

MINUTES

PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 1, 2017

LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A Public Hearing of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners, held at the Lower Swatara Township Municipal Building, was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by President Jon G. Wilt.

Roll call was taken with the following officials in attendance:

- Jon G. Wilt, President
- Laddie J. Springer, Vice President
- Michael J. Davies, Assistant Secretary
- Todd F. Truntz, Commissioner
- Benjamin C. Hall, Commissioner
- Terry L. Kauffman, Interim Manager
- Jean R. Arroyo, Secretary
- Peter R. Henninger, Solicitor
- Erin G. Letavic, HRG, Engineer
- Robert S. Greene, Planning and Zoning

Residents and visitors in attendance: (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SIGN-IN SHEET)

Solicitor Henninger stated that the purpose of this evening's Public Hearing is to receive public comment on the proposed comprehensive plan. He turned the floor over to the consultant for the project, Michelle Brummer of Gannet Fleming.

Ms. Brummer distributed a packet of information containing a timeline and summary of comments pertinent to the preparation of the draft plan. She noted that she was also involved in the comprehensive plan that was adopted by the Township in 2004. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code does not require the Township to have a comprehensive plan. If it does, however, it is highly recommended that the plan be reviewed and updated every ten years.

The timeline was reviewed. In June of 2015, the process started with a kick-off meeting with the staff. A steering committee was appointed in July and worked through 2016 discussing issues and conducting research and outreach with the assistance of Ms. Brummer and HRG, which served as a sub consultant for Gannet Fleming for certain portions of the plan. By the end of 2015, there were three steering committee meetings held which were open to the public and did provide

for comment periods. In 2016, the steering committee meetings included discussion of potential areas for rezoning that would be recommended in the plan, looked at additional transportation and recreation investments, and discussed how this plan would address farmland in a township that is rural in some parts and fairly urbanized in other parts. There was a draft list of recommendations and a future land use map in March, and review and revisions were then made to that. The draft comprehensive plan was then taken to the community in April at an open house at the fire department. Shortly after that, the steering committee convened for the last time (this was its seventh meeting) to review comments that it had heard and to decide if there should be any further revisions to the plan prior to it being forwarded to the Planning Commission. There were further adjustments made. The Planning Commission conducted a public meeting in August of 2016, and then closed the meeting and continued discussion in September. The Planning Commission then made revisions to the draft plan, and the revised draft plan was distributed to adjacent municipalities, the School District, and the County for their review. It was also made available on the Township website. The draft is being brought to the Board meeting tonight so that the Board can have an understanding of the comments submitted, and so that citizens may have a final opportunity to make verbal comments directly to the Board regarding their feelings on the plan. The Board, at its discretion, can make any final revisions to the plan and then take action at a future date.

Ms. Brummer noted that the summary of public comments provided in the hand-out are a mix of comments from property owners interested in rezoning to further the development of their properties, as well as citizens expressing opposition to industrial uses essentially requested by those property owners. There are clearly two perspectives on the future of the Township, resulting in a point of conflict within the community regarding what future direction should be taken at this time. Ms. Brummer added that even if there is no rezoning recommended in this plan, it could certainly be revisited at a future point in time. It does not preclude decisions of the future either towards open space, land conservation, or future development.

The fourth page in the handout contains the Planning Commission revisions. The Planning Commission recommended four specific items be included in the comprehensive plan, some of which were considered early and were removed during the draft preliminary stages, and others that simply needed to be specifically stated if they were earlier implied: (1) recommended rezoning of the Williams Farm along the north side of Fulling Mill Road and the adjacent residentially zoned

parcels along the west side of Longview Drive to neighborhood commercial at a depth consistent with the existing neighborhood commercial district on the east side of Nissley Drive and Hollywood Drive; add to Future Land Use Map (2) recommend rezoning of the Williams parcel along the south side of Fulling Mill Road between Lumber Street and the existing Light Industrial Park district; add to Future Land Use Map; (3) specify the extension of Spring Garden Drive eastward to PA 441 to North Union Street as a recommendation; and (4) specify improvement of the Township-owned portion of North Union Street and other sub-standard Township roads through negotiations with developers to look at right-of-way and straightening of streets as a recommendation.

