

**THE 2002 CHESTER COUNTY COUNTRYSIDE EXCHANGE
A PROGRAM OF GLYNWOOD CENTER
Sponsored by the Chester County 2020 Trust**

KENNETT REGION, PENNSYLVANIA

The Countryside Exchange brings together international teams of volunteer professionals to work with communities on their most important issues. Those issues usually center on conservation and economic development. The Exchange is a catalyst. It uses a visit by an objective team of “outsiders” to identify a wide range of potential solutions, create diverse coalitions, spur the emergence of new leaders and inspire collaborative action. The community also benefits from new ideas, networks and information that it can use to help shape its future.

Since 1987, 100 communities in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Japan have hosted a Countryside Exchange. Over 750 professionals from England, Scotland, Wales, the United States, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Australia have participated as team members.

How Does the Exchange Work?

Communities are selected to participate in the Countryside Exchange through a competitive application process. Applications are evaluated based on such criteria as the depth of interest within the community, existing leadership and leadership skills and the strength and diversity of community members supporting the application. Applicants must also demonstrate flexibility, a willingness to learn new skills and processes and show commitment to working as a team and to developing a community based implementation strategy after the Exchange.

Once a community is selected, a Local Organizing Committee (LOC) is formed. The LOC is crucial to the success of the Exchange and must include a representative cross section of the community - business owners, farmers, developers, elected officials, conservationists and “average citizens.” The LOC identifies and refines the questions that the Exchange team will address. It also plans the Exchange week itinerary, takes care of logistics and handles publicity. After the Exchange, the LOC helps initiate implementation efforts.

The Exchange Team

Glynwood Center draws upon its extensive international network to form teams consisting of six to eight experienced professionals. Each team is international and interdisciplinary in its makeup. Team members are selected by matching a candidate’s expertise with the issues identified by the community. In order to ensure that teams are objective, participants must have had no previous connection to the host community.

The team spends a very intense week in the community. A full itinerary of issue oriented roundtables, presentations, tours, panel discussions and community gatherings gives the team an opportunity to speak with many residents, officials and organizations. The week culminates with the team presenting its observations and ideas at a public forum. A summary report is also published to assist the community with implementation.

Implementation

After the Exchange week, the team report is distributed throughout the community as a first step toward developing an implementation strategy. Most Exchange reports include some forty recommendations and determining priorities is one of the most important tasks facing the community. Glynwood Center and the Chester County 2020 Trust will continue to provide support during this period and offer a training workshop in early 2003 to help the communities develop a strategic action plan for implementation. Glynwood maintains contact with its “Family of Exchange Communities” through its web site, www.glynwood.org, Update Newsletter, database and ongoing personal contact.

The Results

Just as communities vary, so do the results of each Exchange. Some team recommendations may be broad, others very specific. Some may be small-scale projects that can be implemented quickly. Others may be larger, requiring a policy change, a significant philosophical shift – and time. In some cases, the Exchange may trigger a change that the community widely acknowledged was needed. The report may articulate an issue that leads to community discussion and an alternate solution. What most Exchange communities share in common is that the new and strengthened partnerships, expanded leadership base and collaborative action cultivated through the Exchange pay dividends long into the future.

THE EXCHANGE IN THE KENNETT AREA, PENNSYLVANIA

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Kennett Region is bounded on the south by Delaware, with its eastern part in the beautiful Brandywine Valley, some 35 miles southwest of the City of Philadelphia and 12 miles north of Wilmington, Delaware. It is home to the world-famous Longwood Gardens and proximate to many other outstanding historic and cultural attractions.

The core community, the Borough of Kennett Square, has strong roots in both manufacturing, agriculture and agricultural services. The surrounding municipalities (townships) were predominantly agricultural (mushrooms, greenhouses and nurseries). The area includes many beautiful farms and estates located on scenic rolling piedmont terrain with some of the finest soils in the country. Nursery and mushroom cultivation carry on and expand the historical tradition of agriculture, as does the New Bolton Veterinary Medicine Center of the University of Pennsylvania

In response to the pressures of increasing suburbanization, communities in the area formed the Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission (KARPC). This group, now some 14 years old, includes the Townships of Kennett, Pocopson, Pennsbury, East Marlborough, and New Garden and the Borough of Kennett Square. Cooperative efforts of the group include joint purchase agreements, shared manpower, municipal salary surveys, public educational forums, a study of regional police coverage, a regional comprehensive plan and a regional land use and transportation study.

The area has experienced many waves of immigration over the years as the labor-intensive agricultural activities have required an ever-expanding pool of workers. The present wave of immigrants comes mostly from Mexico. The most recent pattern has been for whole families to move into the area, bringing with them their wives and school age children, as well as their cultural traditions. At the same time, the suburbanization of the area by residents from older regional municipalities has brought an explosion of new homeowners in large, new and expensive homes. Traditionally the Borough has been a source of housing, both rental and ownership, which could accommodate a broad spectrum of incomes, but prices are increasing rapidly and threaten to take many of the units beyond the range of moderate income families.

