

**Upper Darby Township Comprehensive Plan**  
**Public Meeting Number Six – Aronimink School Administration Building**  
**June 18, 2002**

Meeting participants were asked to list the strengths and weaknesses of Upper Darby Township, as well as comment on opportunities for change.

**Strengths**

- Historic Preservation Society works well with Township
- Strong schools
- Churches and schools provide strong community resources
- Summer Stage
- Good recreation opportunities
- Strong family units
- Strong community support
- Taxes are reasonable considering services provided
- Central location in the region
- Darby Creek Valley
- Quality housing
- Friendly people
- Good trash removal service
- 69<sup>th</sup> Street convenient and walkable
- Proximity to Center City

**Weaknesses**

- Zoning is too restrictive, discourages new development
- Illegal parking not enforced
- Traffic is on the rise
- Too many multi-car families, not enough street parking
- Schools closing
- Businesses are leaving, tax base is diminishing
- Census may be underreported in ethnically diverse areas
- High school taxes are driving the population out
- High traffic speeds through residential neighborhoods
- Darby Creek and watershed is polluted

- Darby Creek stormwater issues downstream
- Illegal filling of floodplains
- Poor perception of Township is driving young people out
- Low property values – related to perception
- Lack of realtor support
- Lack of property maintenance and landlord responsibility
- Lack of leadership
- Deterioration of 69<sup>th</sup> Street
- Too much Section 8 housing
- West Chester Pike still unsightly, despite previous planning efforts
- Contractors unwilling to work in Upper Darby (related to codes)
- The Township building is not maintained
- Insular attitude
- Walkability limited between Darby Creek and Lansdowne (highways)
- Demolition of 69<sup>th</sup> Street bridge a waste of money – should not have been built in the first place
- Lack of anchor stores at 69<sup>th</sup> Street
- Crime in 69<sup>th</sup> Street area
- Upper Darby High School not big enough to handle projected increase in students
- Poor recycling program
- Curfew not enforced
- Absentee landlords at 69<sup>th</sup> Street
- Not enough police presence at 69<sup>th</sup> Street
- School board needs to listen to residents more – school spending too high
- 69<sup>th</sup> Street bridge an eyesore but well used – removing will restrict safe pedestrian crossing

### **Opportunities for Change**

- Update the zoning ordinance – need reasonable, enforceable regulations (avoid variances)
- Ordinances should encourage historic preservation
- Rehabilitate/reuse the McClatchy Building
- Remove dead trees
- Improve communication between neighbors (diverse cultures sometimes inhibit communication)
- Use the media to market Upper Darby assets
- Establish a welcome wagon for new residents – share information
- Compare Upper Darby demographic trends with those of similar Townships
- Need a closer relationship between residents and Township elected officials
- Preserve floodplains

- Support the 69<sup>th</sup> Street area – preserve the beautiful buildings
- Need to relate more to Philadelphia than smaller suburban towns
- Need to address neighboring municipalities
- Need participation from Clifton Heights and Lansdowne for Darby Creek Trail
- Attract businesses to compete with suburban regional centers
- Need incentives to attract businesses, i.e., parking
- Access management
- Replenish trees that have been removed - School District sets good example
- Attract nice restaurants throughout Township
- Rehabilitate Pilgrim Gardens Shopping Center
- Use incentives to improve small commercial pockets
- Use 69<sup>th</sup> Street transit hub to attract businesses
- Build on the strength of City Ave.
- Solve traffic problems at 69<sup>th</sup> Street – improve flow to Philadelphia
- Develop new middle class housing
- Attract empty nesters
- Build more quality affordable housing to keep young people in the Township
- Attract office development at 69<sup>th</sup> Street
- Form relationship with area universities to attract bio-tech firms
- Use absence of wage tax to attract businesses
- Use public relations to improve the image of Upper Darby
- Improve communication between residents and Township officials
- Retain high education standards – retain well-educated population
- Attract diverse, quality commerce
- More cooperation with adjacent communities for business development
- Work with SEPTA to improve transit throughout Township (e.g., West Whitehall)
- Create more recreation opportunities – similar to Valley Green