



Visioning Notes  
8/11/21

Arnie Oliver opened the meeting with introductions. PDG went through a power point about the comprehensive planning process and visioning. Attendees went around the room to stations and wrote their visions by land use planning elements. They also put green (like) and red (dislike) dots on visioning boards.

## Land Use/ Zoning Visions

- Zoning/property maintenance (3) in all villages
- Preserve large tracts/ farms, have fewer 5 acre lots
- Storm water management controls (3)
- Controlled growth/development in unincorporated areas (3)
- Limit number of private drives and increase use of shared drives
- Benefits for strategic landowners to develop “starter”/ “entry” level housing closer to industry
- Strategic development around main roads
- County-wide signage/zoning
- Zoning on large-scale dog breeding facilities



## Land Use Photo Comments

### Red Dots

- Not like traffic issues
- Need to maintain authenticity with products offered
- Need buffering, mounding to screen industrial uses
- Examine where put industrial uses, need to put in correct place



### Housing Visions

- Further development of second story residential
- Variety of housing types (2)
- More owner-occupied homes
- Single-family starter homes
- Basic residential maintenance standards (3)
- More housing available for small families to purchase (4)
- More single-family housing in \$150k price range (3)
- More homes within limits of municipalities (2)
- Condo complex with amenities (could allow aging in place)
- Smart land development, SW portion of county
- Landowner incentives to develop starter/entry level housing close to industries and main roads
- Private/public partnerships with new builds (zoning, cost issue)
- Company housing, like Smucker's, a manufacturer could increase residential availability, partner with developer, hospitals could do the same. Incentives to workers like paying for down payment
- Encourage more concentrated housing development, neighborhoods with sidewalks and connectivity to schools, shopping, and recreation via non-motorized means
- Control large-lot rural subdivision of productive farmland
- Concentrate housing efforts near village centers
- Create land bank (county land bank) to help with new build and housing for workforce



### Housing Photo Comments

- Red Dots not like cookie cutter development, lack of property maintenance
  - Killbuck and Millersburg have property maintenance code

### Downtown Visions

- Convert downtown to walking district, reroute truck traffic (2)
- More modern entertainment options
- Add parking
- Incentives for preservation, grants, public/private partnerships (5)
- Lessen traffic congestion, noise
- Green space
- Welcome center open 7 days a week
- Continued focus on restoration/preservation of historic structures
- Enhance signage and travel corridors for travelers coming off the Ohio Erie Trail
- Continue to encourage and incentivize downtown occupancy (2)

- Dedicated walking/bicycle access from trail to downtown (2)
- More aggressive with vacant downtown buildings, enforce downtown building code (2)
- Improve pedestrian safety at traffic crossings (4)
- Incentives/support for smaller downtown with engagement of county-wide network/partnership
- Take courthouse beautification project and spread into other areas of the county



## Downtown Photo Comments

### Red Dots

- Turning Radii in Downtown Millersburg is difficult for trucks
- Truck traffic so loud during day can't hear calls inside buildings
- Need bypass or improve township/county roads to give options for tractor trailers
- Make sure design review if followed, maintain look of Millersburg
- Consistent downtown business hours
- Lack of trees, lighting in downtown
- Boarded up structures in downtown

### Transportation Visions

- Helping to eliminate transportation as barrier for families and workers (2).
  - Employers provide vans for Amish transportation (Keim Lumber)
- Create ride sharing/public transportation options for individuals who don't own vehicles or can't afford them (2)
- Develop infrastructure to reduce traffic congestion, improve county/township roads to alleviate traffic on main roads (3)
  - Access points in 2014 show \$1.36 billion was exported
  - Tourist traffic increases by 500% at peak (October)
  - Need more robust infrastructure to handle all this
  - Figure out how to fit into State funding formulas since small population but have lots of usage
  - Keep character, but get more product/people through the county
  - Careful with access in and access out, may contribute to sprawl
  - People are coming here to work, not actually living here
- Continue to encourage and facilitate non-motorized transportation
- Continue connecting places with safe corridors for pedestrians and other means of non-motorized transportation
- Control traffic congestion at city centers
- Provide increased education on safety for bikes, e-bikes, and horse-drawn buggies to both tourists and operators (4)
- Introduction of 4-lane roads for most heavily traveled access points

- Cross-country bike trails to route bike traffic off of roads
- Dedicated routes for heavy commercial traffic (2)
- Create new sidewalks and repair existing sidewalks (3)
- Public transportation for residents and shuttles for visitors
- Improve Google maps, difficult for fire/ems to identify where calls coming from with Township Highway vs Township Road. GPS is routing semis through neighborhoods
- Better signage and/or use road names instead of numbers for better access/response times



### Transportation Photo Comments

- Red Dots not like visual clutter on road, signage, or semi traffic on narrow roads with residential uses

