

Draft for discussion August 25, 2023

WORKING OUTLINE OF 2023 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Note:

This is a preliminary working outline of a possible approach to the 2023 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Fenwick Island. This reflects suggestions by numerous individuals and has not been vetted or considered by the Planning Commission. The Commission will consider a wide variety of ideas put forward by its member or the public. This or subsequent version of the outline may have contradictory ideas. No items in this draft have been adopted or decided upon by the Commission. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Note: Chapters 1 to 3 serve as the foundation for issues and priorities

Chapter 1 – Introduction

- Comprehensive Plan Purpose
- Comprehensive Plan Process and Public Engagement
- Vision Statement
- How To Use This Document

Chapter 2 – Community Profile

- 2.1 Our History
 - a. old history
 - b. emphasis on how Fenwick the town was formed and why
- 2.2 Local and Regional Context and Key Trends (new)
 - *Increasing development, traffic, and congestion in Sussex County*
 - *Development of the Beach Park and Redevelopment of the Chamber of Commerce site*
 - *Potential closure of Route 90 bridge*
 - *Transition to Regional and National Scale Businesses within Fenwick*
 - *Increased flooding potential due to loss of wetlands and natural areas*
 - *Climate change and sea level rise*
- 2.3 Demographic Characteristics (update existing section using 2020 census data)

- 2.4 *Economic profile for business and employment (add this using information available from census for 19944)*
- 2.4 Community Character
 - a. Oceanside
 - b. Bayside
- 2.5 Bunting Avenue – Fenwick Island’s Front Porch and Promenade

Chapter 3 – Existing Conditions

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Existing Land Use
 - a. chart with existing land use categories/numbers of each category
 - b. zoning map
 - c. primarily residential single-family housing with public water and sewer
 - d. distinct commercial zone along Route 1
 - e. park zone
- 3.3 Circulation
 - a. Roadway Network and Use; *links to regional circulation and significance of Lighthouse Road, Route 54 as a regional highway and evacuation route.*
 - b. Public Transit
 - c. Pedestrian and Bicycle
 - i. sidewalk
 - ii. bike routes
 - iii. side streets with emphasis on Bunting Avenue
 - iv. lighting (light key areas; avoid ugly lights and sky pollution; dark sky policy?)
 - v. design of streetscape that reduces speeding and supports visibility and safety of all
 - d. Waterway Network and Use (Map)
- 3.4 Community Facilities and Services
 - a. Administration and Facilities
 - b. public outreach
 - c. finance and budget
 - d. emergency response and management
 - e. police
 - f. beach patrol
 - g. fire and emergency
 - h. public works and environmental services and resources
 - i. trash and recycling management and pickup
 - ii. water supply and delivery
 - iii. sewage collection and treatment
 - iv. storm water management (from precipitation)

- v. flood water management (from routine tidal flooding)
- i. *parks, playgrounds, water access, open space, ecological resources*

3.5 Oceanside and Beach Environments and Uses

- a. need for periodic replenishment of sand
- b. accessible
 - Mobi matt
 - Equipment to bring people over the dune and onto the beach
- c. open to the public
- iv. guarded beach
- v. *management of trash, parking, impacts*

3.6 Bay Environments and Uses – overall map?

- a. Little Assawoman Bay
- b. canals
- c. channels -map? Initiatives to improve and open up main channel
- d. wetlands *and shorelines*
- e. Seal Island
- f. connection to other waterways
 - 1. Derrickson creek
 - 2. Assawoman Canal
 - 3. Ditch to Big Assawoman and Ocean City Inlet
- g. Recreational uses
 - boating
 - fishing
 - kayak/stand up paddle board

3.7 Historic Resources Identification and Preservation

Add something about environmental design for climate and sustainability here or elsewhere.

KEY ISSUES FOR THE TOWN.

