Saving the World through Zoning: Small-Town Success Stories

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Hershey PA
A small town with big numbers
Milton Hershey Home & School with $8B Trust
Hershey Chocolate Co.
Hershey Amusement Park
Penn State Medical Center
Where is Hershey?
Hershey @ a Glance

• Population 25K
• +5M tourists & 4.2M medical visitors annually
• 3 of the 4 largest employers in county:
  1. Penn State Hershey Medical Center - 9K+
  2. Hershey Entertainment (HersheyPark) - 2K FT 7K PT
  3. The Hershey Company
• 27 sq mi (1/2 owned by Hershey School Trust)
• Hershey School Trust owns
  – Hershey Entertainment - 100%
  – Hershey Chocolate Co. - 50% voting control
Milton Hershey’s Model Town
Former Downtown Factory

Now Gone. What will be built?
Government

- 5 elected Supervisors
- 6 year terms
- Professional Township Manager
- Large staff - 200 FTE
- $16 M budget

Revenue (% of total budget)

- Income Tax – 1% income of employees in Twp 27%
- Occupation Tax $250/employed resident 14%
- Local Services Tax $52/employee in Twp 8%
- Real Estate Transfer Tax 3%
- Real Estate Tax 14%
- Amusement Tax -- 85¢/ticket sold -- 8%
- Parking Tax - 10% of parking fees -- 4%
- Misc. Permits, Interest, Rents & Fines 6%
- Intergovernmental Revenue 5%
- Charges for Services 11%

Expenses (% of total budget)

- Police 37%
- Public Works 14%
- Recreation 11%
- Library 7%
- Community Development 4%
- Volunteer Fire Company 3%
- Fund Transfers 14%
- Administration 10%
1945 Town to Suburban Sprawl
Photos from Hershey Sept 2011 Flooding
Comp Plan & SG Education

• April 2010 Resolution Passed
  – Listed 10 SG principles to make our intent clear
• Summer 2010, formed Working Group to do work
  – No funds were available to hire a consultant
  – Included all the Hershey Interests
  – Wrote Survey & resulting Vision
• Sept 2011 Kick-off speaker to drum up interest in Survey
  – Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist & author, Tom Hylton
  – Day after devastating floods and 100 people attended!
• At no extra charge, Hylton
  – Discussed SG in our region on radio talk show
  – Wrote an Oct 2011 Op Ed that highlighted SG issues
  – Published a Nov 2011 Hershey SG newspaper supplement
  – Repeated his presentation at the Med Center

Feb ‘12 - staff member & I go to Smart Growth America conference
Step One – Community Survey

• **Survey Monkey** - Fall of 2011
  – Started with 10 Smart Growth principles
• Respondents could enter a **raffle to win** gift certificates
• 1,500 responses
  – Exceeded both our expectations and
  – The number of responses to be confident in the results.
• Jan 2012 survey results were shared through
  – Township web site and DerryVision.org
  – Township newsletter
  – Local newspapers, and
  – 22 **Listening Sessions** (e.g. AARP, Rotary ...) for additional input
Survey Results - Wanted - Reinvigorated Downtown With Historic Character & Small Town Atmosphere Required

Most liked about Derry Township, were
+ the low crime rate,
+ quality schools,
+ access to health care,
+ the bike/walking path, and
+ the small town atmosphere.

Items least liked were
– event and rush-hour traffic,
– insufficient downtown businesses and activities,
– over-development,
– limited shopping opportunities,
– the high cost of housing and
– insufficient transit.

Roughly 90% of respondents agreed that we should
• preserve the Township's historic image and
• manage development to protect the Township's environmental quality.

Over 80% agreed that
• new development and additions to structures should be consistent with the existing scale and neighborhood character and
• we should promote the full development of existing residential areas before creating new residential areas - infill

Respondents were most concerned about –
• maintaining the quality of schools;
• ensuring that run-down buildings are repaired and junk is removed;
• preserving natural areas, open spaces and farmland;
• protecting streams and water quality;
• redeveloping/revitalizing downtown;
• managing development to minimize sprawl; and
• better traffic management.
Community Vision Adopted

Working Group turned feedback into Vision
Sept 2012 - Board approved

We envision Derry Township as a safe, healthy and active community valuing

- open space;
- vibrant cultural, social & business offerings; and
- welcoming neighborhoods & gathering places.

We envision

- a variety of housing opportunities
- with shops & services within walking distance &
- connected by a network of transportation options accessible to all.

We envision

- a prosperous future driven by our dynamic health care, research, educational, entertainment, business and manufacturing economies,
- while respecting our
  * cultural heritage and
  * scenic beauty.

The vision embraces the following principles:

1. Preserve unique **character**.
2. Focus on the revitalization of downtown with a mixed-use main street.
3. Promote **infill** & pedestrian connectivity.
4. Allow for compact, mixed-use development.
5. Create a safe transportation system for all citizens.
6. Require green stormwater management.
Oct 2012, over 100 residents & all supervisors attend presentation

Next day’s workshop on zoning & sub/land development codes
- Included working group, staff, and board members
- Discussed tools and options such as
  - Removing regulatory barriers,
  - Implementing incentives, and
  - Identifying regulatory gaps.

Current codes are suburban-oriented with low density & separation of uses.

Participants chose 3 important and feasible potential changes
  1. Encourage compact, mixed-use development in targeted areas;
  2. Enhance mobility options; and
  3. Promote green infrastructure storm water management

Recommended completing Com Plan prior to ordinances revisions
How To Make Changes

1. Encourage **compact, mixed-use development** in targeted growth areas
   - Increase allowable density for residential developments in the downtown commercial districts.
   - Permit live/work units in all commercial, office, and industrial areas, downtown districts.
   - Allow mixed-use residential by right in growth nodes that are zoned commercial.
   - In the downtown commercial district and designated growth nodes.
     - Reduce excessive setback regulations &
     - Increase the maximum floor area ratio standards (to allow more floor space/density).
   - Adopt simple design standards to assure quality developments and neighborhood compatibility.
   - Focus development in growth areas and reduce sprawl in rural parts of the Township.
   - Encourage the use of the cluster subdivision option to preserve open space.

2. **Enhance mobility** options with safe alternative methods of travel.
   - Reduce excessive off-street parking requirements in commercial districts.
   - Require bicycle parking facilities in downtown zoning districts and larger commercial and multi-family projects.
   - Reduce setbacks in the downtown commercial district to encourage walking.
   - Require sidewalks that connect the perimeter streets.
   - Require trails around developments and more pedestrian connections.

3. Promote **green infrastructure** stormwater management.
   - Reduce impervious pavement and encourage shared and off-site parking.
   - Permit street-side infiltration swales to replace curb/gutter in low-traffic areas.
   - Reduce road pavement widths.
   - Strengthen the required tree replacement ratio.
   - Increase wetland buffers in low density zoning districts.
2013 to Current

- Jan 2013 Strong Towns’ Chuck Marohn Curbside Chat – ongoing community education

- Three RFP’s
  1. $100K budgeted to finish Comp Plan & update Code
     - Hired Urban Research & Design Corporation
  2. Downtown Association formed
     - Most members part of Working Group
     - Hired Derck & Edson for revitalization plan
  3. Working on Regional Bike Connections Study