

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan profiles the existing community facilities within the Township. This profile will include government institutions, educational facilities (public and private), and health and emergency services.

While the municipal survey did not address the issue of community facilities in detail, it does indicate certain preferences of the township citizenry that are applicable. Members of the community identified issue areas where it would like to foster inter-municipal cooperation, particularly in “trails” and “parks and recreation” and “watershed planning” (See “Recreation and Open Space,” “Utilities and Water Supply,” and “Natural Resource Protection” Chapters). While other services such as “police,” “fire/emergency services” and “library” garnered less support, the survey indicates that the community does not oppose cooperating on these matters. In general, people seem satisfied with the current level of service.

After creating an inventory of community facilities serving Franklin Township, this Plan Component moves to making recommendations for utilizing community facilities to their fullest to achieve the various goals laid out in the Plan’s other components. Ultimately, this portion of the plan seeks to direct the Township towards policy that will take advantage of the wealth of resources already contained in community facilities.

EXISTING FACILITIES

Government Institutions

The Township’s own municipal offices, located on the south side of Kemblesville, serve as the main location for administration. The facilities are sufficient for small meetings and the management of the Township’s affairs, though their size is inadequate for larger community engagements.

The Township is served by three separate post offices. Adjacent to the Township building is the Kemblesville Post Office (19347), offering retail service to those located in the immediate vicinity of Kemblesville proper. The remaining two post offices are outside of the municipality’s borders. The majority of the Township (all but the westernmost portions and Kemblesville itself) is served by the Landenberg Post Office (19350), located in New Garden Township. Finally, the westernmost portions of the Township are served by the Lincoln University Post Office (19352), located in Lower Oxford Township

Educational Facilities

Franklin Township is part of the Avon Grove Area School District. As of the start of the 2004-2005 school year, the enrollment of the district was 4,991, and its estimated revenue was roughly

\$58 million. The district maintains an elementary school (grades K through 2), an intermediate school (grades 3 through 6), a middle school (grades 7 and 8) and a high school (grades 9 through 12). In addition to these facilities, the School District also operates the Avon Grove Charter School (grades K through 11) with 973 students and an operating budget of \$7.5 million.

The school district also contains a charter school with grades K through 12, focusing on “Inquiry Learning.” Until recently, the district operated an elementary school within the Township (Kemblesville Elementary School), however the facility is not currently in use. The school district still owns and manages the facility, but has yet to determine the future use of facility, or whether it will retain the property in the future. After the closure of the elementary school, the district operates no educational facilities in the Township. Whatever the use, any anticipated changes to the facility could have a large potential impact on the community, and its consideration in the Comprehensive Plan is important.

In addition to facilities maintained by the Avon Grove Area School District, there are private educational facilities in the Township. The Kemblesville Christian Day School offers primary education for nursery school aged children. Rockin’ Horse-ABC and the Preschool Workshop offer preschool education in the Township. The Landenberg Christian Academy offers pre-K through third grade, and leases facilities at the Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.

Health and Emergency Services

Due to the Township’s small size, it does not provide its own police, fire or ambulance services. Less than half of the respondents to the municipal survey felt the Township should “promote cooperation with neighboring townships and Maryland” on these issues, but with these services being provided from outside sources, it is a matter of necessity.

Police service is provided by the Pennsylvania State Police. The officers charged with patrolling Franklin Township work out of the Avondale barracks. These officers provide services traditionally offered by municipal police in other jurisdictions, in addition to the duties performed in other posts where local police are present. The barracks maintain personnel continually dedicated to patrolling Franklin Township and adjacent areas. The Township’s low crime rate allows this arrangement to work fairly well, though at times, due to the large coverage areas of the troopers, it can at times be as much as 45 minutes before assistance arrives in non-emergency situations.

Fire and ambulance services are provided by the West Grove and Avondale Volunteer Fire Companies. The West Grove Fire Company maintains two facilities, one in West Grove, a second station in New London, and is the primary responder for the majority of the township. In addition to these two stations, the company is considering creating a third station in the vicinity of Flint Hill Road and PA-896, which, in addition to its emergency management work, could provide a future resource for meetings within the community. Avondale Volunteer Fire Company maintains one facility.

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West Grove Volunteer Fire Company

Rescue Truck/Engine (*WG*)
Ladder/Engine 75' (*WG*)
Class A Pumpers (*NL*: 2, *WG*:
1)
3,000 Gallon Tank Truck (*WG*)
Brush Truck (*NL*)
Squad Unit Personnel Transport
(*NL*)
Traffic Unit (*NL*)
Ambulances (*NL*: 1, *WG*: 2)
~75 Active Members

Avondale Volunteer Fire Company

Engines (3)
Ambulance
~Tanker
~40 Active Members

West Grove Police Dept.

Squad Cars (2)
WMD Training (*All
Officers*)
7 Officers (3FT, 4PT)

Chester County manages emergency management operations from West Chester (Edward J. Atkins, Coordinator). In addition to coordinating larger relief efforts, the County maintains 911 dispatch service for emergency calls. The emergency management center also coordinates with PEMA, and when necessary, Maryland officials, and is capable of handling calls in over 200 different languages.

Franklin Township does not have its own hospital; however Jennersville Regional Hospital in Penn Township is nearby. The hospital offers a wide variety of medical services including emergency care. Across the state line into Delaware, Christiana Care Health System also maintains a full service hospital outside of Newark.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to coordinate with neighboring municipalities for the provision of regional services.
2. Channel new community facilities towards the 896 corridor and Kemblesville to provide a central location, and easy access to residents.
3. Develop an expanded or new Township Administrative Offices Complex (Township Building) preferably in the Kemblesville Village Area.
4. Play a lead role in representing concerns to the Avon Grove School District relative to the loss of Kemblesville Elementary School. (Any future use of the facility should have the community's needs in mind, particularly local groups given the fact that this is the only large publicly owned meeting space in the Township.)
5. Facilitate West Grove Fire Company's new station. The new station would improve response times within the Township, and could potentially reduce the risk to life and property as well as homeowners' insurance rates.
6. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit a broad range of community facilities in the Kemblesville Area.
7. Communicate the presences of new developments with the local fire departments and the school district.