



**VISTA 2025 Goal 5:**

***Support critical infrastructure in targeted corridors of opportunity***

**Initial Goal 5 Team Meeting**

**August 5, 2015**

**Meeting Notes**

**Team Members Attending:** Phil Eastman, Maureen Farrell, Mike Fili, Matt Hammond, Michelle Kichline, Al Koenig, Steve Krug, Mike Hankin, Keith Marshall, Jim Reading, Bob Schoenberger, Frances Sheehan, Paul Spiegel, Coleen Terry, Jim Turner, Jeff Valocchi, Chris Williams

**Also Attending:** Marybeth DiVincenzo, Mike Grigalonis, Elaine Jasper Mary Frances McGarrity, Tim Phelps, Gary Smith, David Sciocchetti

**Michelle Kichline**

- Opened the meeting at 8:00 AM
- Introduced herself as the public sector co-chair of the VISTA 2025 Goal 5 team
- Introduced Mike Hankin as her Goal 5 team co-chair
- Noted that VISTA 2025 had been recognized for its focus on balancing progress and preservation
- Invited all present to introduce themselves
- Asked David Sciocchetti to provide a brief 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 5
- Described importance of infrastructure in competitive communities
- Presented selected strategies from Goal 5 for discussion
  - Strategy 5.2.1 - Identify/support transit oriented development opportunities
    - Keystone corridor one of the best RR in country. How do we take advantage of this unique resource
  - Strategy 5.10.2 - Update/analyze supply/demand for workforce housing
  - Strategy 5.11.1 - Identify rail improvements needed by rail served customers
    - Tastykake had to move to rail spur – flour now moved via rail instead of tractor trailers on local roads

## **Steve Krug**

- Targeted development corridors make sense - supports preserved open space.
- What attracts millennials – one is walkable communities
- What can we do in our communities along the transit corridors

**Jeff Valocchi**

- His young daughters want to live where they can walk to everything

**Michelle Kichline**

- Open space – look at it as an economic driver
- Bike to work, future of the trail system (public-private trail) – vision of possible future
- Atwater/Warner spur – connection to Vanguard
- Can we partner with employers to help attract millennials?

**Mary Frances McGarrity**

- Companies invest in shuttles - why not trails?

**Matt Hammond**

- Young people today not focused on buying a home
- They want to live a different lifestyle

**Frances Sheehan**

- Younger generation wants to be where the action is
- No house now – but perhaps someday in the future
- Housing in Chester County is mostly not affordable to younger generation
- Can buy a house in Coatesville for \$10K, train station coming soon
- Cannot afford housing Philly anymore – we cannot compete with big cities
- Cited Coatesville as having the attributes that millennials are looking for

**Jeff Valocchi**

- There may be a transition in thinking as millennials reach their late 20's and 30's

**Matt Hammond**

- Planning Commission potential employee came to West Chester area looking for a house, but withdrew his candidacy because housing too expensive.

### **Michelle Kichline**

- Coatesville does provide options to commute in multiple directions

### **Steve Krug**

- Are there incentives to make an area a “place people want to be”

### **David Sciocchetti**

- Conshohocken – emerging hot spot – how did it happen? Why did it happen?
- In Chester County we have 16 urban areas - future hot spots?

### **Jim Turner**

- Manayunk is an example of how people want to be “where the action is”
- Years ago – people felt it was about to “happen” and wanted to get in on it
- A “buzz” was generated that lead to what is now Manayunk

### **Mary Frances McGarrity**

- Boroughs and Townships – what are their long-term goals?
- Need to understand each other and we need to help them understand economic development.
- Some urban areas might not want big growth
- Kennett Square no longer a sleepy small town

### **Tim Phelps**

- Private sector interests led to West Chester Business Improvement District (BID)
- Focused on needed infrastructure - they now have a voice in government.

### **Jim Reading**

- Phoenixville Economic Development Corp helped save Colonial Theatre and the Phoenixville Foundry (with help from the Hankin Group)

### **Matt Hammond**

- Urban areas need to decide if they want economic development
- Need future plans for infrastructure – approved in reasonable amount of time – held up by building codes, zoning, etc. – developers will help fund
- Help communities to think “economic development” – help them help themselves.

### **Michelle Kichline**

- Need to focus on transit/transportation in future events
- Need to better understand corporate location decisions
- AmerisourceBergen Corp (pharma) moved executive offices to Conshohocken from Tredyffrin – even though Tredyffrin has lower taxes. How are these areas marketing themselves?

### **Chris Williams**

- Kennett, Phoenixville, West Chester – all successful urban centers but none have train stations

### **Al Koenig**

- Economic development plan difficult – mostly about entrepreneurs
- They need to see Chester County as a place to grow
- Chester County airport – undertaking major growth planning process
- Services 216 companies – no hangar space left
- Long term, need \$4-5M for new control tower
- Sikorsky cutbacks are temporary – part of a cyclical business
- 30 Bypass is the biggest deterrent

### **Jim Turner**

- Route 1 corridor – municipalities want to know where funding for infrastructure is coming from
- Systematically meeting with each municipality to understand their visions for what their communities will look like

### **Gary Smith**

- There are some economic development techniques to get funding.
- All of today's meeting attendees need to talk - spread the word

### **David Sciocchetti**

- “Infrastructure Costs” – next meeting – various ways to raise funds
- Probably one more meeting this year. Next year, probably 3-4 meetings.
- Please go back and look at your strategies for this team – comments invited and welcome

### **Michelle Kichline**

- More discussion to come – we will keep everyone informed and involved

Meeting ended at 9:40 AM