

GREENVILLE PUBLIC MEETING A SUCCESS


Partnering with the New Castle County Department of Land Use and the Delaware Department of Transportation, Delaware Greenways conducted the first of several public meetings for the Greenville Village Study and Special Area Plan on May 8, 2014 at A. I. DuPont High School. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the public to the study and solicit input on four questions which the study and the resultant special area plan will address. See last page of this article for some photos of the meeting.

Assisting at the meeting were volunteers from the Board of Directors of both Delaware Greenways and the Kennett Pike Association and the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership. County Councilman Bob Weiner began the meeting and charged the attendees with thinking about the village of Greenville and what they'd like to see it become. DelDOT's Ann Gravatt, the State's Byways Coordinator defined what a Byway, Delaware's Byway Program and why this Byway is important to the State. Jeff Greene, Transportation Planner from Delaware Greenways and project manager of the project, introduced the attendees to Greenville and described the reasons why a Special Area Plan is important. Eileen Fogarty, New Castle County's new General Manager for the Department of Land Use spoke next and described some of the tools that the Plan could utilize and how they would work to enforce the plan over time. Click [here](#) for the speaker's presentation.

Thirty five residents and business leaders attended, reviewed an introductory presentation and then divided into three smaller groups to discuss the following questions:

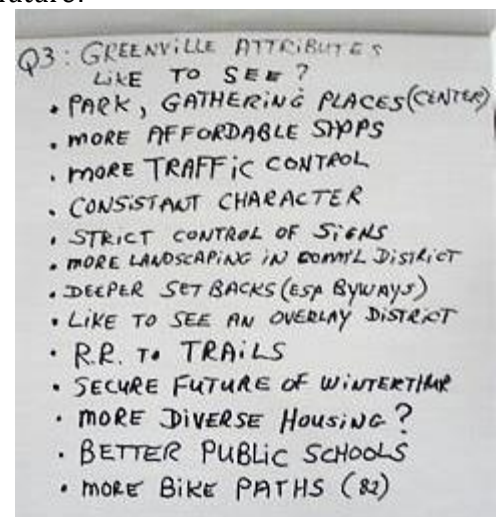
1. What do you think are the attributes that make Greenville special? (Present time question)
 - What do you love about Greenville?
 - Consider Greenville both as a town and as a place on the Byway.
2. What are the challenges that Greenville faces today as a community? (Present time question)
 - What annoys you about Greenville?
3. What attributes would you like to see for Greenville moving forward? (Future time question)
 - Do you have services here that you want?
 - Are there services you would like that are not currently present in Greenville?
 - How do you want to protect the character of your neighborhood?
 - How do you feel about different types of housing?
 - What would you like your community center to be in the future?

Because Greenville is not an incorporated community with an official boundary, the attendees were also asked to consider what the Plan boundaries should be.

The three groups recorded their discussions on poster sized sheets of paper. These sheets were photographed, transcribed and summarized as in the photo to the right. 

The summary of the responses follows:

Responses to the first question indicated that there is a lot to like about Greenville. Close to cultural amenities including museums and gardens, attractive landscaping and viewsheds, history, buildings at a pedestrian scale, bountiful trees and open spaces. There is a variety of commercial uses and the merchants and residents take pride in their community. The commercial area is bustling with activity



and the residential areas are reasonably quiet. The existence of major highways and traffic are recognized but do not seem to be a major problem. What services that are not immediately in Greenville are in close proximity. There is a diversity of land use and it is a nice place to walk. In short, there is a sense of community.

The second question generated challenges and dislikes that ranged from minor to more serious concerns. The participants also identified things that are missing in their community. Some individuals felt there were too many variances approved and that other land use rulings were “too liberal.” Some thought that the shopping centers are inconsistent in their design, signage and lighting and that traffic patterns, particularly the Buck Road entrance to the Greenville Center was problematic. Traffic, particular peak period through traffic, was overwhelming the street network. Some felt that speeding on Kennett Pike was a problem. There is a clash between through traffic and local traffic. Even though walking was classed as a pleasant experience, walking in some areas is quite difficult, particularly crossing Kennett Pike. Walking or biking to the shopping centers, particularly on the weekends was difficult. Attendees indicated that the potential development of Barley Mill Plaza was a concern to not only the Greenville commercial area but also the surrounding residential areas. Preservation of open space, future of the railroad and building heights were also seen as challenges to be addressed as the project moves ahead.

Considering what Greenville should look like, the meeting participants were clear that Greenville needs a sense of community as indicated in the components that make a community: retain the services and shops of today with more affordable shops included, better schools and an elementary school. Consistent landscaping design with buildings placed and sized to a village scale. A village square or central park was suggested as a missing element as were better bicycle and pedestrian connections so residents can walk and bike to the commercial and other areas, open spaces and schools and perhaps a trail along the railroad. The need to retain open space to keep the rural flavor of the Valley was emphasized. Future residential development should provide a variety of housing options while retaining the areas iconic views. Traffic and roads will need greater attention in the future.

Participants indicated that external challenges to be addressed include the growth of through traffic due to continued development in Pennsylvania and along the Route 141 corridor. The participants indicated that they would like to have a greater say regarding developer’s plans and future development.

The fourth question that the three groups worked on is the question of study area boundaries. The stated question was:

We just discussed attributes you would like for Greenville, what is the area you think should be covered in this Greenville Plan?

The question was purposely designed to be open ended without guidance to the groups. Greenville is an unincorporated community. The attendees offered differing opinions pertaining to the Greenville study area. Some believe it encompasses the commercial area only. Others believe that the boundary is the zip code 19807. Still others believe that Greenville covers a much larger area between the City of Wilmington and Centreville. It was pointed out that there is no civic association that claims to represent all of Greenville.

