

Short and Long Range Implementation Strategies

Concord Township Comprehensive Plan Update

CONCORD TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

SHORT AND LONG RANGE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Overview

Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted, efforts to implement the Plan should begin. This chapter outlines short and long range implementation strategies. It relates to the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Section 301.(a)(4.2) which requires:

“A discussion of short-range and long-range plan implementation strategies, which may include implications for capital improvements programming, new or updated development regulations, and identification of public funds potentially available.”

Suggested Zoning Ordinance Amendments

In order to achieve a sustainable pattern of land use, the objectives and provisions of the Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with those of the Comprehensive Plan. To achieve this, the following Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are suggested:

- + Designate Conservation Areas to minimize or prohibit disturbance of areas of prime agricultural soils and farmland, very steep slopes greater than 25%, floodplains and stream valleys, and important vegetation and woodlands
- + Refine Ordinances to promote the preservation of historic and cultural resources by including Design Standards for “Historic Neighborhoods” in terms of building placement, parking location, setbacks, and buffers, consistent with the village-like character of historic places like Concordville, Elam, Johnsons Corners and Ward
- + Amend Historic Resources Protection (Article XX-A) of the Zoning Ordinance to include Historic District regulation in accordance with PA. Act.167.
- + Offer an option to Cluster Development in the form of a Traditional/Neo-Traditional Neighborhood with mixed-uses, sidewalks, smaller lots, and civic buildings
- + Provide options for mixed-use development which supports small scale commercial businesses
- + Permit residential uses in the C-1 and C-2 Districts
- + Permit limited commercial uses in the higher density residential R-A and R-AH Districts
- + Create a pedestrian oriented Village Center District
- + Create a classification of residential neighborhoods to identify their functionality and to affirm their existing identities

- + Direct new development to areas in close proximity to existing utilities and services

Suggested Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Amendments

The objectives and provisions of Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance must also be consistent with those of the Comprehensive Plan. To achieve this, the following Amendments to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance are proposed:

- + All Applicants for Subdivision, Land Development, Conditional Use, Special Exception, and/or Variance must be cognizant of the Comprehensive Plan, and should indicate on their plans and submissions how they have incorporated the Comprehensive Plan into their development
- + Designate open space within all new land development projects
- + Establish consistent requirements for open space
- + Refine Ordinances to encourage greater sensitivity in land development with respect to Conservation Areas and open space
- + Encourage compact land development and provide incentives for the creation of open space in new land developments
- + Encourage Cluster Development as a form of compact residential development through ordinance amendments and incentives
- + Offer an option to Cluster Development in the form of a Traditional/Neo-Traditional Neighborhood with mixed-uses, sidewalks, smaller lots, and civic buildings
- + Limit cul-de-sacs
- + Require Environmental Impact Assessments and Mitigation Measures to safeguard critical natural features
- + Maintain and enhance the Recreational Fee-In-Lieu program so that residential and non-residential users continue to provide needed revenues
- + Add road improvement requirements related to Figure 12, A Plan for Circulation: Proposed Physical Improvements

Other Implementation Strategies

In addition to the Ordinance Amendments outlined above, other creative Implementation Strategies can be utilized. When used in combination with the Ordinance regulations, these strategies can prove to be very effective in helping to achieve the Township's land use goals. The two strategies are:

- + Traditional Neighborhood Development
- + Transfer of Development Rights

Refer to Appendix E, "Implementation Tools" for details on Traditional Neighborhood Development and Transfer of Development Rights, and other planning tools.

Official Map

Article IV of the MPC states that the governing body of each municipality may adopt an Official Map which depicts land that the municipality intends to reserve for public use. The Official Map can be used as a tool to help implement road connections and to acquire land for recreational or institutional use. According to the MPC, the Official Map "may show appropriate elements or portions of elements of the comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to Section 302 with regard to public lands and facilities..." these elements may include:

- (1) Existing and proposed public streets, watercourses and public grounds, including widenings, narrowings, extensions, diminutions, openings or closings of same.
- (2) Existing and proposed public parks, playgrounds and open space reservations.
- (3) Pedestrian ways and easements.
- (4) Railroad and transit rights-of-way and easements.
- (5) Flood control basins, floodways and flood plains, storm water management areas and drainage easements.
- (6) Support facilities, easements and other properties held by public bodies

Section 406, "Time Limitations on Reservations for Future Takings," states that the Board of Supervisors has one year to acquire or begin condemnation proceedings on a property reserved for public grounds "after an owner of such property has submitted a written notice to the governing body announcing his intentions to build, subdivide or otherwise develop the land covered by the reservation, or has made formal application for an official permit to build a structure for private use."

Capital Improvements Program

A sound Capital Improvements Program requires a steady, stable flow of revenue that is adequate to support financial outlays. The Township must estimate anticipated spending for projects such as the road and intersection improvements described in "A Plan for Circulation," and the park system enhancement described in "A Plan for Community Facilities." To fund these programs, the Township may explore opportunities to secure grant monies that are available at the state and federal level for various public works and park enhancement projects.

Education

In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, Township Boards and Commissions involved in the planning process should be informed of its provisions. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force should hold educational meetings for Township organizations such as the Planning Commission, Land Planning Committee, Zoning Hearing Board, Open Space Board, the Historical Commission, and others. This will help to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's objectives are clearly understood by all, and that all are working toward the same goals.

Demographic Data Update

This Comprehensive Plan should be revised once the 2000 Census data are available. This will mainly entail and update to the Demographic Profile chapter. The new data are also likely to impact housing figures and interpretations regarding future land use that are based on these figures. This revision, which will result in an Addendum to the Comprehensive Plan, should be undertaken during the latter part of 2000 or early 2001 (depending on the release date of the Census data).