### Tourism Visions

- Maintain rural theme and nature of the county (3)
- Avoid tendency to add “attractions” that don’t fit the theme (2)
  - Berlin has been called a “mini Gatlinburg”
  - Need to stay true
  - Some people love Berlin and others think it is too much, how appeal to both?
- Add evening activities
- Market to wide demographic of visitors
  - Visitors skew older, but seeing more younger visitors and couples
  - Must go after multi-generational population
  - Older population is not getting on tour buses, behind the curve on attracting younger populations
- Add blue trail, paddeling in Killbuck Creek (runs parallel to trail)
- Add wayfinding, signage is lacking and current signage is not attractive
- Preserve Amish culture
- Focus on our villages and small communities (3)
- Create entry gateways into Holmes County
- Keep improving buggy lanes (3)
- Add more sidewalks and repair existing (3)
- Increase aesthetic appeal by reducing overhead utility lines (3)
- Mix modern ammenities for “after hours” when tourists are looking to do “what’s next”
- Create family-oriented fun for tourists with kids



### Tourism Photo Comments

- Tourism is 20% of GDP, increases traffic 180% (College of Wooster Report)
- 2.6 million visitors to the County in 2019, \$500m a year in revenue
- Overnight guests spend 3xs as much as day trippers
- Red dots include aesthetic, traffic, not being authentic with products offered

### Agriculture/Natural/Cultural Resources Visions

- Balance of development, agriculture, and natural beauty (4 votes)
- Multi-generational farms not sold
- Recreation opportunities for all residents/visitors (2 votes)
- Development taking over scenic areas
- More dedicated outdoor options (see Deer Run Park) (5 votes)
- Preserved woodlands and nature trails
- Campgrounds
- More woodland trails
- Farmland preservation
- Lean heavily on developing outdoor recreation opportunities (2 votes)
- Develop landfill into outdoor activity destination (local and regional)
- Address puppy mills or perceived puppy mills (\$50m a year in sales, estimated, probably more). 1,000 registered kennels with 250+ registered as high volume (40 or more puppies a year). County tracks low volume and State tracks high volume
  - Environmental issues with waste, failing septic systems and no place for waste, dog waste does not compost well
  - Taxation issues (sales tax, wholesale vs retail, retail pays sales tax with vendors license)
  - Quality of life issues (living next to barking dogs, waste, etc.)
    - Noise ordinance on the books
  - Tourism issues (PETA protests, bad press makes tourists not want to visit)
  - Workforce issues (leaving workforce to raise dogs, more lucrative and not have to leave home)
  - Enforcement issues- dog warden can educate, but not able to enforce it. Work with those complaining, mounding, screening so dogs won't bark.
    - Wholesale vs Retail, buy vendors license when applicable



### Agriculture/Natural/Cultural Resources Photos Comments

- Red Dots environmental issues with taking down trees
  - Ohio laws are just suggestions, not have to plant trees as replacements
  - Typically, too late when realize trees being cut down
  - Lumber is huge business for Holmes County
  - Killbuck watershed, debris gets in there when clearing land, not violation when leave tops of trees. Also becomes issue with water trails

### Infrastructure/Public Service Visions

- Internet availability, affordability, better phone/cell phone reception on west end of county (5)
- Water and sewer to support development (2)
  - Septic and dog waste issues
- Centralized/county-wide fire/ems
  - Issues with workforce availability and response times
- Radio systems upgraded
- More funding for police and fire (2)
- Continue to add buggy lanes on heavy traffic county roads (2)
- Strong senior services (continuing education, re-enter workforce, healthy living)
- Local/regional media with local ownership so community minded (TV?)
- Support to localized vocational education, manufacturers, programming, etc.
- Invest in higher education
- Global 5G coverage
- Focus on villages across county who struggle to pay for infrastructure (2)
  - Glenmont, Killbuck, Nashville
  - Look to grants, loans, financing
- Rail access
  - Big Prairie, Loudonville
  - Good for industrial park access
- Updated and modernized airport, tourism next to airport



### Economic Development Visions

- Centralized event space, multi-purpose and modern
- Public/private investment fund
- Greater access to amenities
- Infrastructure to support diverse economic activities
- Creation of shovel-ready industrial sites (5)
- Strong workforce retention and development plan, utilizing career centers (for apprentices) (2)
- Leadership development starting in elementary school
- Encourage industrial re-development of vacant/abandoned areas and away from productive farmland
- Incentive redevelopment over “green field” development
- Encourage outdoor activity focused businesses
- Remember to include Holmesville/Prairie Township
- Create affordable housing opportunities for workers
- Create dedicated industrial park





**Economic Development Photo Comments:**

- Red Dots need screening, mounding, more agriculture, better building aesthetics, better building maintenance, some industry not visually pleasing and not in good locations
- Workforce issues here are with availability, not quality