



Southern New Castle County Master Plan

Feedback on draft land use scenarios

Advisory Committee meeting (6/17/19):

- ~2200 housing units w/in Middletown for the next 30 years (source: Easttown TID)
- Concern with relying on national data and trends for scenario III
 - People buy in this area because of the more rural nature of the area (3-4 DU's per acre)
- Consider a reduced west wing, not full
- Consider calling scenario III, scenario II-b (it's basically scenario II, but with a jobs focus)
- Consider a scenario III (IV)
- A concept of growth between MOT – but the reality of St. Anne's/Andrew's poses significant challenge
- National trend and demand is not in Office use, but logistics, warehousing/cold storage (this point relates to Scott Run Business Park)
- Capacity of MOTS? Aim for keeping small towns vibrant; suggest a Scenario 4..
- In the west wing, how to merge existing communities with new, incoming communities?
- Ag land, farming now requires more access to town, where farmers have ability to access second incomes
- Capacity in other incorporated areas → need to better coordinate; Scenario 4: how do we interconnect and work together?
- Although job growth is desirable, the market for commercial development – other than retail – has been limited in recent years
- Should additional growth be considered in the rural areas that separate Middletown, Odessa, and Townsend?
- Explore growth potential SW of Middletown, NW of Townsend (Anthony)
 - Rail as opportunity?
 - Road capacity in these areas?
 - TDR?
- Demand for services in the areas north of Middletown for the growing population there
 - Other small commercial areas are needed so residents don't all need to drive to Middletown
- East-west traffic issues extend beyond Middletown
- Need to retrofit - restore and revitalize existing stock
- WRT market drivers:
 - Opportunities for Young couples with kids and early seniors;

- demand from people who work in NY, NJ and commute;
- remote work something to keep in mind
- Not seeing industry in this area, we need industry (decent jobs/wages) to support people who live here.
- KRM industrial Park (Duck Creek Area) expecting ~4,000 jobs
- What is the sewer / water capacity currently?
- St. Andrew's parcel to the Southeast of Middletown shown as developable, but maybe shouldn't be? (Kendall)

Public workshop (6/24/19):

Staff Notes:

- Is there growth in Smyrna and Clayton? Were they included in the model?
- Are there protections for prime soils?
- Map is a little hard to read. Does growth area mean all area within targeted for growth?
- Traffic congestion is a problem
- Need more retail options in the area e.g. shoe repair shop
- Aging communities are an issue in SNCC, increasing the need for public transit
- Lack of a cultural center in SNCC
- The region, specifically Middletown, could use more land available for industrial use, like manufacturing
- Strip of land to the East of Rt. 13 that is within the East Wing should be developed, near Lester's farm
- On the subject of creating an employment hub – the population growth is already forecasted without more job growth, why do we need an employment center? Given that there are other places in the county and surrounding region that have Research and Development opportunities, why would we create a center for this in Middletown?
- Map Issues:
 - Update bus stop layer. There is one near Amazon in Middletown that isn't on the map.
 - Check assisted living facilities layer for accuracy
 - Is the golf course at St. Anne's showing up on the map?
- Strip malls in Middletown are an issue
- Under Scenario 3, what about traffic in Middletown and the whole region?
- Concern with scenario 3 with regard to transportation and getting people around town
- Let developers build out their land instead of creating parks in development and paying the county to preserve land and maintain panel (Mrs. Carter)
- Scenario 2 and 3 are pretty much the same but people may prefer scenario 3 for economic
- Suggested edits to the Scenario 1 Preservation/Protected Map based on feedback:
 - Note hunting areas/game lands

