Implementable Comprehensive Plan REVISITED

APA PA Conference
October 18, 2016

Denny Puko, PA DCED
Jim Pashek, Pashek Associates
Think differently

New benchmark

- Success is measured by RESULTS!
  - Implemented?
  - Principles followed?
  - Improvements?

Does the quality of the document or the ingenuity of its recommendations matter if a plan is not implemented?
Think differently

- Problems
- Needs
- Opportunities

- Problems getting solved
- Needs being met
- Opportunities pursued

Comprehensive Plan

Community is dissatisfied, restless, concerned for the future

Community is taking action, moving in new directions, making improvements, achieving its vision
Think differently

Old School
- Have consultant prepare book
- Review book
- Submit book
- Hope

New School
- Meet, talk, inquire
- Have consultant provide investigation and ideas
- Involve others
- Decide
- Action plan
- Commit
- Create workbook of notes and reports
• **Tradition** – A comprehensive plan is a guide to decisions to be made and actions to be taken after the plan is completed.

• **Innovation** – A comprehensive plan is a record memorializing decisions made and actions committed to and initiated during a planning process.
5 keys for an implementable plan
1. Focus on real, relevant issues

2. Organize the plan the way officials and citizens think

3. Devise practical and workable recommendations

4. Recruit partners and create capacity to implement the plan

5. Get “community” ownership and commitment
Myths

- This isn’t a true comprehensive plan.
  - Doesn’t include all comp plan elements
  - It’s about projects not goals and policies
  - It’s short range not long range

- The plan is “issues-based” and chapters don’t follow the MPC template, so we’ve done it!
An implementable planning case study for the City of Jeannette
City of Jeannette
Westmoreland County
The RFP

Setting the stage for Implementable Planning

The Consultant will:

1. Focus on providing intelligence for decision making (not recitation of data)
2. Provide creative ideas and workable action plans
3. Help recruit partners and create capacity to implement plan
4. Organize on city’s priorities that emerge from the process
5. Be efficient in words and avoid jargon
Public Participation

• Working with a terrific, diverse steering committee
• Distributed a digital Quality of Life Survey
• Interviewed stakeholders
• Facilitated a public meeting attend by 100 people
Taking **hundreds of ideas** and consolidate those ideas into **4 critical issues** that needed to be addressed by this planning process

- Fighting Blight
- Positive Impressions
- Vibrant Downtown
- Welcoming Gateways and Corridors
Significant Shift in Scope of Work

Original Scope of Work was to hold a focus group of “experts,” stakeholders, local champions and design team members for each of the four key topic areas.

*Client noted that we had great participation by residents in the first public meeting and was worried that holding focus groups as planned would not keep the residents engaged*
Significant Shift in Scope of Work

- Agreement to do a 6-day workshop

- Change from the traditional:
  - client – observer/facilitator
  - consultant – producer of the work
  - county/DCED staff – reviewer
So what happened at the workshop?

- Each key issue had a team formed
- Each Issue group team was responsible for developing an action plan
- Recommendations were presented at a second public meeting. A “buzz” in the community about the plan was created.
Planning Team

- **Fighting Blight** – Brian Lawrence, County Planning Staff, Bill Wasielewski, M&L
- **Positive Impressions** – Elaine Kramer, Pashek Associates
- **Vibrant Downtown** – Denny Puko, DCED
- **Welcoming Gateways and Corridors** – Jim Pashek, Pashek Associates
- **Meeting publicity and logistics**, Council and City staff liaison – Diana Reitz, Community Development Director/Michael Nestico, City Manager
Why do this?

