

February 14, 2019

Sent by Email

Dear Mr. Graziani,

As a result of last week's Planning and Zoning meeting and in response to your email, Protect PT has discussed important issues that we feel should be taken into consideration as the township talks about updating its Comprehensive Plan. Our initial work session included PPT members present at last week's meeting. These thoughts and ideas presented to you today are by no means final, as we have yet to inform our members (and other residents) about this update or engage them in the planning process. Their input is vital to a successful, vibrant, innovative, growth mindset community that we call home.

To begin with, we took Phil Miller's suggestion and looked over the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as a beginning "assessment" of sorts. We believe some key topics, not implemented or contradicted in reality, remain vitally relevant to a sustainable comprehensive plan. Please consider making the below words a reality by putting into practice some of the objectives developed in the last comprehensive plan.

Review of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan for Penn Township

These goals were part of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan posted on the Penn Township website. These views were part of the conclusions from those who participated in the process at that time (Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee). We believe the following items are still important and should be considered for inclusion in the updated comprehensive plan:

Page 3, Implications for Public Policy:

"Many residents will likely see the residential quality of life as more important than attracting non-residential development."

Page 6, Summary of Part 4 Housing and Households Implications for Public Policy:

“Penn Township is a community of households. Citizens are more likely to be engaged in civic projects and take an active role in community life. Such communities of homeowners are also likely to be sensitive about the impact of non-residential development upon their residential use, enjoyment, and financial security.”

Page 8, Summary of Part 6 Transportations and Circulation Implications for Public Policy:

“A major factor in developing design guidelines should be the ability to mitigate the impact of nonresidential development upon the residential community.”

Page 12, Thematic Goals and Objectives:

“Whether creating or updating a comprehensive development plan, the building of a consensus on those development objectives which are viewed as important to Township residents, as they relate to the future growth of the preservation of community characteristics are necessary if a comprehensive plan is to be ‘useable’”.

Agricultural: *“Promote the preservation of active farmland”*

- If the township wishes to preserve active farmland, building large industrial complexes for unconventional natural gas development is not the best way forward.

Historic Preservation: *“Encourage the preservation of cultural and historic sites and structures in the Township.”*

- Did you Know? There is a tavern in Bouquet that was the main and only building in this area in the 1700s.
- Did you Know? Forbes Road came through this area. The Boy Scouts used to hike the designated Trail. Old placards still hang on trees to delineate the path.
- Did you Know? The house on the Blank property that Huntley wants to raze is the oldest brick building in Penn Township?

Natural Resources Preservation: *“Promote the preservation of natural resources and environmentally sensitive land in Penn Township. Consistently enforce environmental performance standards township-wide through provisions of an amended zoning ordinance.”*

- Did the commissioners read and understand the goals of the comprehensive plan when implementing recent changes to the Township ordinance?

Comprehensive Plan Update 2019

Next, we discussed issues and developed a preliminary list of needs to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan:

Infrastructure

- Unconventional natural gas development (UNDG) degrades infrastructure
- Road system
- Water, Sewage
- Buffer zones between industrial and residential areas
- Transportation
- Stormwater upgrades: with an increase in recent heavy rainfall, upgrades to stormwater will need to be planned for the future to remediate the impacts of climate change.

2014 National Climate Assessment states, *“Since 1991, the amount of rain falling in very heavy precipitation events has been significantly above average. This increase has been greatest in the Northeast, Midwest, and upper Great Plains – more than 30% above the 1901-1960 average. There has also been an increase in flooding events in the Midwest and Northeast, where the largest increases in heavy rain amounts have occurred”.*

<https://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/our-changing-climate/heavy-downpours-increasing>

Sustainable Economic Development

- Court Small Business, Professional Services (consulting, engineering, accounting etc.)
- Design and develop a Community Center that attracts both youth and seniors who want to live and play here.
- Financial Stewardship and fiscal accountability; example - decrease police expenses. Reduce the number of police cars by requiring cars to remain on township property when not in use. Saved dollars could be utilized to help eliminate the pension fund shortfall.
- Good paying jobs for residents through cultivating businesses that pay a living wage that would encourage employees to work and live here.
- Writing grants and encouraging more small business will ensure residents don't bear all tax responsibility

Sustainability and Renewable Energy Plan

- Incentives for residents who elect to switch to renewable, sustainable energies. This would also increase the quality of life with less air pollution and achieve the preservation of natural resources and sensitive land.
- Footprint and Legacy: We are stewards for generations yet to come. Being socially and environmentally responsible guarantees our children a better future.

What is important: Quality of Life, Community Engagement, Sustainable Future, Better Communication between Municipality and Residents, Growth, Balance, and Fiscal Accountability.

Protect PT would like to be a partner with the township to move in the right direction in order to solve problems, meet needs, and enhance the quality of life of Penn Township citizens. We feel that the first step to ensuring the Township Comprehensive Plan reflects the citizens that live, work, and recreate in the township is to engage those citizens through targeted outreach, social media, and a series of educational public meetings. According to guest speaker, Denny Puko, the purpose of establishing a comprehensive plan is to enhance the quality of life. We feel this includes all citizens, not just a select few large landowners with financial interests, but all those who have an investment backed-expectation of enjoyment and use of their property no matter the size or wealth.

Thank you,

Gillian Graber
Executive Director

Beth Jamison
President

Pat Emich
Vice President

Patricia Wendall
Member at large