

Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Annual Report

Name of Municipality: Town of Smyrna

Date of Plan Certification: February 4, 2013

Date of Report: July 1, 2013

In accordance with 22 Del. C. §702 (g) Municipalities shall provide to the Office of State Planning Coordination a report describing implementation of their comprehensive plan and identifying development issues, trends* or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended. The report shall be due annually no later than July 1.

*Please note that the development trends data is provided twice to further supplement this requirement. Please contact the Office of State Planning Coordination with questions regarding development trends or this annual report.

- 1. Please review the recommendations, goals and implementation items within your comprehensive plan and please indicate which items are complete, underway, or not yet started. Also, please include any other comments that you may wish to add.**

Since the 2013 re-certification/update of the Town of Smyrna's Comprehensive Plan the following items, identified in Chapter 4 of the Town of Smyrna Comprehensive Plan, have been completed:

- a) Prepared and adopted an historic preservation ordinance to protect and preserve the historic architecture and heritage of the area.
(Completed 2003)
- b) Conducted a review and comparative analysis to ensure consistency between the proposed land use plan map and the existing zoning map as required under state law (HB 255)
(Completed 2004)
- c) Reviewed the Town's charter to streamline it, make it more contemporary, and provide the basis for effective, efficient, and responsive government.
(Completed. Charter adopted 2003, amendments adopted 2012)
- d) Developed and implemented a Matching Façade Improvement Grant program to encourage historic preservation and housing improvement.
(Completed 2005)
- e) Developed and implemented a program of incentives to encourage redevelopment and continued economic development.
(Established a Redevelopment Authority, completed 2004; created incentives for redevelopment of chronically vacant buildings located in commercially zoned areas of the Town or in the Historic Preservation Overlay District, completed 2005; established an annual registration of vacant buildings and registration fees, completed 2007)
- f) In coordination with DelDOT, the Dover/Kent MPO and the Office of State Planning Coordination, a design Charrette was held during the week of August 20, 2012. The purpose of the Charrette was

to develop a master land use and transportation plan for U.S. Route 13 within the existing town limits and extending into areas identified on the town's annexation plan.

(Completed 2012)

- g) The US 13 Corridor Plan was adopted by Mayor and Council, it includes design standards and other controls to ensure that the corridor and its adjacent land uses develop in a pattern that is compatible with safe, efficient travel, will enhance the aesthetic character of the Town, and improve the economic vitality of existing and future businesses.

(Completed 2013)

Since the 2013 re-certification/update of the Town of Smyrna's Comprehensive Plan the following items, identified in Chapter 4 of the Town of Smyrna Comprehensive Plan, are underway:

- a) Designate a business and commerce zone where a combination of infrastructure investments and development of a second town-owned business park would foster additional economic development and creation of employment opportunities in the Smyrna-Clayton region. As part of this effort, the existing industrial and business zoning classes will also be reviewed to ensure that Smyrna appropriately provides for office, professional, institutional uses, and mixed use residential.

(Underway)

As stated above in items 'f' and 'g' the adopted US 13 Corridor Plan provides design standards and other controls that will contribute to the transformation of the look, feel and function of the main commercial corridor of the Town. The Future Land Use maps are being updated to reflect the recommendations of the Corridor Plan.

The Town is working with the Dover/Kent MPO, DelDOT and the Office of State Planning Coordination in the development of an access management plan for the northern portion of the U.S. Route 13 corridor. The intent of the access management plan is to identify future access, easements, interconnections (both vehicular and non-vehicular) and signals, etc. The access management plan would then be used as a planning tool by providing potential developers with future access requirements prior to their site plan submission, promoting a more efficient planning process.

The Town continues to review its existing zoning ordinance, which presents an ideal opportunity to identify new zoning classifications incorporating elements of a form-based zoning approach along the U.S. Route 13 corridor. The Planning and Zoning Commission is currently reviewing a draft amendment to the Highway Commercial zoning district, specifically addressing those commercially-zoned properties along U.S. Route 13, from north of Duck Creek to the Rest Area. The proposed provisions are intended to provide for convenient, controlled access and parking; buildings that are constructed near the roadway, possessing an architectural form and theme reflective of the character of Smyrna's Historic District; and sidewalk, trail, bicycle and parking facilities to provide interconnectivity with surrounding, adjacent uses allowing the northern section of the corridor to function as an entrance into the Town of Smyrna, alerting drivers that they are entering a unique place.

- b) Developed and implemented contemporary community design standards that promote compact, creatively designed, resource efficient development of the areas proposed for annexation. These standards will foster developments that are similar in character to the town, that promote walking and other non-vehicular forms of transportation, that include sensible and useable open space

systems, and that provide a mix of residential uses accompanied by neighborhood commercial and community services, as appropriate.

