



# ORPC Oxford Region Planning Committee

Chair: Albert Jezyk Jr. Vice-Chair: Charles Fleischmann Treasurer: Robert Ketcham

## May 28, 2025 Public Open House - Report

**Date/Time:** Thursday, May 28, 2025 - 7:00 pm to 8:45 pm.

**Reported By:** Mark Gallant

**ORPC Representatives:** Pauline Garcia-Allen, **Kathryn Cloyd** – Oxford Borough; Al Jezyk, Jr. – Elk Township; Joel Brown – Lower Oxford Township; **Charles Fleischmann** - Upper Oxford; **David Ross** - West Nottingham Township.

**Regular Attendees:** **Eileen Butler** – East Nottingham Planning Commission; **Blair Fleischmann** – Upper Oxford Historical Commission.

Those names in **red** above also volunteered to participate in the event.

**Guests:** Chip Benke – OARA; Justin Lytle – TMAAC; Phil Harris – Oxford Borough Mayor; Jon Dunkle (Oxford Library); Casey Bye – OARC;

**Authorities, Boards, and Commissions (ABC) members:** Chris Farmer – East Nottingham Planning Commission; C-Randy Teel – Oxford Borough Planning Commission

Tom Ferro, Dustin and Leslie Slesman, Pamlea Mason - East Nottingham Township; Donna Elingsen – Elk; Patty McComsey, Robert C. McComsey – Oxford Borough; Teri Dignazaion – Upper Oxford; Dana Katie Arter – Frequent the Borough.

**No Affiliation specified:** Dana Simpson, Jeff Simpson, Jenna Johnston, Johnny Johnston, Kaye Bortle, Sherrie Robinson, Ted Jazinski.

**Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) Staff:** David Blackburn, Geoff Creary, Beth Cunliffe, Mark Gallant, Libby Horwitz, Ryan Mawhinney, and Patty Quinn.

### Attendance

Considering the weather conditions (rainy and chilly) and the limited number of potential attendees who pre-registered (about 13), I think attendance was exceptional. I think we easily pushed 40 guests. Please keep in mind that many who attended, did not sign in. The names above represent those who did sign in. Based on the photos below (provided by Geoff Creary and David Ross), there were multiple conversations going at any one time about a number of topics.

## □ Stations

The CCPC Team and ORPC volunteers set up seven stations devoted to the survey results and the draft goals and objectives:

Welcome Station: Sign it sheet, “What is a Comp Plan” sign, a participants to-do list, and refreshments (Thank you Blair and Charlie).

Station 1: Public Survey Results and Land Use and Housing goals and objectives.

Station 2: Economic Development and Transportation goals and objectives.

Station 3: Community Facilities and Parks and Open Space goals and objectives.

Station 4: Natural and Cultural Resources goals and objectives.

Station 5: Energy Conservation and Did we miss anything?

Resources Table: Related planning handouts from CCPC.

### Sample Display Board

**Station 1**

**Survey Results**

A selection of **Survey Results**

- 86.80%** of respondents are **Resident Property Owners**
- Of those who responded, **41.7%** are **Adults, 30 to 54**.
- 23.4%** of respondents have lived in the Oxford Region for **21-30 years, 31.3%** for **31-50 years**.
- 21.8%** of respondents chose to live in the Oxford Region for the **Attractiveness and/or Character of the area**.
- East Nottingham** had the highest number of respondents at **39.4%**
- 33.3%** said Good, **17.3%** said Excellent, **3.9%** said Fair, **0.2%** said None
- The top answer when Respondents were asked to describe the **Quality of Life in the Region** was **Very Good** at **55.4%**
- 60.8%** of respondents said they **live next to a farm, 31.8%** said they **did not live next to a farm, and 6.9%** said they **lived on a farm**.
- The vast majority (**93.6%**) of respondents said they live in a **single-family home**.
- Of the respondents that answered the question, **33.5%** said that **we have enough affordable housing, 40.1%** said **we need more affordable housing, and 26.4%** said **they were not sure**.

**Land Use**

**Land Use Goal**  
Provide for orderly growth and development, where appropriate and supported by necessary infrastructure, while protecting natural, cultural, and open space resources that define the Region's rural character. Promote environmentally and economically sustainable agriculture and the Region's agrarian character through the protection of the farming industry, conservation of agricultural soils, and recognition and celebration of agriculture as the primary land use in the Region.

**Housing Goal**  
Encourage a variety of housing options, at densities and price points appropriate for the diverse and growing population of the Region in accordance with existing or planned infrastructure, with a focus on attainable housing.

