

Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report

Name of Municipality: Town of Smyrna

Date of Plan Certification: February 4, 2013 **Date of Report:** June 29, 2018

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 collected each year 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 you may wish to add.

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan details five “Issues and Goals” in the introduction to Chapter 3, THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

The first issue cited is a lack of new employment opportunities and the need to promote Smyrna to prospective new employers. Implementation of programs that address this issue is underway.

In August of 2016, the Town of Smyrna was designated as a Downtown Development District. The town doubled the size of its district in May 2017. This designation has incentivized the re-development or expansion of no less than four commercial buildings and one residential building.

Contracted marketing and business recruitment services have been continued through the 2017-18 reporting year. Vacant commercial properties have been enhanced through the use of window “clings” with the Smyrna logo and messages such as “imagine your business *here*”. This multi-faceted marketing program is designed to make the Town of Smyrna a destination for dining, entertainment and shopping.

The Smyrna at Night event continues to grow. It drew nearly 4,000 visitors in 2016 and 6,000 in 2017. Weekly concerts in the park began on Memorial Day in 2018.

The second issue cited was the need for the preservation of historic buildings. Implementation of programs that support this goal is also currently under way.

The establishment of a Historic Overlay District, by way of ordinance, requires that exterior improvements to properties in this district be approved by the Historic District Review Board (HDRB). During period July 2017 through June 2018 (inclusive), forty Building Permit applications were reviewed and approved by this group. The preservation of historic standards of construction (materials of construction, color, ornamental elements, design of windows and/or shutters) was often a condition of approval.

The RDA's accomplishments cited in the Comprehensive Plan report of July 2018 included twelve façade improvement grants valued at \$26,061 which leveraged \$163,336 in housing improvements. This authority has loaned \$50,000 through a USDA re-lending program during the last year.

The third issue cited is the need for annexation – so that development on the town's periphery may be better controlled and so that economic opportunities in town may be maximized. The Planning & Zoning Commission has undertaken an eight month comprehensive study of land use and is ready to begin public hearings about proposed changes to the Annexation Growth Zone in its Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map. Growth to the north of the US Rt. 13 SR 1 interchange is expected.

During the 2017-18 reporting year, the owners of the large tract east of Duck Creek Road and north of Joe Goldsboro Road approached town officials regarding the residential development that was first approved in 2003. Subsequent to this, an engineering study was contracted. It is anticipated that utility services ending at the DelDOT Rest Stop will be extended west, under the highway, to the proposed residential community.

The business park off Paddock Road has now begun development. A "spec" building has been contracted and the roadway is being built.

The fourth issue cited is that of the need for the Town of Smyrna to be an active and informed participant in the planning activities of surrounding jurisdictions. The achievement of this goal requires on-going effort to be engaged with "partners" as the planning landscape changes.

Developing an understanding of shared community and watershed interests has been at the heart of recent efforts to partner with the neighboring Town of Clayton. Publication of the Notice of Intent for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to issue a General Permit regulating discharges into surface waters is imminent. This precedes the need for compliance with the EPA Phase II NPDES program relating to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4's). The mapping of each respective system is currently underway. The end result, however, will be a better understanding of connections and the impact that development in one jurisdiction will have upon the other.

The fifth issue cited is the need for the strategic extension of critical infrastructure. This activity is currently underway.

As detailed above, utilities on the east side of Dupont Boulevard are extended through the Del DOT Rest Stop. Utilities have been extended to the trailer park that is north of Duck Creek and west of DuPont Boulevard. Services on the west side of DuPont Boulevard, along Joe Goldsborough Road and north to the Route 1 interchange will be developer-driven.

The establishment of a Traffic Improvement District (TID) in this particular area has been explored. Because the entire area is within the corporate limits of the Town of Smyrna, this approach will not be limited to the options on Brenford Road (half in-town, half in-county) on the south side of town. The Site Plans for this northerly area (Duck Creek Road, Joe Goldsborough Road) have expired, though. Implementation of a TID may be included in a Comprehensive Plan update. There is no known date for the revision of expired Site Plans.

Finally, there is consideration of an exploratory drinking water well to meet demand in the southern part of Smyrna's corporate limits. Certain subdivisions in this area are currently serviced by Tidewater Utilities, through an agreement in 2004.

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.

The Downtown Development District program has been instrumental in the rehabilitation of a residential duplex and in rehabilitation or expansion of four businesses in the central commercial district. This is complimented by the establishment of a downtown park. The park was made possible through a cooperative agreement with the Smyrna Downtown Renaissance Association and a grant from the Neighborhood Building Blocks Foundation.

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.

The previously cited Comprehensive Plan amendment, with respect to the annexation growth zone, will require coordination with the counties and the Office of State Planning Coordination.

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

Mayor: John L. Embert, III e-mail address: jembert@smyrna.delaware.gov

City/Town Manager: Gary Stulir e-mail address: gstulir@smyrna.delaware.gov

Planning Director: Wilmer Abbott e-mail address: wabbott@smyrna.delaware.gov

Town/City Clerk: Valerie Heritage e-mail address: vheritage@smyrna.delaware.gov

Council/Commission Members:

Peter Retzlaff, Alvin Pope, Valerie White, Robert Johnson, Anthony DeFeo and William Pressley

Planning Commission Members:

Robert Newnam, James Wolfe, Michael Reed, Michael McGrath and Amy Retzlaff

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.


Signature of Mayor

8-2-18
Date

John L. Embert, III
Printed Name of Mayor.