Chapter 4 – Maintaining the quiet, family-oriented character of the Town

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Issues
- 4.3 Goals and Objectives
- 4.4 Recommendations

4.5 References and Resources

Chapter 5 -- Creating Safe and Inviting Spaces for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Issues
- 5.3 Goals and Objectives
- 5.4 Recommendations
- 5.5 References and Resources

Chapter 6--Stewardship of Ocean and Beach Environment

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Issues
- 6.3 Goals and Objectives
- 6.4 Recommendations
- 6.5 References and Resources

Chapter 7 – *Increasing Resiliency and Preparing to Respond to Increasing Heat, Strengthening Storm Events, and Flooding, through Infrastructure and other Solutions*

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Issues
- 7.3 Goals and Objectives
- 7.4 Recommendations
- 7.5 References and Resources

Chapter 8 – – Stewardship of our Bay Environment

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Issues
- 8.3 Goals and Objectives
- 8.4 Recommendations
- 8.5 References and Resources

Chapter 9 – Address Regional as well as Local Growth and Seasonal Population Influx

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Issues
- 9.3 Goals and Objectives

- 9.4 Recommendations
- 9.5 References and Resources

Chapter 10 – Support A Vibrant Business District within the designated footprint of commercial uses and the unincorporated area

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Issues
- 10.3 Goals and Objectives
- 10.4 Recommendations
- 10.5 References and Resources

Chapter 11 - Community Development Plan - Address Required and Certain optional elements of State of Delaware Comprehensive Plan Requirements - to be discussed in separate presentation

- Housing**
- Redevelopment**
- Annexation**

Chapter 12 – Increase Coordination and Engagement with Federal and State agencies as well as Sussex County and nearby Municipalities to address Town concerns and mutual interests

See example from Ocean View plan

Chapter 13 -- Summary of Implementation Actions for the Plan

- 12.1 Introduction/Summary
- 12.2 Implementation Table -Recommendation/Timing/Potential Partners and Coordinating Agency and Potential Technical/Financial Assistance.

See example from Ocean View plan

APPENDICES

A.1 Comprehensive Plan Requirements –where they are addressed in this document

A.2 Maps

Little Assawoman Bay

A.3 Implementation Table –also build in the Comprehensive Plan Requirements into the implementation table.

A.4 Bibliography/Sources

Issues Raised During Public Comment (not exhaustive)

How can we get a combined approach to design of the state highway including the medians, lighting, sidewalks, and possible other pedestrian and safety elements?

Parking requirements are not clear to all residents. Concerns about whether parking for residents for beach is sufficient and what the balance between public parking and resident parking should be.

The Planning Commission should adopt enforceable or measurable objectives.

Development at the State Beach Park is imminent and does not seem to be coordinated with the Town. Concerns about sidewalks from the park to Town and development in proximity to houses. Also, about location of parking lots.

Should the Town encourage greater support for older residents through voluntary organizations?

How to better support the pedestrian and bicycle use of Bunting Avenue? Creating greater awareness of this use for those who are visitors or passing through. How to create a better shared understanding of the special use of this area especially in the morning. Keep it safe for kids. Would changes in traffic patterns help? Maybe ban traffic except local traffic during certain hours. What about something like the “patrols” that help kids cross streets on the way to school? Could youth help to increase awareness of the need for care when driving along Bunting Avenue. What about motorized bikes that are fast and heavy? Do we really want to make every bike stop at every stop sign? The signs that tell people where to walk and bike have been worn off. It would help if people followed that. There is wide support for ensuring the continued use of Bunting Avenue for walking and biking by people of all ages and all abilities (and their dogs).

How can we make it safer to cross Coastal Highway? Even when a car stops for pedestrians, a car in the other lane may be proceeding. Everybody has a horror story about a close call and most feel that a death is going to happen. What about flashing crosswalk signs like they have in Bethany? What about more traffic lights to stop traffic? What about “flags” that people could carry when crossing for greater visibility? Would greater police enforcement help? Speeding is also a concern especially toward the north end of Town, in both directions.

How can we get the proposed capital project to complete sidewalks funded by the State?

Could something be done with the property at the North end of Bunting, perhaps as a garden or recreation resource?

Should the Town consider acquiring or dedicating property to support a farmer's market on a daily basis or more frequent basis, especially given the lack of any food store. What about for recreational purposes? Should the Town re-establish volleyball leagues to create community?

The Town should take action to actually identify the Area of Concern from the 2017 plan.