

April 17th Stakeholder Workshop

Town of Bloomsburg Comprehensive Plan

Summary

April 17, 2008

6:00pm-8:00pm

Bloomsburg Fire Hall

1. Welcome from Mayor Daniel Knorr

The Mayor opened the workshops with a welcome to the approximately 25 stakeholders who attended.

2. The Planning Process – An Overview of Project and Schedule

The Gannett Fleming project team introduced themselves as planning consultants working with an appointed Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) on preparing a new comprehensive plan.

Michelle Brummer, project manager for Gannett Fleming, emphasized that planning is an iterative process of assessing conditions and needs, planning changes in policy and investment, and implementing those changes to guide community development. She noted examples of planning that the town, the county, state and federal agencies, the University and non-profits have done since the 1950s. This comprehensive plan – while a concentrated effort to develop a new document – simply continues the process of planning.



The project was initiated in February 2008 with a PAC kick-off meeting and is expected to present a draft comprehensive plan to the Borough Planning Commission and Borough Council next spring (2009). The PAC identified a list of 75 stakeholders who were invited to this workshop.

The purpose of this meeting was to further develop the project team's understanding of assets, issues and opportunities that the plan should address. The comprehensive plan must address various aspects of community development – land use, transportation, community facilities and services, etc. – but it should do so in a way that reflects the community's character and needs.

This was the first of three stakeholder workshops; others are planned for October 2008 and February 2009.

3. What We Know about Bloomsburg

The Gannett Fleming Team presented a brief characterization of the community based on 2000 census reports as well as more recent town and University statistics, including:

- Who lives in Bloomsburg
- Who works in Bloomsburg
- Living in Bloomsburg (housing conditions and costs)
- University Impact



See Stakeholder Workshop#1 Presentation for details.

4. Facilitated Discussion 1: Getting to Know Bloomsburg Better

The project team has begun its research of conditions and trends and compiled these potential discussion items into five categories:

- Bloomsburg as a Place (Location, Physical Design and Infrastructure)
- Living in Bloomsburg (Housing and Neighborhoods)
- Working and Doing Business in Bloomsburg
- Lifelong Learning in Bloomsburg
- Relaxing in and Visiting Bloomsburg (Social and Cultural Aspects)

Assets (building blocks of the future), issues (needs and concerns) and opportunities (for improvement) identified by recent studies and the project team were presented for discussion, validation and prioritization. See Session 1 Results.

5. Facilitated Small Group Discussion 2: Exploring Priorities

After a short break, stakeholders divided into small groups to discuss the priority assets, issues and opportunities in each of the 5 topic areas. See Session 2- Results.

6. Closing

The project team closed the meeting with a summary of the input received in the small group discussions and asked stakeholders to provide their contact information for further follow-up.