Solicitor Henninger referenced the first two recommendations, and asked what the current zoning is on the two Williams' parcels. Ms. Brummer stated that they are both currently Residential-Agriculture. He asked if the recommendation also includes the residential properties on the other side. Ms. Brummer confirmed that this is correct; it would prevent a residential strip from being between the Tyco properties and this proposed future district.

Ms. Brummer reported that also completed was the final required narrative sections of the plan. These are not really recommendations but compliance statements with the planning code, and state that the plan has been reviewed for compatibility with adjacent municipal development and future land use planning and with county land use planning. There is also a short guidance section on plan review and maintenance.

The last few pages of the handout contain a summary of review comments on the draft plan, including those from the Middletown Planning Commission.

Commissioner Truntz inquired what percentage of the Township is Residential, Industrial, and Commercial in terms of existing development. Ms. Brummer responded that she believes the mix is 30/30/30 with the remaining being open space.

President Wilt opened the floor for public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jim Rodgers, 181 Highland Street, stated that he had reviewed the draft comprehensive plan quite thoroughly, and applauded the Planning Commission, the consultant, and the Board on the hard work put into the plan. He noted that this type of planning is important to everyone, since it is a game plan for the Township's future operations. As a resident who is the owner of a lot of open space and is adjacent to a large undeveloped industrial tract, Mr. Rodgers stated it is important for

him and his wife to know the plans for zoning. Adopting a good plan that gives credence to the different viewpoints presented is critical for the future success of the Township. It is important to consider if this will be a desirable municipality to live in, if the tax base can support what is necessary for that type of development, and if the Township will have the resources to deal with the issues it will face. Mr. Rodgers expressed his support of the plan as laid out.

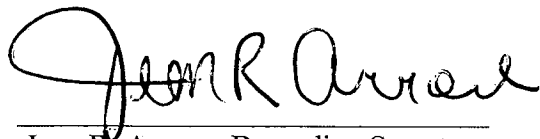
BOARD COMMENTS:

Solicitor Henninger explained that the Board will now look at the comprehensive plan and if it decides to make any significant changes, will schedule another Public Hearing. If no significant changes are made, the process to approve the plan will be via resolution. A resolution would be prepared for approval of the plan with any comments that the Board would like to make to the final version that has been submitted. He noted there is no real time frame required for approval.

CLOSE:

Hearing no other questions or comments, a motion was made by Commissioner Hall, seconded by Commissioner Truntz, to close the Public Hearing. The motion was unanimously approved, and the Public Hearing was closed at 6:22 P.M.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean R. Arroyo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jean" and last name "Arroyo" clearly distinguishable.

Jean R. Arroyo, Recording Secretary

PLEASE PRINT NAME CLEARLY

March 1, 2017 Public Hearing on Comp Plan followed by Workshop Mtg. - 6:00 P.M.

Name/Organization	Address
M. Loyer	1880 N. Union St.
A. Dickerson	1860 N. Union St.
Michelle Brummer	GANNETT FLEMING
R. Shuman	Longmead Dr.
DENNY FROUSEY CITIZEN	1781 Mountain View Rd
Margu Hart	2142 N. Union St.
CHET HARTZ	2142 N. Union St
Ron Paul	2 Richard Ave
RON BURKHOLDER	OLD EMBLICE
NANCY AVOLESE	1451 N. Union
Jim Rogers	181 Highland St.
KATHY GOTTSALL	HEARTSTONE
N PENDERGRASS	BRIAR CREEK
M. Williams	
Jinda Mehaffie	921 Ebenezer Rd
Tom Littell Son Lee Dickson	1880 N. Union
Bruce & Joanne Hunk	1134 Little Rd
Carolyn Lutz	Woodbridge Dr.
Tom Fisher	Farmhouse Lane
Timothy Henry Santoro	1890 N. UNION
Chad Zimmerman	FDLS
John Weikle	FDLS

March 1, 2017 Public Hearing on Comp Plan followed by Workshop Mtg. – 6:00 P.M.

