook said he doesn't feel this will move forward because he doesn't feel this would be accepted. Getting a zoning change would take a lot of effort. Ray Ott asked if Mr. Sisk had formally petitioned for a zoning change. Mr. Crook stated Mr. Sisk had not done a formal petition requesting a zoning change. The current zoning for the proposed area of the Hope Community is Office-Industrial. Mr. Crook said until we get a formal plan submitted, we can't say what will be done with that land. Dawn Crawford asked if the Planning Commission had any interest in including the Hope Community in the Comprehensive Plan. Dennis Crook said the Planning Commission is not interested in including it. Garth Monaghan explained that even though Mr. Sisk has brought sketch plans to the Planning Commission, this means nothing until he goes to the Zoning Hearing Board to request a zoning change. The Zoning Hearing Board is a separate group from the both Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors are the only ones that can change the zoning. The other boards are recommendation boards. There was an informal request to the Board of Supervisors to change the zoning and the Board unanimously voted to turn it done.

Review notes from August 18, 2014 Task Force meeting –

Ray Ott reviewed the notes from the previous Task Force meeting held on August 18, 2014:

1. John Snook of the Brandywine Conservancy updated the Planning Commission on the status of this plan. Specific details about this project are available on the project website.
2. Septic Systems –
  - a. Ralph DeFazio, of the Chester County Health Department, spoke to the Planning Commission and had discussed four areas that could not be resolved:
    - 1) Jane Street. There was a discussion about how many houses are in this area. A half dozen was the estimate.
    - 2) Marty's (Mortonville, one parcel),
    - 3) Mink Hollow Road (one parcel),
    - 4) Hephzibah Hill Road (four row houses).
    - 5) Buck Run Road and Barry Road, Old Stottsville and West Glenrose. There was a discussion about some of the houses in this area being abandoned and some needing to be demolished. Ray Ott said that this was not one of the four areas discussed by Ralph DeFazio.
  - b. On-Lot Septic and Acreage - Ray Ott summarized that Ralph DeFazio stated that as a general rule parcels less than 0.75 acres with on-site septic will not have enough room for a second back up septic system. He suggested using one acre threshold to be conservative. Ray Ott discussed a map showing all the parcels less than one acre with on-site septic. These parcels will likely need an off-site solution for future septic. Mr. Ott said there are quite a few parcels outside the sewer franchise area. There are not necessarily failures in these areas, however, a policy to address future possible failures needs to be created. There was a discussion about the four row homes in Hephzibah Hill Road. They also discussed the sewer franchise area maps and what areas are in the franchise area. They discussed approximately forty properties south of Strasburg Road that are on less than 0.75 acres and how to address those properties in the Comprehensive Plan. They will identify these properties and the potential future septic problems. Dennis Crook spoke about small groups of houses sharing a small community sewer system to solve the acreage issue. They discussed that the Chester County Health Department has its own isolation distances from wells and buildings. The Chester County Health Department can waive some of these requirements if there is an existing home on the lot. They will not do this for empty lots. The homes on Hephzibah Hill Road potentially tying into Modena's system was discussed.
3. Water Supply - Ray Ott also discussed water supply and a geology map. He said he didn't see any problems with the water supply based on the geology map. There is good ground water yields for residential purposes. Water supply versus water quality were discussed. The Scott Farm Development was discussed. Part of the Scott Farm Development Agreement is to include the homes on Mount Carmel Road in the public water system. South Brandywine Middle School was mentioned as potentially hooking up to public water. Ray Ott discussed the expanded franchise area. Dennis Crook stated applications were recently withdrawn in

regard to the South Brandywine Middle School. As of now, there is no approved water franchise expansion in the Township.

4. Penn State Extension Service Water and Sewer Workshop - Dennis Crook discussed the Penn State Extension Service Workshop for on-lot water offered a free water test. Mr. Crook said he went to the workshop and had his water tested. His well had a nitrate level of 0.07 in 2005. The current test result was over 0.20. The acceptable nitrate level is 0.10. A second test was done and came back at 0.11 nitrates. One of the biggest facts he learned is that 45% of existing wells have not been tested. He also discussed his attendance at a geothermal conference in Baltimore last week. Every type of well dug has a recording of what type of millings comes out of it. He'd like to take it a step further and asked the Board about possibly getting a grant through the National Science Foundation to extend research on why nitrates in some wells are increasing in a short period of time. Ray Ott suggested including in the Comprehensive Plan an acknowledgment of a problem with nitrate loads in wells and that it is recommended the Township pursue grants and programs to resolve the issue.
5. Public Comments on Comprehensive Plan - They discussed the public comments in regard to where they wanted the Township to extend the water and sewer franchise area as well as an Ordinance in regard to residents hooking up. Public comments were mostly about not spending a lot of money to hook up. There were comments for expansion too. Ray Ott will double check the Ordinance specifics.
6. Buildout Analysis Map - Ray Ott stated on the Buildout Analysis Map, if the Township was built out, under current zoning we could have 1,200 new dwelling units. Township population projections through 2040 shows a need of 720 new dwelling units. This shows the Township is meeting its fair share of housing. Ray Ott commented that the Comprehensive Plan could include a statement limiting the franchise area to above Strasburg Road. John Schwab commented this would be fair to the residents south of Strasburg Road. They discussed that everything south of Strasburg Road could accommodate on-lot septic and water except the South Brandywine Middle School. Clustering and Open Space Design were briefly discussed.

