Plumstead Forward Comprehensive Plan

WORKSHOP 1B FACILITATOR NOTES

Housing – 8 participants

Top-Five Community Values

1. **Our actions are sustainable, and we are stewards of the environment. (6)**
2. We're safe and secure. (5)
3. We are mentally and physically healthy. (1)
4. We have opportunity for education and lifelong learning. (0)
5. We have job and business opportunities. (0)
6. There's cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity. (2)
7. We are resilient to change in the world. (2).
8. We engage with the process and come together to solve problems. (2)
9. **We value open space and a rural lifestyle. (6).**
10. We're connected to the community. (4)
11. **We have a sense of appreciation for history. (8)**
12. We value our privacy and property and respect our neighbors. (4)
13. We are open to new ideas and innovation. (0)
14. Other. (0)

Concepts and Perceptions

- Is housing attainability in conflict with reality?
- A strong desire to preserve quality of life (and the existing landscape).
- A need to develop a strategy for discouraging sprawl.
- DEP and other regulatory requirements can be burdensome on housing.
- Township only has power to control density level and location.
    - Zoning currently allows for a variety of housing types

Opportunities/areas for improvement

- A renewed focus on walkability as it relates to housing provided.
- Can we improve homeowner occupied homes within the village?
    - Incentivize improvements through some type of programming?
- Should pay careful consideration to what is approved.
    - Can we have more conversations with developers with respect to adhering to neighborhood character?

Priorities

- Traffic management
- Better understanding of state of infrastructure and what existing housing stock ties into public sewer
- What is the impact of housing on emergencies services?
    - Should a contribution fee be considered?
- Need to preserve quality of life and real estate values.

- Should be discouraging sprawl.
- Preserving the character of the township.
- Maintaining lower property taxes.
- Need for “missing middle housing”
- We need to continue to grow at a level that encourages homeownership for younger generations.
- Prioritize preserving farmland and open space.
- Should seek to better navigate complex regulations and courts.
- The land development process should be considered a mechanism of township control.
- Consider mixed-use within a village setting.

Preservation – 16 participants

Half of the participants are local farmers, the rest included historic preservation architectural designer, expert who focuses on farmland education, and township staff who worked at Land Preservation department. Preservation topic mostly focuses on farmland/land preservation.

Top-Five Community Values

1. **Our actions are sustainable, and we are stewards of the environment. (11)**
2. We’re safe and secure. (6)
3. We are mentally and physically healthy. (3)
4. We have opportunity for education and lifelong learning. (0)
5. We have job and business opportunities. (2)
6. There’s cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity. (2)
7. We are resilient to change in the world. (0).
8. We engage with the process and come together to solve problems. (5)
9. **We value open space and a rural lifestyle. (25).**
10. We’re connected to the community. (4)
11. **We have a sense of appreciation for history. (10)**
12. **We value our privacy and property and respect our neighbors. (12)**
13. We are open to new ideas and innovation. (3)
14. Other. (0)

Introductions and dotmocracy

- **Concepts of Preservation:** preservation includes tangible (land, farmland, open space and natural resources) and intangible (art, culture, history, food, music, traditions and memories) resources.
- **Reasons people chose top-five values in terms of preservation:**
    - Rural lifestyle and open space are the character and signature of Plumstead, people don’t want to lose it.
    - Residents want to have sustainable farmland and nature.
    - The history of Plumstead was surrounded by historic villages with farmland scenery.
    - New developments should respect the privacy of the neighbors, the buffer between new development and existing properties should be more thoughtful.
    - Residents hope there is a collaboration between government agency and people to preserve farmlands that doesn’t meet State preservation threshold (< 50 acres)

Name one hope and one concern

Hope

- Preserve more open space and farmland
- Hope there are more people with expertise will participate into land preservation
- It is possible to reconstruct and recreate historic buildings
- Preservation contiguous and not lose context
- Hope County has policy to help land preservation
- Honor “319 Program”
- Hope to preserve rural atmosphere
- Live in development but appreciate farmland and open space
- Farmland preservation education

Concern

- Over-developed
- Lose historic village preservation and its context
- There is not enough funding for farmland preservation
- Difficult to have less than 50-acre farmlands
- Traffic
- Not sharing information
- Not knowing your neighbors

What does preservation mean to you?

