

Comprehensive Plan Committee/BOC

Future Character Area Map Discussion

Meeting Summary

Date:	Tuesday, January 21, 2025
Time:	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM
Platform:	In-Person & Virtual
Invitees:	Comprehensive Plan Committee & Project Team
	Michael Baker International

Welcome and Introduction

MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL

- Kathy Wyrosdick – in-person
- Porter Stevens – in-person
- Nick Sisco – in-person

MANHEIM TOWNSHIP STAFF

- Anthony Vallone
- Andy Bowman

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMITTEE/BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Mark L James
- Hollis S Butterworth
- Nathan Van Name
- Roy E Baldwin
- Michel Gibeault
- Paula G Landis
- David E Wood
- Mary Jo Huyard
- Stacey Morgan-Brubaker
- Carol Gifford
- John C Bear

Welcome

- Anthony kicked off the meeting and introduced the topic of the day's discussion.
- Anthony passed the meeting off to Kathy so that she could lead the main discussion.

Future Character Area Map Overview

- Kathy introduced the topic and explained the concept of future character areas vs traditional future land use maps. Also introduced reinvestment areas and the importance of considering/prioritizing redevelopment areas.

- We're not proposing anything substantially different from past FLU maps but will look at some underdeveloped areas that should be considered for taller, mixed use, more urban buildings.
- Linked zoning analysis to the FLU map; zoning changes would help carry out future vision displayed in future character area map.
- Discussed the link to poor zoning/land use and transportation and congestion issues. Folks who can't afford to live here will move outside the township and drive in on pikes.
- Also discussed fiscal sustainability; single-family homes pay less in taxes than they cost in public services. Need to have better mix of uses and higher density to have more sustainable tax income. Currently dipping into reserve funds to pay for capital projects, more sustainable land uses will help the Township avoid having to make drastic changes in the future.
- Ultimately, we're proposing peeling back and rethinking zoning to encourage the right type of development that is more affordable "missing middle" housing.
- What is LERTA?
 - Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)
 - Not something the Township can do alone, must do it in coordination with the School District and County.
 - Township used it for the Stiehl Silk Mill.
 - Lancaster City used it a lot to revitalize their downtown area.
 - This will be included as a list of possible tools the Township can use to incentivize development (grants, infrastructure/road improvements, etc).
- Nick Sisco gave overview of Character Area Map/Reinvestment Areas
- Kathy walked the group through the draft reinvestment areas, how they can increase the amount of housing.
- CPC Comments
 - Urban reinvestment area does not include the scattered islands of Township that exist in Lancaster City
 - Belmont and Golden Triangle shopping centers are very different places, Belmont is brand new and will likely not be redeveloped anytime soon.
 - We mainly looked at where there were major parking lots, not just the age of the building; these could be locations where new buildings could be added.
 - There are also lots of single-family homes along the roadway that are no longer being used as homes.
 - Village Reinvestment Areas
 - Does the location of each area take into account historic structures?
 - We can advocate for a historic assessment of the Township.
 - One does exist for the Township, taken from the County, several decades old.

- The description indicates that village areas would have more density than suburban areas, that is not the type of development that is found currently in our villages, or what village residents want.
 - That is more referring to height/bulk standards rather than density, we can amend descriptions to better communicate that.
- We are struggling with how we can sell this comprehensive plan, especially as people are saying that development should stop and they are tired of traffic congestion and losing greenspace.
 - Folks are cynical about government, cynical about the Township.
 - Folks don't want more development, don't want more traffic.
 - How can we propose more development at intersections/roads that are already failing?
 - We need to explain the reasoning behind what we're proposing; explain the costs of doing nothing, how that will impact traffic, taxes, other quality of life impacts.
 - We need to have specific actions that we can offer to the public that will implement the concepts, so we can have something concrete.
 - Need the language to explain to folks why redevelopment is necessary, why housing is necessary, etc.
 - We can also pull back on what is proposed in the comp plan, and focus on making smaller changes limited to trails, bike lanes, minor changes to zoning. It is ultimately up to the Township to decide how bold they want to be.
- We can make housing more affordable, but it is making housing more affordable for folks moving from outside the region from DC, New York, etc that have deep pockets and can out-bid locals. How can we emphasize affordability that prioritizes residents?
 - Housing cost burdens disproportionately impacting renters, need additional housing for them.
 - Folks are wanting to downsize, but there aren't places for them to downsize to, that's what reinvestment areas are for.
 - We're not letting the market do what it needs to do, we aren't going to get more detached single family housing; that is done.
- Going from housing ownership to renting is hard.
 - The only choice for many people is to move into retirement communities, not a lot of people want to do that.
 - What about single level homes for retirees/downsizing? There are few communities, and they are expensive.
 - Some folks would be fine with multi-story buildings.
 - Condos could also be option for maintaining homeownership while downsizing, especially around the train station. Condos could be a great way to preserve ownership.

- There are Many different models for ownership/multi-family, rental schemes, community land trusts.
- The Fruitville Pike corridor/Suburban Reinvestment Area is very similar to the Golden Triangle, with lots of old buildings, huge parking lots, etc,
 - Those parking lots are a holdover from old zoning that required a lot of parking, a lot of that has been eliminated from D-6 overlay
- Manheim Township has one of the more complicated zoning ordinances, important to peel back layers/simplify.

NEXT STEPS

- CPC/BOC will meet at least two more times.
 - February
 - March – hopefully have draft in hand.
- Adoption would begin in the summertime.