

PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING NOTES

October 11, 2011

The Planning Commission Workshop on the Issues Report convened at approximately 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, October 11, 2011. Recommendations pertaining to the proposed HPE (“HPE”) were the focus of the workshop. Present were Commission Members Bob Gray, Alan Ritterband, Charlie Howland, Brian Hirsch and Marc Vitale. Also present from the Board of Commissioners were Board President, Elizabeth S. Rogan (Ward 7), Commissioner Cheryl B. Gelber, Esq. (Ward 5) and Commissioner Brian A. Gordon, Esq. (Ward 7). Township staff present included Bob Duncan, Director of Building and Planning, Chris Leswing, Assistant Director of Building and Planning, Colleen Hall, Planner/GIS Technician and Carissa Koll-Hazelton, Planning Technician.

Mr. Gray thanked everyone for coming out to this workshop on historic preservation. Mr. Gray explained that tonight is intended to review the work that has been accomplished in the Issues Report and outline a process for going forward. Mr. Gray stated that this meeting is intended to be a workshop and a less formal forum and the idea is to encourage dialogue and feedback. Mr. Gray asked Mr. Leswing to start with an overview.

Mr. Leswing stated that there are a number of different topics to hit on tonight. Mr. Leswing stated that he would go through everything quickly and then speak of each of the components more in depth. Mr. Leswing provided an overview of the agenda and stated that the purpose of Comprehensive Plan will be to solve the issues outlined in the Issues Report. Mr. Leswing stated that staff reached out to the public to identify issues facing the community. Mr. Leswing stated that the Issues Report is action oriented and ties together 25 years of historic preservation planning efforts. Mr. Leswing stated that approximately 30 percent of all land development deals with historic preservation. Mr. Leswing stated that staff wants to make a coherent, coordinated plan to make sure all of the historic preservation efforts work in harmony. Mr. Leswing stated that the Issues Report has 30 recommendations to address issues regarding historic preservation and the Lower Merion Conservancy also came up with 31 recommendations with their White Paper Report which is included as an appendix of the Issues Report. Mr. Leswing stated that over the past five to six weeks staff also met with the Board of Historical Architectural Review (“HARB”), the Historical Commission (“HC”) and the Lower Merion Conservancy to obtain input. Mr. Leswing stated that he would like to talk about value of historic preservation in the Township. It provides intangible values, such as sense of place and tangible values, such as increased property values. Mr. Leswing stated that staff recommends that the HPE be the first element of the Comprehensive Plan prepared. Mr. Leswing stated that it is anticipated that this element will take one year to complete. The plan will be completed by staff with a technical advisory committee.

Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will do regulatory and non-regulatory things. Mr. Leswing stated that the regulatory efforts include reviewing the zoning regulations and procedures, and

updating the Township's Historic Resources Inventory ("HRI"). Mr. Leswing stated that there are a lot of people in the room tonight who care about historic preservation and it is truly a community effort.

Mr. Leswing explained that this element fits with the other elements of a Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Leswing stated that as a mature suburb the Township is dealing with things at the neighborhood level. There are potential historic districts, but there are also other neighborhoods that could benefit from "historic district light" regulations, such as form based zoning. Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will include an evaluation of the location, age and types of housing and that will serve as the basis for the Housing Element. The Housing Element and the Land Use Element can then take those areas that were not eligible for historic district designation and evaluate the use of form based zoning to maintain the character of those areas. Once the HPE is completed, the Land Use Element will also review the commercial areas. Mr. Leswing stated that the involvement of property owners in the development of the HPE will be critically important and he would like to talk about how to engage the property owners in the process. Mr. Leswing stated that he would like to open up a discussion of the purpose of the plan. Mr. Leswing asked if everyone agrees that an HPE should be completed and that it should be the first element of the comprehensive plan completed.

Mr. Ritterband asked if the Township has to prepare an HPE as a part of the comprehensive plan by law.

Mr. Leswing stated that the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code ("MPC") does not require an HPE. Mr. Leswing stated that the MPC is good at creating a comprehensive plan for taking a cornfield and turning it into a town, but it does not get to the level of detail needed for a built-out community such as Lower Merion.

