

## **Marshall Township Implementable Comprehensive Plan**

Steering Committee No. 3 – March 23, 2020, 6:00 to 7:30pm, Zoom

### **WELCOME AND OVERVIEW**

Jenni Easton thanked everyone for their time and provided a project update. Since the Steering Committee's December meeting, Pashek+MTR:

- Conducted key person interviews and focus groups and summarized the results of those conversations
- Recruited panelists, advertised and staged the Land Use and Development Forum

The original project timeline envisioned wrapping up Phase One of two with presentations to Planning Commission and the public in late spring. Phase One progress is on track, though some adjustment could be needed to adapt public events to Covid-19 protocols. By the end of Phase One, we will have finalized the Key Issues around which the plan will be built.

### **REVIEW OF INPUT RECEIVED**

Jenni provided a brief recap of summaries emailed to the group in advance, including the following:

#### *Land Use and Development Forum*

The intent of this community webinar, held on the evening of February 25, was to create a common understanding of land use regulation and planning as they relate to the Township's western side, best practices and tools to consider. The event attracted 83 unique viewers. A full summary is available in the "Top Eight Takeaways" PDF, providing detail on the following:

- The Township can't officially "close its doors" to growth.
- The Township's Conservation Residential approach is generally consistent with best practices, though it's worth considering adjustments to most effectively implement land use policy.
- Zoning is the first line of defense, but there are many other tools for conserving open space.
- The Big Sewickley Creek Watershed study has insights that could benefit the comprehensive plan.
- With extended sewer infrastructure comes intensified development pressure.
- Drastically downzoning the western side would represent a considerable legal risk.
- Variances are less of a judgment call than you might think.
- The best basis for good land use regulation is good land use policy.

### *Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups*

Pashek+MTR has completed 16 one-on-one interviews and four focus groups to date, working from a stakeholder list based on committee and staff suggestions. The contacts include long-time residents, new residents, business owners, volunteer group representatives, professionals with Marshall Township insight (economic development, land development, sustainability), first responders and school district representatives. The Steering Committee received a PDF summary of this input. PMTR will schedule additional outreach as the key issues continue to develop.

Conversation most often included:

- Marshall Township assets, aspects of identity: How to define, reinforce?
- Route 910
- Land use, zoning and development: Find ways to keep green, rural landscape, especially on western side
- Community facilities: Given growth in young families, demand for recreation facilities exceeds supply
- Warrendale's potential as a town center
- Connectivity between neighborhoods
- Township services: Kudos and ideas for the future, communication

Other issues brought up included stormwater management and the diversity of housing supply.

### *Questionnaire*

Results of the Community Questionnaire were reviewed in detail at the December meeting of this group and circulated for a refresher. Among the 907 responses, the most important issues were:

- Balancing growth/development with preservation of existing rural character
- Finding solutions for traffic problems
- Increasing safe connections within and beyond neighborhoods for walking and biking
- Preserving and enhancing environmental quality

"Other comments" – Limit development was the most frequently mentioned comment

### *Steering Committee's List of Key Issues*

The first meeting of this group involved discussion of what each member thought should be important topics for the plan to address. Jenni briefly summarized this input, in which the following issues were commonly identified and framed in more detail that is available in the notes:

- Managing growth and development, tension of competing interests, growing inclusively and responsibly while preserving open space
- Community identity and sense of community
- Traffic and transportation: Route 910
- Connectivity

*Summary/Status of Previous Plan Recommendations*

Finally, Jenni reviewed major goals from previous planning efforts that may still have relevance for this plan. More detail is in the written summary.

- 2006 Comprehensive Plan:
  - Develop new signage/logo, gateway landscaping, engage business community in marketing
  - Update comprehensive sewage plan
  - Implement traffic calming measures
  - Encourage TOD, increase transit service
  - Develop Innovation Ridge (then Tech 21)
  - LEED standards in ordinances
- 2009 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space Plan
  - Master site plan for Knob Hill, considering additional facilities
  - Continue to develop a community-wide greenway and trail system and sustain the Township’s natural character
  - Adjust and enhance recreational program offerings
- 2017 Commodore Perry Regional Trail Master Plan
  - In Marshall, CPRT would include 3.6 miles of new sidewalks, trails and in-road facilities in addition to 5.2 miles existing. Secondary would include 5.8 miles of new facilities in addition to 5.8 miles that are complete.
  - High-priority projects: Paint/signage along Warrendale Connection west and center, sidewalk along Altmyer Connection, sidewalk/trail along Shenot Road

Major themes that emerged through various sources of input can be visualized as follows, though it’s worth recognizing that each source involved many other topics and points made. PMTR is relying on the Steering Committee to help parse through all input received to identify and characterize themes.

Input type	Issues						
Land Use and Development Forum	Manage growth on western side						
Key Person Interviews and Focus Groups	Manage growth on western side	Traffic on Route 910	Enhance assets, reinforce identity	Increase recreation facilities	Warrendale as town center	Connectivity	Broaden housing inventory
Community Questionnaire	Manage growth on western side	Traffic solutions	Enhance environmental quality			Connectivity	
Steering Committee Key Issues	Manage growth on western side	Traffic	Community identity			Connectivity	
Previous Plans (recommendations not yet accomplished)		Implement traffic calming	Signage/logo, gateways, marketing	Enhance recreation opportunities		Develop trails, greenways	

## KEY ISSUES SELECTION

The meeting's main focus was defining the core problems and issues coming through in all forms of input. The Implementable Comprehensive Plan, Jim explained, will be built around four Key Issues, which are pressing problems and great opportunities a community wants to address using its plan. The plan will include additional issues, but in order for the plan to be implementable, it must focus on and provide in-depth ideas for a limited number of highly important issues.

Jim proposed that land use and development had already risen to Key Issue status based on everything the committee has heard and said so far. He asked members of the committee to help determine what the other three Key Issues should be. Jim called on each committee member to ask for ideas, based on what we are hearing from the community. Jenni recorded ideas on a whiteboard (larger image attached separately):



In a "lightning round" of prioritization, Jim asked each committee member to identify up to three concepts from the discussion that were most important. In summary:

- David: Rural character, conservation as identity. Walkability, connections to the Township's great parks and trails. Development opportunities in the Northgate Drive area.
- Guy: Connectivity. Zoning and development, particularly related to Warrendale/Northgate. Balancing all of these elements, conflicting and connected pieces of this.
- Tom W.: Road improvements. Indoor sport court facilities. Pickleball is huge!

- Hugh: Identity, unified sense of community. Community recreation facilities. Topography as an opportunity (see Chatham Village).
- Heather: Connectivity, walkability. Sense of identity, community feel. Improving Warrendale.
- Lisa: Walkability. Our identity. Marshall-specific recreation facilities.
- Betty: Development of Northgate. Providing housing for seniors. Identity.
- Srinivas: Thanks for doing this! Traffic and speed concerns. Multi-use recreation facilities – tennis, volleyball, cricket, baseball.
- John: Northgate town center – tax credit, code enforcement. Unmet demand for recreation facilities. Connectivity.
- Francois: Reduce the minimum acreage for PRD. With zoning flexibility, Innovation Ridge could be a town center by itself. Access management on Route 910.
- Jeff: Senior housing, medium-priced housing. Development “910 creep.” Traffic.
- Bob: Traffic and land use along Route 910. Connectivity – trails, walking, biking. Commercial strategy.
- Tom M.: Preserving the Township’s rural feel. Connectivity. Sustainability.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Pashek+MTR will review and analyze comments from tonight’s discussion in order to provide a next-level assessment of Key Issues in advance of the Steering Committee’s next meeting.