

Terraced Streetscape District (TSD) Rewrite

Public Meeting #1

August 31, 2022 @ 12PM via Zoom

I. WELCOME + INTRODUCTIONS

Jenna Wargo, AICP, Director of Planning and Zoning for Ferguson Township, opened the meeting at 12pm.

ADD ZOOM POLL RESULTS

Jenna introduced the project team, which includes:

- Township Staff:
 - Jenna Wargo, AICP -Director of Planning & Zoning
 - Kristina Bassett -Community Planner
 - Jeff Ressler -Zoning Administrator
- Consulting Team:
 - Brandi Rosselli, AICP, Manager of Planning Services for Mackin Engineers & Consultants (prime consultant) – Project Manager
 - Amy Wiles, AICP, Manager of Planning & Design for E. Holdings, Inc. (subconsultant) – Community Engagement Task Lead

Jenna reviewed today's meeting agenda:

- Project Overview
- Participant Input
- Wrap Up

Brandi Rosselli, AICP, Manager of Planning Services for Mackin, reviewed housekeeping:

- This session is being recorded and will be posted to the project website
- The Chat feature is not available, so people can raise their hands if they have a question or comment
- Special Accommodations
 - Closed captions –hit the "Live Transcript" button at the bottom of your screen
 - For those joining by phone
 - *6 -Toggle mute/unmute
 - *9 -Raise/lower hand

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Brandi provided an overview of the TSD rewrite project:

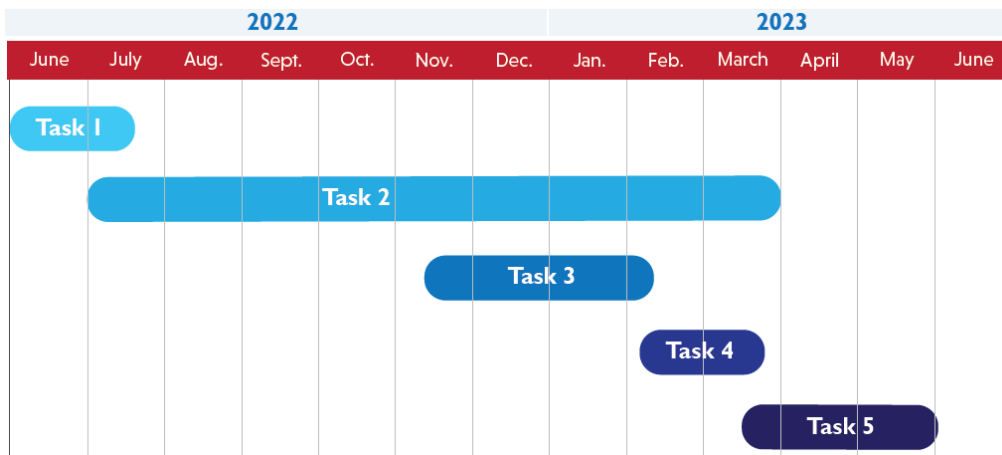
- Brief history of the TSD:
 - Since its inception in 2011, the TSD has not developed as envisioned

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- Obstacles, such as pedestrian connectivity; traffic; and market demand, have created challenges
- Elected officials and planning staff within Ferguson Township and State College Borough are interested in working together to overcome the challenges and create a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood that benefits both communities
- Due to the location and significance of the area, there is great opportunity to work with residents, business owners and others to develop a targeted vision for the TSD
- Project Goals:
 - Engage with residents & stakeholders to identify areas of concern and/or opportunities
 - Update zoning regulations to address permitted uses, building form standards, dimensional requirements, and other requirements
 - Improve circulation, connectivity, and pedestrian safety
- Project Tasks Include:
 - Task 1: Initial Review + Analysis
 - Task 2: Public Input
 - Task 3: Drafting the Code
 - Task 4: Refining the Code
 - Task 5: Approval Process
- Project Schedule:



- What is here now?
 - Project Boundary: (TSD) in Ferguson Township
 - Mixed-Use corridor along West College Avenue from the boundary of State College Borough (BuckhoutStreet) to the intersection of Blue Course Drive
 - Existing Land Use
 - Primarily commercial uses along W College Ave –professional services, animal clinic, restaurants

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- Residential is primarily single family (few townhouses or apartments)
- Automobiles speed through the TSD is an issue especially with increased pedestrian activity
- What is permitted?
 - Permitted Uses:
 - Lots < .40 acres:
 - Conversion of single family dwelling to nonresidential use; Conversion of Apartments to single family dwelling; Playground/Trail; B&B; Farm Market
 - Lots > .40 acres includes above uses AND:
 - Retail Service; Office; Mixed Use Building; Hotel; Restaurant/Brewery;
 - Community Theater; Bank; Pharmacy; Nonprofit; Health Club; Multifamily Dwelling as part of Vertical Mixed Use Building; Salon/Spa; Studio; School
 - *No drive-throughs are permitted
 - Maximum Building Height:
 - 45 feet for all uses
 - 55 feet ONLY IF workforce housing is built in the development
 - Front Yard
 - Buildings must be located on the sidewalk on W College Ave
 - Sidewalks 12' deep along W College Ave or 5' on other streets

