



# HENRY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Steering Committee

November 15, 2016

### Meeting Summary

The Steering Committee discussed the expectations of the Henry County Comprehensive Plan process in terms of desired outcomes. In summary, the Steering Committee hopes to accomplish the following, in no particular order:

- Have a comprehensive plan that intentionally guides future growth and re/development and improves the overall quality of life of Henry County residents
- Use the comprehensive plan planning process to get buy in from the community regarding future growth and re/development
- Improve the County's collective ability to compete for relevant grant opportunities
- Avoid incompatible developments
- Seek the highest and best use for all areas of the county, especially the I-74 interchange
- Agree on a vision and set of goals that are aspirational
- Anticipate future re/development and the (utility) infrastructure implications that will follow
- Improve the predictability and therefore the accountability of staff recommendations
- A user-friendly, actionable document

The composition of the Steering Committee was also discussed. All agreed that representatives from schools/education (including youth and educators) and economic development need to be at the table. Darrin agreed to populate and circulate a list of key stakeholders to the Steering Committee for review and comment.

Opportunities to engage and inform the public included electronic and traditional vehicles, such as:

- Project website (strong preference)
- Newspaper articles, including publications in New Castle, Middletown and Knightstown
- Coffee shop flyers
- "Early bird" coffee klatches
- "Iron kettle" coffee klatches
- A separate Facebook page
- Mysidewalk, an online platform for gathering, organizing, and sharing data

The Steering Committee discussed the various strengths and weaknesses to be addressed during the planning process, including:

- Strength – Hope Initiative
- Opportunity – Memorial Park
- Weakness – Lack of coordination/collaboration across county jurisdictions
- Weakness – the community is currently divided in terms of what is possible and the progress that can be made

Henry County was described as a place with a rich community fabric that was complimented by a relatively low cost of living (compared to surrounding areas) and local feel. It was further described as a community that “boxes above its weight class,” and a place that residents care about one another and know each other. The Steering Committee also shared places that make Henry County unique. The list included:

- Field house
- Hall of Fame
- Hoosier Gym
- Baker Park
- Library
- YMCA
- Westwood Park
- Memorial Park
- Summit Lake
- Trails
- Cross country skiing
- Saddle Club
- Motorsport Park
- Active Babe Ruth baseball league
- Jacob’s Family Orchard (agritourism)
- Belgian Horse Winery (agritourism)
- Wilbur Wright Conservation area (hunting/ shooting)

Hot topics discussed – and which will need to be addressed during the planning process and comprehensive plan recommendations -- included:

- Wind farms
- Confined animal feeding operations

All agreed to convene again to In terms of future meetings, all agreed that evening meetings from 6:00 – 8:00 PM worked best.