

Garrett Hill Coalition

Business Community Forum of December 12, 2007

The Garrett Hill Coalition held a Forum designed specifically for the Business Community regarding the Garrett Hill Overlay District at 2:30 p.m. on December 12, 2007 at The Radnor United Methodist Church located at 930 Conestoga Rd., Rosemont, Pa.

Patti Barker brought the Business Community up to date with information on the Garrett Hill Coalition, the Garrett Hill Steering Committee and the Garrett Hill Overlay District process.

Refreshments were served and the GHC's enlarged GHOD map was provided for the group's observation and comments.

A question & answer period was provided and open discussions were held regarding the perceptions and concerns among the businesses.

The most prevalent concern among the group was the uncertainty of their future regarding the substantial investment they had made in their businesses in order to develop a tangible asset that can be relied on for retirement.

Many of them foresee their retirement evaporating before their very eyes.

The group was considerably appreciative for the opportunity to attend a meeting geared specifically for the Business Community and would be pleased to attend future meetings similar to this one.

Overall, they were relieved to finally have a setting which allowed them to actively interact with the GHC.

Speaking openly in the General Community meetings is a common concern among all those in the group, as they fear the possibility of offending any community member that may not clearly understand the severe impact the GHOD process may have on their financial futures and what they, as individuals have at stake.

They do not want their businesses to suffer from speaking out and many of them have the closure of "The Brick Bar" on their minds, which they mourn in the same way that the residential community mourns the loss of the Rosemont Elementary School.

The GHC members assured the group that meetings will continue to be held for the Business Community and explained that their participation will be imperative during the visioning process and focus groups with the Planner during the commencement of the GHOD planning process.

Informal personal discussions took place between the GHC members and the guests both before and after the forum, creating a relaxed atmosphere for all.

The groups dispersed between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m.

Additional Business Community Issues & Concerns from December 12, 2007 Meeting

1. *Open space* – Protect Emlen Tunnell Field and Clem Macrone Park.

2. *Parking* – “Can’t make it worse than it is now, without having a solution.”

- Parking space quantity and visual access - customers need to see open spaces.

- Businesses with adequate parking provide parking for other businesses without compensation. They cannot enforce their right to exclude other businesses’ customers due to practicality and the risk of alienating their own customers. Customers should be directed to the correct parking areas with effective signage and cooperation between businesses. The problem is most severe at busy times.

- Licensing - At busy times, businesses often rely on parking spaces of other Garrett Hill businesses for customer parking. Current licensing requirements allow businesses to open and operate without adequately addressing the increase in parking demand.

- Employee parking – Approximately 30 spaces could be created if employees had places to park. Employees park on the street and prevent customer use of public parking spaces and increase parking congestion in the neighborhoods.

- Parking requirements – Some Garrett Hill businesses rent parking spaces from other Garrett Hill businesses to meet Township parking requirements.

- Could tenant permit parking on Garrett Ave. be expanded to Williams Rd. and other streets? Could Emlen Tunnell Field’s lot be expanded?

3. *Street lighting* – Increase street lighting from the eastern corner of Rosemont Business Campus west to Clem Macrone Park, preferably architectural “cut off” fixtures.

4. *Re-zoning* – Could this mean reduction in businesses’ worth or property values - particularly in the case of Andrew Tillman’s loss of C-3 as described in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan? Could this drive out Garrett Hill business operators as property owners are forced to increase rents due to costly Township mandated requirements?

5. *Traffic safety* – PennDOT favored back-out parking as a traffic calming measure during crosswalk meetings. Those involved in these meetings thought a Garrett Hill crosswalk location and approval was accomplished. However, there is still no crosswalk.

- Crosswalk needs to be well-marked (at least painted for high visibility, perhaps raised and/or lit or with little plastic flagmen?)

- Curb extensions/Bulb-outs could work – but where?

6. *Enforcement* – Parking (enforce the 30 minute limit and permit parking), traffic, and noise ordinances need adequate enforcement.

7. *Taxation* – It seems like the Wayne area has historically received an uneven share of Township services while Garrett Hill has been overlooked.