

**Countywide Advisory Team
Meeting #8 Summary**

The eighth meeting of the Countywide Planning Advisory Team (PAT) for *Cultivating Community: A Plan for Union County's Future* was held on Thursday, September 11th, 2008 at the Carriage Corner Restaurant in Mifflinburg.

I. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Shawn McLaughlin of the Union County Planning Commission at 7:00 PM.

II. Public Outreach Activities Update

Mr. McLaughlin announced the September 25th panel discussion that will be held at 7:00 PM at the Carriage Corner. The purpose of the program is to provide municipal officials and residents access to professionals from around the Commonwealth that have planning and community development experience. The panelists will be James Cowhey from Lancaster County Planning Commission, John Trant, Jr. from Cranberry Township, and Bill Fontana of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. McLaughlin also noted that there will be a program on October 21st at Bucknell University's Forum Room in the Elaine Langone Center featuring Reid Ewing who will be giving a talk titled "*Growing Cooler*". Mr. Ewing's presentation will focus on the relationship between how communities develop and energy consumption and sustainability. Mr. Ewing is with the National Center for Smart Growth at the University of Maryland and has authored several books for the American Planning Association and Urban Land Institute.

III. Future Land Use Map Update

Mr. Rouse, Mr. Kerns, and Mr. McLaughlin presented an update on future land use mapping based on the two meetings held with municipal officials in July. In the Eastern Planning area one change was that Kelly Crossroads was changed from a secondary growth area (Village Mixed Use designation) to a Hamlet, since sewer service will not be extended to that area. The growth area around West Milton was then enlarged to compensate for this. The other major changes were in White Deer Township where they significantly enlarged the growth areas around New Columbia and along the White Deer Pike west of White Deer village. In East Buffalo Township the southern portion of the proposed growth area was reduced and exchanged for land that is being developed in the Fairfield Road portion of the township and where infrastructure already exists.

In the Western Planning area a few minor changes were made in and around Laurelton. The areas designated for Village Mixed Use were shifted to reflect where development was most likely to occur given property ownership and infrastructure issues.

In the Central Planning area White Springs was changed from a secondary growth area (Village Mixed Use) to a Hamlet and the lines were shifted around New Berlin as tradeoffs were made between the borough and township. There were some minor changes in West Buffalo Township to reflect existing conditions near Mifflinburg. In Buffalo Township Mazeppa was changed from Village Mixed Use to Hamlet and there was a proposal to have strip development along PA Route 45 from Mifflinburg to the East Buffalo Township line. After considerable discussion that

proposal was withdrawn and a compromise was reached; however, the situation still remains fluid.

IV. Review and Discussion of Draft Plan Elements

Cultural, Historic, & Recreation Resources

Mr. Kerns led the discussion and review of Chapter 10 on Cultural, Historic, and Recreation Resources. Mr. Bowman suggested the Mifflinburg Buggy Museum be added to the first page and Nada Gray stated that the New Berlin Historical Society and the various groups working on preservation in Mifflinburg should be recognized. It was also noted by Ms. Hagenbaugh that on Page 6 the Elias Church is being rehabilitated with a state grant.

Ms. Gallagher noted that there should be parkland or open space within developments. There were some questions raised about scenic waterway designations, who would be involved in providing education about historic resources and preservation, and how the park and recreation acreages were calculated. Mr. Showers felt that some of New Berlin's parkland might have been overlooked that is owned by the community association and the Legion. Mr. Bowman also felt the totals for Mifflinburg might be incorrect. Ms. Pearson discussed the Lewisburg Area Recreation Authority's role with regard to programs and facility development such as the rail trail. Mr. Auman mentioned that SEDA-COG is investigating the possibility of a regional trail authority.

Several participants asked if private recreation facilities and lands were included in the calculations. Mr. McLaughlin responded that non-publicly owned parks and recreation resources were not counted because some of them are not open to the public for use and/or the owner may have requested that it not be included. There is also a greater likelihood that some private spaces might be converted to non-park use in the future unless the property is subject to an easement or deed restriction.

Community Facilities

Ms. Pearson noted that community spaces, senior centers, and recycling facilities were not addressed. Ms. Pearson felt shared spaces such as schools and other small neighborhood centers should be incorporated into future plans and there should be mention of indoor recreation facilities that are in the planning stage like the proposed YMCA. Ms. Gallagher asked about impact fees. Mr. McLaughlin noted that unlike other states Pennsylvania only authorizes two types of impact fees, transportation and recreation and parks.

Mr. Fetterman commented that based on what he has heard recently that some residents in the county might take exception to the statement in the plan about the state police not responding quickly. Ms. Moyer felt in the western part of the county this was true because police response takes a long time.

Mr. Showers asked if natural gas, in light of the aggressive gas exploration and drilling in counties to our north, would be something Union County could take advantage of in terms being a resource for heating and energy. Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Pearson said that even with all the new sources of gas the price is not projected to drop and it will not have a significant impact on supply because worldwide demand continues to increase. Another factor is the higher cost involved with extracting the gas from this particular geologic formation.

Ms. Moyer felt that recommendations for the hospital and library should be county wide actions rather than for the eastern region.

Transportation

Chris Williams from McMahon Transportation provided an overview of the transportation element and said the plan is looking at transportation choices to accommodate the various travel modes (walking, vehicular, transit).

Ms. Pearson felt that strengths that could be listed are the Lewisburg Borough Traffic Committee and the East Buffalo Township committee that is working on bicycle and pedestrian issues.

Mr. Bowman felt that PA Route 45 issues were overlooked and the report focused mainly on Route 15 and the Eastern Planning area. He also questioned what geometric deficiencies meant. Mr. Williams explained that a geometric deficiency is a design element that does not meet engineering standards. It could be a sight distance issue, inadequate turning radius, or a multitude of other design factors. Mr. Bowman recommended the term be explained or other wording used that people would understand.

Mr. Fetterman asked if a fare based transit system existed. It was noted by others that there is a bus stop in Lewisburg but USTA has the only local transit program which is fare based but unaffordable for those that do not qualify for the reduced rates. He also asked if the problem for bicycles is the lack of shoulders or a lack of paved shoulders. Mr. Fetterman stated widening roads to accommodate horse and buggy and bicycle traffic is counter to what the PA DEP is trying to do with less impervious coverage and storm water runoff. Mr. McLaughlin said it does create more paved surface and runoff.

Ms. Wheeler felt that pedestrian issues exist along all of the US 15 corridor in the Lewisburg area. Ms. Pearson commented that a web-based ride share or community car share in addition to having more walking and bicycling opportunities available would help the transportation problem.

V. Comprehensive Planning Schedule

At approximately 9:15 PM the meeting concluded. There will not be an October meeting. The next PAT meeting will be on November 13, 2008.