III. WHAT HAVE WE HEARD SO FAR?

Brandi provided a brief summary of who we have talked to and what we have heard so far:

- Who We Have Talked To:
 - Stakeholder Survey: Identified by the Township and included elected/appointed officials, property owners, business owners and residents in the district.
 - Land use for the district: "Mixed Use"
 - Existing regulations that need to be addressed: Height Requirements and Setbacks
 - Opportunities: Multi-modal improvements, more village feel, connectivity
 - Focus Groups
 - Residents
 - Penn State
 - Government/Planners
- What is working in the TSD...
 - Like the mixture of uses
 - Historic homes should be protected
- What isn't...

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- Want safer pedestrian/bicycle connections
- Building Height –don't want more tall buildings

IV. WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

Amy Wiles, AICP, Manager of Planning + Design for E. Holdings, then provided an overview on the discussion and input session. Since there were only about 20 attendees, we stayed as one group. She led an online exercise, sharing her screen that included a map of the TSD and asked people the following main question:

- What is your VISION for the TSD?
 - What types of land uses make sense here?
- Locate Zoning Opportunities.
 - What can be done to encourage the type of development you want?
- Locate Zoning Challenges.
 - Identify zoning challenges on the map –what issues/concerns should be addressed?



- **Green:** What's Working?
 - Wide sidewalks along College Ave - working great, want to see more!
- **Red:** Land Use + Boundaries of TSD
 - Narrow area, don't want to see more dense development that will cause more traffic/parking concerns
 - Why isn't this land included in the TSD? Land development plan submitted
 - Want to see less industrial feel near equipment rental
 - Are there any plans for the vacant land? Not that we know of

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- Borough DPW land, not likely to change
- Live on Beaver Ave - don't want to see tall buildings nearby! Quiet street - want to stay that way, no light pollution
- Glenview neighborhood - want to see green areas stay as is, don't want to see hotels or large developments, used heavily by people for active recreation
- Prefer no more apartment buildings!
- Can the area that isn't the golf course be included as part of the TSD?
- Like the idea of a village
- If need to provide, can require smaller garden style apartments
- Previous development was noisy for local neighbors, PSU no longer uses as an active staging area
- **Blue:** Connectivity Gaps (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, parking, etc.)
 - Need bus stops - shelters, benches, curb cuts/pullover for CATA!!
 - Corl St should be improved for bikes/peds
 - Less emphasis on cars! Want to see ped/bike/transit be the focus
 - Sidewalks stop when you get to the golf course - want to see continued! Bike lane? Would love!
 - Want to keep center turning lane on College
 - No parking restrictions on Township roads - concerned about parking
 - What does the official map designate for future connections here?
 - Concerns with parking from apartment building, would like a parking study and improved intersection Buckhout/College
 - Parking garage on PSU property?
 - Through traffic on Middle St to College Ave, don't want to encourage more traffic
- **Yellow:** Amenity Gaps (dimensional requirements, lighting, etc.)
 - Higher density isn't necessarily bad, if done correctly
 - Concerned that the village concept doesn't align with major thoroughfare; hard to create a village feel along College Ave
 - Lighting - top of PSU parking garage and apartment building in Borough too bright; would like to see urban sustainability center (PSU) here
 - Original vision was to create a village - quaint, transitional district between downtown and rural areas - would like to go back to that!
 - 3 story buildings - first floor retail/ commercial, with apartments above, mix of SFR, want to see small businesses, encourage grad student housing, green space, larger setbacks along College Ave to be pedestrian friendly (sidewalk, benches, etc.)
 - Would prefer 20-22' setbacks, LEED buildings, Rooftop solar and other climate change incentives
- General Questions + Comments
 - What is the data on owner occupied homes in TSD? Township has that info
 - PSU owns land - are there any long term plans? Zoned Residential Agriculture (golf course)

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- Keep trees! Incentivize more trees, particularly along College
- Talk to Corl Elementary - what would they want to see developed nearby? Maintaining walkability is important
- Bring PSU to the table - use zoning. Parking requirement is an impediment to development here, can they provide central parking for the TSD and provide ped/bike connections?
- Live on N Butz St - incentive to improve area, appreciate intent of TSD, wish people would use incentives for development
- Students that do live here fit in great - like to see the mix of students/ residents, concern that high rise apartments change the feel of the neighborhood
- Between Buckhout and Blue Course - only 8 properties not owned by PSU

V. Next Steps

Brandi provided a quick wrap up and discussed next steps. Once the information from today's meetings is compiled (along with additional stakeholder outreach), recommendations for the district will be drafted and presented at an additional round of public outreach meetings. These have not been scheduled, but will probably happen in early 2023.