



## Community Working Group Meeting #5 - Summary

### Meetings Schedule

CWG meetings will be held at the Upper Merion Township Building and will begin at 7 p.m. Below is the schedule through June 2017 and will be held on the third Wednesday of every month unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> – Valley Forge Room

Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> – Valley Forge Room

Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> – Valley Forge Room

Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> – Valley Forge Room

### Meeting #5 Summary

Location: Upper Merion Township Building, Henderson Room

Date: Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>

Time: 7 – 9:45 p.m.

#### Attendees:

##### KOP Rail project team members-

Liz Smith, SEPTA

Fritz Ohrenschall, SEPTA

Fran O'Brien, McCormick Taylor

Emily Watts, McCormick Taylor

##### CWG members-

Eric Huhn

Martin Trumpler

Mark Vondra

Gary Russell

Ron Ginnona

Vivian Peikin

Pamela Hale

Traci Ginnona

Joan Grunwald

Carole Kenney, UMT Supervisor

##### Presenters-

Matthew Edmund, AICP, Montgomery County  
Planning Commission

The CWG held its fifth meeting in January 2017. The meeting began with introductions and welcoming our speaker: Matthew Edmund, AICP from Montgomery County Planning Commission. Matt gave a presentation on Montgomery County's comprehensive plan called Montco 2040. Planning is finding effective solutions to community challenges while remaining committed to improving the high quality of life experienced throughout the community. Montco 2040 is Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan which looks at everything including housing needs, growth trends, public transportation, trails and trail connections and the economy. A comprehensive plan looks at how all these things go together. Montgomery County is involved with many municipalities and boroughs and helping them write comprehensive plans including Upper Merion Township. Each community is different with different needs which means the approach will also be different (i.e. tourism vs preservation).



Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan has two major components: *Montgomery County Today* which is an overview of existing conditions, trends, forecasts, and issues; and *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision* which includes a vision for the county, goals, themes, recommendations, and an implementation strategy. The goal is to position the county to thrive under the trends of the future. There are three themes for the comprehensive plan: Connected Communities, Sustainable Places and Vibrant Economy.

Connected Communities are physical and social connections. Physical connections include transportation, trails, etc. and social connections include a sense of place and collaborations. Sustainable places is about preserving nature such as farms, streams and energy while adapting to change and position the community for new trends. Vibrant economy involves transportation access such as roads, transit and highways. It also involves strengthening places such as office parks and neighborhoods.

In order for projects to move forward and receive federal and/or state funds, planning starts at the county level. Once it is identified by the county it can move onto Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC) comprehensive plan for the region. DVRPC is the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). From there it can go onto the region's TIP which is eligible for federal and state funding. DVRPC's board includes members from SEPTA, PennDOT, NJDOT, and each county it oversees.

Regionally speaking, there are a lot of people already driving to Upper Merion Township. An extension of the NHSL has been in Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan for over 50 years. It is the most promising major transit expansion with the high ridership and frequency. Montco 2040 identifies KOP Rail as connecting Upper Merion within itself, to neighbors and to the region. The goal is to improve transportation quality and expand options for county residents and workers. People want options. Whether or not residents or neighbors plan to use KOP Rail, people like options and that additional option will be appealing to the community in the future. Getting workers to their jobs in KOP is critical. Reversing that trend would be detrimental to UMT and the county. When UMT thrives, Montgomery County thrives.

**Other items for discussion:**

- Ridership data – Where UMT residents are going? Where are the new riders coming from?

**Action items:**

- Bus feasibility
- Answer Mark's questions sent via email on 12/12 and add as agenda items for next meeting