



VISTA 2025 Goal 3:

Expand business attraction and retention efforts with a focus on targeted industry clusters

Initial Goal 3 Team Meeting

August 6, 2015

Meeting Notes

Team Members Attending: Duncan Allison, Chris Annas, Bill Bogle, Ed Brownley, Jeff Culp, Tom Fillippo, Joel Frank, Derek Kimmel, Nancy Kunkle, Ed Leo, Dan Miller, Roger Legg, Mark Rupsis

Also Attending: Marybeth DiVincenzo, Mary Fuchs, Jodi Gauker, Mike Grigalonis, Elaine Jasper David Sciocchetti, Katie Poppiti, Mary Frances McGarrity

Mark Rupsis

- Opened the meeting at 9:00 AM
- Introduced himself as public sector co-chair of VISTA 2025 Goal 3 Team
- Recognized his goal team co-chair, Mike Bray from Vanguard (who was not able to make this meeting)
- Asked all participants to introduce themselves.
- Commented on the importance of a successful business community to Chester County government

- Pointed out that the County has three AAA bond ratings and that one of the key questions asked by the ratings agencies concerns the overall health of the County economy.
- Asked David Sciocchetti to provide an overview of VISTA 2025.

David Sciocchetti:

- Described VISTA 2025 theme of progress and preservation
- Noted that VISTA 2025 is a public-private partnership focused on economic health
- Noted that VISTA 2025 was a response to a Landscapes 2 recommendation
- Described the VISTA 2025 Executive Alliance
- Reviewed samples of VISTA 2025 Community Questionnaire word clouds
- Described the five VISTA 2025 goals
- Described the VISTA 2025 implementation matrix
- Described the role of the VISTA 2025 goal teams
 - Broaden knowledge of VISTA 2025
 - Provide feedback on implementation
 - Recommend adjustments to VISTA 2025 strategies
- Emphasized that VISTA 2025 is an “evergreen” document (annual review)
- Provided background on basis of VISTA 2025 Goal 3
 - Industry Clusters – “Do not put all of your eggs in one basket.”
 - Identify industry clusters – or where we see strengths to build on
- Described importance of industry clusters in competitive communities
- Presented selected strategies from Goal 3 for discussion
 - Strategy 3.2.3 - Industry clusters marketing materials
 - Strategy 3.4.1 - Expand industry clusters program
 - Strategy 3.5.1 - Promote/expand business services to farmers
 - Strategy 3.7.9 - Leverage existing lending expertise

Ed Brownley

- Asked how often the goal team will meet and was advised once more in 2015 and 3-4 times in 2016

Marybeth DiVincenzo

- CCEDC has been active with industry partnerships since 1998
- Active industry partnerships at CCEDC include bioscience, IT, healthcare, agriculture, energy, manufacturing,
- PA has reduced industry partnership funding from \$20 million to \$1.6 million
- Last year over 1,000 companies came together – mostly training. 2,000 employees trained.
- CCEDC brought in \$700,000 in grant funds and also received \$900,000 in private sector cash and in-kind services
- Targets for industry partnership efforts include: talent pipeline, recruiting and hiring and responding to business needs

Derek Kimmel

- Economy League of Greater Philadelphia stresses regional advantages
- close to capital, close to NYC, close to airport for international travel, trains for local
- One of only seven regions that has all four major league sports – attracts millennials
- We need to take advantage of regional strengths as we market Chester County

Ed Brownley

- Asked the status of the marketing materials referred to in Strategy 3.2.3 and was advised that drafts were in preparation. CCEDC was working with Select Greater Philadelphia.

Chris Annas

- Noted that Philadelphia was a destination for the younger generation
- Small business incubators are emerging all over the city

- Suggested that marketing materials could be targeted at them
- We need to tell our success stories – CTDI small loan led to major company
- He noted that student loan debt was limiting entrepreneurship

Roger Legg

- The equine industry is an important part of agriculture in Chester County
- One key component is blood stock agents who buy and sell horses
- 2 of the best 3 agents in the country are in Chester County
- Financing is a problem – especially for racing.
- Schools in County agriculture areas – struggle with quality/funding
- Dilemma – farmland preservation important but negatively impacts local tax base
- Growth will help with taxes, but will negatively impact farming
- New Bolton veterinary center – one of the best in the world
- Can get a veterinary doctor in 20 minutes in County – 2 hours elsewhere
- Need to think about attracting new businesses around New Bolton

Bill Bogle

- Chester County has great public schools, big biotech area
- Downingtown STEM school has attracted international students

Ed Brownley

- Asked who gets the call when a business expresses interest in a county location in response to marketing efforts
- Are we prepared to answer questions that may be asked?

Mary Frances McGarrity

- Responded that leads are directed to CCEDC
- CCEDC regularly works with site selection brokers

Gary Smith

- Looked at over 400 farms
- AgConnect – agriculture and economic development
- CC has been a leader – farmers were Excluded, but now are Included.
- Never had a farm loan default.

Ed Leo

- Noted that VISTA 2025 identifies a wide range of activities
- Collective effort will be needed

Duncan Allison

- Asked about the mission of the goal team and was advised that it was to help with implementation of the identified strategies

Dan Miller

- Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has a new initiative to work with equine industry
- Ag industry does not pay high wages - workers cannot afford housing prices in Chester County - need to think about affordable housing.
- Ag industry supports “quality of place” in Chester County
- Support structure for farmers (equipment, supplies, etc.) – originally in Chester County – is now in Lancaster County
- North to south travel is difficult for the ag community in Chester County
- Ag and natural resources center needs to be accessible to all

Jeff Culp

- How do we finance communities that provide amenities (open space/farmland)?
- What is the proper balance for healthy communities?
- Need to encourage financing at a deeper level
- Collaborate effectively

Mark Rupsis

- Stated that County has set a goal of 30% of county land to be preserved
- Currently at 26%

David Sciocchetti

- Chester County preserved areas total 198 square miles
- City of Philadelphia consists of approximately 130 square miles total
- Delaware County consists of approximately 191 square miles total

Joel Frank

- Asked if Chester County's small business incubators focused on targeted industry clusters

Mary Fuchs

- Chester County home to serial entrepreneurs
- Innovation within their own business

Gary Smith

- Cross dialogue is good with goal teams: added value for Ag, many working in tech.
- this is a round table discussion
- All goes back to the Executive Alliance – interworking of goals.
- We need your input
- It is time to bring leadership together

David Sciocchetti

- Please contact us with any comments or thoughts on all goal 3 strategies

Meeting ended at 10:40 AM