Chad Graham, a resident of Ardmore, stated that no one from this audience will oppose the preparation of an HPE.

Mr. Howland asked if any owners of Class I or Class II properties were present.

Christian Busch, a resident of Ardmore and the HC Chair, raised his hand.

Lori Salganicoff, a representative of the Lower Merion Conservancy, stated that an HPE may not be a required component of a comprehensive plan under the MPC, but a Historic Preservation Plan is required in order for the Township to maintain its current status as a Certified Local Government ("CLG"). Ms. Salganicoff stated that an HPE could meet that need.

Mr. Busch stated that the Township has an incredibly unique asset in the number of historic properties throughout the community and the character of the built environment. Mr. Busch stated that he was astonished at what he found here and the fact that the Township does not already have a plan for historic preservation makes him speechless.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that historic preservation is not just about preserving one historic building; it is preserving the character of the community. Ms. Salganicoff stated that moving forward she would like to have a better understanding of the existing community fabric as new development applications are reviewed.

Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will include a lot of housekeeping. Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE is dealt with in many sections of the code and that the plan can make the historic preservation requirements easier to understand.

Marty Piltch, a resident of Merion Station, asked if anyone has any arguments against moving forward with HPE as proposed. Mr. Piltch stated that if they do they should speak up otherwise the discussion should move on to the next topic.

Mr. Busch stated that he owns a Class II property and it's easy for him to say that preparing an HPE is a good idea because he understands it. Mr. Busch stated that this workshop makes a point that the Township is for historic preservation and the word has to be put out. Mr. Busch stated that he sees this report as another way to get people to understand what the value of historic preservation is. Mr. Busch stated that he is an architect and he doesn't agree with all the historic preservation requirements, but he has to abide by them.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he likes the idea of historic preservation, but he wonders if the HPE should be completed first in the Comprehensive Plan process. Mr. Hirsch asked if the intention is to spend the next year on this element before beginning the other plan components. Mr. Hirsch stated that scarce resources would be going towards this and he would like to talk about prioritizing the elements. Mr. Hirsch stated that he would like to hear other people's ideas about putting this on the top of the list and whether or not this is the appropriate place for this element. Mr. Hirsch stated that he didn't move to Lower Merion Township because of historic preservation, but more because of the patterns of life. Mr. Hirsch stated that he chose a neighborhood where he could walk with his children to the train and the bus.

Mr. Leswing stated that the patterns and function of the neighborhood are exactly what everyone is talking about preserving. Mr. Leswing stated that it may not be the actual architectural character of some neighborhoods as much as it is the pattern of development that needs preserving to ensure a high quality of life.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he thinks that Economic Development and the Land Use Element will do more to preserve the quality of life than historic preservation.

Scott Kalner, a resident of Merion Station and HARB Chair, stated that neighborhood conservation could also be explored as one of the subsets of the Land Use Element just as easily as the HPE.

Mr. Leswing stated that the order of the completion of the elements is one of the important things to discuss tonight.

Kathleen Abplanalp, a resident of Wynnewood and HARB Vice-Chair, stated that she agrees that neighborhood conservation is the umbrella under which historic preservation falls.

Mr. Leswing stated that those are some of the things that will be looked at. Mr. Leswing stated that with the HPE the obvious historic districts can be identified and then those less obvious areas will be looked at with the other elements moving forward.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that the White Paper includes recommendations geared to maintaining the traditional character of a neighborhood without using the historic district designation. Ms. Salganicoff stated that one of the biggest challenges in the community is maintaining the character that makes the Township unique, especially in those older neighborhoods that may not have the integrity needed for historic district designation. Ms. Salganicoff stated that there are limited resources to complete the comprehensive plan. Ms. Salganicoff asked how the process would work if the HPE is not used as the organizing principle.

Mr. Gray stated that the first topic has been exhausted and he would like to move onto the discussion of the value of historic properties.

