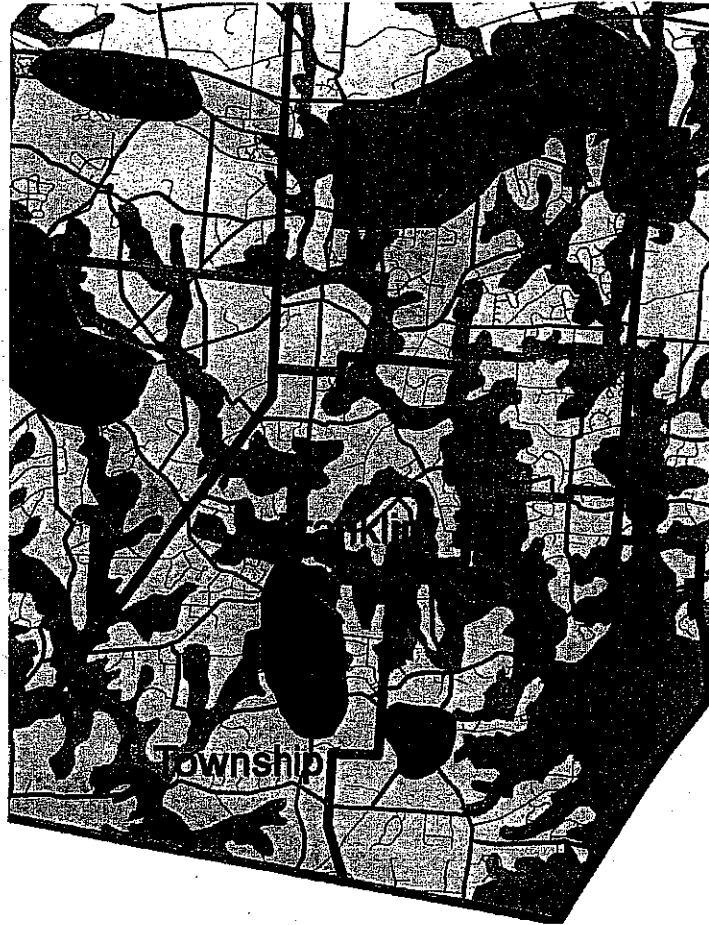


Attachment to 2/15/06 BOS minutes.

# ***COMPREHENSIVE PLAN***

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**Franklin Township – Chester County, Pennsylvania**



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## *GOALS & OBJECTIVES*

### FARMLAND AND PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

#### Goal:

- 6.0 Preserve farmland and conserve prime agricultural soils to preserve the character of the Township.

#### Objectives:

- 6.1 Continue to encourage farmland preservation by providing financial incentives to farm owners through Act 515 and Act 319 to maintain land in agricultural use.
- 6.2 Maintain and preserve existing farms in order to promote sustainable agriculture in the Township.
- 6.3 Conserve current farmland areas through effective agricultural zoning, and restrict conversion of prime agriculture soils for residential use ~~to residential use.~~
- 6.4 Preserve farmland through purchasing and transferring development rights.
- 6.5 Attract buyers interested in purchasing eased land.
- 6.6 Continue the education of the farm owners regarding funds available for conservation efforts, and work with landowners to find workable conservation easement alternatives to development of entire parcels.
- 6.7 Capitalize on proximity to Fair Hill by keeping parcels in horse-oriented activities.
- 6.8 Encourage farmers who want to sell their properties to market their farms for alternative agricultural uses (e.g. vineyard, equestrian).

*GOALS & OBJECTIVES*

ZONING & LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Goal:

- 14.0 Create a new zoning ordinance that provides a defensible basis for land use regulation; control growth, preserve open space, and plan new growth while preserving open space; and enact context sensitive land development regulations.

Objectives:

- 14.1 Implement the Comprehensive Plan with innovative zoning designed to achieve the goals.
- 14.2 Write new zoning that is specifically designed to address the goals and objectives of Franklin Township.
- 14.3 Revise zoning ordinances so new housing is limited to lowest density the law permits.
- 14.4 Change ordinances ~~to require minimum lot sizes of 20 to 25 acres or larger~~ to effectively preserve agricultural land.
- 14.5 Protect wooded areas from being developed.
- 14.6 Design zoning to direct growth to the most appropriate areas, and to protect natural resources and vistas.
- 14.7 Prepare ordinances that will encourage builders to improve the safety of the main roads (e.g. widen shoulders, improve drainage, and remove earthen banks to provide more visibility).
- 14.8 Amend the ordinances to address the transitional aspects of development intensity from the more village-like in Kemblesville, to the more rural in the outlying areas.

