

NEWTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4410 NEWTON FALLS BAILEY ROAD
NEWTON FALLS, OH 44444
PUBLIC HEARING-DRAFT 2019 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
MARCH 10, 2021

The Newton Township Board of Trustees held a Public Hearing of Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at the Township Administration Building with Trustees Augusta, Lutz, Nemet and Fiscal Officer Montgomery present. Augusta led the Pledge of Allegiance and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT: Rod Hedge, zoning inspector; seven members of the general public

The purpose of this meeting was to hear public comment before considering adoption of the draft 2019 Newton Township Comprehensive Plan.

Augusta reviewed hearing procedures to be followed.

He described the basic implementation of the Plan to this point and noted that the Board observed meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Committee but did not participate. Draft copies of the Plan were available for all present.

Montgomery confirmed publishing of the legal notice and read as follows:

The Board of Trustees of Newton Township, Trumbull County, Ohio, gives notice that a Public Hearing will be held on the **10th day of March, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.** at the Township Administration Building located at 4410 Newton Falls-Bailey Road, Newton Falls, Ohio 44444 to hear public comment on Comprehensive Plan data compiled in 2019 and consider the proposed Plan.

An official copy of the draft Plan is on file with the Township and is available for inspection and copying at the Administration Building upon request to the Fiscal Officer at (330) 716-3712 or smontgomery@newtontwptc.org.

All persons have a right to appear in person or by representation to address the Board regarding the proposed Plan. Action may be taken at this meeting.

BY ORDER OF THE NEWTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

By Susan D. Montgomery, Fiscal Officer

#055-IT February 24, 2021-#5890

The hearing was opened for public comment.

Steve DeBolt, 2412 S Canal, asked who the internet providers are in the Township. He noted that Spectrum is near his place and he hopes to try to connect. He hoped the Plan addressed internet services. Augusta responded that SuddenLink and CenturyLink currently provide service in the unincorporated area of the Township and the county is currently conducting a feasibility study on broadband to determine needs for future access.

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Hearing of Committee members:

Richard Curtis, Scott St. commented that 5G wi-fi is not safe; he is hoping for fiber optics or fiber optic alternatives. Augusta responded that the city is installing a fiber optic line but we don't know who will have access to it.

Susan Montgomery, 3179 State Route 534, indicated her opposition to the "rural nodes" incorporated into the plan which she noted encourage spot zoning which a Comprehensive Plan should discourage, and also open the door for development in primarily residential areas. She further stated that she is opposed to the proposed rural development center which includes the state route corners of her family's land and that of adjacent landowners saying that development along that corridor only opens up the possibility of annexation and is not in line with the main publicly chosen goal of the proposed Comprehensive Plan which is to maintain the rural character of Newton Township.

Nemet responded that people at the meetings disagreed with Montgomery and showed favor to small development.

Bill Irons, Weiss St., also a member of the committee, stated that the land and decisions will be controlled by the landowner for any changes to be made.

Montgomery acknowledged that a Comprehensive Plan is not a legal document, but merely a guide for future zoning and planning decisions, but remained opposed to this portion of the Plan as stated suggesting that it sets a precedence for future development in these residential zones. People looking at the Plan perhaps would have more of a concern if a Plan for change were being proposed next to their own home or property.

Patti Hanzes, E. River Rd (residents) stated she and Ethan Kistler attended the community meetings and wanted to maintain the rural and agricultural setting of that corridor and were not in favor of encouraging development there.

Montgomery noted an error recently discovered regarding the certified Township mileage which is 34.881 in the official Township records in lieu of 39 and requested a change.

Richard Curtis stated that having a Comprehensive Plan in place opens the door for annexation. He expressed concerns regarding Agenda 21 and the current overall movement to a cashless society.

Patti Hanzes requested that, if a person were placed in charge of economic development, that it be someone from within the community, not an outsider. Augusta responded it would likely be a Trustee. Hanzes also asked in the Committee had provided feedback on the draft Plan. Augusta explained that information was sent to all Committee members and their comments were forwarded to YSU and incorporated as the Plan evolved.

Tom Vickers, SR 534 and E River Road, stated that he moved out to the Township because of the rural atmosphere. He wanted to know what is the bottom line of the proposal; what is its purpose?

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Augusta responded that the residents of the community provided input, YSU compiled, and the end result is a recommendation for the future of the community. Nemet responded that the people in the Township want status quo; we needed a Plan for compliance to apply for grants.

Dave Kennedy, 5290 Bright Baldwin, attended a committee meeting and felt that sometimes people were seeing things from many of their own perspectives rather than as a community as a whole. He noted his concern addressing the Committee regarding the proposed development of old railway near his property that was initially being considered for a community bike trail.

Nemet stated that Rachel McCartney and Mike Hripko from YSU compiled the data for the Plan; they had a good 15-20% response for the community survey that was completed; other entities have received 1-2%.

Richard Curtis stated that he is opposed to grant funding as he believes it increases government control. Nemet responded that this will help with funding for grants for road resurfacing. Augusta concurred that grant money has helped the Township resurface many roads.

The Board expressed appreciation to Committee members for their time and effort. Augusta and Lutz thanked Nemet for his leadership of the project. Nemet noted that it was a great group effort.

Augusta moved to close the public comment for the hearing. Second by Nemet.

Roll Call: Augusta, Yes Lutz, Yes Nemet, Yes MOTION CARRIED 3-0

Nemet moved to place the adoption of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan on the agenda for the March 22, 2021 meeting. Second by Augusta.

Roll Call: Augusta, Yes Lutz, Yes Nemet, Yes MOTION CARRIED 3-0

Nemet moved to adjourn the meeting/public hearing. Second by Lutz.

Roll Call: Augusta, Yes Lutz, Yes Nemet, Yes MOTION CARRIED 3-0

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

These meeting minutes have been lawfully approved as amended on this date: March 22, 2021.

Respectfully submitted
Susan D. Montgomery
Fiscal Officer

Official copy available by request.