Mr. Leswing stated that one way to approach a comprehensive plan is through a visioning process and that is not going to work here. Mr. Leswing stated that a significant amount of time was spent at previous meetings drafting a vision statement, but consensus could not be met. Mr. Leswing stated that instead of talking about the vision for the Township as a whole a greater consensus could be reached regarding why the community values historic preservation. Mr. Leswing stated that coming up with a certain set of values and goals may be as important as a vision statement. Mr. Leswing stated that a list of values will help guide a list of goals. Mr. Leswing stated that most people's primary investment is their home and historic preservation helps maintain the existing development patterns and character of the neighborhoods, which in turn ensures stable property values. Mr. Leswing stated wealth is generated in the community by this and there is a monetary value to it.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that Preservation Pennsylvania has worked with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission ("PHMC") to figure out the economic benefit of historic preservation in the state. Ms. Salganicoff stated that she heard that the study revealed that there are huge economic benefits to historic preservation. In studies in other locations it has been found that properties in historic districts will maintain or increase in property value as opposed to non-designated properties in similar neighborhoods.

Ms. Simon asked if examples could be provided of what other communities in Pennsylvania do.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that a lot of information was compiled in the White Paper Report. Ms. Salganicoff stated that in Pennsylvania it is possible to adopt a document called “Rules and Regulations” to provide the advisory bodies additional leverage in terms of historic preservation. Ms. Salganicoff stated that she has also seen different levels of integration of historic preservation through other zoning districts, the use of conservation districts, and the provision of financial and non-financial incentives. Ms. Salganicoff stated that other communities also have technical incentives, such as free advice from the HC and HARB. Ms. Salganicoff stated that some municipalities outside of Pennsylvania have utilized tax incentives to promote historic preservation. Ms. Salganicoff stated that Pennsylvania doesn’t have tax incentives yet, but it has been worked on year after year. Ms. Salganicoff stated that there may be things for the Township to consider, such as permit fee waivers. There are also incentives such as plaques on buildings and having things out in the public that say that the Township is proud of its historic character. Ms. Salganicoff stated that there are a number of different things that could be explored.

Ms. Abplanalp stated that studies have also been shown that having historic district also brings more money back into the municipality through the local contract work that is required to maintain and improve these properties.

Taryn Trexler, a resident of Ardmore and a member of the HC, stated that she brought a book entitled “The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation”. Ms. Trexler stated that aside from maintaining property values historic preservation also fosters economic development.

Mr. Leswing stated that there are people who are not here tonight who may not be in favor of historic preservation. There is a cost to being regulated on the HRI and a cost to maintain an older home. Mr. Leswing stated that some people view that as a taking. Mr. Leswing stated that a part of this is to encourage people to buy into the idea that this encourages the maintenance of the older properties and property values. Mr. Leswing stated that if someone put a new building in the English Village it may not fit.

Mr. Kalner stated that not all historic districts are the same, nor does everyone grant their permission to reach Class I status in a district. Mr. Kalner stated that people choose to live in the community because of the tangible qualities, such as the walkability and character of Lower Merion Township. The designation as a historic district makes investing in the area more predictable because it is a way to protect the character of the community.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that there is a need to look at zoning and historic preservation. There was a conflict with the underlying zoning at Haverford Station Historic District where the underlying zoning doesn’t support the form of the historic district. Ms. Salganicoff stated that both the HPE and White Paper focuses on how to coalesce the historic district with the zoning.

Mr. Gray stated that some of these concepts probably go well beyond historic preservation in its traditional concept. Mr. Gray stated that in many ways the intangible values are as important as the tangibles. Mr. Gray stated that the character represents the feel of the entire community.

Mr. Leswing stated that he hopes to find the tools to maintain that character through this process.

Mr. Piltch stated that it seems that everyone is forgetting that any historic district has contributing structures which become on an individual basis Class I, or if they have been sufficiently destroyed they become Class II properties. Mr. Piltch stated that if a new structure would negatively impact a Class I resource in a historic district, then it cannot be built. Mr. Piltch stated that all properties, regardless of whether they are historic or not, are required to be sufficiently maintained under the Township Code. Mr. Piltch stated that it is unfortunate that the Township doesn't have the personnel to enforce those requirements.

