



# Pocopson Township

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## **Planning Commission (PC) Meeting Minutes Wednesday, 7:30 P.M., April 16, 2014**

In attendance: Gary Summers, Suzy Breiseth, Meg Johnson, Barney Leonard, Rob Miller, Steve Simonson, Sean Rafferty.

Commissioner Absent: Mickey Bailey.

Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) Representatives: Susan Elks, AICP, Community Planner, Chester County Planning Commission; Township Comp Plan Update Task Force – Kathy Miller, Jeff Randall.

**1. Call to Order and Public Comment:** Summers called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. and called for Public Comment. No Public Comment.

**2. Township Comprehensive Plan Update:** Elks noted that the Public Review Draft Copy of the Comp Plan Update was distributed to members of the PC, Comp Plan Task Force, and Board of Supervisors. A printed public review copy was made available at the Township Building and a link provided on the Township web site for viewing the electronic version. Summers commented that he is impressed with the overall layout and design and particularly pleased with the substantive recommendations. He noted that the Comp Plan is a path forward for implementing future goals and strategies for the Township. He thanked the Township residents who served on the Task Force for their dedicated efforts noting overlap in some cases between the Task Force and PC membership.

**a. Technical Review:** Elks outlined the review period in accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code emphasizing that the purpose this evening is for the PC to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. The Board will hold a public hearing to propose adoption of the updated Comp Plan in June. Elks reported that the Task Force has met regularly over a two-year period. The Draft Copy presented this evening provides a vision for the Township's future and recommendations to achieve that vision. Three overarching topics are subject of the recommendations – future land use, historic resources, and greenway inventory (park, recreation, trails and open space).

**b. Future Land Use:** Using a display-sized map of the future land use plan, Elks commented that Chapter 10 of the Comp Plan focuses on critical differences in existing land use and future land use. She reviewed the options outlined in Section 10-1 noting the Future Land Use Plan Map suggests a new zoning district to fine tune current zoning in order to promote local agricultural products currently in the Township. At the same time, future developable land may be balanced in part with availability of public water and sewer. Historic Villages are shown on this Map as part of the resource protection area. Creation of a new zoning district would be beneficial if pointed toward development options that require public or community water and sewer infrastructure. Elks noted that the Township should review the need for a Transfer of Development Rights program

generally, because only one contiguous area of developable land of moderate acreage remains. Fill-in-type development is accommodated in future land use.

**c. Historic Resources:** Elks noted that few recommendations from the 2001 Comp Plan have been implemented. The Draft Comp Plan encourages coordinating internally and with outside groups to highlight and create historic and scenic areas. A specific recommendation is the creation of a free-standing ordinance to establish a Historical Commission rather than the current Historical Committee. Another recommendation of note is the creation of a historic overlay district. The district is not a historical or architectural review board, but instead, would provide regulatory review with regard to setbacks and other zoning concerns.

**d. Greenway:** Chapter 8 of the Draft Comp Plan provides recommendations to review existing provisions, plans, and ordinances for greater consistency. Elks noted adoption of an Official Map and pursuit of grant funding to support parks, recreation, and trails as useful recommendations going forward. The Task Force did not discuss ordinance amendment to the greenway areas designated in the current code.

**e. Discussion:** Commissioners had a number of questions regarding hierarchy of land use easements, particularly regarding the easement administered by the Chester County Agricultural Lands Preservation Board located in the central portion of the Township. The eased area includes required mobile home park zoning designation. Rafferty voiced concern that changes to the zoning map and ordinances may preclude or limit land assets of developable land. Elks noted that per the Draft Comp Plan, land use is a balancing act against availability of water and sewer resources and economic feasibility of installing the improvements. A number of recommendations appear in Chapter 7 of the Draft Comp Plan to address overall fire, EMS, and emergency management including but not limited to encouraging regional participation. Elks and the PC indicated that it is not necessary for the Township to hire a Court Reporter for the June public hearing.

**Motion:** Miller moved, Rafferty seconded, to recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the Draft 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update as presented during the public review contingent upon one change on Page 11-6 from Appendix B to Appendix C; motion approved.

**3. Township Resolution 2014-7 – Commission Bylaws:** Secretary distributed copies of Resolution 2014-7 approved during the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors on April 14, 2014, approving the Bylaws.

**4. Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Breiseth moved, Johnson seconded, to approve the Meeting Minutes dated March 19, 2014; motion approved.

**5. Adjournment:** At 8:40 P.M., Summers moved, Johnson seconded, to adjourn the meeting; motion approved.

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Susan Simone, Administrative Secretary

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Gary Summers, Chair