

Princeton Consolidation
Transition Task Force
Boards, Committees, and Commissions Subcommittee
April 19, 2012

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM in Conference Room A, Princeton Township Hall.

Attendance

Subcommittee: Hendricks Davis, Bill Enslin, Wanda Gunning, Bernie Miller, Gary Patteson; Eugene McCarthy, Liaison for the NJ Department of Community Affairs; Ryan Lilienthal, Member of the Consolidation Commission; Staff: Dave Henry, Health Officer, Lee Solow, Director of Planning; Elected Officials, Members of BCCs and the Public.

Discussion Items:

Advisory Planning Districts (APD)

At the request of the BCC subcommittee, Ryan Lilienthal led a discussion of Advisory Planning Districts--a tool included in the NJ State Statue governing municipal consolidation. He indicated that the Consolidation Commission had studied the concept and reported on it in its June 22, 2011 report to the community and, at that time, recommended that during the year leading up to municipal consolidation that a framework for establishing ADP's be studied and provided the governing municipalities. . The commission's report outlines the rationale for ADP's, which Mr. Lilienthal reviewed in detail (see Report of Official Recommendations on Consolidation, June 22, 2012 p.17 and ff) and potential approaches (i.e. 1) appoint neighborhood liaisons, 2) "bottom up" or have groups form organically and obtain ADP status and recognition by petition or some other method, or 3) establish via commission structure.) Mr. Lilienthal indicated that the Commission leaned toward the second or "bottom-up" approach and that neighborhoods might be defined by election districts or current boundaries or neighborhoods.

Members of the subcommittee engaged Mr. Lilienthal and each other in discussion of related issues and concerns including the current existence of ad hoc "ADP" groups, the influence of the "strong personality" in dominating an ADP's agenda, the hesitancy of some neighbors to express their opinions or concerns (the minority opinion/voice), the potential of diluting citizen participation and thus having the opposite desired effect; the potential of generating more NIMBYism. B. Enslin stated that Princetonians have never been reticent about expressing opinions and his concern that ADP's would create

another layer of review which might impede development applications particularly on individual homeowners. W. Gunning suggested researching the models developed in Austin, TX and Roxbury, MA for neighborhood or local conservations groups. She cautioned that people generally don't want to be designated into a district or additional layers of government. In response to G. Patteson's inquiry, it was stated that the impetus for ADP's is found in the statutes authorizing municipal consolidation, though the current statute only calls for two districts which would be made up of the former municipalities. B. Miller indicated that ADP's could be seen as one way of ameliorating the concern of diminished or "less" democracy resulting from municipal consolidation and there being fewer elected representatives per capita.

Members of the public and staff of the municipalities offered comments about the establishment of ADP and it was suggested by Commissioner Lilienthal that the BCC subcommittee identify and study the issues, goals and community planning assets. H. Davis affirmed that the subcommittee would continue its discussion and consideration of ADP's and would report its findings and recommendations to the Transition Task Force.

Inventory of BCCs

Subcommittee members indicated that progress is being made in completing the inventory. Some continue to have difficulty using the template provided by CGR. H. Davis suggested that those that are having difficulty with filling in the form submit the content to J. Stefko who will be able to make it work. The question of whether to include the Housing Authority of the Borough of Princeton on the inventory was raised for discussion. H. Davis stated that the job of the BCC subcommittee is fairly straightforward and that we are charged with providing information to the municipal government to be elected in November to assist in transition. HABOP is an authority to which members are appointed by elected officials. As such, and simply for the purpose of facilitating transition and continuity of governance, HABOP will be included on the inventory. Following discussion by the subcommittee members, comment was offered by Mr. Alvin McGowan, a member of the HABOP board. H. Davis stated in summation that the information required for the inventory is in the public domain and accessible to the BCC subcommittee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:34PM

Submitted by:

Hendricks S. Davis, Chair
Boards, Committees and Commissions Subcommittee