- Differentiate between State, County, and locally owned public lands
- Should concentrate more development around towns, expanding n existing infrastructure (Townsend, Smyrna, Odessa); Could there be a Scenario 4, Village Cluster
- Interest in expanding passenger rail service through SNCC to the beach communities
- Is the county going to be purchasing more land for parks?
- Add more industrial/manufacturing zoned land opportunities in SNCC? (the feeling was that if the county provided more opportunities, businesses would come)
- Setback of some distance into east wing from Route 1 that could be sewerred to provide opportunities for commercial growth along Route 1?
- Will the sewer service area restrict sewer? By identifying the west wing, are you encouraging growth in that area? Scenario 1 does not?
- Is there value in designating some area adjacent to Smyrna as growth area?
- If sewerred the upper west wing to encourage development there, and also encouraging job growth in Middletown, how will people get from the upper west wing to jobs in Middletown without increasing congestion?
- Regarding the western portion of the east wing (along Rt 1):
 - Properties in the east wing cannot hook into sewer line – why is there a hard “east wing” sewer line rather than allowing some properties to utilize sewer?
 - Can this portion of the east wing be included in the sewerred area? There is access to two major roads, as well as other existing infrastructure. More existing infrastructure than in the west wing.
- Why is the lower part of the central core sewerred, when it’s in a sensitive environmental area?
- Smyrna – Why are we not looking at economic development here?
- Need to put more money toward ag preservation
- Growth trends play out differently here than in urban areas – “walkable” here means something different than New Jersey (for example). Want more of a small-town center:
 - When asked about heights/densities, suggested maybe a max. of maybe 3 floors.
 - Density and transportation are the biggest issues
- Scenario 3 will need to look at congestion/transportation fixes
- Should encourage development of trails/paths within SNCC
- Potential to look at southern part of SNCC for employment growth:
- Railroad spur / multiple people bringing up rail
- Potential overlay for commercial use
- Need more mass transport options (could be on-demand) – more options for people to get around within SNCC, not just to Wilmington, etc. Right now, mostly in municipalities. NCC should fund more transit in unincorporated areas.
- Impacts of development – Townsend, Odessa receive impacts of increased development in Middletown, but less benefit. Need to revisit MOT planning – allows for sharing of environmental impacts and benefits.

- In general, people like the focus on job/economy, but want to see how traffic issues will be addressed.
- Some questions of “why don’t I have sewer?” in the central core area (since the area is sewerred) → need to be clear that the map shows where sewer service is available, not what property has sewer.
- The most southern part of the county gets forgotten (just brushed over with the scenarios)
- One person voiced support for mixed-use, but concerns with transportation
- Suggested policy/strategy: fee in lieu of for developers to pay the county for maintenance of open space
- Are municipalities included in the scenario numbers?
- Why is everything shown in Middletown?
- Why do we need employment center in Middletown if people are already coming?
- Suggestion for bus stop location next to Amazon, senior living areas, etc.
- Seeking specialty retail
- Seeking more industrial manufacturing type uses, different from business park
- What is the capacity/growth potential in the municipalities?
- Participant likes the target growth area in center—should include Hollywood Farm (and should be included in area included for sewer)
- Someone brought up Wiggins Mill improvements
- Townsend folks–
 - felt projections were low
 - we (NCC LU) may not be aware of all the capacity/growth in and around Townsend
 - interested in the MOT “grow together” idea
 - currently working on Comp Plan (2020 due date)
- Smyrna – potential annexation (related to issue they went to PLUS about last year?); currently working on their Comp Plan
- Comments from Townsend representatives:
 - Areas west, near Route 15 – consider for growth, given the practicality that Route 15 functions as an access way / bypass to Route 301
 - Areas recently annexed are going to accommodate some 200-300 units
 - Consider growth in areas south of Middletown
 - Like ideas of targeting employment growth; suggested zoning overlay for targeting areas for growth in manufacturing/industrial—especially west of Townsend
 - Comp plan underway for 2020 update

Public Comment Forms (workshop and online): (see following pages)