In the schools, the new families have altered the traditional population ratios dramatically with one school already showing a majority of Latino children. This trend has had a mixed impact. Some families come to the Borough and welcome its diversity and cultural richness. Others have moved out. Neighborhoods have been generally stable, but tensions have occurred, particularly around occupancy levels and noise (music).

The Borough has been working vigorously at revitalization for the past several years with a significant focus on its Main Street. As this effort has gained momentum, the local library, a major factor in the revitalization, has announced a controversial decision to move out of the Borough to a nearby suburban location.

While the library board was deciding whether to move out, the Borough was developing a plan called the Kennett Commons with major community input. The plan, emphasizing opportunities for shared spaces and facilities, provides for a greatly expanded library, a community center/auditorium, abundant parking and space for expanded retail, housing and other possible uses.

COMMUNITY ISSUES

1. How should Kennett Square's role as the cultural and community center of the Region be carried forward (Activities, facilities?)

- How do we bring in public-private partnerships to participate in this process?
- How do we bring in charitable and other non-governmental organizations to participate in this process?
- How can funds be raised to support the Kennett Commons?
- How should we publicize the cultural and financial benefits of an in-town location of the library as part of the Commons?
- What are other alternatives to be considered for urban revitalization?

2. How can we best deal with the changing nature of the community, which is impacted by rural-to-suburban sprawl, widening economic differentiation, and rapidly increasing Hispanic population in a traditionally Anglo area?

- How can we provide and maintain a spectrum of housing needs for everyone from unskilled immigrant workers, through seniors and "early nesters", to protection of estates as part of open land preservation?
- How do we provide cultural knowledge and understanding across all cultural groups and all age groups?
- How do we provide community services to meet the needs of our changing population?
- How do we foster and develop a collective sense of community across all segments of our population?
- What strategies may we employ to increase participation in leadership and governance activities by all segments of our population?

A SAMPLE ITINERARY:

THREE DAYS FROM THE KENNETT REGION EXCHANGE

Thursday, October 17

Driving tour of region

Walking tour of Kennett Square

Kennett Commons Presentation

Friday, October 18

Emergency Services Discussion
Kennett Township Government Presentation
East Marlborough Township Government Presentation
New Garden Township Government Presentation
Kennett Square Government Presentation
Tour of Proposed Library Site
Presentation by the Library Board

Sunday, October 20

Tour of YMCA
Introduction to the Trail System
The Garage Community and Youth Center
High-end Housing Presentation
Affordable Housing Presentation
Discussion on Local History

THE KENNETT REGION EXCHANGE TEAM

Clara Arokiasamy is the Deputy Director (Operations) of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the agency responsible for distributing lottery grants for heritage projects throughout the U.K. She manages five regional teams responsible for distributing and managing grants in excess of £50 million. Clara has lead responsibility for developing and providing risk management, financial and project appraisal and best practice for staff in project management of large and complex capital and revenue projects.

Of Indian ethnic origin, brought up in Malaysia, Clara previously worked in social services in two culturally diverse London boroughs where she developed and implemented socially inclusive employment policies and services including skills training for women and ethnic minority communities. Before taking up her present post, Clara spent five years in another borough as the senior manager responsible for research and corporate planning for arts, libraries, and leisure and tourism services for a population of 250,000. Key achievements here included: introducing an arts audit and arts partnership; cultural tourism strategies to revive community and public arts development in the borough; and regeneration of the local economy by kick-starting the local cultural industry.

Chris Bailey has thirty years of experience in the performing, visual and public arts as writer, director and community animator. He worked for five years with the Inter-Action Trust, a London-based not-for-profit enterprise dedicated to exploring new forms of creative and participatory programs in the inner city. Before spending a year setting up a community arts initiative in the historic provincial town of Lincoln, he was the founding Artistic Director of Same Sky, a multi-disciplinary celebratory arts company based in Brighton, on the south coast of England. Among the 120 or so projects in the company's portfolio are the co-ordination of local community input into the public celebrations to mark the opening of the Channel Tunnel linking the U.K. and France; working with 68

local schools to produce the annual Children's Carnival for Brighton Festival (since 1989), and a five-year celebratory arts development program in rural East Sussex. Chris was also responsible for the conversion of a derelict Post Office building into a custom-designed cultural production and operations center, in an economic and social regeneration zone in East Brighton.

In April 2002, Chris set up "The Practice" a consultancy and project development service. Current projects include working with a voluntary association of parents and teachers from 15 local schools to increase the accessibility of practical creative projects to young people; and working with a local authority to refocus and reinvigorate a longstanding rural and small town's community arts festival.

Ruth Dass is the Founding Director of Interculture, a not-for-profit company that provides advice and development service for the arts, heritage and other sectors that wish to develop culturally diverse programs of activity. After periods as a teacher, a hotel proprietor and a field archaeologist, Ruth spent seven years as the operational and project manager of the Archaeological Resource Centre in York, a ground-breaking initiative that opened up public access to and provided hands-on experience with the work of archaeologists.