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Timeline of Draft Plan Preparation

Lower Swatara Township Comprehensive Plan Update

2015

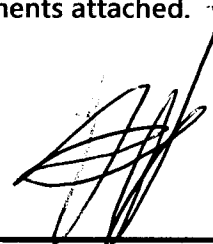
- June* ◆ Kick-off with Staff
- July* ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #1
- July-August* ◆ Interviews with Commissioners, staff, 2 large land owners, Middletown and Steelton managers, Middletown Area School District (Winter 2016)
- September* ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #2: Issues and Opportunities
- December* ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #3: Public Participation Report; Background Studies; Direction for Issues and Opportunities

2016

- January* ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #4: Recent Development and Zoning Capacity Analysis; Review of Township goals; Targeted Land Use Review and Alternatives
- February* ◆ Meeting with Staff
- ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #5: Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Farmland, Open Space Restoration in Floodprone Areas
- March* ◆ Draft Plan
- ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #6: Draft Plan Review and Needed Revisions
- April* ◆ Community Open House
- ◆ Steering Committee Meeting #7: Review of Open House Comments and Needed Revisions; Approval to Forward Revised Draft Plan to Planning Commission
- August* ◆ Planning Commission Public Meeting
- Verbal and written comments received. Summary of comments on Page 2.
- September* ◆ Public Meeting continued. Verbal and written comments received. Summary of comments on Page 3. Planning Commission revisions to Draft Plan. See Page 4.
- October* Revised Draft Plan distributed for 45-day review via letter to adjacent municipalities, school district, and Dauphin County
- Written comments received. Summary of comments attached.

2017

- March* ◆ Board of Commissioners Public Hearing
- ◆ Board revisions and adoption by resolution



Summary of Public Comments Made August 25, 2016

Request for **consideration of business uses, preferably industrial uses, for the Williams Farm**

Tom Williams, Annette Cassel-Means

Requesting **consideration of agrihoods** as a form of development that would include farmland conservation

Dave Zavoda

Opposed to more industrial uses, specifically trucks that impact bicycle safety

Bill Bosnyak

Requesting **consideration commercial uses for his property between the Shope Farm and Dickerson lands**

Robert Stile

Requesting zoning for the **Jednota Estates property** that would request in tax-generating development for the Township after sale of the property to a developer; industrial with buffer was mentioned.

Gary Matta and George Matta, for First Catholic Slovak Union

Expressing a desire for responsible growth, not a warehouse complex.

Linda Mehaffie

Suggesting land use alternatives to industrial:

...open space preservation

Lynda Doyle Bosnyak

... an agrihood.

Kimberly Vajda

...a 55+ community

Vickie deasy

...a combination of the above

Dave Zavoda

Indicating a **potential future request for industrial zoning for a distribution warehouse on a portion of the Kreider property**, not abutting Old Reliance; noting that such uses generate revenue at each sale, no children for the school district, and willingness to work with Township on needed improvements to North Union Street

Ron Lucas and Gary Frederick, for Hillwood

Opposed to warehouses based on personal research of impact to property values in Allentown area

Connie Fritz

Also opposed based on limited benefits to the Township people.

Donna High

Indicating that residents have been and will continue to be opposed to warehouses.

Stephen Artman, Dan Magaro, also members of the Steering Committee

Summary of Public Comments Made September 22, 2016

Request to **remove the Dickerson property from recommended commercial rezoning** because there is no longer a rezoning application

Nancy Avolese

Indicating **insufficient attention in the plan to road infrastructure needs.**

Indicating **support for Dickerson rezoning** based on the potential elimination of a high maintenance pump station and verbal support from PennDOT to work on required road improvements.

Expressing **a desire to keep open space but also** recognizing that the farm community is shrinking and preservation costs money.

Dan Wagner

Opposing recommendation of Dickerson rezoning

Sherry Santoro

Suggesting **agrihoods** as a hybrid agricultural and residential community development model.

Kimberly Vajda

Opposing warehouse/distribution center for the Williams property.

