

APPROVED

**SPRINGETTSBURY TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION  
APRIL 28, 2022**

**MEMBERS IN**

**ATTENDANCE:** Mark Swomley, Chairman  
George Dvoryak  
Don Bishop (via Zoom)  
Bob Cox  
Charles Wurster

**ALSO IN**

**ATTENDANCE:** Mark Hodgkinson, Township Manager  
Marion Hull, CDM Smith  
Randall Heilman, Director of Community Development  
Shane Rohrbaugh, Township Solicitor  
John Luciani, Township Engineer  
Dori Bowders, Director of Administrative Operations  
Terry Hummel, Director of Finance  
Patrick Walsh, First Capital Engineering  
Abby Gibb, Communications Manager  
Sue Sipe, Stenographer

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Swomley called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

**2. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Discussion – Update of Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances**

Mr. Hodgkinson stated the work session is a Q&A to allow everyone to think about the process, express what they feel is important, develop topics and other items.

Ms. Hull displayed the schedule which she noted is an outline of tasks for updating the Comprehensive Plan and the Ordinances.

Ms. Hull stated the Comp Plan will include an existing conditions analysis, i.e., base mapping and talking to stakeholders within the Township, including some on the economic development and housing side. In terms of engaging a Steering Committee, she felt the approach taken previously by the Steering Committee to have a mix of people from the Board, the Planning Commission, the Zoning Hearing Board, and major stakeholders in the community was beneficial. The process allowed gaining feedback from the general community while also keeping everyone informed about the process as it goes on. Ms. Hull referred to the previous Comp Plan prospective, noting a mailed survey was sent in the past to residents. For this revision, she felt it will be more cost effective with a higher response rate, by

conducting a community survey online. Ms. Hall also recommended preparing an outline of draft strategies to be evaluated by the Steering Committee and overall community before creating a plan.

Ms. Hull stated she wanted to get feedback from the Board regarding the content of the plan, noting there are specific items to include in the Comp Plan, i.e., the Township recently completed a transportation plan from which components could be added to the Comp Plan, as well as any other transportation challenges that have been re-thought which would need additional work.

Regarding the Galleria reuse strategy, Ms. Hull indicated a major element important for the Comp Plan is what happens at the Galleria in the future specifically and more broadly economic development for the Township overall.

Ms. Hull asked the Board to identify other key planning issues for the Comp Plan:

Chairman Swomley commented traffic is a big issue the Township face. He cited Davies Drive poised to be completed, as well as the Mt. Rose/I-83 intersection, which was redone, also, the upcoming reconstruction of I-83 towards Route 30 planned by PennDOT.

Mr. Luciani stated on North Hills Road there is a median expected to be installed.

Other Issues:

- Residents who are opposed to a completion of Pleasant Valley Road but there is an opportunity to address a route that gets emergency services across the Township.
- Concern with the Galleria mall site which is one of the largest pieces of commercial real estate – with the casino does that change what the opportunities are for that tract of land?
- With the push for more apartment housing and with alternative workspaces does that present an opportunity at the mall site for a high-rise in the location of one of the former anchor stores?
- Housing in general throughout the community – what is appropriate – how to protect open space lands?
- Stormwater management projects underway – one completed by the wastewater treatment plan with more of those ongoing throughout the community.
- Parks and recreation – work has been done on several parks – how do we make the township a better place for residents after hours?
- Regarding the economic development piece, looking at the zoning map today to determine if there are opportunities for development of more industrial space to meet the needs of any reshoring which may transpire over future decades for industries looking to locate operations.
- In looking at the Township in areas with mixed use zoning and Town Center Overlay, identify those challenging locations where the property is vacant and determining if the zoning is appropriate, creating a comprehensive view of all zoning. Regarding multi-tenant housing demand in the region, what does the residential complexion of the Township need to be and are there density factors to be determined.
- Old housing stock – is there anything to be considered when determining the age of housing and are there maintenance issues which could involve the zoning perspective?

