

**EAST GOSHEN BUSINESS PARK TASK FORCE  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 1, 2021**

The East Goshen Township Business Park Task Force held their regular meeting on Monday February 1, 2021 at 7:00 pm. Due to restrictions caused by the COVID-19 virus, the meeting was held via electronic conferencing Zoom. Members in attendance are indicated in bold:

**Ed Decker**  
**John Hertzog**  
**Mike Koza**  
Mike Lynch  
Jeff O'Donnell  
**John Stipe**  
**Brian Sweet**

Others in attendance:

**Mark Gordon, Township Zoning Officer**  
**Christine Morely, resident**

**Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

Mark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. There was a moment of silence to remember our military, medical and healthcare workers, and first responders, and snow plowers.

**Guest Presenters:**

Brian O'Leary – Exec. Dir., Chester County Planning Commission  
Mary Frances McGarrity – VP of Bus. Dev., Chester County Economic Council

Mark introduced the presenters and asked them to give any information that will help the Task Force with their assignment.

Brian commented that they started producing a report on the Chester County economy. Some of the strengths are high growth in the GDP, employment has increased, about the same number of people coming into the county to work as there are leaving, highest education, unemployment at about 3%, higher wages and a diverse economy. The vacancy rate in some office parks is a little higher than other counties. Commercial costs per sq. ft. a little higher. He showed a chart about sq. ft. proposals from 1991 to 2020. Not all have been built. They started tracking what actually got built 2016-2019. There has been an uptrend in industrial mostly because of additions to buildings. They just received a proposal for the Happy Days Farm, which Vanguard bought but never developed, from a foreign pharmaceutical company. He shared a 2025 plan of how business parks will change. Millennials want more amenities in their workplace. He spoke about a business park that had food trucks come in a few days a week. He also mentioned that residential is being added to business parks. To get more information go to [chescoplanning.org](http://chescoplanning.org).

Comments:

Mark asked if he would provide a copy of the presentation. Brian will send it to him.

Brian O’Leary mentioned that we need to consider whether people will be returning to the office or not.

Brian Sweet commented that, in repurposing of spaces, he has seen more residential.

Brian O’Leary mentioned repurposing to supportive commercial, such as restaurants, banks, day care center, etc. He also spoke about the apartments in Exton that added residential into commercial.

Mary Frances mentioned that agriculture is mostly industrial. She spoke about the area across from the New Garden Airport off Rt. 1. Her background is Commercial Real Estate. She joined the Economic Development Council 8 years ago and helps companies find locations. Another possible change is that they probably won’t need all the parking spaces if people work from home. Be open to the uses you attract.

Christina Morely mentioned that there has been an increase in industrial and distribution. She has been reading about Amazon the largest employer in the country. They have plans to open 1,000-1,500 small local delivery hubs around the U.S. in order to meet the 2-day Prime delivery. There has been space allocated in Whole Foods stores for Prime delivery. They also considered repurposing JC Penney stores.

Mary Frances commented that Amazon did make that proposal, but it didn’t take. Just because a parking lot is empty doesn’t mean the lease is up. She did a vacancy analysis of 39 buildings (existing or under construction), 2.5 million sq. ft. The only vacancy was of 166,000 sq. ft. about 2.5% vacancy. Rent average was \$18/sq. ft. office and industrial.

Mary Frances mentioned 905 Airport Road, 127,000 sq. ft. is 50% vacant. The Tesla organization was looking at locations in DE, PA and NJ with 30 minutes allocated for the visit. They were in the 905 building for 2 hours last week and want to repurpose it to an educational training facility. She called PA and Chester Co. officials for a letter of support. They will also contact Delaware Co. Community College to partner in this.

When COVID-19 first started, they did surveys. She recommended looking at the surveys and find 10 questions to ask and use the same ones all the time. She gave an example: what category best describes your industry sector? It has to be measurable and reportable so you can compare county data with municipal data. She reviewed some of the questions on the surveys. You need to strengthen tenant base and meet their needs.

Brian O’Leary has seen a lot of older buildings being torn down. Another trend they have also seen is an increase in requests for more parking. They even got one during the pandemic. He doesn’t know what will happen after COVID.

John asked about housing for the Tesla students.

Mary Frances commented that their courses will be short term 6-9 months. Having a college town nearby is a plus. However, you would need to get a van to bring people to and from transportation. Mark spoke about having this type of transportation for the company that was in the building where Mars is now. They worked with TMACC and the company paid for it.

Brian O’Leary mentioned that Coatesville is starting a shuttle. Both companies and the municipality are paying for it. Hotels will be interesting to see. They often turn into longer term which would be good for students.

Mark thanked Brian and Mary Frances for their valuable input.

## **Organization**

Chairman – John moved to nominate Jeff O’Donnell. Ed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman – Brian moved to nominate John Stipe as Vice Chairman. Ed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mark turned the meeting over to John.

## **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 5, 2021 meeting were approved as amended.

## **Task Force Objectives & Review of Background Materials**

Mark explained the materials he supplied.

Mike spoke to a couple of owners and feels the company owners are willing to meet. He feels they should do the survey.

John feels the survey should be sent to them by mail or email, then meet in-person with them. He feels we should wait until they receive the surveys from Mary Frances.

Brian offered to review and set up a sample survey for the next meeting.

Mark offered to help make contacts if needed.

Brian commented that they need to develop the survey first for distribution. It will be good to see the answers before they meet with the owners.

John mentioned #4 rent and real estate costs – ask if they own or lease the building.

Ed mentioned #3 what industry is your business in – expand the list and use the ones Brian O’Leary had in his presentation. Some buildings may have more than one use.

Mark spoke about Synthes. They have four buildings for different uses.

Ed suggested reviewing parking standards. Find out if the owners will work with other tenants.

Mark mentioned that there is a standard for the use and the number of employees. You should also find out if they need restaurants or if they need any programs. He will find out if the YMCA offers anything.

John commented that the Commerce Committee used to state that “East Goshen is business friendly. Call if you need anything.”

Christina was reviewing the list of the properties in the corporate parks and only 905 is vacant. She was excited about the mention of Tesla. If it doesn’t get used by Tesla, some others are WCASD needs more classroom space. Their Cyber program is very robust. Their resource center is at Fugett so they may want to lease some space. They also had to build the Greystone School because of the amount of new housing in that area. There may be an increasing need by Chester Co. Dept. of Health for space for vaccinations, etc.

John mentioned that the Executive Center at 1450 Boot Rd. is not included on the list. Mark commented that it is in the BP and should be included. Mrs. Hicks owns a few of the units. John suggested that the letter to Keystone should be revised to include the Executive Center.

Ed asked who would set up food trucks if they want them. Mark mentioned that Jason Lang, Director of Parks and Recreation has used food trucks at many of his events so he would be a good contact.

Mark mentioned that Rick Smith sent a memo to Keystone. He just received a response so that will be provided at the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Ruth Kiefer, Recording Secretary