



STATE OF DELAWARE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
STATE PLANNING COORDINATION

April 23, 2007

Scott Clouthier
Town of Bellefonte
901A Rosedale Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19809

RE: PLUS review – PLUS 2007-03-06; Town of Bellefonte

Dear Mr. Clouthier:

Thank you for meeting with State agency planners on March 28, 2007 to discuss the proposed Town of Bellefonte Comprehensive plan.

Please note that changes to the plan, other than those suggested in this letter, could result in additional comments from the State. Additionally, these comments reflect only issues that are the responsibility of the agencies represented at the meeting.

The following are a complete list of comments received by State agencies:

Office of State Planning Coordination – Contact: Herb Inden 739-3090

The Office of State Planning Coordination congratulates the Town of Bellefonte on submitting a very thorough and well done comprehensive plan. The time and effort that the Town put into developing the plan including the development and analysis of the public survey shows in the product submitted. This is particularly impressive given that this document was created and produced by town residents.

This office will recommend that the plan be certified. We do note that the next steps, which include the revision and/or development of implementing land use regulations and policies, will be critical. In this regard, we offer any assistance that we can provide.

Certification Comments: These comments must be addressed in order for our office to consider the plan amendment consistent with the terms of your certification and the requirements of Title 22, § 702 of the Del. Code.

- Our office finds that the plan, as drafted, complies with the minimum requirements of Title 22, § 702 of the Del. Code.

Recommendations: Our office strongly recommends that the Town consider these recommendations as you revise your plan. These recommendations are intended to enhance or improve the plan, and assist in plan implementation:

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs – Contact: Alice Guerrant 739-5685

The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs have reviewed the Comprehensive Plan for Bellefonte. There are some ways preservation programs can assist them in attaining their Community Character and Design Goals.

The Main Street Program has downtown revitalization strategies they could use, even if they don't want to go the full route and hire a manager. Contact Diane Laird at the Delaware Economic Development Office at diane.laird@state.de.us or 302-672-6834.

The town should undertake an architectural survey to help flesh out the basic data in the comprehensive plan and provide the basis for further initiatives to further these goals. One tool to explore is being used by the City of Wilmington, the use of conservation district zoning. Not as restrictive as historic zoning, a tool more widely used across the city and in other Delaware towns, conservation zoning provides a basic level of protection from demolition, being moved, new additions, and infill construction, all potential threats to community character. Conservation zoning protection would qualify the government of Bellefonte for Certified Local Government designation and access to the Historic Preservation grant funds available to those select communities. Incentives like state and federal tax credits and low interest loans and grants are available for National Register-listed properties, so evaluation for listing in the National Register of Historic Places would also be recommended. The contact for any of these initiatives is Robin Bodo, our National Register and Certified Local Governments coordinator, at 302-736-7400.

Department of Transportation – Contact: Bill Brockenbrough 760-2109

DelDOT congratulates the Town on what they consider to be a generally well-written plan.

DelDOT has three specific comments on strategies in the Strategic Plan:

- a) In Goal #1 under Safety (page 47) one strategy is to “Explore more resident-acceptable means of traffic calming.” In that regard DelDOT recommends that the Town contact Mr. Michael Somers, a planner in our Traffic Studies Section, who is in charge of our traffic calming program, for assistance. Mr. Somers may be reached at (302) 659-2024.
- b) In Goal #3 under Safety (page 48) one strategy is to “Solicit support of our County Councilman, State Representative, and State Senator for installation of a traffic light at Philadelphia Pike and Beeson Road.” In that regard, we point out that funding for traffic signals is generally not a County responsibility. Also, while State legislators may be able to assist with funding, the decision to install or not install a signal on a State-maintained road rests with DelDOT’s Chief Traffic Engineer, Mr. Donald Weber. DelDOT recommends that the Town contact the Traffic Studies Engineer, Mr. Thomas Meyer, and request a traffic signal warrant study to determine whether the Department would be willing to install a signal at this location. Mr. Meyer may be reached at (302) 659-2005.
- c) In Goal #1 under Transportation, the strategies regarding bicycle and pedestrian transportation are quite general, suggesting that the Town may benefit from DelDOT’s experience in this area. DelDOT recommends that the Town contact Mr. Anthony Aglio, a planner in our Statewide and Regional Planning Section for assistance in these regards. Mr. Aglio may be reached at (302) 760-2509.

**The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – Contact:
Kevin Coyle 739-9071**

Water Quality

On page 29 of the Natural Features Section, under the Shellpot Creek watershed subsection, the last sentence of the first paragraph should read:

It drains about 9,000 acres of residential and commercial areas. Point sources of pollution do not appear to be an issue. However, non-point sources of pollution will

likely need attention from the Town as shown below and through participation in drafting any pollution control strategies.