• Community remained **engaged** in the process
• County & state staff **partnered** in the process
• Local “experts” were involved in a way that maximized their contribution while minimizing their time – **built local capacity**
• Vision, goals, objectives and implementation **strategies were developed** quickly, for each key issue identified by the community
• Focus was on producing **results** and not sitting back and writing a book
• The final presentation could be used as a **rallying cry for action** that energized the participants
Vibrant Downtown

- Building capacity and leadership
- Make it easy for prospective businesses and developers to find downtown properties
- Get started on Good ideas like Brand, Events, Promotions, physical improvements
Fighting Blight

- Mapping of problem areas
- Focus on problem areas near assets, gateways
- Beef up code enforcement, go digital
- Update ordinances to support this plan
Data mapping

A heat map shows tax delinquency, abandoned/vacant property, and violent crime so far in 2015.
Focus the effort
Positive Impressions

- Branding and marketing program
- Communicate message many ways but with one voice
- Develop media relationships
Welcoming Gateways and Corridors

- Cleanup key locations
- Add Trees
- Pilot project that rebuilds crumbling sidewalks, creates planting beds and adds sign
So what has happened since the Workshop?

• New Planning Commission
• New zoning ordinance in works
• DCED grant for code enforcement & blight tracking software
• New logo / publicity toolkit developed
• Council updates

• PA Downtown Center is helping to create downtown action plan (paid by DCED)
• “Accountability” team meetings by phone
• Running “progress report”
What does the “progress report” look like now?

**Vision**
Jeannette will be an environmentally healthy, economically vibrant and visually attractive location for residents, business owners and visitors.

**Goals and Objectives**
1. Create opportunities for commercial/economic growth.
2. Improve or create opportunities for safe and healthy residential, social, recreational and cultural life.
3. Create visually attractive locations and views.

Blight is a big reason why Jeannette's future is uncertain. It has many causes and, in turn, contributes to numerous negative consequences.

Vacant and deteriorating properties, whether commercial or residential, add to an unfavourable impression of the City. They hinder economic stability and growth. They create public health and safety hazards. They attract vandals, trespassers and law-breakers.

Deteriorated properties in some cases have owners who live outside the area. Some have owners who cannot afford improvements. Some have owners who cannot be located.

This issue was the one that public meeting participants most wanted the City of Jeannette to address.

The City of Jeannette plans to enact a comprehensive and aggressive plan to fight blight in all forms, in all parts of the city. This effort includes new land-use designations, new ordinances that apply to zoning and building codes, and new design guidelines to provide standards for redevelopment. The effort will apply to the city generally, but pay specific attention to the downtown, to important gateways and corridors leading into the city, and to the three major parks owned by Westmoreland County that are slated for redevelopment.

Create intensive plan for addressing blight

- Create a comprehensive, intensive and rigorous plan for addressing blight in all forms throughout the community. An overarching plan will provide a full, data-driven view of the problem and set out specific steps for making improvements. Jeannette will generally follow the “Five-step, Fast-track Blight Plan” created by the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, with additional tailored to the specific circumstances and needs of the community.
- Gain consensus for developing a comprehensive blighted property strategy.

**Progress**

- Engage political leadership, which has occurred at least since the beginning of this comprehensive planning process but also must continue with elected and appointed officials.
- Commit staff resources, including creating a full-time code enforcement officer position. Add or strengthen codes and ordinances. Be more aggressive with enforcement.
- Engage key stakeholders in a multi-task force that includes the city’s community development officer and code enforcement officer, and representatives of the planning commission, redevelopment authority, county planning division, county redevelopment authority, the consulting team, others and landlords.
Positive Impressions

The good things happening in Jeannette these days could fill a book (and they do fill 3 books). The positive steps are aimed at addressing real and significant problems such as blight and vacancies, a struggling downtown, and other community issues. The steps set forth in this comprehensive plan and other initiatives led by the city, community groups, and individual citizens give Jeannette much to be proud of and new improvements to look forward to. Nonetheless, many residents and outsiders hold negative impressions of Jeannette. Many believe Jeannette is far worse than it is—and believe incorrectly that the city lags behind similar communities in Westmoreland County or Western Pennsylvania.

Vision
Jeannette is widely recognized for its vitality in community, commerce, and culture, arising through public engagement and timely and accurate two-way communications.

Goals and Objectives
1. Rebrand Jeannette as the city of "Community. Commerce. Culture."
2. Communicate in a timely and accurate way with citizens, the business community, visitors, and the media.
3. Involve and engage the public effectively.

The City of Jeannette plans to take tangible and visible steps to address the problem of negative impressions.

