

Open House Public Meeting Summary

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Pleasant Hills Middle School

Purpose:

The purpose of this public meeting was to provide the Pleasant Hills community with an update on the progress of the Implementable Comprehensive Plan and to gather input from residents on the draft recommendations. Feedback from the meeting will play a key role in shaping the final recommendations, and attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on the plan's current direction. Jenni Easton, project manager, provided a brief overview of the implementable planning process and highlighted the project milestones achieved so far. Based on input received to date, the plan's four key focus areas are:

Communications, Community Facilities, Safety and Property Maintenance, and Old Clairton Road.

Following the presentation, participants were encouraged to explore various stations focused on each key issue. These stations featured draft recommendations and interactive activities designed to collect feedback, including evaluations of priority and feasibility, design preferences, and commonly walked routes. The meeting concluded with a group discussion and a question-and-answer session. The following is a summary of the written feedback provided by attendees.

Meeting Results:

Community Facilities

The draft recommendations include reimagining Mowry Park, identifying opportunity parcels for additional open space and recreation, cost-effectively enhancing Borough programming, and finding unique ways to meet the current and growing needs of the community through partnerships and funding.

- Add running water to Mowry Park
- Prioritize the library as a building *and* as a community space
- "Pleasant Kingdom is a safety hazard, but there is potential for it to be an amazing area for the community"

- Pleasant Kingdom requires better maintenance
- Hydration stations at public facilities; PA American Water Co. does water fountains and stations in public areas (grant funding)
- Need more playgrounds for children aged 1-5
- Close Breisinger Field for 4 days to allow library book sale with adequate parking

*As part of Community Facilities, participants were asked to respond to a draft concept plan for a reimagined **Mowry Park**. The following summarizes the comments:*

- Needs a flat space for children to ride their bikes
- Needs more playground area for children ages 1-5
- Needs flush toilets
- Needs more shelters
- Proposed splash pad area is not going to be big enough and is located on a slope
- Where are the pickleball courts? 2 would be nice.
- Moving play equipment to Field 4 is not a good idea. Field 4 is hidden.

Old Clairton Road

The draft recommendations include advocating for a shared vision for the future of Old Clairton Road, establishing a sidewalk improvement program to improve pedestrian conditions without burdening homeowners, use streetscaping and public realm improvements to reinforce a cohesive community feel, attract desired investment and reinvestment, and enhance the community's identity and status as an arboretum community.

- Add signage at major entrances (+1)
- Needs nice dining places; needs more fun businesses and restaurants
- "I would love some sort of Towne Square (maybe near Bill Greene) that we do community events like Tree Lighting and business events"
- Nice local grocery store on Old Clairton Rd

Participants were asked to think about what kinds of streetscaping (widened sidewalks, lighting, greenery, etc.) they would like to see on the road:

- More street lighting (+1)
- Benches would be lovely (+1)
- Benches, sidewalks, hydration stations
- More and wider sidewalks

Participants were also asked to draw their route they walk on Old Clairton Road. Many walk the extent of the road between the shopping center and the middle school. Some participants also noted they expand their route by walking on residential roads such as National, Coleen, Dutch Lane, and Yarrow Lane, as well as around the middle school.

Communications

The draft recommendations include suggestions such as adding a Borough calendar of events to the website, proactively updating residents on impactful Planning Commission and Council deliberations, and exploring new technologies that could improve access to information and make Borough operations and decision-making more transparent.

- Publish Council meeting minutes
- More online newsletters
- Council meetings should be live-streamed; televise Borough meetings
- Allow residents to nominate citizen of the month + do a write-up on the Borough site
- Currently the calendar is not updated regularly
- Provide weekly updates via social media platforms, other than facebook

When asked to rank the feasibility and priority of recommendations, participants had the following to say:

- Updating the Borough calendar regularly, promoting the opportunity to sign up for e-mail blasts from the Borough, and making the Borough newsletter quarterly/entirely online are all high priorities and seem feasible
- Developing a mobile app is not a high priority nor is it very feasible

Safety and Property Maintenance

Draft recommendations included maintaining the current high standard of public safety, pursuing proactive property maintenance, establishing an official annual day of recognition for public safety personnel and volunteers, and maintaining a reliable enforcement of traffic violations.

- Enforcing traffic violations is a high priority (+1)
- Is the annual day of recognition the same as National Night Out?
- Update borough by-laws, etc. to make things like food trucks accessible

- Recognize public safety
- Enforce Borough codes
- Enforcement of existing codes is needed
- Make the existing codes easier to find and know about. Some of them are antiquated and don't make sense, so we don't even know to follow them.

Participants were asked to consider which traffic calming recommendations they would like to see and where, as well as what intersections need improvements.

- Consistent sidewalks
- Flashing stop signs
- “We need something like a flashing beacon + crosswalk by the library”
- “Crosswalk (Flashing signs) to cross W. Bruceton at library”
- Enforcement on National and Bruceton (some interested in cameras, some are not)
- National Drive needs improvements – things like speed radar signs
- Speed limit/radar signs on Mowry Dr. and Gill Hall Rd.
- One way streets – nice to walk from school to parks
- “Our roads aren't wide enough for bumpouts”
- “Sidewalks would be so nice anywhere that's possible”
- Speed humps on entrance to Mowry Park
- Speed humps on East Bruceton
- Stop signs ½ way down National Dr.
- Clean leaves from yards and streets
- Public art would be too distracting for younger kids; love the idea of public art near parks or schools (+1)

General Comments

- Needs flashing stop signs – people blow through existing stop signs
- Yellow playground equipment attracts bees, can the Borough use blue equipment?
- Would Jefferson Hills be interested in working together to do a swimming pool or spray park?
- Pleasant Hills has so many wonderful assets, they should be capitalized on and celebrated.
- Gateway signage and signage hierarchy in the community would be great

- Council is supportive of this plan. Part of the greatness of Pleasant Hills is the community so this plan should be reflective of that. This plan helps secure grant funding and guides budgeting decisions over the next 10 years, both of which will aid in implementation.
- Some of the recommendations, such as the ones for Old Clairton Road, which is a County road, may have less definitive paths. However, providing plans and concepts allows for a collaboration that might not have happened without a clear vision for the future.
- Enforcement and citing are important tools in holding businesses accountable for maintenance and landscaping plans.