In addition, we strongly encourage the Town to adopt specific goals and strategies that ensure that these water quality objectives are met including Best Management Practices (BMPs) like wetlands buffers, reforestation, street cleaning, sand filters and retrofits, etc. during subdivisions, infill or redevelopment. More information is available at the Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) website (http://nemonet.uconn.edu/programs/about_members/de/de_news.htm; see information about forthcoming manual) as well as the Pollution Control Strategies (PCS) website: <http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/water2000/Sections/Watershed/ws/>.

Sediment and Erosion Control/Stormwater Management

The prominent inclusion of stormwater management as an element of the infrastructure section of the Bellefonte Comprehensive Plan is to be commended. As well as identifying the need to maintain and improve stormwater system in your Strategic Plan.

The Drainage and Stormwater Section encourages the town to also consider stormwater management as a component of future ordinances and codes. It is also strongly recommended that you consider developing your own drainage code as well to address private drainage issues as land redevelops. Representatives from the Division of Soil and Water Conservation's Drainage and Stormwater Section will be happy to meet with the Town to provide assistance and/or draft language for consideration as you develop any ordinances. Please contact Jennifer Campagnini at 302.739.9921 or at Jennifer.campagnini@state.de.us to set up a meeting or to provide additional assistance.

The current Sediment and Stormwater Law and Regulations are available online at <http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/DNREC2000/Divisions/Soil/Stormwater/StormWater.htm>. The regulations are due to be revised in the coming year.

State Fire Marshal's Office – Contact: RT Leicht 323-5365

The DE State Fire Marshal's Office has the responsibility to review all commercial and residential subdivisions for compliance with the DE State Fire Prevention Regulations. This Agency asks that a MOU be established between the DE State Fire Marshal's Office and the Town of Bellefonte. The State Fire Marshal's Office would be issuing approvals much like DelDOT, Kent Conservation, and DNREC. This Agency's approvals are based on the DE State Fire Prevention Regulations only.

The DE State Fire Marshal's Office has no objection Municipal Comprehensive Plans.

Department of Agriculture - Contact: Scott Blaier 698-4500

The Delaware Department of Agriculture has no objections to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, we would like to commend the town on a thoroughly conceived and well-written plan.

Public Service Commission - Contact: Andrea Maucher 739-4247

Any expansion of natural gas or installation of a closed propane system must fall within Pipeline Safety guidelines. Contact: Malak Michael at (302) 739-4247.

Delaware State Housing Authority – Contact Vicki Walsh 739-4263

DSHA has reviewed the Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bellefonte to determine how the Municipality has incorporated the State's goals, policies, and strategies as they relate to affordable housing. Since the Town of Bellefonte's population is less than 2,000, the Comprehensive Plan is required to include goals and recommendations for providing sound and affordable housing for its residents. They strongly recommend that the Town of Bellefonte add a statement that will include goals for providing sound affordable housing. For informational purposes, the most recent real estate data collected by DSHA, the median home price in New Castle County is \$232,000. However, families earning 80% of New Castle County's median income only qualify for mortgages of \$186,731, thus creating an affordability gap of \$45,269.

Department of Education – Contact: John Marinucci 739-4658

The DOE supports the State Strategies for Policies and Spending, to the extent possible and practicable within the limits of the Federal and State mandates under which the Department operates.

1. In its review of Comprehensive Plans and Comprehensive Plan Amendments, the DOE considers:
 - Adequate civil infrastructure availability within the region to accommodate current and future educational facilities.
 - Transportation system connections and availability to support multimodal access within the community, to include but not limited to walk paths, bike paths, and safe pedestrian grade crossings.
 - Transportation road system adequacy to accommodate bus and delivery vehicle traffic to current, planned or potential educational facilities.

- Recreation facilities and opportunities within the community and their respective proximity to current and planned or potential education facilities. The DOE also recognizes the potential that the educational facilities are to be considered recreational facilities by and within the community.
2. The DOE *typically* considers industrial/commercial development incompatible with educational facilities, however, residential development and educational facilities *are typically* considered to be compatible. As a result, the DOE is interested in the proximity of current and planned or potential education facilities to commercial/industrial development zones.
 3. The DOE recognizes the integral role of educational facilities within communities. As such, the DOE seeks to assure that residential growth, that generates additional demand on educational facilities, is managed with adequate educational infrastructure being made a part of sub-division plans as appropriate.
 4. The DOE offers its support to assist the town and participate in coordination between the town, the local School District, the County, the Office of State Planning Coordination as well as other school districts and stakeholders as future developments and annexations may be considered.
 5. The DOE has no objections to the Comprehensive Plan under consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 302-739-3090.

Sincerely,



Constance C. Holland, AICP
Director

CC: New Castle County