The work of creating new, more positive impressions of Jeannette is called "rebranding the narrative" in the professional world of marketing and strategic communications. The idea is to get updated facts, information, and understanding about the city into the public realm so that these perceptions carry the weight they deserve.

This does not minimize the work going on in other aspects of the city; in fact, the intention of the "Positive Impressions" chapter of this comprehensive plan is to acknowledge problems, but also show how they are being solved or addressed.

Strategies and implementation steps

Create and implement a branding strategy

1. "Rebrand" the city with a new slogan and logo that present Jeannette in a positive light. A city’s slogan becomes the short-hand way it is perceived by residents, businesses, visitors and also by people who know nothing else about a place. For years, Jeannette was known as "The Glass City," which is no longer accurate, and now serves more as a reminder of what has been lost than a statement of current conditions or future hopes. A new slogan and logo are needed, along with a brand implementation plan:

   - Activate the city’s vision for its future, its mission as a municipal jurisdiction, and a list of guiding principles for how it wants to operate.

   PROGRESS

1. Create a set of statements that put into words how the city views itself and its future, and the values by which it conducts its daily business. (Statements appear on facing page)
2. City Council reviews and approves the statements.
3. Ensure the statements are visible on the website and that city actions and publications reflect the contents and intentions.

   - Create a new brand. A new brand must reflect the contents of the city's vision, mission and guiding principles. It must effectively position the city while also aligning with reality, neither glossing over problems nor selling Jeannette short. It must tout what the city is proud of today while also providing room for aspirations.

   - Create an ad hoc group of marketing, communications, and design professionals and representatives of the city, business community, planning commission, and other groups.
   - Draft a slogan and logo.
   - Secure support from City Council and advocacy.
Implementable Comprehensive Plan

REVISITED

Discussion
Input
Best practices
RFP/RFQ, Scope of Services, Contract

What consultant skills should you hire when you don’t know what issues will be addressed by the plan?

Are you comfortable with an “ORGANIC” process that may lead you to tasks you never imagined in the beginning of the project?
# Implementable Comprehensive Plan REVISITED

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**Heidelberg, Carnegie, & Scott Multi-Municipal Plan**
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Key Issues
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- Community Character & Appearance Section 3
- Parks & Recreation Section 4
- Public Infrastructure Section 5

Other Topics
- Population Growth and Township Resources Section 6

Workbook Appendices
## Consistency with the MPC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPC requirement</th>
<th>Where it can be found in the Comprehensive Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement of objectives</td>
<td>Found in the Vision Statements for each Key Issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for land use</td>
<td>The Township of Pine is almost fully developed. The township recently updated its zoning ordinance and zoning map. This comprehensive plan addresses a few minor adjustments recommended to the zoning. The current zoning map and chart of zoning designations and permitted uses for residential development are provided on subsequent pages in this section, reflects Future Land Use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to meet housing needs</td>
<td>Housing was discussed during preparation of this plan, and the township believes the current housing mix as well as that provided for in the Zoning Ordinance will meet the needs of the community for the next 10 years. The current zoning map and chart of zoning designations and permitted uses for residential development are provided on subsequent pages in this section of the appendix. Research regarding population growth and community resources appears in the Other Topics chapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for movement of people and goods</td>
<td>Found in the Public Infrastructure chapter for road improvements proposed by this plan. Also, in the Connectivity &amp; Trails section for non-motorized movement of people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for community facilities</td>
<td>Most of the township’s facilities are fairly new or have recently been updated. This plan focused on several park recommendations, in the Parks and Recreation chapter. Public utilities were addressed in the Public Infrastructure chapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Interrelationship among various plan components</td>
<td>The nature of an Implementable Comprehensive Plan is to focus on major issues in the community. Each issue tends to address multiple planning elements in an integrated manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short- and long-term implementation strategies</td>
<td>Found in each chapter for the specific issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## MPC requirement (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPC requirement</th>
<th>Where it can be found in the Comprehensive Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement that existing and proposed development is compatible with existing and proposed development in adjacent communities and consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.</td>
<td>The zoning map was not changed as the result of this plan. There has been no change in consistency. Part of the process was to convene a focus group of planners from adjacent communities to address common regional concerns including Route 19, watersheds, regional trails and best practices municipalities were engaging in regarding stormwater and land use regulations. This plan is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for protection of natural and historic resources</td>
<td>Found in the Community Character &amp; Appearance Chapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for reliable supply of water</td>
<td>Found in the Public Infrastructure chapter. Water for the Township of Pine is provided by the Westview Water Authority. Two water storage tanks have been built for the township. Adequate water supplies have been planned for through full build-out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to be reviewed in 10 years</td>
<td>This plan recommends that the plan be updated in 10 years. Found in the Introduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careful analysis of all of the elements</td>
<td>We believe that the Key Issues identified by the Community were developed in a careful manner that incorporated most of the planning elements of the MPC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption process with the county</td>
<td>To take place in Fall 2015.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page
Implementable Comprehensive Plan REVISITED