(Underway)

The Town continues to review its existing zoning ordinance and anticipates adopting new zoning classifications that will improve the aesthetics and function of the Town by 2014. In February 2013, the Town amended their residential zoning districts to allow as a conditional use a 'planned village community'.

The intent of a 'planned village community' is to allow detached, single-family dwellings that are placed close to the street, having very small front yards with landscaping that ensures adequate separation and protection from street activities, and architectural façade treatments that create an aesthetically pleasing, walkable, livable community.

2. Please highlight any significant accomplishments, development issues, trends, or conditions since the plan was last adopted or amended that may either have enhanced or hindered the implementation of your plan. These accomplishments may be used in the annual report to the Governor.

As noted above, the Town adopted the finalized U.S. Route 13 Corridor Plan. The Town is proud of the collaborative approach taken in the development of the Corridor Plan and looks forward to the continued collaboration with DelDOT, the Dover/Kent MPO and the Office of State Planning Coordination in future planning initiatives.

The Town issued 324 building permits with a construction value of \$18.2 million in 2012. Seventy-nine new residences were approved including a mix of single family, apartments and townhomes; potentially adding another 250-300 residents to the town as these units become occupied. Several new residential subdivisions continue to see building activity or are approved to be built. Construction continues in Bon Ayre, Cambria Village, Hickory Hollow, Lake Como Woods, Sunnyside Village, Sunnyside Village Apartments, and Worthington, for example. In the past 5 years the Town has witnessed a decline in construction of single-family dwellings and an increase in duplex, townhome and apartment dwellings. This is indicative of the housing market and the demand for smaller, more energy-efficient housing options.

The Town continues to work diligently with various developers and/or property owners on the redevelopment of downtown Smyrna. Project concepts include a mix of commercial, service (a new library, senior center, etc.) and residential (particularly senior and market-rate housing) uses.

In December 2012, the Town amended the zoning ordinance to allow craft distillery and microbrewery establishments as a permitted use in the Central Commercial zoning district. In 2013, Painted Stave Distilling (formerly Legacy Distilling) began renovations on the former Smyrna Theater building in downtown Smyrna; they are anticipating opening later this year.

The Town continues to support Smyrna Farmers Market in its second season. The Market is located in downtown Smyrna. This community supported market provides locally grown and affordable foods and products to the Smyrna community and its surrounding area. The Market is anticipated to act as an incubator for small, local businesses and producers.

3. Are there any planning issues that the municipality is currently facing? Do you anticipate any comprehensive plan changes for which the Office of State Planning Coordination may be able to offer technical assistance? If yes, please describe below.

As previously noted, the Town has witnessed a decrease in building permits issued for new construction of single-family dwellings and an increase in building permits issued for new construction of duplexes, townhomes and apartments. This trend has not gone unnoticed by the owners and developers of previously approved housing developments that are expected to start as the economy improves. The Town has been approached by several of these owner/developers (particularly of properties located along Brenford Road and Rabbit Chase Lane) inquiring about the possibility of allowing an increased density to permit the construction of alternative housing options. The Town believes this may be an opportunity to create a master plan for those undeveloped residential projects located in this area offering a mixture of housing options on various sized lots with commercial and civic destinations located within a few blocks, promoting walkability and a sense of place. In order for a master plan to comply with the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use designation of this area must be amended. The Town anticipates working with various State and County agencies to determine the feasibility of this proposal.

4. Please help update our mailing list by supplying the following information:

Mayor: H. Joanne Masten email address: joannemasten@aol.com

Town Manager: David S. Hugg III email address: dhugg@smyrna.delaware.gov

Planning Director: Janet L. Vinc email address: jvinc@smyrna.delaware.gov

City Clerk: Valerie Heritage email address: vheritage@smyrna.delaware.gov

Council/Commission Member:

Regina I. Brown, Vice-Mayor Andrea C. Rodriguez, Council Member

Jeffrey A. Flairty, Council Secretary Robert C. Johnson, Council Member

John L. Embert, III, Council Member Valerie M. White, Council Member

Planning Commission:

Keith Faulkner, Chairman Robert Newnam, Commission Member

Jack Bobeck, Commission Member Michael Reed, Commission Member

David Bruner, Commission Member

On behalf of the Town of Smyrna, I respectfully submit this comprehensive plan annual report to the Office of State Planning Coordination. The information contained in the report is correct and complete.

Joanne Masten
Signature of Mayor

7-1-13
Date

Joanne Masten
Printed Name of Mayor