Mr. Leswing stated that he would like to discuss the more specific recommendations from the Issues Report and the White Paper. Mr. Leswing stated that staff is proposing to prepare a plan that is publicly accessible that anyone can follow. Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will begin with a background of historic preservation in the Township and the purpose of historic preservation. Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will include an inventory of historic resources in the community and the HRI will be updated with use of GIS software. Mr. Leswing stated that the HPE will include an analysis of the current rules and the regulations and the organizational structure of the HARB and HC as well as an analysis of the current classification system. Mr. Leswing stated that a series of recommendations will then be prepared along with an implementation matrix. Mr. Leswing explained that the matrix will include a section regarding the relationship of the HPE to other Comprehensive Plan Elements and the HPE is proposed to be completed in one year.

Ms. Simon asked if it is proposed that all other elements will be put on hold while the HPE is completed.

Mr. Leswing responded that the other elements will be completed after the HPE is finished.

Mr. Kalner asked where that puts the timeline for the completion of the entire comprehensive plan.

Mr. Hirsch stated that there are so many other issues that are important and that he is concerned with this timeline. Mr. Hirsch stated that he would rather see a more aggressive time schedule. Mr. Hirsch stated that there may be some buildings that are important to be preserved, but that he is more concerned with rhythm of his own neighborhood being disrupted by new development in the meantime. Mr. Hirsch stated that there are a couple buildings in his neighborhood that could be on the HRI, but he does not think that if those buildings were lost that it would be the end of the neighborhood. Mr. Hirsch stated that he thinks that one thing that could ruin his neighborhood would be the inappropriate development of Maybrook at Penn Road and

Wynnewood Road and on that property there is one building that should be preserved. Mr. Hirsch rhetorically asked if the preservation of that building is critical as compared to the compatibility of the rest of the development. Mr. Hirsch stated that he doesn't think so. Mr. Hirsch stated that there are more than 40 acres of open space there now, and if that is developed with the development that was proposed in 2006 it could devastate the neighborhood. Mr. Hirsch stated that if the Planning Commission could recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the property be rezoned, then it could affect a new development on that property.

Mr. Leswing indicated that Mr. Hirsch is talking about zoning changes; not a Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he is talking about getting the whole thing done faster. Mr. Hirsch stated that historic preservation is important, but he doesn't want to spend one year on it before the other elements are started. Mr. Hirsch stated that when the economy turns around the development at Maybrook will be built. Mr. Hirsch stated that the budget is tight, but he thinks that the Planning Commission may be asking too much of planning staff. Mr. Hirsch stated that it is important to find a way to get help to get this done faster.

Hugh Gordon, a resident of Ardmore, stated that he is 100 percent in agreement with Mr. Hirsch. Mr. Gordon stated that historic preservation is not the most difficult thing affecting the quality of life in the Township; it is the encroaching of the commercial developments into the neighborhoods. Mr. Gordon stated that people are upset when there is more traffic on their street resulting from new development. Mr. Gordon stated that he is beginning to wonder if this comprehensive plan is ever going to get finished. Mr. Gordon stated that the tasks listed for the HPE alone are going to be impossible to accomplish in one year.

Mr. Leswing stated that there is no magic flip to switch to stop new development.

Mr. Duncan stated that he is hearing that people would prefer that the Township start with the Land Use Element as opposed to the HPE.

Ms. Simon stated that people are being told that the HPE will be completed in one year and everything else will be stepped back, which is something that is hard for her to wrap her arms around. Ms. Simon stated that the Comprehensive Plan is an advisory document only, but the point is to understand land use in the Township, so that the zoning code can be reformed. Ms. Simon stated that if the zoning code is not amended there will be more Dunkin Donuts coming in. Ms. Simon stated that the Land Use Element is the key. Ms. Simon stated that she feels like she has come into a parallel universe. Ms. Simon stated that as far as she can tell the township has been working on the comprehensive plan since 2007 and it is now 2011. Ms. Simon stated that the township needs to get this done.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he thinks that the planning department does a great job and he would want planning staff to continue to be in charge of this effort, but he is concerned with the proposed timeline.

Mr. Leswing stated that the Township has a culture of public process that he would like to see the plan go through in order to build community consensus. Mr. Leswing stated that civic engagement takes time and has to be built into the process.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he agrees that if the plan is prepared too fast without public input things will go awry. Mr. Hirsch directed Mr. Leswing to take one week to figure out how the different elements of the Comprehensive Plan could be completed on parallel tracks and within a one year timeframe. Mr. Hirsch stated that the Planning Commission can then review the proposal and the Board of Commissioners can decide whether or not they want to fund it.

