



TOWNSHIP OF ABINGTON

Office of the Township Manager

MEETING NOTES

July 20, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

TO: Richard J. Manfredi, Township Manager

DATE: JULY 20, 2021

SUBJECT: COMP PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM MEETING

REFERENCE: CHAPTER 11 - TRANSPORTATION

ATTENDEES: MIKE NARCOWICH, MCPC, COMMISSIONER THOMPSON, MARK BICKERTON, PATRICIA BOTERO, DOUG CALLANTINE, PATRICIA GALLAGHER, LUCY STRACKHOUSE, GERRY MAGID, RITA STEVENS, CHRISTINE STRANGE

SUMMARY: AS FOLLOWS

General Discussion:

Review draft of Chapter 11 – Transportation – Sections of the chapter include: Introduction; Existing Conditions of roads, transit, pedestrian network, bicycling network, commuting characteristics, and crashes. Adopted Transportation Plans; Ongoing Transportation Projects; Complete Streets; Active Transportation; and Goals.

Roads -

Roads in Abington can be differentiated based upon federal highway functional classification per the map and there are no expressways, but there is arterial, collector, local and private roads. Greenwood Avenue is a minor arterial road as well as Cedar Lane and the northern section of Washington Lane, and that will be updated.

Ownership –

Abington Township owns most of the roads in the municipality, although Easton Road is owned by Montgomery County and PennDOT owns most arterial and some collector roads in the Township. Private roads are Harbison Way, Deer Run, Herring and Valley Green.

Available Vehicles -

Suggested was adding “public transit” to this section for those who rely on it and note that transit does have its own constraints.

Traffic -

Traffic including volume, which declined at the beginning of 2020 due to COVID, but returned to normal by September and data shows numbers just as high as previous years.

Traffic on most heavily traveled roads in the Township increased, decreased, or stayed about the same depending upon location. Data shows traffic increased substantially on Huntingdon Pike and Susquehanna Road. AADT - Average Annual Daily Traffic Data for Huntingdon Pike from 2009 and 2017, the volume increased by 22% due to new construction that went from 14,993 AADT to 15,171 in nine years, so a 1% rise, and 37% increase on Susquehanna Road.

Transit – SEPTA Bus

Abington is served by nine SEPTA bus routes. Route 55 that runs along Rt. 611 Old York Road serves the Willow Grove Park Mall, the busiest stop in the Township. Abington-Jefferson Memorial Hospital on Route 55 is the second busiest and the Pavilion is the third. Bus Route 24 that runs along PA 232 Huntingdon Pike to the Huntingdon Valley Shopping Center is its busiest stop. Chart of bus volume was reviewed.

SEPTA Regional Rail –

Abington is the site of seven Regional Rail stations on three regional rail lines. Roslyn has the highest ridership followed by Noble. Crestmont has the lowest ridership and SEPTA considers it one of the most underperforming stations in the regional rail system. Other stations located outside of Abington are the Jenkintown-Wyncote and Willow Grove stations. SEPTA provided a mode split analysis of weekday SEPTA Regional Rail passengers dating back to 2017 as noted on the chart.

Goals -

The following goals have changed as they were based initially on public feedback as well as ideas from the team, and since then, it has been modified as follows:

- Work to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow and increase safety for all road users.
- Obtain funding to help pay for transit amenities and work with SEPTA to improve bus, rail and shared-ride service and facilities in the Township.
- Extend the pedestrian network while making it safer.
- Implement adopted transportation plans with recommendations for improvements to the pedestrian network, bicycle network, road corridors and identify and prioritize additional improvements.
- Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) and further strengthen existing TOD zoning in appropriate locations.
- Endorse a completed streets policy and facilitation improvements to roads to make them convenient and safer for all potential users.
- Encourage active transportation benefitting public health providing alternatives to the motor vehicle, reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality and reduce impacts on climate change.
- Enact new funding mechanisms and implementation tools to help the Township more rapidly and effectively attain its transportation goals.
- Promote electric vehicles through education, zoning, and sustainability planning.

Recommendations –

Priority 1 – Must Do:

Create Official Map as recommended by the Walk-Park-Train Abington Plan. This map would allow the Township to identify and reserve areas for acquisition and subsequent transportation improvements. It is authorized by the MCPC to implement a waiting period, for example, if someone was trying to sell land that is on the official map and the Township wanted to widen an intersection or construct a new trail, it would provide the Township a year to try and acquire it. If negotiations fail, the municipality may use condemnation and then the reservation lapses and the owner is free to build or subdivide.

Make Walk-to-School Pedestrian Safety Improvements. Use recommendations from planned walk audit of elementary school proposed by MCPC as basis for future funding applications to the Safe Routes to School Program for pedestrian safety improvements near the school.

Also, regarding the transportation section, it was suggested including renderings of traffic calming measures of certain areas that involve landscaping improvements; greening of the street; enhanced crosswalks; curb bump-outs to narrow the distance; adding speed bumps or small traffic circle in neighborhoods of certain areas such as Limekiln Pike, Jenkintown Road over Ardsley Train Tracks, Susquehanna and Old York Road, and The Fairway. It was also suggested making Rubicam Avenue a pedestrian and transit only road or a one-way street.

Implement Master Bicycle Plan.

Implement Priority Walkability Recommendations Highlighted from Past Plans. Suggested was adding language about children being dropped off/picked up from schools in which vehicles are stacked up interfering with traffic.

Add Projects to Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Implement PA 611 Old York Road and Susquehanna Road Intersection Improvements.

Promote TOD (Transit-Oriented Development).

Add Traffic Calming Measures. Evaluate and create such measures where appropriate such as roads generating high volumes of cut-thru traffic, or such measures would alleviate traffic safety issues. It was noted that a Traffic Safety Committee was newly created consisting of Commissioners as well as members of the public and they are working on a traffic calming policy and recommendations will be sent to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

Recommended Improvements to Transit Service. Work with SEPTA to make recommendations on bus and regional rail service through the Annual Service Plan Survey.

Adopt Complete Streets Policy for Township Roads and work with Montgomery County to implement the County's Complete Streets Policy on Easton Road.

Plan for Construction and Maintenance of Bus Stop Shelters.

Work to Upgrade Technology that Improves Traffic Flow.

Priority 2 – Should Do:

Evaluate Westward Relocation of Roslyn Train Station Platform and Ardsley Train Station Platform.

Develop Improvement Plans for Regional Rail Stations.

Evaluate the realignment of the Fairway and Rydal Road Intersection.

Fund Road Improvements with Transportation Impact Fee was revised to state, "Evaluate implementation of Act 209 Transit Fee, and if appropriate, include it."

Realign and Signalize Roy Avenue.

Bollards. Use bollards, light fixtures, or street trees to separate and protect pedestrians from traffic at Noble.

Create an Active Transportation Plan.

Priority 3 Could Do -

Comments from the team were requested for this section.

Also, previously discussed was creating the Comprehensive Database and Traffic Study Data/Map

Action Items and Responsibility:

Refer to Goals and Priority 1-3 as listed.

Provide comments for Priority 3 - Could Do list.

Create Comprehensive Database and Traffic Study Data/Map

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary