

Transportation and Land Use

Tuesday January 19, 2010 Public Forum Summary

Meeting Format

The publicly advertised meeting was held to support dialog between the eight sub-committees, to allow them to inform each other about the status of their visioning and development of Goals and Objectives and to inform the general public on their progress. A representative of each committee presented their ideas to-date and then other committee members and the public were given an opportunity to give comments or ask questions to the group.

General Summary

Below is a brief summary of the key points made by each committee. Complete written summaries will be available at the beginning of February from the individual committees.

Housing

- Provide a gradient of housing opportunities within the Township to support a variety of age groups and economic statuses; need to support 20-somethings and elderly population; need more workforce and disabled housing as well; need to focus on affordable housing – what is affordable for Pittsfield Township; want people to be able to live and age here; need homes that are appropriate for senior needs – i.e. ranches, single stories.
- Concentrate development on key areas of the Township with infrastructure and transit opportunities; infill and redevelopment of single family areas; not new tract developments; redevelop large underutilized parking areas; capitalize on existing services area; focus resources on currently development area.
- Allow for greater density within these key areas.
- Preserve the open space within other areas of our Township.
- Support and encourage sustainable/green practices in housing; green development in new or retrofitted homes.
- Support greater housing density along current transportation routes.
- True mixed use development like Plymouth Green in A2; needs to be aesthetically pleasing; linked to non-motorized routes; become a destination place.
- Revitalize older homes (Oak Park area).
- Allow accessory dwelling units.

Arts, Culture and Leisure

- Tap the local art and culture resources that we have in the Township; celebrate unique talent in Pittsfield Township and identify local talent.
- Create a sense of place – inviting atmosphere that builds on identity of the Township.
- Establish gateway corridors with a distinct purpose.
- Iconic public art that becomes part of identity; use historic structures for identity.
- Utilize existing spaces; particularly historical resources.



- Create destinations within Township that become centers.
- Celebrate cultural diversity of Township; highlight diversity of everyone.
- Economically viable arts community in Township – sustain arts community because it gives back to community.
- Seek funding for arts.

Community Infrastructure

- Provide highest and best quality services to community.
- Add future development to existing developed areas first.
- Must maintain what is built already.
- Create urban pockets to reduce service costs – concentrated resources.
- Platt Rd. Greenway – use as a model for future greenways/pathways; locate between uses to strategically to reduce needs for driving.
- Expand transit services in higher density areas (urban pockets); expand non-motorized system to enhance transportation system.
- Expand parks system to better serve population (i.e. pocket parks).
- Make quality library services available to everyone.
- Consider where population will live/work and concentrate infrastructure and funding accordingly; direct future capital improvements as well.

Economic Development

- Agriculture is an important part of economic development strategy and needs to be included; support non-traditional and small businesses.
- Enhance current businesses and help them be successful; understand what they do as a business.
- Work with businesses to build a better relationship with Township.
- Marketing, business retention needs to take place.
- Focus development to particular areas.
- Support State Street area and business development.
- Entrepreneurship – support and provide for their needs (housing, business space, play, etc.).

Open Space and Natural Resources

- Our community character needs to be protected with appealing view sheds, such as the glacier marsh area to the south of Michigan Ave going over the approaching Fosdick Rd. at the R/R overpass.
- It is inevitable that some agricultural land will be lost to development. It is important to understand where the lands that are most productive and suited to agricultural operations are located and implement policies that provide additional protection (i.e. PA 116, tax reduction). The key is to identify the prime tillable grounds vs. others that are just OK, thus a priority approach can be used as a guide and an Agriculture Strategy set into place.
- Address storm water issues as they affect development.
- Focus future efforts on the development of our currently owned open spaces and parks.

- Acquisition should be focused on properties that offer connections to existing parks and open spaces or connect our most developed areas together with greenways.
- Construct more trails, greenways, linkages to natural and green areas.
- Promote pedestrian and bike paths as roads grow; require sidewalks to all new developments.
- Need to fully protect natural features as development occurs; require natural areas be set aside in developments.
- Property values tend to increase when green areas and natural features are adjacent to properties.

Green

- Township should lead through example and support sustainable practices; take on greening projects to start.
- Township should be more active in leveraging resources for sustainability.
- Create land use development patterns to create more transportation options and mixed use areas; become more transit ready based on zoning districts.
- Promote natural resources protection on local and regional level; update local land use standards and create design standards that encourage green development.
- Work with adjacent communities to sync adjacent land uses.
- Limit expansion of utilities in rural areas.
- Need to provide education about sustainability and sustainable practices.
- Share best practices with other communities.
- Encourage sustainability as economic development and assist businesses with becoming greener.
- Provide developer incentives for greening/sustainable practices.

Special Community Input

- Get people excited about input and seek their input.
- Partner with schools to get youth input – go directly to schools
- Provide non-traditional methods of gathering input; work with human services agencies and create partnerships.
- Do a community road show to get information out to different groups; go to other venues to get word out about Township projects.
- Use other completed plans to supplement Pittsfield plan (i.e. WATS).

Transportation and Land Use

- Identify land uses that compliment existing land uses.
- Provide additional modes of travels; provide safety and mobility with transportation options; have all needs met for housing, transportation, etc. for all people.
- Maintain viable open space.
- Protect and enhance existing residential areas (implement service boundaries).
- Access management – incorporate current plans.

- Create and enhance access and transportation connections between all land uses

Themes

Generally all the subcommittees agreed that the Township should consider focusing on the following:

- Supporting sustainable/green practices and encouraging green development and land use.
- Focusing development in areas that currently have infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) and access to transit.
- Recognizing that the agricultural heritage of the Township has value and that we need to preserve it where and when it makes sense.
- Understanding that offering housing, services and cultural amenities to the diverse population is critical to fostering a successful Township.
- Developing programs or incentives for uses/developments/preservation that the Township supports may be necessary to encourage appropriate activity.
- Creating an identity for the Township that is capitalizes on Pittsfield's unique character and offerings.
- Developing methods of reaching out and providing services for as many people in the community as possible.
- Develop a plan that identifies appropriate growth/preservation areas
- Develop a transportation system the provides connection throughout the township utilizing many modes of transportation