

## Coatesville Oks 10-year comprehensive plan

By Kristina Scala

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Coatesville— An exhaustive year-long process ended after city council adopted the final version of its 10-year comprehensive plan Monday night.

“It was an exhausting process,” council Vice President David Collins said during the public hearing portion of the meeting. He commended city planner Tom Comitta for his work. “This is an important document, in my opinion, for the future revitalization of Coatesville because it lays the groundwork, it defines the path.”

Comitta, landscape architect and owner of Thomas Comitta Associates, said the state requires municipalities to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years. He gave a brief presentation Monday night before council unanimously voted to approve the final comprehensive plan.

“There are many very good rays of light to shine on the city,” Comitta said describing the details in the comprehensive plan.

Some main features of the plan outline areas of development in the city. Color-coded maps included in the document point out areas of revitalization, define future phases of development and identify existing sites for improvements.

Comitta also included a section for the city to help it implement the comprehensive plan. That section includes creating diverse programs that “strive for inter-generational opportunities.” It calls for accelerating the approval process for developers who are interested in building in the city; celebrating the history in Coatesville; continuing leadership on city council; moving forward with the “new city/old city” concept; and using the train station as a catalyst for change.

City Manager Kirby Hudson pointed out there are “a lot of moving parts in this comprehensive plan” for the train station. He said there is the project for streetscape improvements, plans for the train station, developing the south side of Fleetwood Street and the plan for the old train station building.

Greg Bentley, representing Trinity Episcopal Church in Coatesville, asked if there was an update on the development of the train station. He said he heard there’s currently enough funding to move forward with the train station development.

Hudson said the city is still working on maintaining funding for the development of the train station from state agencies.

Comitta said county representatives helped design maps in the plan for the area showing a “gravitational pull around and from the train station.”

But the final document is still in the works.

“Because that is still ongoing we don’t have the advantage of the final report,” Comitta said.

Justin Smiley, urban planner with Chester County Planning Commission, said a conceptual phase is being looked at for the train station site and the properties on Fleetwood Street.

## **Coatesville OKs 10-year comprehensive plan**

Daily Local News, August 26, 2014

*page 2*

"Hopefully this coming fall there will be an informational meeting that everyone can go to focus on which concepts both council as well as the public would deem the best option for the city," Smiley said.

To oversee implementing the plan, Comitta recommended the city create a comprehensive plan committee in 2015. He said the committee should consist of three members of city council and would be tasked to create "ideas on how the plan can change" to better manage it in the future.

To accommodate the plan, zoning changes that would be needed.

Comitta said the city applies for grants to help with ordinance amendments. He said the city might have an upper hand on other municipalities applying for the same grant.

"If we can get it (the grant) we can start by next June (writing) the ordinance amendments," Comitta said. "I'm very optimistic that if we apply for a grant for zoning amendments, we will get it."

He said if the city fails to acquire the grant before June 2015, it can apply again until it's granted.

Copies of the comprehensive plan can be found at Coatesville City Hall and should be on the city's website- [www.coatesville.org](http://www.coatesville.org) - later in the week.

*source: [www.dailylocal.com](http://www.dailylocal.com)*