

Focus Group Meeting Discussion Highlights

A. Quality of Life

1. The diversity of amenities, places and landscapes in the Township is important.
2. There is less feeling of community within the Township: neighbors don't know neighbors. More 'Rock the Quarry' type activities would benefit the community.
3. Elected officials and the school districts need to better align themselves.
4. The quality of the school district is questionable. Affluent residents don't send their kids to CVSD; they go to private school. In Upper St Clair, South Fayette Township, and Peters, wealthy kids go to public schools. The local school district is one of the top three decision points for people when they are deciding to move into a community.
5. CVSD has had problems; but it's getting better; they're on the right path.
6. The school district communities seem to have pulled away from each other.
7. The community park and the Panhandle Trail are tremendous assets.
8. Connectivity between local trails and the larger Panhandle Trail is lacking. If connectivity could be improved, it would be a great asset in the community. This should be a high priority.
9. The Township has been effective at developing both the Panhandle Trail and the Botanic Garden.
10. There are two distinct stakeholders in the Township: new residents (less than 10 years in Collier) and old timers who have roots in the community. They see the world in different ways i.e. new residents want more public outdoor spaces while older residents don't think that is a high priority.

B. Regional Competitiveness

1. Convenience to regional assets like downtown, airport, farmland and Settlers Ridge is very important.
2. Collier is one of the best/most logistically positioned communities in western PA.
3. Small improvements to fix the public realm are needed; focus on a selection of key areas and make investments.
4. Build an image that aligns with the community's key assets- diversity, convenience, etc.
5. Who we are and who we want to be may not be one and the same.

C. Growth and Development

1. Monroeville and Cranberry have too much non-residential use and are overdeveloped; this is not the vision for Collier.
2. The preference for new development is material consistency in buildings. Architectural style variety is acceptable/good.
3. Rennerdale: skrinkwrap and preserve. Routes 22/376 and 50: develop and redevelop (highways and periphery).
4. Collier should be a residential community supported by commercial development.

5. If the BFI site is redeveloped, it should be more mixed use but heavier on the residential and flex space; not more industrial uses.
6. Development at the Carnegie exit should be small neighborhood commercial convenience and/or motel or gas station (i.e. Sheetz).
7. Collier has no center or heart.
8. Is the bar for new developments high enough?
9. Redevelopment of Trader Jacks would improve the Township.

D. Governance

1. The municipal government is conscientious and fiscally responsible—a code word for low taxes and low to no debt.
2. There needs to be a vision for the Township’s specific regulations; there is too much over and unrealistic regulation
3. Building code inspection/approvals are difficult; the Township holds everything.
4. The comprehensive plan should define a goal the developers can help to achieve.
5. Zoning should be used to protect Collier’s special places.
6. An expedited review process is needed.
7. Incorporate connectivity requirements into the ordinance.
8. Create a basic palette of preferred architectural features or a style guide and define a development goal for the architectural standard.
9. A preapproved list of landscape materials would be helpful.
10. Collier should be proud; the quality of development is not as high as it should be.

E. Communication

1. The Township newsletter is the primary news source in the community.
2. The Township website is not very useful.
3. The Township does not do enough to educate/build awareness/communicate with residents about its projects and efforts. I.e. there was ineffective effort to build community support for the Panhandle Trail and some community members see it as a negative influence in the community—bringing in outsiders/strangers. The Township does not communicate about its good financial standing and some residents perceive this lack of communication to mean that the Township has financial problems.

F. Infrastructure

1. The organically developed road system allows traffic to move fairly well. The regional roads and local roads create convenient access.
2. Vandium Road intersection and double left into Kirwan Heights need to be fixed.
3. A fund for sidewalk improvements could enhance the character of the community.
4. Traffic impact fee ordinance: Developers are concerned about the use of the money. The Township should be more flexible or creative with developers regarding the use of the Traffic Impact Fee—it could be used to address bigger transportation issues.
5. The road maintenance has gone downhill recently.