

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

**March 27, 2017**

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

The March 27, 2017 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (Committee) of South Strabane Township came to order at 6:06 p.m. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road).

The following were present:

Steering Committee: David Fisher (Resident)  
Jack Keisling (Supervisor)  
Joseph Kopko, (Planning Commission)  
Dan Reitz (Resident)  
Cynthia Rossi (Resident)  
Robert Weber (Supervisor)  
William Ursic (Resident)

Absent: Michael Sherrieb (Township Engineer with KLH)  
Thomas Steele (Planning Commission)  
James Stewart (Zoning Hearing Board)

Also Present: Brandon Stanick (Township Manager)  
Carolyn Yagle (Planning Consultant with EPD)

There were four residents in attendance.

Committee Members introduced themselves to Mr. Reitz and an overview of the previous meeting was provided.

A discussion, facilitated by Ms. Yagle, took place among the Committee members regarding the issues and opportunities each member identified.

Mr. Kopko noted the need to identify people that the Township can use to get the word out about the comprehensive planning process. He also suggested input be solicited from corporations in the Township.

Mr. Keisling stated there is more activity in the real estate market lately where homes that were just built are now being sold.

Ms. Rossi shared several issues and opportunities with the group noting the planning for the protection of the Township's environmental features, historical resources, the preservation of "view scapes", and programs to assist in rehabilitation and/or preservation of older historic homes. She noted U.S. Rt. 40, the National Road corridor, is a National Historic Road park.

Mr. Weber suggested the Committee understand the location of the various midstream pipelines being laid throughout the Township as this will impact future development.

Mr. Fisher noted the Township should have, if not already in place, standards for commercial, retail and residential development. He inquired if the Township can control the scale of development to create "respective scales". Mr. Fisher also expressed interest in having a plan for the revitalization of neighborhoods.

Mr. Kopko noted the Patton neighborhood is an older neighborhood that is historic that could possibly benefit from a revitalization effort.

A discussion followed regarding property maintenance.

In addition, Mr. Fisher suggested the Township have certain landscaping and home occupation requirements in place as well.

A discussion concerning nursing homes and other personal care facilities followed.

Mr. Fisher also expressed interest for the Committee to consider mechanisms to protect green spaces. He noted that understanding park development, the existing facilities and future needs, would better quality of life for Township residents.

Mr. Fisher also expressed interest in identifying agricultural uses, both as an identity and occupational. He stated the Committee should also understand the effects of drilling on the environment and development.

Mr. Kopko noted that because physical commercial retail establishments have most likely peaked in the Township that it would be good to understand how we can plan for the future of commercial districts with attention to the tax base. He also noted that industrial districts will become areas for high tech companies in the future. He inquired what will the Township do to attract these businesses and what is the future for the older existing industrial businesses and the impact on the Township's tax base.

Ms. Rossi stated the Washington Mall is a blighted area and this is in the center of the Township. She inquired what should be the Township's center.

A discussion followed regarding the school district and the possibility of the Township meeting with the school district from time to time.

Ms. Rossi noted long wall mining, as well as conventional mining, has taken a large portion of the Township and subsidence will be a long-term issue affecting development. She expressed support for identifying these areas to avoid future catastrophes.

A discussion regarding parkland ensued. Ms. Yagle stated the industry practice is to now look at having parkland and facilities in specific areas and not base the amount of parkland on the population size of new development.

In response to a comment from Ms. Yagle, Ms. Rossi noted there are not many high-quality streams in the Chartiers watershed.

Mr. Weber stated midstream pipelines will need identified. He expressed his support for the neighborhood park concept. He also suggested the Township identify and plan for natural hazards.

Ms. Yagle confirmed the Township does not currently regulate the protection of natural resources. This would allow property owners to develop property more responsibly.

Mr. Weber suggested neighborhood integrity be a goal of development in the Township.

Ms. Rossi noted that home ownership is important for stability in the Township.

Mr. Ursic stated quality of life is important and litter along the highways and commercial properties does not look good. He suggested the Township communicate to commercial properties about property maintenance issues. Mr. Ursic also added that having a variety of recreational opportunities available to residents would contribute to quality of life.

Mr. Keisling suggested the Committee review and evaluate land appropriate for public service facilities. He noted the Insurance Service Office recently completed its analysis of the Township's Fire Department, which may provide valuable information for the Committee to consider. He also noted the group will want to understand the police coverage needed at buildout.

Mr. Stanick suggested the Township focus on planning for public services and facilities, as well as the overall idea of "connectivity" and plan to ensure that neighborhoods connect (via bike trail or road, etc.) and corridors are adequate for future development.

Mr. Reitz suggested the Committee consider planning for a town center concept.

Mr. Fisher suggested the Committee also explore intergovernmental cooperation opportunities with other municipalities and the State.

Ms. Yagle concluded the discussion and stated a summary of the meeting, as well as an updated issues and opportunities map will be distributed for next meeting. She stated the next meeting will focus on land use and housing.

Comments from the members of the public in attendance were received.

Mr. Richard Luketich suggested the Committee consider addressing the litter along Township roadways, as well as the condition of the former public works facility adjacent to the interstate.

As no further business came before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick  
Township Manager