



High school Civics students participated in the Comprehensive Plan meeting last week. From left, Chris Harbaugh, Brian Milanovic, Jon Zook, Dustin Barry and Bryan Clever. Zook suggested the community construct a skate park for youth.

Citizens speak out on future of community

By PAT FRIDGEN
Echo Pilot

The citizens had a voice and it was heard at the Comprehensive Plan meeting held at the Greencastle-Antrim High School last Thursday. Issues concerning the present and future of the community were prioritized.

Frank Chlebnikow, project manager from Rettew Associates, told the assembly this was the chance to provide feedback and information to the three local governing bodies. His Camp Hill firm, partnering with Traffic Planning and Design, formed the consulting team hired to get the new Comprehensive Plan established.

"This plan is in need of an update," he said of the 1992 document. "But think as a region, not specifically just township or borough needs."

He noted that elected officials were only lightly represented at the meeting. "Speak your mind," said Chlebnikow. "Your comments are important. We want all residents to feel free to speak."

The crowd of 75 broke into small groups to discuss the preliminary goals of community facilities and utilities, community character, land use, parks/recreation and open space, planning and coordination, transportation, economic devel-

opment, historic and natural features, and housing.

Antrim Township, the borough of Greencastle, and Greencastle-Antrim School District hired the consultants in December for a 15-month contract. Chlebnikow said the reason for the meeting was to prepare a plan that was 'publicly driven.'

The issues

"We are trying to find what issues are most important to a broad base," said Lauren Zumbrun, Rettew community planner.

And the results are in.

Congestion at exits 3 and 5 off Interstate 81 topped the transportation concerns. Traffic along Williamsport Pike grabbed attention too, as that road is seeing an increase in usage due to the growing number of housing developments southwest of Greencastle. People want some sort of relief at the Rt. 16 and US 11 intersection, as well as pedestrian and bike paths constructed.

The supply of water was questioned. As natural resources were examined, residents thought Conservation by Design was not always appropriate. They want industrial development to blend with the landscape and agricultural land preserved.

Citizens cited a need for

impact fees as housing grows faster than the infrastructure to accommodate it. They see problems with stormwater management, the impact on water and sewer services, an influx of students, and developments taking up too much open space.

Concerning community facilities, there was support for combined township and borough services, a joint police force, and a YMCA. Police coverage and the tax burden on citizens funding the school system made the list. Hiking and biking trails again were suggested.

The future of downtown Greencastle included a desire for improvements in traffic flow, police presence, control of truck traffic, and the preservation of historic buildings.

Shortcomings in land use included the lack of impact fees, overdevelopment, access from one neighborhood to another by pedestrians, the supply of water, and the need for commercial development in the area.

One resident found the meeting interesting. "However, I really don't think that there were any issues that came out that the township and borough are not already aware of. So they are paying this consulting company to tell them what they already know."

Business owners will have their say at a similar meeting in February.