**CHAPTER 5**  
**LAND USE PLAN**

Future Land Use in Franklin Township is one of the most important elements for effective growth management over the next 10 years and beyond. Before outlining a strategy for 2015 or 2020, Existing Land Use is presented to visualize the types, distribution and acreages of agricultural, residential, commercial, recreational, etc. development in 2005. Figure 5-1, Existing Land Use, depicts 11 types of activity currently found in parcels in Franklin Township. Single-family residential and rural residential land use account for approximately one-third of the existing land use, while agricultural lands comprise approximately 55% of the total 8,412 acres in the Township. Only 10% of the Township is comprised of multi-family residential, commercial, institutional, recreational, utilities, and road rights-of-way. Given Franklin Township's relatively remote location away from the growth corridors of Routes 1 and 95, it is not surprising that only 10% of the land varies from the predominant agricultural and lower intensity residential uses.

Over the next 10 years, the uses that comprise the 10% non-agricultural and non-single-family residential may only grow to a combined 15% total (a 5% net increase). Therefore, the real challenge for future land use, is for it to happen in such a way that the agricultural landscape is retained, while selective infill of residential development is directed to the most appropriate areas.

The Future Land Use Plan, Figure 5-2, provides a simple but effective future view for Franklin Township. Development intensity is intended to transition from the Kemblesville Village Area along Route 896 as the core and hub of activity, to the Rural Resource Area where existing farms on prime agricultural soils are maintained. Along the way, Moderate Intensity Use Areas are recommended to adjoin Kemblesville, and Low Intensity Use Areas are recommended to adjoin the Rural Resource Areas. The best gift that we can give future generations in Franklin Township is that of an orderly, logical, and balanced pattern of land uses.

The key attributes shown on the Future Land Use Plan include five (5) areas as noted below:

1. Rural Resource Area, which is intended for:
  - a. existing farmland protection;
  - b. prime agricultural soils protection;
  - c. larger parcel size retention;
  - d. "farmettes" and equestrian activity opportunities and retention; and
  - e. scenic road network retention.

These areas are appropriate for [REDACTED] continued agricultural use [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- + the creation of a compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented Village of Kemblesville;
- + the concentration of infrastructure to support development in and adjoining Kemblesville;
- + the protection of the Rural Resource Areas;
- + the protection of the natural resource network;
- + the overall transition of development intensity, from the rural center in Kemblesville to the natural landscape beyond the Village;
- + the long-term viability of farming; and
- + reducing pressure on the Township to provide increased services, by fostering only moderate population.

Various Implementation Strategies related to future land use and development are profiled in Chapter 13, relative to the recommendations below.

### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

1. Amend the Open Space Design (cluster) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to be more in keeping with the character zones expressed on the Future Land Use Plan. Vary lot size, density and open space provisions to promote greater intensity of development in the Kemblesville Village Area and Moderate Intensity Use Area, a lower intensity of development in the Low Intensity Use Area, and the lowest intensity of development in the Rural Resource Area.
2. Create an Official Map, in accordance with Article IV of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, to identify sites and routes that should be reserved for such items as: open space, parks and recreational sites, trails, sidewalks, civic uses and land for a municipal building.
3. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to create a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Overlay District for the Kemblesville Village Area.
- ~~4. Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to be more responsive to the natural resource protection recommendations of Chapter 4, in order to better address the Natural Resource Protection Areas and Rural Resource Areas and to be more responsive to prime agricultural land.~~
- ~~5. Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to be more responsive to the historic, cultural and scenic resource protection recommendations of Chapter 3.~~
4. Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to create new Definitions, using terms from the Comprehensive Plan so that the ordinance lexicon matches the plan.

## *CONCLUSION*

While the Township has experienced some growth in the past years, this growth was far outpaced by neighboring Townships, indicating Franklin Township is not the epicenter of regional growth. The increased popularity of farmettes bolsters the rural atmosphere. Indeed, with only one-third of the Township's land occupied by housing, the majority of land is still in rural agricultural or open space uses.

