



West Nottingham Township

P.O. Box 67 • Nottingham • PA • 19362

SUMMARY

Nottingham Village Visioning Meeting
October 22, 2007

Welcome

David Ross, Vice-Chairman, West Nottingham Township Board of Supervisors

(For accompanying word/photo slides, see the .pdf file entitled, "Nottingham Village presentation_David Ross" (3 slides))

"Welcome!" to all in attendance, and please meet the following public figures: Gerald Cox (Chairman, Board of Supervisors), Neil Camens (Chairman, Planning Commission), Dennis Byrne (Chairman, Zoning Ordinance Review Committee), Carol Stauffer (Director of Planning Services, Chester County Planning Commission), Robert Lewis (Superintendent, Nottingham County Park), and Ed Herr of Herr Foods, which generously is hosting our two visioning meetings.

The Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2006) projects an almost 50 percent increase in West Nottingham's population over the next 20 years, without factoring in the subsequently planned 27,000 + jobs that will be created when the nearby Aberdeen Proving Grounds (MD) are developed/redeveloped.

Implementation of the Plan's recommendations is ongoing, with the first step being the update of the Township's zoning ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance Review Committee, and the Chester County Planning Commission as advisors, has found it difficult to develop zoning specific to Nottingham Village – where much of the projected growth will occur – without knowing what we want it to look like.

Hence these two meetings – they're organized to seek residents' input into how the Village could develop in the future. Tonight's meeting will provide information and education, while the second on November 13th will be a "workshop" where people can show on maps what they'd like to see in the Village. On the 13th, we'd like participants to roll up their sleeves, and use old-fashioned grease pencils to draw what they'd like for a future Nottingham Village.

Everyone is encouraged to think creativity and outside the box, and show flexibility in identifying desired characteristics for the Village. The Board of Supervisors intends that improvements identified in this process will be paid for by developers, who are "waiting in the wings" for the zoning ordinance process to finish, and/or by grants for which the Township qualifies.

Planning Context

Kevin Myers, Community Planner, Chester County Planning Commission

(For accompanying map, see the .pdf file entitled, "Map 10-1 Future Land Use" (1 map, 11" x 17"))

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan's future land use recommendations for the Village area encompass four land use types:

- Village Center (at the intersection of Route 272 and Baltimore Pike);
- Village Residential (on either side of the Village Center to the east and west);
- Industrial/Employment (to the south of the Village Center where Herr's is situated); and,
- Planned Commercial/Residential (in the vicinity of the Kimble Farm).

Additionally, the Land Use and Transportation Plans recommend an interconnected street pattern for future developments, streetscape improvements within the Village, traffic calming, access management strategies, and pedestrian facilities both within the Village and connected to Nottingham County Park.

The Zoning Ordinance Review Committee has made progress in drafting an ordinance that implements the Plan's recommendations. However, further direction is needed. The public input sought in the visioning process will be very helpful in completing a draft zoning ordinance that will meet the particular needs of the Township.

Several tools are being considered for focusing development in the Village, including Transferable Development Rights (TDR). A TDR program allows the development value from a "sending" area parcel in the more rural portions of the Township to be severed, and sent, to land in the "receiving" area in and around Nottingham Village. A TDR program would allow farms in West Nottingham's rural areas to receive payment for their development value, with the actual development occurring in Nottingham Village as recommended by the Comprehensive Plan. TDR is already being used successfully by municipalities in Chester County, the Commonwealth, and throughout the country.

A public information meeting will be held to present potential zoning changes to Township residents for their consideration when a complete draft of the ordinance is ready. Residents will be notified of these meetings in a variety of ways, including:

- Township website;
- Township newsletter;
- public notices; and,
- media coverage.

Once additional changes have been made, there may be additional public meetings before a final public hearing is held to adopt the ordinance. All Review Committee meetings are open to the public, the second Monday of each month at 7:00 in the Township Building on Park Road.

What is a Village?

Tara Tracy, Senior Planner, Brandywine Conservancy

(For accompanying word/photo slides, see the .pdf file entitled, "Nottingham Village presentation_Tara Tracy" (12 slides))

The first map is of Honey Brook Township (Chester County). West Nottingham's approach is similar to Honey Brook's; i.e., Honey Brook planned for growth in an expanded village area ("Rocklyn Station") and uses TDRs and other tools to protect outlying/rural farmland. The following photos are examples of characteristics common to vibrant, active villages.

It might seem complicated to think about both the big picture and seemingly excruciating details like signs, lights, planters, planting, and exact sidewalk locations. But a village is a whole that is truly much bigger than the sum of its parts. Please think about how to get around, what kind of businesses that would be desirable to patronize, where people could live, and what kind of gathering places might be developed in Nottingham Village.

Nottingham Village Opportunities and Constraints

Sheila Fleming, Senior Planner, Brandywine Conservancy

(For accompanying photo slides, see the .pdf file entitled, "Nottingham Village presentation_Sheila Fleming" (14 slides))

The word "village" comes from the Latin word "villaticus," which means "a group of houses outside a villa farmstead." Villages evolved because of a particular combination of geographical, commercial, economic, and social factors. Villagers share various resources such as roads, services, and usually a place of worship. A village will expand, decline, and fluctuate over time.

Nottingham Village has a rich history; it began as a land grant from William Penn; mining, railroad and telegraph lines followed, and it is still bordered by farms. Photos show the historic architecture of its church and residences, as well as those locations where a village streetscape already exists. These good "bones" will help to improve the Village, in spite of the challenges it faces.

Village challenges include ever-increasing traffic; unsafe conditions for automobiles and pedestrians due to extensive areas of paving and uncontrolled automobile access; and, noise and pollution from truck usage and car exhaust. Also, there's a lack of a central community green, and many open areas with no landscaping, shade, or screening for pedestrians. In some cases, architecture is not compatible with historic styles. These challenges aren't insurmountable, and can be addressed and managed through the visioning and ordinance processes.

Cars, People, and Bikes

Jim Gade, Associate, Stantec

Approximately 4,700 cars travel the Route 272/Baltimore Pike intersection on weekdays, with about ¼ of these passing through during the 7 am – 9 am period, for an average of about 100 cars/minute. Close-by planned development will add approximately 2,000 more cars on a daily basis.

Potential traffic improvements to alleviate traffic problems include a turning lane and traffic light, or roundabout, at the Route 272/Baltimore Pike intersection, but these could be restricted by the amount of land available in the legally-defined corridor for the road (the "right-of-way").

A plan for the Village would allow the Township to request that developers fund traffic improvements when their projects go beyond "by right" provisions of state law or local zoning.

Comments, Questions, and Homework

All

Many comments and questions focused on traffic problems, and the bottleneck that currently exists at the Baltimore Pike/Route 272 intersection. Solutions include additional streets to create options for motorists to bypass the two main roadways. A turn lane combined with a traffic light or roundabout will better control the Baltimore Pike/Route 272 intersection.

The importance of all in attendance having a say in what the Village can look in five, 10, or 15 years from now was stressed. Township residents are the experts on what the community can be.

It will be beneficial to plan for impending growth, rather than fearing it, so as to bring in good people and major businesses to the Village. There will be ample opportunities for interested citizens to stay informed and involved, starting with the second of the two visioning sessions on November 13th. Attendees should come prepared to share their ideas regarding: where community parks should go, what types of businesses are appropriate for the Village, how pedestrians and bicyclists could move around, and what options exist to keep traffic moving.