Mr. Gray stated that he thinks that there is a way to do this without short circuiting the public participation process.

Ms. Simon stated that the MPC allows for citizens groups to undertake tasks related to a Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Simon stated that staff could bring in qualified Township residents to work on a Comprehensive Plan and it is not something that the Township has to do alone. Ms. Simon stated that this has been done before with other bodies.

Mr. Piltch stated that he hates to be a cynic, but if he remembers correctly there is nothing in a Comprehensive Plan that can be enforced. Mr. Piltch stated that the last Comprehensive Plan the Township had sat on the shelf and was not looked at the last 45 years and there is no guarantee that a new Comprehensive Plan will be used any differently. Mr. Piltch stated that whatever is done with land use has nothing to do with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Howland stated that he respectfully disagrees. Mr. Howland asked how the Township can make changes to the zoning code without a Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Gray stated that he is hearing that this needs to come together at the same time and on parallel tracks. Mr. Gray stated that the Comprehensive Plan is the road map from which changes to the zoning code should come. Mr. Gray stated that the Comprehensive Plan should guide all changes to the zoning code and that the Planning Commission is hoping that this can be adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Piltch stated that right now the Township is looking at the proposed City Avenue change in zoning and it will not wait for the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Piltch stated that the zoning can change once a Comprehensive Plan is adopted, but the group is collectively saying that they do not want to wait that year for one element of the plan to be completed.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that it seems that after all this time of talking about the Comprehensive Plan everyone may have different ideas about what a Comprehensive Plan is and what it can

accomplish. Ms. Salganicoff stated that what she hears people saying is that they would like to have all of these sections of the plan coming forward within one year, but what staff is planning is much more in-depth. Ms. Salganicoff it sounds as though the Planning Commission is proposing a plan that has a higher level view and that the Township staff has been thinking of developing each of the elements fully. Ms. Salganicoff stated that she is wondering if everyone is talking about the same things here.

Mr. Hirsch stated that waiting one year to have one element completed is not acceptable. Mr. Hirsch stated that he thinks that the Township should be able to produce a revised Comprehensive Plan in one year. Mr. Hirsch stated that he is recommending that in the next week planning staff produce a blueprint to complete the Comprehensive Plan in one year. Mr. Hirsch stated that Ms. Simon's ideas were excellent for using community members and Township resources. Mr. Hirsch stated that he wants to see how the Township can get to a completed Comprehensive Plan in one year with adequate public comment and that he wants to understand the nature of the plan that will be prepared in that timeframe. Mr. Hirsch stated that he is willing to take whatever depth we can get in order to get it done in one year. Mr. Hirsch stated that the Township should seize this chance to complete this plan so that the Board of Commissioners has something concrete in front of them so they can choose whether or not to make certain zoning changes. Mr. Hirsch stated that it will take vision and money to get it done in one year.

Mr. Leswing stated that he envisioned the Comprehensive Plan as a document that would have solved problems in the Township. Mr. Leswing stated that everyone has a different problem that they want this plan to identify, but there is not an easy fix to all of these things. Mr. Leswing stated that the breadth of this plan was big and that staff can certainly script out the next steps and what is involved in each step. Mr. Leswing stated that staff could complete a more broad brush plan in one year, but to do a historic preservation plan less than what has been outlined will not anything.

Mr. Duncan stated that prioritizing the completion of the elements is clearly one of the issues staff needs to get feedback on. Mr. Duncan asked the Planning Commission if they want a plan that is not as in-depth as Chris was suggesting.

Mr. Kalner stated that the HPE doesn't need to be a standalone plan. Mr. Kalner stated that by the time the Comprehensive Plan is completed, the Township will start it over again.

Mr. Leswing stated that he would argue that the Comprehensive Plan is something that is constantly going on in planning and once it is completed it will be implemented. Mr. Leswing stated that he views comprehensive planning as a process as much as it is a product.

