

# I HAVE A PROBLEM (AND WE HAVE A SOLUTION) SESSION 2022 APA PA CONFERENCE

## FLIPCHART NOTES

### PROBLEM

A municipality is updating zoning and SALDO following completion of a comprehensive plan. Officials are not satisfied with the plan and do not want the ordinances aligned with the plan.

### SOLUTIONS

Ultimately, you've got tell the elected officials, "It's your ordinance," and do what they tell you, i.e., prepare the ordinances to their satisfaction.

In hindsight, this suggests it is important to get elected officials' participation in the comp plan process and buy-in of the plan objectives and recommendations.

The municipality needs to pause and regroup. It likely needs to do interim planning and shift ordinance objectives from what were proposed in the plan to a revised set developed with additional and elected officials' input.

### PROBLEM

A county is non-compliant with Act 167. It does not have a stormwater management plan and consistent stormwater management ordinances in all municipalities. The county planners are concerned about lack of adequate stormwater controls and public pressure over that.

### SOLUTIONS

Do a lower cost county-scale stormwater management plan with reasonable county-scale storm analysis and a model stormwater management ordinance.

Clinton County does not have a current Act 167 stormwater management plan. As a follow-up to the county's Chesapeake Bay Countywide Action Plan, the county is updating its subdivision and land development ordinance with a focus on including current stormwater management regs and creating a model ordinance for municipalities. The cost is comparatively low, and the county obtained 50% funding from DCED Municipal Assistance Program.

Cumberland County was suggested as a source of ideas and information.

## PROBLEM

A municipality has not updated its comprehensive plan since 1968. The municipality is largely built-out and no longer growing. Officials do not perceive need for or have interest in a comprehensive plan.

## SOLUTIONS

Don't use compliance with the MPC's 10-year update requirement as motivation. There is little threat of penalty.

Certainly the municipality is not without problems, needs, and opportunities. Frame the value of a comp plan as being results-oriented and providing solutions and ideas.

Mechanicsburg Borough is similarly built-out. It focused its comp plan on issues other than growth – revitalization and community and economic development opportunities.

Start into a plan gently. Don't say you're doing a comprehensive plan. Hold listening sessions in the community to learn what residents want and need. Find partners – organizations and groups that want to take action to improve the community.

## PROBLEM

A municipality intends to undertake a comprehensive revision of its zoning ordinance using a form-based approach. But, before that can be done, the municipality needs an interim zoning fix in a small development area.

## SOLUTIONS

The municipality could apply a hybrid zoning approach in the small area in the interim. It could amend the existing zoning with form-based standards targeting the more critical design elements in the short term.

Montgomery County Planning Commission has outstanding model zoning ordinances with suggested form-based elements applicable in different settings.

## PROBLEM

A municipality is starting a comprehensive plan coincidentally at the time it is dealing with a controversial development proposal.

## SOLUTIONS

Get the elected officials involved early in a meaningful way. Get a sense of how they want to handle things.

Provide a public process that effectively facilitates input on bigger and broader community issues, and that manages discussion of the controversial development as just one community issue.

## PROBLEM

How does a municipality promote more dense housing development without cluster development regulations which are negatively perceived?

## SOLUTIONS

Call the regulations something else.

Address desire for more dense housing by policies and regulations other than cluster development.

Direct the conversation to what the municipality really wants and what its real objectives are, then to what kinds of regulations will actually and effectively achieve the objectives.

Discuss worst-case scenarios as a springboard to discuss policy and regulation alternatives.

## PROBLEM

After considerable work involving multiple parties preparing a zoning ordinance amendment, the elected officials said it turned out different than they thought it should and did not accept it.

## SOLUTIONS

At this point it is best to regroup and reconsider the amendment.

Staff could focus re-review on individual components of the amendment that did not meet elected officials' expectations.

Make sure the right regulatory tool is being used for the issue.

Get the disparate parties together and find points of agreement and consensus on regulations.

Create a check list of regulatory options to help elected officials understand and make choices.

Scrap the draft amendment.

## PROBLEM

A small Good Ole' Boy network is dominating local decisions and preventing authentic community participation.

## SOLUTIONS

Find and recruit to your aid a local leader respected by the G.O.B. network who supports community participation and broader involvement in decision making.

Talk frankly and straight to the G.O.B. network.