**Land Use and Housing Objectives**

- Continue to promote the preservation and expansion of the **agricultural industry** by Ensuring the viability of agriculture as a way of life, a commercial enterprise, an important source of open space, and a component of rural character.
- Continue to protect **farmland and prime agricultural soils** through preservation efforts (conservation easements), land use regulations, and/or by the implementation of appropriate land use tools such as conservation development, effective agricultural zoning, and transferable development rights (TDR).
- Accommodate **non-agricultural development** that is appropriate in scale and intensity and located in designated growth areas where adequate infrastructure exists (or is planned for expansion) and encourage the location of compatible land uses or transition zones to reduce the potential for nuisance conflicts.
- Support **sustainable land use practices** within the Region and ensure that proposed development respects the existing site conditions.
- Recognize **Oxford Borough as a major population center** in the Region, target needed resources to existing neighborhoods, and ensure municipal regulatory documents encourage a sustainable approach to neighborhood design.
- Coordinate **land use and utility planning efforts** between the Oxford Region's municipalities and utility service providers (OASA, CWA, etc.) to ensure effective, consistent, and cooperative infrastructure planning throughout the Region and the provision of adequate supplies and facilities for current and planned future needs.
- Coordinate **planning efforts** regionally with the Oxford Area School District (OASD) to accurately assist them with projecting and planning for population growth of the school age population and associated housing needs.
- Support the development of a mix of **quality, attainable, and easily accessible housing options**, with increased opportunity for multi-family housing, social amenities, proximity to job and commercial centers (including agricultural operations) consistent with long-term public transit goals in designated growth areas, for workers in all sectors.

**Key Term Definitions:**  
**Attainable Housing:** Affordable housing in housing whose mortgage payment is no more than just of total household yearly income.  
**Conservation Development:** A subdivision where a significant portion of a tract is preserved as open space and development is directed away from natural, scenic, historic, and agricultural areas.

## □ Takeaways

CCPC Staff and ORPC Volunteers reported back and the following comments and questions were provided by the Open House attendees (organized by topic area). I have also included the volunteer who heard the comment(s).

### Land Use and Housing

- Random comment, “99% of affordable housing is in Oxford”
- Libby overheard a conversation, how can you make affordable housing work when you can't get under \$1,500 when building new construction?

- Libby had a conversation with two people who discussed (much of this was in reference to the site of the fire)
  - ✓ They like mixed income / mixed age housing
  - ✓ What current restrictions are there for multifamily in the boroughs? (as in are there actually restrictions)
  - ✓ Interested in % for veterans and disabled
  - ✓ Like multiuse areas
  - ✓ What is the price point that's "affordable"?
  - ✓ What are the state supplements to HUD?

### **Transportation**

Patty - Some people had questions about what would be feasible concerning public transportation (why SEPTA will not provide service and who TMACC is).

Patty - One quote from the event that I really liked was, " We need to focus on working together because things like streams don't just end at municipal boundaries".

### **Cultural and Natural Resources**

Eileen – Where's Lincoln Village? I don't know it by that name. Some homes are old and need improvement.

Eileen – When you approve development, do you look at it from a Watershed perspective? Especially as it related to stormwater? Do you consider who's going to be impacted?

Eileen – Someone had a concern about stormwater management and our waterways, the impacts of stormwater to our waterways.

### **Energy Conservation and Transition** (these were all overheard by Ryan (CCPC Team))

- Add an objective for increasing EV charging stations for public use.
- Connect government/public facilities with recycling companies that collect, sort, and manufacture recyclables into products on-site. Example companies: Eco Plastic Products in Wilmington [there are similar companies in Elkton Recyclers, and Sycamore International in West Grove). They also recycle materials that other centers do not (certain plastics, metals, glass). Example products include park benches and parking bollards.
- How will the energy efficiency and alternative energy sources be funded? Rebates are going away.
- Even small-scale solar panels can make a big difference for a home.
- Consider targets- What are we trying to achieve? Is it the county's goal of an 80% reduction in GHG?
- Consider solar canopies that also provide shade.

**Blair provided the following comments** (via email after the Open House):

Regarding the Cultural Resources Protection Objectives, if we are going to combine #2 with an addition for locally significant historic villages to read as follows,

Collaborate with the municipalities of the Region to update municipal ordinances to prioritize and **protect locally significant historic resources** and identify the villages of the Region that are locally significant and prioritize their protection.

maybe we should say:

Collaborate with the municipalities of the Region to update municipal ordinances to prioritize and **protect locally significant historic resources, including the locally significant historic villages.** ~~identify the villages of the Region that are locally significant and prioritize their protection.~~

As to Objectives #4-7:

#4 - What do we mean by “leverage” the Borough's fire-recovery and Niblock Alley?

#5 - Why have we separated these scenic natural resources from natural resources?

#6 - How would community education efforts and activities protect scenic resources, when scenic resources are not always being protected by property owners (especially those who have been educated)?



**Next ORPC Meeting:** June 25, 2025 via Zoom.