

**St. Clair Township
Planning Advisory Committee
April 21, 2008
Summary of Discussion**

ATTENDED BY:

Steve Bartels	Kevin Fall	Pearl Hicks
Bonnie Hobbs	Steve Hobbs	Jerry Lanich
Rich Santefort	Joe Schmidt	Ron Sunderhaus
Doug Wheelright	Ray Williams	

Staff: Bill Miller, Larisa Sims, Jane Wittke, OKI; Mike Ekberg, Miami Conservancy District

Staff distributed revised drafts of data and analysis summaries for housing, schools, recreation and open space, public safety and economic development to reflect earlier discussion and comments by the advisory group. The meeting discussion focused on draft goals, objectives and policies regarding Housing, Public Facilities (Schools, Recreation and Open Space, and Public Safety) and Economic Development for the St. Clair Township Comprehensive Plan in progress.

To understand the following summary, it may help to know that the draft goals were presented with a letter abbreviation, the related draft objectives with the same letter and a number in sequence, and the related draft policies with the same letter and number, a period and a number in sequence, for example H= goal, H1 = objective, and H1.1 = policy. Those attending responded with the following points and issues:

Housing

- H1.3 is not realistic, because the Board of Health won't enforce a policy for a minimum housing code.
- Even so, H1.3 has value as a benchmark to indicate the relative need for enforcement.
- Can't we look at another enforcement mechanism?
- The existing eviction process is ridiculously ineffective.
- In H1.5 mobile home standards are under state jurisdiction so the township can't do anything about them.
- In H1.6 the number 5 (referring to the number of substandard housing units that should be rehabilitated or demolished and replaced annually) should be lowered to 2 to be more realistic, based on past experience.
- In regard to H1.8 (concerning the pursuit of funding to maintain and improve housing stock), not all the existing available dollars are being used, so is it really necessary to pursue additional funds?
- Delete H1.9 regarding streamlining the permitting process—it doesn't apply to the township.
- Does H2.1 apply to tenants who are displaced as well as home-owners?
- H5.3 should be split into two policies: the first should do away with the reference to mobile homes and refer to manufactured homes only; the second should be specific to mobile homes and should require a large lot size and a minimum distance between mobile home parks.
- NOTE: as part of this discussion, there was a suggestion that the township ought to consider a change to the zoning code to require a minimum distance between mobile home parks.
- Shouldn't H5.4 somehow look at/refer to the leapfrogging of single-lot development, and not just subdivision development?
- Delete H5.6 (regarding ensuring the availability of ensuring scattered-site subsidized housing).

**St. Clair Township
Planning Advisory Committee
April 21, 2008
Summary of Discussion**

Public Facilities and Services:

--In general, the group seemed to believe that the concept of level of service for public facilities should be revisited as the plan progresses, as it would be useful as a yardstick and a prompt to discussions needed.

● **Schools**

--In a discussion of level of service concepts, the comment was made that a level of service is already required for schools.

--The revised text of data and analysis for Schools does not acknowledge that Edgewood High School is in the township.

--Delete Objective PFS5 dealing with school funding and the policies associated with it.

● **Recreation and Open Space**

--Objective ROS1 is desirable, and township recreation and open space planning could be fairly simple and would be a useful guide to the Butler County Planning Commission.

--In addition, having a township master plan for recreation and open space would help the township qualify for Clean Ohio grant money.

--Under ROS, a new objective is needed, to be phrased something like “ Coordinate with Butler Metro Parks regarding township goals and needs for recreation and open space now and in the future.”

--Policies under this new objective could be similar to those dealing with communicating with school districts.

● **Public Safety**

--In reaction to PS1.1 about documenting delays and emergency response problems caused by train back-ups on at-grade crossings, it was noted that the Sheriff has the authority to call a judge who can impose hefty fines on railroads after 5 minutes of railroad crossing blockages and delays.

--PS2.1 about evaluating the volume of police emergency calls from the township should have “nonemergency” calls added to it.

Economic Development

--Under Economic Development, what about the dollar value of the township’s water resources? Would it be possible to estimate that value?

--No one has tried to estimate the dollar value of the aquifer, probably because water resources are generally under-valued. Economists haven’t figured out how to value some of the environmental services that water provides (such as drinking water and wastewater removal, recreational amenities, aesthetics in a natural river corridor, and support of ecosystems).

--According to the Miami Conservancy District, the Great Miami Buried Valley Aquifer in southwest Ohio is estimated to hold at least 1.5 trillion gallons of water, and about 312 million gallons of water are used from it every day.

--The township’s plentiful supplies of pure water should be emphasized in trying to attract new business and industry to the township.