- Sustainable farming
- Farmland/land preservation
- Property value
- Scenery

Strengths and assets

- Community service
- Road system (infrastructure)
- Unique character
- Historic village and farmland landscape
- Geographic amenities
- Nature beauty
- Wildlife

Obstacles

- Lack of historic preservation committee
- Lack of regulations and expertise
- Need professional to negotiate with big developers

Priorities

- Inform people with clear and timely information
- Find funds to preserve the land
- Need laws to allow people to preserve farmland

Township Services – 5 participants

Top-Five Community Values

1. Our actions are sustainable, and we are stewards of the environment. (3)
2. **We're safe and secure. (4)**
3. We are mentally and physically healthy. (1)
4. We have opportunity for education and lifelong learning. (0)
5. We have job and business opportunities. (0)
6. There's cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity. (0)
7. We are resilient to change in the world. (1).
8. **We engage with the process and come together to solve problems. (4)**
9. **We value open space and a rural lifestyle. (4).**
10. We're connected to the community. (1)
11. We have a sense of appreciation for history. (2)
12. We value our privacy and property and respect our neighbors. (3)
13. We are open to new ideas and innovation. (2)
14. Other. (0)

Discussion Notes

- Snow plows are important, together with informing residents of plowing process and schedules.
- Township services need to be well communicated to residents
- EMS is very important and it needs to be kept efficient
- Township administration is important.
    - Leadership needs to be able to work together.
    - Manager with supervisors and admin with residents.
    - An openness to working with township administration among residents. Needs to be flexible with changes and issues.
- There is a need for having enough staff and volunteers to provide key services.
    - Volunteers need to have adequate training.
- There is a need to balance safety, security, and programs for residents (e.g. free mulch program)
- Staffing and volunteer issues due to external factors (e.g. housing costs specifically)
- Make sure resources are being used.
    - E.g. some parks are not being used, but resources are still being used to maintain them.
- More information should be sent out to public about parks, so they know what resources are available.
- Creating new ways to get people to use township facilities (e.g. scavenger hunt in parks before trick-or-treating)
- Important to understand that fire is volunteer.
- Coffee with cop event is good, helps. Possibly touch a truck event?

- Quarterly newsletter not frequent enough – cannot adequately promote events
- Website needs to be more clear as to what services are provided.

Parks and Recreation – 12 participants

Community Values

1. Our actions are sustainable, and we are stewards of the environment. (2)
2. We're safe and secure. (6)
3. **We are mentally and physically healthy. (13)**
4. We have opportunity for education and lifelong learning. (0)
5. We have job and business opportunities. (0)
6. There's cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity. (6)
7. We are resilient to change in the world. (0).
8. We engage with the process and come together to solve problems. (2)
9. We value open space and a rural lifestyle. (5).
10. **We're connected to the community. (9)**
11. We have a sense of appreciation for history. (2)
12. We value our privacy and property and respect our neighbors. (6)
13. We are open to new ideas and innovation. (0)
14. Other. (9)

Key Issues and Questions

- Keeping parks up to date
- Are parks representative of the community (age appropriate, etc)?
- Should we be pursuing new ventures (e.g. pickleball)?
- Are the available resources being utilized in the best possible way?
- Are parks being used for and by Plumstead residents?
- Is there an equitable distribution of parks?
- Are parks safe for kids and elderly residents? Are they clean? Are doggy bags provided?

Strengths/Assets

- Township has great open areas and takes care of them well
- Programs – e.g. summer camps and Santa run.
- Township works well with other organizations.
- Generally good access to parks

Opportunities for improvement

- Splash pad
- Age appropriate parks
- Park connections
- Need new safe playground equipment
- More softball fields
- Pickleball should be offered
- More sidewalks

- More bike racks and other facilities
- Hiking trails
- Owl's nest underutilized
- Gardenville fields could be used for softball
- A dog park would be nice

Overall priorities

- Softball fields
- Splash pad
- Pickleball
- Age-appropriate activities at parks
- Lighting