

LIGONIER VALLEY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Focus Group Summary – Government Services
January 16, 2017 – 6:00 PM

A total of four (4) persons attended the session facilitated by Rick Truscillo (EADS). Suggested topics as per input received from field work, the prior workshop and the community survey included the following, but these were noted for guidance only:

- Cooperative/consolidation of services
- Recycling
- Telecommunications infrastructure
- Development regulations
- Dealing with blight

After a brief introduction on the process and the purpose of this session, input on issues and recommendations were welcomed.

Recycling

There was considerable interest in resurrecting some type of broader recycling

- Township noted as offering collection point for paper, aluminum and cardboard.
- Expense and end of a grant terminated past effort by Loyalhanna Creek Watershed Association.
- Provision by local government would entail costs but may yield savings in landfill costs:
 - One commenter noted a limited staff capacity at the municipal level;
 - One commenter noted that current haulers may offer irregular services.
 - Another commenter felt that the area has plenty of volunteers who would become involved.
 - A collection site at the Township building made sense to one attendee due to the proximity of police that may deter illegal dumping.
- One commenter noted that there still are violators who dispose of garbage at common commercial locations and/or illegally.
- The way forward was seen as the Plan recommendation for an ad hoc committee to move the recycling idea further.

Cooperation/Consolidation

It is felt that in many respects the communities may function cooperatively already and are “joined at the hip”:

- 4 fire departments seem to cooperate well;
- 2 police departments have informal cooperative agreements (police regionalization is under study and moving separately from this planning effort); and
- 2 public works departments cooperate on public projects.

Tax exempts have historically been in the Borough (serving the region) but may be growing in the Township as well.

Municipal consolidation was discussed and recognized as potentially complex and controversial, with the Plan realizing this and perhaps recommending a broad-based committee to explore a more optimum organizational model as a follow-up effort.

Telecommunications

Comments at the first workshop and in the Community Survey suggest that cell and Internet service in sections of the Township hamper use by residents and may in fact affect home businesses/commutation as well:

- Three (3) Internet providers operate in the area; and
- These essential private services are beyond the scope of municipal regulation although the Plan should recommend that service providers upgrade and improve services.

Developmental Regulations

Land use and land development regulations will be revisited to better reflect the Plan recommendations:

- Surveys show a distinct split between those who want more and fewer regulations.
- Design standards guiding new development were discussed and dismissed at the time of the original regional plan in the late-1980's but may be revisited as a result of this Plan update.
- Ridge-top development was noted as particularly noticeable and perhaps subject to additional scrutiny.
- Regulations should encourage economic development that builds on the area's strengths and assets.
 - The Plan must define those assets.