Ed Fox

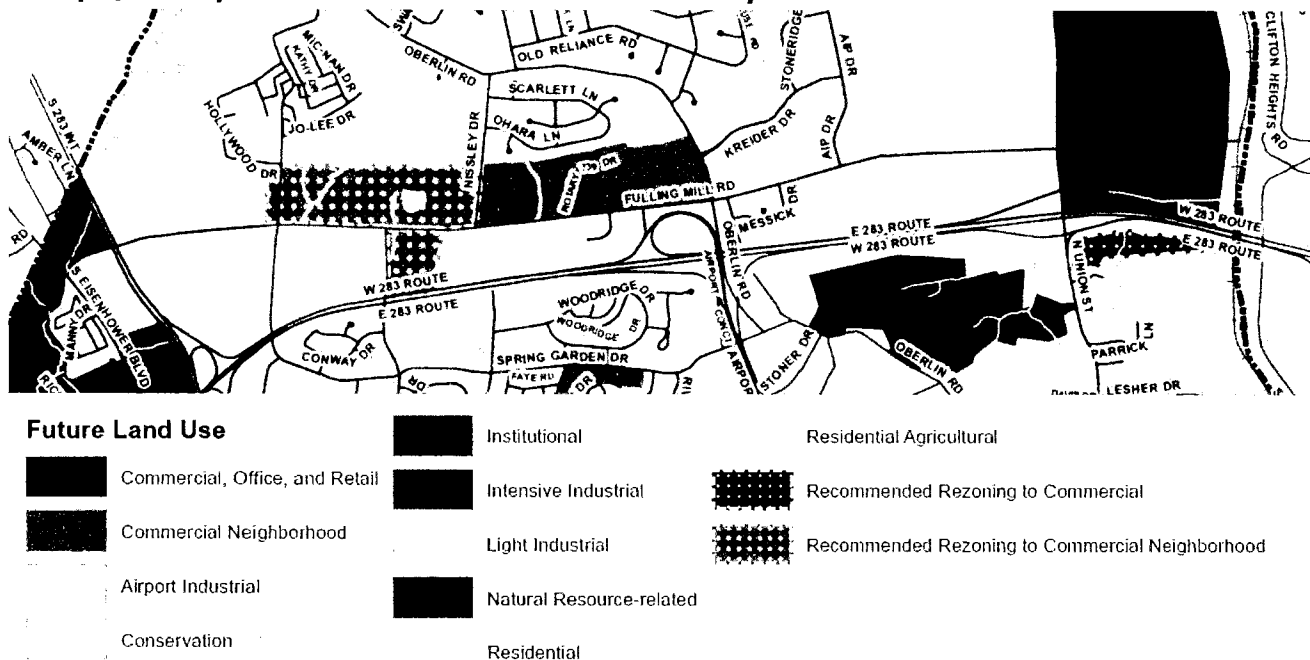
Kathy Gottshall, also a member of the Steering Committee

Planning Commission Revisions

The Planning Commission voted and approved these changes to the draft plan:

1. **Recommend rezoning of the Williams Farm** along the north side of Fulling Mill Road and the adjacent residentially zoned parcels along the west side of Longview Drive to neighborhood commercial at a depth consistent with the existing neighborhood commercial district on the east side of Nissley Drive and Hollywood Drive; add to Future Land Use map.
2. **Recommend rezoning of the Williams parcel** along the south side of Fulling Mill Road between Lumber Street and the existing Light Industrial Park district; add to Future Land Use map.

Excerpt from Sept 28, 2016 Revised Future Land Use Map



3. **Specify the extension of Spring Garden Drive** eastward from PA 441 to North Union Street as a recommendation.
4. **Specify improvement of the township-owned portion of North Union Street and other sub-standard township roads** through negotiations with developers to look at right-of-way and straightening of streets as a recommendation.

In addition, final required narrative sections of the plan were completed. These statements that the plan has been reviewed for compatibility with adjacent municipal development and land use planning and wilt county land use planning (they are not recommendations), and a short guidance section on plan review and maintenance.

Summary and Status of Review Comments on the Draft Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by Michelle Brummer, AICP, Comprehensive Plan consultant, revised January 19, 2017

Nancy Avolese, resident – October 8, 2016; summarized

1. The Planning Commission disregarded the desires expressed by citizens – namely continued open space, no more commercial development – and made recommendations that it wanted.
2. Planning for commercial use by rezoning the Dickerson area “will wipe out that neighborhood.” Continued development will change the character of our community, “a nice diverse mix of houses, small business, and commercial enterprises. Keeping the rural areas in the township will prove visionary and folks will want to move into Lower Swatara Township instead of out.”
3. The plan does not respond to citizens’ request for bike lanes.

Consultant: These comments reflect Ms. Avolese’s opinions. Her desire to maintain the current land use pattern is implied. The plan recommends improvements for bicyclists along select roadways as public projects for maintenance and improvement are programmed and through “trails for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity” created by developers.

