



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Cumberland County

Cumberland County Review Report

Cumberland County Planning Department
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Summary:

The Cumberland County Planning Commission (CCPC) recommended the township pursue a thorough, good faith public participation effort during the adoption process for the comprehensive plan. In particular, the township should make residents aware of the proposed future land use map change from agriculture to industrial along McClures Gap Road and seek their input on the transportation needs and community compatibility issues with that proposal.

Recommendation: *Approval With Comments*

<i>Name of Amendment:</i>				
Comprehensive Plan Update				
<i>Municipality:</i>	<i>Date Received:</i>	<i>Date Reviewed:</i>	<i>Reviewed By:</i>	<i>Checked By:</i>
North Middleton Township	12/8/2022	1/19/2023	SH, EG, KS	Planning Commission
<i>Type of Amendment:</i>				
New Comprehensive Plan				

Explanation of Amendment:

North Middleton Township has submitted an updated 2023 comprehensive plan for review and recommendations. The existing comprehensive plan was adopted in 2008.

<i>Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:</i>	
AMENDMENT IS CONSISTENT	AMENDMENT IS NOT CONSISTENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A majority of the proposed comprehensive plan is generally consistent with the Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The township is proposing to change the future land use map north of Interstate 76 at McClures Gap Road to industrial. This area is shown as agriculture prime farmland and residential on the Cumberland County Future Land Use Map.

Administrative Comments and Recommendations:

- The draft comprehensive plan includes the following note (page 3). "...the steering committee took into consideration comments from the public and integrated these ideas into the plan. The township released a survey in March of 2021, held a public hearing in August of 2021." The township should verify the date of the public hearing provided in this section of the comprehensive plan to ensure compliance with Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requirements. The date of the County Planning Commission review should also be noted for MPC compliance purposes.

2. Page 5, plan organization. The date of the Comprehensive Plan should be changed to 2023.
3. The goals / objectives / actions are listed on pages 13-30. The text is repeated in Appendix I (goals, objectives, actions) (page 32). The township should consider combining the information into a single section to avoid redundancy and to create a smaller, more user-friendly plan.
4. Page 18, future land use map. The map included in the plan has white vertical lines throughout the map which limit legibility. The version legend states it was last amended February 2022. A higher resolution map should be included in the plan with an updated revision date for the map.

Technical Comments and Recommendations:

5. The community profile (pages 6-12). Since the start of the planning process in 2020, new supporting data for the community profiles have been released. The township should determine if it wants to update the community profile and associated planning assumptions with that new data.
6. Page 15. The comprehensive plan identifies an area of future industrial growth along McClures Gap road north of Interstate 76. The change was made after the planning process concluded and not subjected to public review like other FLU map changes. The rationale for this policy change should be described in the plan and fully communicated with residents as the public survey did not support more industrial land in the township.

This future land use area will likely see development given the presence of infrastructure, but a more detailed analysis should be conducted to determine what type of development and its compatibility with surrounding uses. Such considerations were not made during the planning process. The change from agricultural to industrial use would allow the most intensive land uses in the township at a location that where the least intensive uses were permitted. Intense industrial uses in that location may stress the supporting transportation system and conflict with surrounding residential uses. A less intensive FLU category may be more appropriate.

Through the public review process of the draft plan, the township should specifically identify and discuss this change to the FLU map with the public as it is the most notable change from the previous comprehensive plan. Likewise, coordination should occur with Carlisle Borough as development along the municipal boundary may have significant impacts on the borough's road network, residential neighborhoods and other infrastructure demands in this area.

7. Page 29. The plan recommends providing appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new transportation projects. The plan should clarify the intent. Should the township require bicycle and pedestrian amenities for all projects? The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO) section 180-38 requires sidewalks where a proposed project includes three or more lots or dwelling units per acre, is a nonresidential development, or is within 1,000 feet of any development having sidewalks. Further, the SLDO permits a waiver of the requirements for sidewalks if a statement regarding future construction is added to a plan. The township should consider amendments to the existing SLDO to move ahead with this objective.
8. Page 29. The transportation goals / objectives / actions indicate that Capital Area Transit (CAT) service is limited in North Middleton Township and that CAT is in the process of restructuring its routes. The information should be updated as the current CAT Ride Guide became effective in January 2022.
9. Page 31. The summary of the public survey indicates that the residents appreciate the rural nature of the township. The summary also notes that residents would like to see more health and human services capability and single family detached homes.

The public survey summary also indicates that the proposed land use revisions along the Harrisburg Pike and Newville Road were viewed favorably with 80% agreeing or neutral with the proposed changes.

This section does not address the proposed land use change to industrial along McClures Gap Road north of Interstate 76. For consistency, all proposed future land use changes should be included in the public survey.

Adopting a comprehensive plan and amending the future land use map should be driven by public interest and guidance. Changing the proposed future land use map after the dissemination of the survey may capture the attention of residents and open potential challenges to the adoption process. If the area north of Interstate 76 at McClures Gap Road is proposed for rezoning, this process may be scrutinized.

10. Page 40. A blank public survey is provided in Appendix II. The survey results should be included in the plan and more detail should be added to the summary provided on Page 31

“Section 505 (b) and 609 (g) of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that amendments to municipal ordinances be filed with the county planning agency. If this amendment is approved, please forward a final copy to the county planning office so we may update our records.”