



LANCASTER COUNTY
PLANNING

Pequea Valley Regional Comp Plan

Committee Meeting – Regional Concerns – Recap /Visioning Statement Exercise

Salisbury Township Municipal Building
Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

Attendees

Lancaster County Planning Department

Kip Van Blarcom, Sharon Cino, Mark Huber, Aim Terranova, Sam McMinn

Partners

Karen Farra (Paradise Township), Kirsten Peachey (Salisbury Township), Damian Clawser (Salisbury Township), Wally Hockensmith (Paradise Township), Dale Hershey (Paradise Township), Christopher Slaymaker, (Leacock Township), Frank Howe (Leacock Township) Mike Sensenig (Leacock Township), Gordon Hoover (Lancaster Farmland Trust/Salisbury Township), Dylan Coleman (Paradise Township), Eric Orndorff (Pequea Valley School District, Superintendent)

Discussion

Economic Opportunities

- Strengthen existing industries in Gap while also working to attract new ones.
- Create more places for commercial and industrial redevelopment.
- Expand on large, successful agritourism businesses like Cherry Crest Farm.

Growth Management

- Development should be focused within designated growth areas that have existing infrastructure.
- Efforts to continue preserving farms remain a key priority for the region.

Housing

- Provide a variety of housing types that meet the needs of all residents.
- Provide “missing middle” housing: twins, duplexes, townhomes, multifamily.
- Encourage the conversion of existing buildings.

Parks, Trails and Natural Area

- Largest publicly accessible natural lands in the region
- State Game Lands 52
- Money Rocks County Park
- Welsh Mountain Nature Preserve

- There are no regional trails in the area; develop a separate trail system to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclist off the roadway.
- We need to hear back from residents about the need for trails and parks. The County survey is now open.

Transportation

Considerations for 2025-2028 TIP

- Bridge 741 over Amtrak near PA 41
- PA 772 realignment to reduce ped-vehicle conflicts
- Freight truck safety and infrastructure on Old Philadelphia Pike, PA 741, PA 772, PA 41
- Problems with GPS routing – Traffic on Chestnut Street in Gap
- Install a new weigh station on Route 30 to prevent trucks from bypassing inspection
- Wider shoulders for buggies

Pedestrian improvements

- Sidewalk/ADA enhancements in Intercourse
- Crosswalk upgrades
- Add curb extensions to slow traffic

Assess Needs

- Fire Station in Gap (easement needed)

Water Quality

- Work together to improve the Pequea and Mill Creek watersheds.
- Act 167 Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting May 15th 8:00 am at Quarryville Borough.
(for questions, please contact Mark Huber mhuber@lanastercountypa.gov)

Working Regionally

- Update official map
- The county is open to facilitating a regional map. Staff have developed a symbology.
- An official map puts you in a good position for future planning.
- Paradise Township is working on an update to their official map.
- Commit to working together to simplify local zoning ordinances.
- Guidance and tools from the County on Simplify Zoning will be available this summer.
- There are concerns about the need for variances and the economic feasibility of development.
- There is a need to support both businesses and agricultural land.

Vision Statement Exercise

- Staff facilitated an outreach exercise focusing on what is **unique** about the Pequea Valley Region.
- What We Have
 - Volunteerism
 - Strong work ethic
 - The relationships we have and how we can use them as leverage for the problems we have.
 - The community is very engaged-The large Plain Sect population cares so much about their community.
 - The Plain Sect owns 70-80% of the land.
 - Heavy freight traffic – Route 30, PA 74, 772 and PA 41
 - Tourism- tourism has changed. There used to be sightseeing flights at the Plain Sect. Now visitors are coming for shows for entertainment and shopping.

How do the Plain Sect feel about tourism in the region?

- While the Plain Sect were once opposed to tourism – particularly disliking sightseeing flights over their communities – their attitude has shifted over the years. Many have begun working in the tourism industry and have seen the economic benefits it brings to the area. Today, they run their own businesses, selling everything from handcrafted furniture to fresh flowers.

Where is tourism going?

- There is a strong sense of community trust in the shared commitment to preserving farmland along Route 340, between Bird-In-Hand and Intercourse.

What is **important** for the Pequea Valley Region?

- There is concern about excessive growth – many residents are content with the community just the way it is.
- Maintaining agriculture for profitable, productive farming is important to members of the Plain Sect community.

Managing the transition of farming

- Small farms are being consolidated into larger farms that continue producing various commodities but have evolved into different types of agricultural industries.
- There is a shift from traditional dairy farming to pasture-based dairy operations.
- Niche farming are the farms that are generating business for the Plain Sect (grass fed, organic veggies, etc.,)

Managing the needs of the older vs. younger generation

- Older members of the Plain Sect community prefer 3 to 5 acre lots.
- Younger members of the Plain Sect community only require 1 acre lots.

Housing Challenges

- Members of the Plain Sect community are increasingly investing in short-term rentals, often purchasing properties at prices above typical market value for business purposes. These write-offs reduce housing availability for families and contribute to growth outside the designated Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Urban Village Area (UVA).
- The younger generation would like to remain living in the region but do not have the option to stay and are looking to purchase housing elsewhere.
- Teachers commute long distances to work and are unable to find housing nearby.
- It is especially difficult to find housing if you grew up in the region but can't remain there and are now looking to buy a home elsewhere.
- There are 700 acres in paradise located on the east side Route 30 that's zoned residential is being used for Plain sect agriculture.
- Members of the Plain Sect community purchased four homes situated on 100 acres in the Gap Hil area.

Where do you see housing?

- Around intercourse where, where there is water and sewer infrastructure, you will find approximately 60-70 homes on ¼ acre lots.

Next Steps

- Draft Framework-Summer 2025
- Public Meeting for Draft Plan-Fall 2025
- Final Plan Adoption-Winter 2025