## *RECOMMENDATIONS*

In light of the above information, and in the context of all other related chapters of the Plan, the recommendations for housing are:

1. Accommodate a fair share of growth and development, in sync with the Future Land Use Plan, Figure 5-2, through Ordinance Amendments that direct growth proportionately to the four character areas: Kemblesville; Moderate Intensity Use; Low Intensity Use; and Rural Resource.
2. Focus on higher intensities of residential land use, including multi-family residential uses, in Rural Center of Kemblesville, minimizing impacts on more rural areas, and environmentally sensitive areas.
3. Maintain the rural character of the Township by directing new housing away from environmentally sensitive areas. (Strengthen various overlay districts such as steep slopes and riparian corridors.)
4. ~~Amend the zoning, particularly in the Rural Resource areas, to accommodate increased interest in farmettes and horse stables. (These uses would direct additional housing units in a pattern consistent with the Township's rural character, similar to that of the Unionville area, but more affordable.)~~
5. Encourage the consolidation of lots ("Reverse Subdivision") where applicable, to preserve the rural character.
6. Maintain the existing housing stock.
7. Rehabilitate substandard housing units to improve their viability and livability into the future.
8. Encourage the use of a modified open space design option, especially for the Moderate Intensity Use Areas, to incorporate the recommendations in the Future Land Use Plan, Figure 5-2.
9. Promote a more walkable neighborhood form of development in Kemblesville Village through Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) options.
10. ~~Create Effective Agricultural Zoning to promote prime agricultural lands in the proposed Rural Resource Areas, with lots of at least 10 acres (or greater) and parcels of 20 acres (or greater) in sync with a TDR — Transfer of Development Rights program.~~
11. Promote subdivision that helps to maintain the rural character of the Township in the proposed Low Intensity Use Area.

Table 13-1. Implementation Matrix (continued)

INITIATIVE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
5-1 LAND USE PLAN		
5-5.1 Amend the Open Space Design (cluster) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to be more in keeping with the character zones expressed on the Future Land Use Plan	BOS; PC	Short-Term
5-5.2 Create an Official Map in accordance with Article IV of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (See Note below)	PC; BOS	Short-Term
5-5.3 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to create a TND Overlay District for the Kemblesville Village Area	BOS; PC	Short-Term
<del>5-3.4 Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to be more responsive to prime agricultural land and the other natural resource protection recommendations of Chapter 4</del>	PC; EAG; OSC; BOS	Short-Term
<del>5-3.5 Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to be more responsive to the historic, cultural and scenic resource protection recommendations of Chapter 3</del>	PC; HARB; HC; BOS	Short-Term
5-5.4 Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to create new Definitions, using terms from the Comprehensive Plan so that the ordinance lexicon matches the plan	PC; BOS	Short-Term

Note:

Franklin Township should create an Official Map, as per item 5-3.2 above and Article IV of the MPC. According to Section 401. MPC, the Township shall have the power to show elements of the comprehensive plan on the Official Map with regard to public lands and facilities, including such features as: public streets, watercourses, public ground, public parks, playgrounds, open space reservations, pedestrian ways and easements, flood control basins, stormwater management areas, and drainage easements.

Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan

Table 13-1. Implementation Matrix (continued)

INITIATIVE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<b>6-1 HOUSING PLAN</b>		
6-10.1 Accommodate a fair share of growth and development, in sync with the Future Land Use Plan, Figure 5-2	BOS;PC	Ongoing
6-10.2 Direct higher intensity development, including multi-family development, towards Rural center, away from sensitive areas	BOS; PC	Short-Term and Ongoing
6-10.3 Strengthen steep slope and riparian corridor overlay districts	BOS; PC	Short-Term
<del>6-10.4 Amend zoning for farmette accommodation</del>	<del>BOS; PC</del>	<del>Short-Term</del>
6-10.5 Encourage lot consolidation	BOS; PC	Ongoing
6-10.6 Maintain the existing housing stock	HOA; HC; PC	Ongoing
6-10.7 Rehab substandard housing	HOA; HC; PC; BOS	Mid-Term
6-10.8 Encourage a modified Open Space Design Option in Moderate Intensity Use Areas	BOS; PC	Short-Term
6-10.9 Promote a more walkable village through TND	BOS; OSC; HC; PC	Long-Term
<del>6-10.10 Create effective agricultural zoning with large minimum lot sizes (10- or 20-acre)</del>	<del>BOS; PC</del>	<del>Short-Term</del>
6-10.11 Promote subdivision with rural character in Low Intensity Use Area	BOS; PC	Short-Term