

Land Partnerships

*A Countywide Strategy for
Open Space Preservation and Smart Growth*





Background and Process

Land Development Trends

- Between 1990 and 2004, nearly 45,000 acres of land (13 percent of the County) was proposed for residential, commercial or industrial development.
- On average, about 3,000 acres was proposed for development each year.
- About 1500 new dwelling units each year and rising
- Significant industrial and commercial development

Planning Process

- Evaluation of natural, cultural, historic & recreation resources
- Assessment of public opinion & support for open space program
- Identification of preservation strategies
- Development of recommendations and a countywide action plan

Components

- Steering Committee
- Key Person Interviews
- Public Visioning Session
- 4 Public Forums
- Growing Greener: Conservation By Design Workshop & Audits
- Countywide Public Opinion Survey

Plan Elements

- Farmland Preservation
- Natural Resource Protection
- Parks, Greenways & Trails
- Livable Communities

Implementation Strategies

- Acquisition
- Planning
- Park and recreation development
- Redevelopment

Implementation Plan

- Five Year Plan
 - Phase 1: 2006-2007
 - Phase 2: 2008-2010
- \$6.5 million for farmland preservation
- \$1.5 million for open space preservation
- \$12 million program (and growing) considering matches

War Stories

Lessons Learned from the
Cumberland County Example

4 Tips for Successful Planning

- Establish goals and purpose
- Expect opposition & involve them
- Involve a 3rd party
- Variety is the spice of life

Establish and Legitimize Clear Goals

- ID purpose
 - Farmland, parks/rec, redevelopment?
 - Think beyond acquisition
- Establish need
 - Why is this so important?
 - Link to comp plan

Establish and Legitimize Clear Goals

- Consider audience (KISS)
 - Appeal to emotions
 - Avoid tax discussions
 - Use conservation language (TPL survey)
 - ❖ “Working farms”, “water quality”, etc.
- Get the word out!
 - Press
 - Public meetings

Expect and Involve Opposition

- Identify opposition
- Involve them in the planning process
- Understand, respect, and be prepared to counter their arguments
- Find “something for everyone” in your plan
- Expect the worst and don’t take it personal

Expect and Involve Opposition: Common Arguments

- Waste of tax dollars
- Opposed to zoning
- Farming is a dying industry
- Not needed
- Open space preservation = taking
- Will stop all development
- Need land for houses

Expect and Involve Opposition: Common Arguments

- Will stop all development
- Will take farmers retirement
- Need land for houses
- Will impact housing affordability
- Will cost us money

Listing of Comments from Residents

- “Plan is a waste of money and amounts to socialism. Planners are communists.”
- “Worked lifetime on land, don’t want the County taking away the farm.”
- “Spend tax money on necessities. Open space not necessary.”
- “This is a land grab. Already have Clean and Green Program and Nature Conservancy; why do we need county dedicating land use?”

Otto Letter

Risch Letter

Involvement of a 3rd Party

- County staff can't lead the initiative
- Consider non-profits
- Remove perception of publicly funded lobbying

Incorporate Variety

- Consider a variety of preservation techniques.
- Develop a program tailored to your needs
- Use several public involvement tools
 - “Perpetual open house”
 - Person to person when possible



Questions?

Kirk Stoner, AICP

717-240-5381