Discussion
Input
Best practices
**Implementable Comprehensive Plan REVISITED**

### Land Use and Planning

**Objective 1.0: Seek consistency in land use across municipal borders through sound land use tools, design concepts, and mutual action toward common policies and practices.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Responsible &amp; Participating Parties</th>
<th>Potential Funding Source or Technical Assistance</th>
<th>Record of Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.1</td>
<td>Create a Regional Planning Commission among the four municipalities to oversee implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan. The four municipalities should retain their individual Planning Commissions to serve as an advisory board for implementation of individual zoning ordinances. The Regional Planning Commission will complement the individual Planning Commissions by providing guidance on regional development issues and plans that impact all four municipalities.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, Local Government Academy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.2</td>
<td>Update and implement separate, but consistent, zoning ordinances and sub-division and land development ordinances (SALDO) to promote uniform development standards and zoning districts among the four municipalities. Land use ordinances should be consistent with the elements of the future land use plan.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, Local Government Academy, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.3</td>
<td>Develop and implement land use tools through zoning that encourage innovative neighborhood design options. Innovative land use tools include traditional neighborhood development and conservation subdivision design standards. Ensure consistency between the zoning ordinance and SALDO in allowing for innovative neighborhood design.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, Local Government Academy, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County, Natural Lands Trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.4</td>
<td>Establish and adopt ordinance design standards that are consistent across the four municipalities for sidewalks, buffers and landscaping, signage, streetlights, shade trees, and parking.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, Local Government Academy, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.5</td>
<td>Implement commercial development standards and design guidelines for large scale retail facilities that include take into consideration building design and orientation, surrounding land uses, access, landscaping/buffering, lighting, signage, and pedestrian movement.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Hempfield Township</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, Local Government Academy, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.6</td>
<td>Improve the visual appearance of designated gateways and corridors that travel through one or more of the municipalities, including Route 28, Route 136, Route 819, Route 119, Business Route 66, Pittsburgh/Otterman Streets, Huff Ave/Broad Streets.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions, Huff Avenue Committee</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP, PennDOT, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County, Main Street/Plan Street Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.7</td>
<td>Create consistent design standards and guidelines for the Route 30 and Route 119 corridors through managed access management, building orientation, lighting, signage, sidewalks/porch railings, parking areas to the side or rear of buildings, loading areas, landscaping, and buffering.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions</td>
<td>Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County, DCED - LUPAP, PennDOT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU 1.8</td>
<td>Develop a system for identification and evaluation of developments of regional impact for consistency with the goals and objectives of the multi-municipal plan.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg Borough, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>Municipal Governing Bodies, Planning Commissions, Westmoreland County Planning Department</td>
<td>DCED - LUPAP</td>
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### Strategies and implementation steps

**Create and implement a branding strategy**

1. **“Rebrand” the city with a new slogan and logo that present Jeannette in a positive light.** A city’s slogan becomes the short-hand way it’s perceived by residents, businesses, visitors and also by people who know nothing else about a place. For years, Jeannette was known as “The Glass City,” which is no longer accurate, and now serves more as a reminder of what has been lost than a statement of current conditions or future hopes. A new slogan and logo are needed, along with a brand implementation effort.

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