| Comment Form # | SCENARIO I | | | SCENARIO II | | | SCENARIO III | | | GENERAL |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario I addresses best and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario I does not address well and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>How do you think Scenario I can be improved?</i> | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario II addresses best and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario II does not address well and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>How do you think Scenario II can be improved?</i> | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario III addresses best and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>Of the Master Plan objectives that are most important to you, which do you think Scenario III does not address well and why? Please use numbers from the list of objectives (included below in rows 11-19)</i> | <i>How do you think Scenario III can be improved?</i> | |
| Attendee 1 | 0 - I don't see any of the objectives being addressed. These are only goals to be achieved. | I don't see any of the objectives being addressed | To take seriously the recommendations that were made for change. I don't see any of the 22 Master plan objectives in any of the maps. They are lovely maps, but some of the information is incomplete or inaccurate. | Putting sewers in to the West Quarter is a good idea, but does it address any Master Plan objectives? Maybe #6? | Changes need to be made in other areas to make any of these possible: 11, 9, 13, 4. These changes are not addressed, but should be. | | Job growth is necessary but the changes are best addressed by the jagged purple circles | 2, 3 | With the aging population projected to increase, there needs to be more master plan objectives addressed - # 2, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. You need to figure out how to do it! | The Master Plan is exceptional, you need to make it happen |
| Attendee 2 | | 1, 6, 8, 16 | The County needs to acquire more land for "parkland" not to be developed. Look to Nassau County Long Island to see parks. Air quality continues to be a problem - although not generated totally locally. | | 1, 7, 8 | County needs to acquire more land for future open area & parks. County needs to ramp up acquisition of farmland to prevent loss of farms to development. Provide more open space for betterment of air quality | | 19, 13 | Population continues to grow in area although no increase in jobs. New residents seem to be commuters to Philadelphia/Baltimore, we are a bedroom community. Ability of schools to interact with universities (Newark, Philadelphia, Baltimore) to develop local R+D centers to aid education & development of new industries, e.g.; Penn State Incubator Program | The Master Plan has to be developed with Maryland and Pennsylvania and their development - particularly is the "New Bridge" over the Chesapeake. Impact will be to Delaware road system. Bring higher education facilities to area. Partner with Universities and Colleges (Philadelphia, Baltimore, Newark and Washington, D.C.) |
| Attendee 3 | | | | | | | | | | Heated path / sidewalks. Safer / Quality of life. New library / new park |
| Attendee 4 | I don't feel that business as usual will to serve the area. | It does not address sprawl. Density is needed in areas already, or easily served by existing infrastructure. | I wonder why the northeast section east of Route 1, New Route 301 & Route 13 is not projected for any use or expansion; sewer is located to the west and south of the NE quadrant, so it would not take much to expand into the NE quadrant | This plan serves the area well as long as projected growth is not larger than expected | The NE quadrant is not used even though it is surrounded by current infrastructure, sewer to the west and south and is currently served by Route 1 and Route 13 and the new 301 | | I think it is best to prepare for the largest scenario. This addresses most Master Plan objectives. | Again, the NE quadrant with access to both new Route 301, Route 1, and Route 13, and is close to sewer to the west and south, it underutilized, it could be industrial, business, or residential uses | | I would like to see more detail on serving East and West connections (15) |
| Attendee 5 | | | Not Preferable | | | Not Preferable | 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15 | 13, we would like a bus loop from Giant to Odessa to Legacy via Route 299, Route 9, Fieldsboro, Route 13 to Route 299 | | |
| Attendee 6 | Scenario 1 - Not Feasible | Not | Not | Best for conservative growth | Does not recognize Route 15 as actual route for industry and growth | Route 15 needs to be examined | | Addresses industrial growth but is not realistic | Use the railroad to address possible growth for high industry | These scenarios do not recognize areas below Middletown |
| Attendee 7 | | | | | | | | | | It seems that the sewer line that extends up Route 13 to the St. Georges Bridge should not only provide sewer to the West of that road, but very easily could provide sewer from the same main pipe to the properties to the East of Route 13. Three major roads (Route 13, Route 1 and Route 301) converge in that area and it seems logical that the properties along that corridor are logically suited for development. There are few services provided to the populace in those areas already developed - no gas, no groceries, etc. It would seem logical that some development would be appropriate along that corridor. Also: if the county has any expectation of land owners participating in a conservation plan, the county should implement a conservation program that provides landowners with appropriate compensation and implement that program sooner rather than later. |
| Attendee 8 | #3 - 8 senior 55+ communities ring Middletown - no public transportation and inability to age in place as seniors cannot drive. No assisted living and very limited nursing home care. | | Business as usual will not work as the infrastructure is not in place | | | | | | | |
| Online Participant 1 | 1,2 | 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15 | Move to Scenario II or III | 6, 7, 8, 11, 13 | 14, 15 | Promote 10, 11 and 18 by creating additional town centers in Townsend and Odessa | 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19 | 10, 14, 15 | Promote 10, 11 and 18 by creating additional town centers in Townsend and Odessa | |
| Online Participant 2 | Probably none | 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21 | Providing all that this scenario does not...see question 2 answer | 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13 | 14, 15, 16, 17 | see question 5 for improvements need as well as not focusing all job growth in Middletown. Lastly this vision won't happen without significant in funding to compensate farmers to keep their land as greenspace... | 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 | 14, 15, 17, 20, 21 | Too much focus on economic center in Middletown when the infrastructure is already over capacity... If we are to avoid Scenario 1 continuing NCC and State need to greatly increase funding for farmland preservation to encourage farmers to keep their lands as green space outside of the targeted growth areas | A mix of options 2 and 3 looks good but for either to succeed there needs to be large increases in farmland preservation funding and finding ways to address infrastructure issues in Middletown, and identifying ways to encourage "good paying" job growth in the targeted areas. Thanks for all the efforts so far!!! Dale Swain |

| MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Recreation for all ages: indoor and outdoor | 8. Large-scale protected open space for wildlife | 15. Better east-west connections in and around Middletown |
| 2. Access to quality healthcare | 9. Enhanced landscape: "greening", street trees, recreation, reforestation | 16. More/safer walking and biking paths/connections |
| 3. Graduated care for aging population, including transportation | 10. Preservation of rural/small-town/historical character | 17. More local, diverse job centers, facilitating shorter commutes |
| 4. Continued improvement of emergency services; types of equipment and response times | 11. Denser, more walkable development with mixed use | 18. Support small local businesses |
| 5. More locally grown food | 12. More opportunities for family-oriented cultural attractions, entertainment, recreation | 19. Diversification of industries |
| 6. Air/water quality and environmental protection | 13. Expanded public transportation | 20. Higher income jobs |
| 7. Farmland preservation/ support for local farmers/ tax incentives | 14. Congestion reduction in Middletown | 21. Living wage/trade/union jobs with retirement benefits |
| | | 22. Access to more training and education opportunities |

Scenario I:

- The scenario is not preferable, it does not address the goals/objectives.
- Many 55+ communities but difficult to age in place. Limited/no public transportation for seniors. Limited/no options for assisted living/nursing home options.
- The County needs to acquire more parkland (see Nassau County NY).
- Why is the northeast section east of Route 1, Route 301, and Route 13 not projected for expansion of sewer when the area could easily connect to existing/proposed nearby sewer.

Scenario II:

- Best option for conservation growth so long as projected growth is not larger than projected.
- Not clear option addresses objectives such as denser development/land preservation, increased public transit, or public services such as emergency response.
- Does not examine Route 15, specifically with regard to further industry and growth.
- Does not address town centers in Townsend and Odessa.
- Only possible if there is significant funding for compensation to farmers who preserve greenspace.

Scenario III:

- This scenario addresses the most objectives.
- Need to increase jobs/economy. Are there opportunities to work with schools, universities to develop R&D centers to aid education and development of new industries (see Penn State Incubator Program).
- The East Wing underutilized? It has easy access to main roads and highways, as well as, connection to sewer in the west and south. Opportunity for industrial or business uses?
- Addresses industrial growth but not sure if realistic. There is also an opportunity to use existing freight rail lines to support industrial growth.
- Too much focus on economic growth in Middletown, which is already at capacity. Funding is needed to support farmers and preservation outside of growth areas to incentivize and direct growth into them.

General Comments:

- Plan needs to be developed with neighboring areas in Maryland and Pennsylvania particularly the impact of a "New Bridge" over the Chesapeake.
- Partner/bring higher education facilities to the area from nearby colleges/universities
- Plan does not address east/west connections.
- Plan does not address areas below Middletown
- Sewer line extending up Route 13 to the St. George's Bridge should not only provide sewer to west. Area converges with Route 1, Route 13, and Route 301, seems like a logical location for development.
- Need more local serving uses such as gas stations, grocery stores, outside of Middletown.