Ms. Hull agreed all those items are critical issues. She noted the last time the Comp Plan was done it was purely a land use, transportation planning approach. She would like to include an economic planner on

this project to dig deep into the economic opportunities they may have today and might expect over the next 10 years as well as a strong housing needs analysis. Considering the changing market for housing, the Township does not have the mix of housing stock they need to maintain people through their entire life cycle, i.e., young professionals, families, retirees, etc. It is important as a part of the plan to understand what the market is in this location with the mix of developed and undeveloped lands, in addition to redevelopment opportunities and green space opportunities. She remarked they need to determine what are the realistic immediate near term and long-term market opportunities and build plan recommendations and a new zoning framework around that.

Ms. Hull stated her current company, CDM Smith is a full range firm with economic planners on staff. She noted much of their work is focused on benefit cost analysis for various infrastructure investments. She proposed bringing on a sub-consultant who has deep experience in Pennsylvania and the Northeast on community market analyses, economic developments, and housing strategies. She recommended Urban Partners who have this experience, are used to working in established communities with infill opportunities and switching out obsolete uses into new market opportunities. This would involve rehabilitation of a building or razing a building and starting over. Infilling new developing, i.e., hotels and other commercial uses or industrial uses, warehousing and transportation are the biggest trends they are seeing in industrial kinds of development currently. With Route 30 coming through the Township there are marketing opportunities for those options. What do you want to do to leverage those further, versus holding out for true high value manufacturing opportunities?

Discussion was held regarding the timeframe for the Comp Plan shown as an 18-month process on the schedule. Ms. Hull indicated it may be closer to 24 months for completion. She noted the 18-month schedule is if everything goes perfectly, i.e., public hearings do not cause substantive changes which would require re-advertising for a second public hearing. Furthermore, the adoption process can be lengthy. The Comp Plan will have a 45-day review process before it can be adopted, and changes made after the 45-day review process will necessitate restarting the clock. Zoning also requires a 30-day review. She determined 24 months for completion is a realistic schedule.

Discussion was held regarding the Town Center Overlay. It was recognized there is the need to evaluate the Town Center Overlay in terms of current conditions and changes to the municipalities planning code, which have made it easier to do some of the design base features. It is also necessary to understanding what is important in terms of the detailed design standards and determining the simplest strategy to get those in there. To the extent this can be done through a stand-alone district rather than an overlay, so all regulations are in the same place.

Mr. Bishop pointed out the lack of entertainment in the Town Center Overlay. It was noted the casino is a source of entertainment in the Township. Is there an opportunity to use the casino as an anchor for other entertainment uses?

Mr. Cox stated in reference to growth in the Township, two of the largest vacancies in the Township from a retail standpoint have been occupied. One is Raymour & Flanigan Furniture Store taking over the former Wolf Furniture building which is approximately 60,000 sq. ft and the other is Wellspan Health occupying the vacate Kmart Store which is approximately 70,000 sq. ft. He also noted the casino is anticipating a restaurant/entertainment use in the upper floor of the former Sears store at the Galleria.

Ms. Hull commented on the current state of malls which continue to struggle. Mr. Cox noted when walking through the Galleria mall recently he counted 31 vacancies within the mall.

It was noted there is a four-unit retail strip center at the corner of Memory Lane and Whiteford Road which has been vacant for several years pre-Covid.

Discussion was held regarding zoning concerns. Mr. Luciani mentioned there have been several conditional uses which necessitate advertising for a hearing. He noted conditional uses within the Town Center Overlay gives the Board latitude to work with the developer to provide an opportunity to move quickly although it also involves a large amount of time. He suggested to review the process to determine if it is working satisfactorily. He noted most if not all the cases are related to properties in the Town Center Overlay.

Other zoning issues mentioned;

- Variances to allow residents on small lots to own chickens
- In law quarters in a separate structure on the property
- Airbnb
- Sign ordinance – animated signs
- Uber
- Solar - Windmills – battery, generators
- Electric – Hydrogen vehicles in terms of what is the expectation to provide charging stations
- Definitions for gasoline/service stations as well as automobile showrooms
- Burying utilities

Ms. Hull stated this is all good information to help scope the Comp Plan.

Mr. Heilman asked about the composition of the former Steering Committee members. He offered to reach out to those members to let them know the Township is looking to re-engage the Comp Plan process and determine if those members are willing to participate again as this effort begins.

Mr. Hodgkinson indicated they will curate the list and send it to the Board for review.

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

**CHAIRMAN SWOMLEY ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 6:46 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Doreen K. Bowders  
Secretary

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