Carole Strickland, a resident of Wynnewood, stated that the Comprehensive Plan is a guideline and it needs to be adopted by the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Strickland stated that it is a plan of vision; not a plan of solutions.

Mr. Leswing stated that the Open Space Plan, which is an element of the Comprehensive Plan, took 18 months to complete. Mr. Leswing stated that staff is proposing that instead of doing this as one large document, that it be separated into segments similarly to the Open Space Plan. Mr. Leswing stated that there is a certain level of analysis that goes into this process that takes time.

Ms. Strickland stated that the vision of the plan should be used as a guideline; not a solution.

Mr. Graham asked why the HPE would be completed first.

Mr. Kalner stated that the Open Space Plan was completed first back in 2006.

Mr. Leswing stated that the Open Space Plan was completed first because funding was available. Mr. Leswing stated that probably one-third of the land development issues that come before the Township deal with historic preservation.

Mr. Graham stated that completing the plan the way Mr. Leswing proposed will lead to another 8-10 years of planning before the Comprehensive Plan is finished.

Mr. Leswing responded that it will take one year to do this element right.

Commissioner Gordon stated that he is not a planner, but he is a citizen and he has watched this process amble along. Commissioner Gordon stated that it took him until about three or four months ago before he understood the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan with the help of people like Ms. Simon. Commissioner Gordon stated that he is hearing residents saying that they do not want to have a beseeching plan, but a clear set of guidelines as goals. Commissioner Gordon stated that he would like to see the goals listed as items, because if the Township doesn't have a backbone that is the bedrock from which every land use decision is evaluated, then the Township doesn't have anything. Commissioner Gordon stated that he is hearing that the community is asking us for a set of defined goals.

Mr. Duncan stated that a list of 10 goals can be established for historic preservation, but it can't be enforced.

Commissioner Gordon stated that the goals and visions should be established and then the Township Codes should be the articulation of the community vision. Commissioner Gordon stated that the goals come first then the Code needs to be amended or adjusted to meet those goals.

Les Greenberg, a resident of Merion Station, stated that he would like to cut to the chase. Mr. Greenberg stated that the Township needs to close the loopholes of by-right applications

Alison Graham, a resident of Ardmore, stated that in 2004 the League of Women Voters wrote a letter to the Board of Commissioners stating that the Comprehensive Plan was out of date and the Township needed a new one. Ms. Graham stated that they sent the letter because everything was being done ad hoc and everything in the Township is still done on a very ad hoc basis. Ms.

Graham stated that the League of Women Voters was joined by the Federation of Civic Associations and the process went forward. Ms. Graham stated that after that Mr. Leswing came aboard and the Open Space Plan was an excellent first step to making some sense of the ad hockery. Ms. Graham stated that she also worked on the 2000 plan for the entire Philadelphia region and the elements were done concurrently. Ms. Graham stated that it took one year to develop a plan for the entire DVRPC region. Ms. Graham stated that she agrees that the elements should be completed concurrently and completed in one year. Ms. Graham stated that she would like to go over the recommendations in the Issues Report and see if the community wants to adopt or adapt them.

Mr. Leswing stated that it will be difficult to produce any solutions with such a plan.

Ms. Graham stated that solutions should not be completed in a plan; they ought to be done as a project. Ms. Graham stated that the plan should set up the parameters to do the project.

Mr. Kalner stated that each component should include an implementation plan.

Ms. Simon stated that she asked Mr. O'Leary how long it should take to do a municipal Comprehensive Plan and he responded that it should take, at the most, one year and a half to do a Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Simon stated that the MPC requires that the plan be updated once every 10 years; it is a living document and should be changed.

Mr. Gray stated that he would like to talk about whether to do the elements concurrently versus sequentially. Mr. Gray stated that a lot of the work has been done and can be built upon. Mr. Gray stated that he would like to see a thorough process over next 12 months for each of these elements to form the basis of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Gray stated that he would like to know if the plan can be finished in 12 months, what can be accomplished, and what it will cost, including Township staff time, residents volunteering and outside consultants. Mr. Gray asked staff to lay out a plan to put it all together in 12 months. Mr. Gray stated that he realizes that some of the perfection will be given up in order to get the plan done in the expedited timeframe.