Future Land Use Map – Ray Ott discussed the Future Land Use Map and current Township Zoning Map. He said the Future Land Use Map mimics the Zoning Map. He asked if the area south of Strasburg Road should be called conservation areas or rural agricultural. The Planning Commission decided to keep the current wording unless there is a specific advantage to changing. The Task Force discussed having a comment in the Comprehensive Plan that the franchise area will only include north of Strasburg Road. The Task Force is satisfied with the current zoning map. Therefore, Ray Ott will make the Future Land Use Map mimic the Township Zoning Map. Susan Elks said the County recommendation is that they'd like to see a third of the County in preserved spaces. This would include Homeowner Association lands, easements and township parks. They discussed housing type requirements and multi-housing requirements as well. West Bradford Township's fair share issue was also discussed. Mixed-Use zoning was discussed. Susan Elks said that this area was probably called Multi-Use to accommodate what is already existing in that area which includes Jane Street as opposed to what the area is intended to be. Dennis Crook read the definition of Multi-Use zoning. Susan Elks said the County would like development to occur on land that will not have water or sewer failures.

Village Commercial – Ray Ott gave some examples of Village Commercial local areas. He said Ercildoun is an example of village commercial which is the area around Triple Fresh. Willowdale, in East Marlborough Township, is another example of a Village Commercial area. Village Commercial combines commercial with residential. Susan Elks discussed Willowdale. Ray Ott discussed examples of villages including Eagleview and Weatherstone. Ray Ott said he labeled an area in the Future Land Use Map as Mixed Use Growth. He said even though East Fallowfield Township’s zoning for that area is Office-Industrial, it does allow residential. Ray Ott said he needs to double check on whether it allows for both a combination of both residential and commercial in the same development. Mr. Ott stated he will better define Mixed Use. John Schwab said a disadvantage of making the whole area Mixed Use, the area could get developed as all one type. Ray Ott said you could adjust your zoning to restrict the percentage of development of each type – residential, retail and office. The idea is to encourage more symbiotic relationships between land uses and communities to be more complete. With older zoning, communities have been segregated. Ray Ott said you would want to prevent any one developer to come in and develop a larger parcel with one use by writing a Mixed Use zoning ordinance that would state the percentage allowed of different types of development such as residential and commercial. Taking possible public water and sewer capabilities into consideration when designating an area as mixed use was discussed.

Transferring Development Rights - Garth Monaghan asked if transferring development rights is still done. Susan Elks stated the areas where this has been successful has been for a specific application or a very large area where you can transfer in an area broader than a township. It was successfully done in Lancaster County around Manheim. Within the same entity or good partnering entities, you need a reasonable sending zone where you are buying development rights and a reasonable receiving zone where you can use them. It would be very difficult in a single Township. East Fallowfield Township would have a problem with this because most of what would be send development has already been eased. Ray Ott spoke about his past experience with transferring development rights.

Village Commercial - Ray Ott stated there a few areas within the Township that could function as a village. Mr. Ott asked if there is any interest in having a village area in the Comprehensive Plan. There was a discussion about Ercildon. The Planning Commission felt there is no place to expand in Ercildon. There was a discussion about the area around Triple Fresh not having room to grow and no sidewalks. Garth Monaghan said the majority consensus of the Township is that residents like the Township the way it is. Dennis Crook asked about revitalization programs. Mark Toth spoke about programs to get grants for walking trails. The possibility of walking and biking trails on Rt. 82 and Strasburg Road were also discussed. A sidewalk is needed from South Brandywine Middle School and East Fallowfield Park because kids walk from the school to the park. Mark Toth stated he thinks the area around the Big Apple is the only viable area for a possible Village Commercial area. Dennis Crook asked about the previous Comprehensive Plan having facilities for the Township Building on the park property. Garth Monaghan said there were sketch plans but it didn’t move forward.

Resource Map – Ray Ott suggested that in addition to the Future Land Use Map, there is a Resource Map which would identify items such as scenic roads and historic districts. Ray Ott explained that as part of the grant program, we are charged with helping to implement the Brandywine Valley Greenway Study. The main recommendation the Brandywine Conservancy has for East Fallowfield is trail corridors and public access points to the river. He said he doesn’t have a problem including their trails but he isn’t sure how some of them would be implemented. Mr. Ott said he will incorporate some of the Brandywine Conservancy’s recommendation on the Resource Map. He said we should be realistic about the trails and should identify a linkage for the trails. Ray Ott mentioned there are a lot of grants available to do

these studies. Susan Elks said if you mention a recommendation in the Comprehensive Plan, it could aid in getting grant money at some point in the future. Ray Ott will include Beagle Club, Luria Brothers, and Modena Greenway on the Resource Map.

Ray Ott said his objective now is to put a main draft together. The next meeting will be November 17, 2014. He asked Dennis Crook about the status of the Open Space Design Option Ordinance. Dennis Crook said they are still working on it. Garth Monaghan said if we recommend to get rid of it, it will be up to the Board of Supervisors to remove it through proper procedure. There was a brief discussion about the procedure for repealing an ordinance. There was also a short discussion about the Open Space Design Option Ordinance.

Dennis Crook made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:27 pm. Motion was seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis  
Township Secretary