Melinda Heicher-Logan, resident – October 11, 2016; full text

4. Thank you to the Planning Commission for addressing the distressed area of North Union Street. It’s time the forgotten residents’ needs are addressed in that area. This rezoning only makes sense in an area located immediately off of a major highway with high volumes of truck traffic. Generally, commercial zoning creates tax relief for township residents which is long needed.

Consultant: These comments reflect Ms. Logan’s opinions.

Linda Mehaffie, resident – October 16, 2016; full text

5. I recommend that we review our Zoning Classifications before we approve a comp plan so everyone understands what the land can be and not be used for.

Consultant: Ms. Mehaffie suggests that the public needs a better understanding of the current zoning.

From the First Catholic Slovak Union, property owner – October 26, 2016; summarized

6. Request that the current zoning of its property south of the PA Turnpike be modified from Residential Urban to Industrial I or Industrial Park IP.

Consultant: The property owner requests that the future land use be shown as industrial to support a future rezoning to an industrial-type district.

From the Dauphin County Planning Commission – November 7, 2016; as listed

7. As part of the assets and opportunities section on traffic crash rates, recommend to include crash analysis tabulations for township in HATS Tri-County Safety report (2010-2014).

Consultant: Crash rates were referenced by the Police Chief. They are not reported or analyzed in the plan.

8. In issues and challenges section, recommend to include that HATS has identified an Airport Connector access project in its long-range transportation plan (2027-2034), but exact access and alignments have not been determined yet.

Consultant: Text was added to pages 27-28 of the draft plan on Sept 30:

PennDOT/Harrisburg Area Transportation Study has identified an Airport Connector access project in its long-range transportation plan (long-term period, Years 2027-2034), but exact access point and alignments have yet to be determined. The estimated project cost is \$36 million.

9. As part of the assets and opportunities section under open space, recommend to cite Delaware and Lehigh Valley studies describing how open space may increase property values.

Consultant: Text was added to page 22 of the draft plan on Sept 30.

Both the Delaware Valley and Lehigh Valley have quantified the impact of open space protection in their regions with studies entitled Return on Environment. They assessed economically measurable impacts on natural systems, air quality, health, outdoor recreation, economic activity, and property values. The studies can be found here: ...

10. Action plan recommendation page numbers (see page 51) need to reference correct pages, for example, Land Use Actions begins on page 52, not 50.

Consultant: Page numbers will need to be updated prior to plan production and delivery.

From the Middletown Planning Commission – November 7, 2016; as listed

11. Suggests regional cooperation should be specified as planning with Middletown and Royalton Boroughs on
 - a. A zoning lexicon that has similar zoning districts, district purposes, and similar definitions of certain words within the zoning ordinance for all three municipalities.
 - b. MS4 requirement to achieve cost savings now as well as in the next 5 years in preparation for the next permit cycle.
12. Suggests Lower Swatara should consider downtown Middletown Borough as its regional hub or community center.
13. Suggests Swatara Township and Londonderry Township be listed as a trail partners.
14. Suggests Lower Swatara should consider higher density, smaller housing options to accommodate the residential needs of millennials, retiring Baby Boomers, and Latino and Asian households.

15. Suggests Lower Swatara should consider actions to become a Bike Friendly Community, e.g.
 - a. place shared lane markings or "sharrows" throughout the Township roadway system,
 - b. put up signs indicating that bicyclists can share the road, and
 - c. yellow-paint intersections to prevent parked vehicles blocking motorists sight distance.
 - d. adding fix-it stations near community parks, bike racks near commercial and or residential development.
16. Suggests Lower Swatara should
 - a. continue to require developers to install sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians.
 - b. use traffic-impact fees to not only remediate roadway deficiencies, but also install sidewalk along SR230 from Penn State Harrisburg's student housing buildings to the former "James Way Plaza."
17. Suggests there is need for discussion about connecting the Township or PSU to Middletown and Highspire.
18. Suggests the township's goal to convert properties within the floodplains to "open space" be expanded to list conversion to forest or meadow.

Consultant: These comments represent regional and township policy suggestions (12, 14, and 15) as well as specific recommendation edits and additions for the draft plan (11, 13, 16, 17, and 18).