Mr. Leswing stated that he feels like a mechanic. Mr. Leswing stated that the Township could get a plan done good or a plan done cheap.

Mr. Watson stated that they usually say they can do the work good, fast or cheap but you can only pick two.

Mr. Leswing stated that he has always worked under the assumption that the public wanted a document that could be easily implemented. Mr. Leswing stated that by completing the plan in one year the Township will be able to say that they have a Comprehensive Plan, but they may not be able to quickly implement it.

Mr. Hirsch stated that the Planning Commission has a meeting coming up in a couple weeks and he would be willing to start the meeting one hour early to discuss staff's outline for completing

the plan in one year. Mr. Hirsch stated that Mr. Leswing could delegate the responsibilities for each Comprehensive Plan Element to different staff members. Mr. Hirsch stated that he would like to see a staff plan with a timeline and a cost estimate at the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Duncan stated that staff can either provide a plan or an update to the Planning Commission at their upcoming meeting.

Mr. Howland stated that the Comprehensive Plan will give the Board of Commissioners the political will to make some changes. Mr. Howland stated that he wants a plan that will lead to decisions, because he thinks that zoning is a problem in the Township.

Mr. Leswing stated that he has been outlining the project and that he underestimated this. Mr. Leswing stated that he thought that this plan would be a solution document. Mr. Leswing stated that the Township does not have a magic wand to tell developers that they can't build something if it is by-right. Mr. Leswing stated that what he wanted to do was come up with something that could solve specific problems and he was trying to do it in one broad stroke and to do it comprehensively to do it right. Mr. Leswing stated that he takes great responsibility in doing this and that even with the expedited timeframe he will still push for solving some of these problems. Mr. Leswing stated that finishing this in a year essentially requires a moratorium on some of the public process.

Ms. Simon stated that she disagrees. Ms. Simon stated that she feels that this is an opportunity to get additional public participation rather than less.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that it will be a different type of public participation.

Ms. Abplanalp stated that some of the recommendations of the White Paper and the staff's recommendations in the Issues Report will take much longer than one year to accomplish. Ms. Abplanalp asked if updating the HRI is realistically something that the Township could do in one year. Ms. Abplanalp stated that it is a very long term process and the idea of recommending historic districts comes over a period of years.

Mr. Busch stated that this discussion is about the scope of the plan. Mr. Busch stated that Mr. Leswing had a plan in his head that was more comprehensive, but what others have said tonight is that what they want is broader brush plan. Mr. Busch stated that he does not think that it is a loss, but the depth of how you look at these things will be separated. Mr. Busch stated that he doesn't think anything is diminished by doing it this way.

Mr. Kalner stated that he would like the plan to identify the problems and how to fix them, but to not actually fix them in the document.

Mr. Ritterband asked what other Townships do.

Commissioner Rogan stated that Upper Dublin Township hired a consultant and had eight public meetings to complete their comprehensive plan. Commissioner Rogan stated that what she is hearing is that the Issues Report will become the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Rogan stated that she would have loved to see a comprehensive plan as detailed as Mr. Leswing was talking about, but if the public wants this done in one year it will be a different beast.

Ms. Salganicoff stated that she thinks that the Issues Report is a long way from a Comprehensive Plan, but that a Comprehensive Plan could be completed in one year if it is structured in a way that is manageable. Ms. Salganicoff stated that this report has already identified many of the issues facing the Township.

Mr. Leswing stated that in that case it may serve as a draft of the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Rogan stated that she thinks that the Issues Report should be turned into a Comprehensive Plan and it should be considered a draft of the plan in its current form.

Mr. Howland stated that a big difference between the Issues Report and a Comprehensive Plan is that the Issues Report doesn't take a hard line.

Mr. Gray stated that he thinks that a lot has been accomplished at this meeting and a consensus has been met regarding the timeline.

Mr. Leswing stated that the Issues Report is a draft of the Comprehensive Plan and staff will come forward in one month with a program to finish the document.

Mr. Hirsch stated that he would like to get an update at the next Planning Commission Meeting.

Mr. Gray thanked everyone for coming and drew the meeting to a close at approximately 9:15 p.m.

Meeting notes recorded by Carissa Koll-Hazelton, Planning Technician