Before establishing Interculture, Ruth worked on a number of collaborations with museums, galleries and other partners to raise awareness of issues of ethnicity. In particular, she was a consultant for two "people exhibitions" in the City of York in which members of ethnic minority groups living in the City brought their own artifacts and talked about them to visitors.

Bruce Fullem works for New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation as a park manager in the Finger Lakes Region of New York where he is responsible for a cluster of parks including Sampson, Seneca Lake, Bonavista Golf Course and Lodi Point Marine Park. Previously, he served as the Director of New York's Heritage Areas Systems and was responsible for assisting 17 Heritage Areas develop strategies to revitalize their downtowns through the celebration of history, events and tourism. Bruce also has experience in fundraising and leadership development, and was able to raise over \$100,000 in a poor rural community to support education.

Ned Kaufman is a consultant based in New York who works with foundations, schools, youth programs, civic and community organizations, government agencies, museums and businesses to develop and implement innovative ways to conserve heritage and character of places and to build public understanding of the cultural environment. His clients include the New York City Board of Education, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Women of the West Museum and New American Youth Initiative. Prior to becoming a consultant, Ned served as Co-Director for Place Matters, a joint project of the Municipal Arts Society of New York and City Lore, whose mission is to discover, celebrate and protect New York's historically significant places. Ned was also the Director of Historic Preservation for the Municipal Art Society of New York where he directed their educational and advocacy campaigns for historic preservation.

Sally Waltham is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing. She spent eighteen years with South Holland District Council in England, during which she progressed from Deputy Housing Manager to Director of Housing and Planning Services, a position she occupied for the last seven years. Prior to this, she worked for five years with a housing association in a regional market town and during her time with South Holland District Council she was seconded for a while as Acting Chief Executive of another local housing association. She is now a freelance consultant.

Sally has taken a lead role in developing partnerships between housing associations, private developers and voluntary groups and has experience in community development, having established a Tenants Group that has been recognized by the regional Government Office as an example of best practice in tenant involvement. She has also led regeneration schemes for market towns, commissioned town centre health checks and established Town Centre Manager posts. She has been involved in cross-cutting issues such as tourism, economic development and town centre management.

Kevin Wallace works part time as a Housing Arts Officer for the Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. He works with a team that manages arts activities in the context of community regeneration, which can range from environmental art features to celebratory events. He also leads a number of public art and consultation initiatives that involve consulting local communities.

Kevin initially trained as an architect and worked as an architectural assistant before moving into the performing arts where he co-founded Scarabeus Theatre, spending five years performing internationally at festivals across Europe. He currently combines his present position with Bolton Metropolitan Council with that of Artistic Director of Wyrld Arts, a charity with a performing arts background that works in a wide range of arts in education, arts in health, carnival and community arts.

EXCHANGE TEAM REPORT

ISSUE ONE: KENNETT SQUARE AS THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE REGION

The Fundamentals

The team believes that there are particular observations and recommendations that go to the heart of the question of how should Kennett Square's role as the cultural and community center of the region be carried forward. We feel that these provide the critical framework for responding to the particular issues raised by the community. The team has termed these overarching observations and recommendations "The Fundamentals".

Given the structure of municipal government in the State of Pennsylvania, the team fully appreciates the challenge and progress that has been made in working regionally. The Landscape 2020 plan of Chester County, the Comprehensive Plan and the Regional Planning Commission are initiatives that are applauded by the team and the community

should be rightly proud of these achievements. Having taken the first, and arguably the most difficult initial step, the team encourages all concerned to move forward and form a vision of what could be achieved.

The problem began when the first immigrants came to Pennsylvania and carved out their plots to build modern America. The basis of all land definition in the State is the plot, creating an approach and mindset that could be defined as “plot thinking” – a concern and motivation to work within a defined boundary. Over time, plots were joined into bigger plots of Boroughs and Townships, amplifying “plot thinking” to a municipal level. To move forward, “plot thinking” needs to be challenged – Kennett needs to “lose the plot”, loosen its thinking and be more adaptive and organic. There is a striking difference between Township maps with hard edges, corners and straight lines and the Landscapes 2020 Plan, which is full of organic forms without a straight line in sight.

OBSERVATIONS:

The widespread view, expressed across the Kennett Region, is that Kennett Borough has a vital and desirable role to play as the cultural center of the Kennett Region. The Townships recognize the benefits of a vibrant Borough to their own community, but have not considered how they, in turn, can contribute to and support a vibrant Borough.

The Borough needs to grow in functional space. The zoning pressures on the one mile square of Kennett Borough and the boundary areas with neighboring Townships is resulting in fragmented, disjointed and inconsistent planning. Also, there are a number of potential sites that meet the needs of housing, parking or landmark developments including some in the Borough that are in disuse, light industrial use or of undetermined status, as well as others on its borders in adjacent townships.

The Kennett Commons concept affords a number of options for the site that relate to potential cultural clients such as the library and a community college. There has been very significant positive interest in the idea of bringing a community college to the Borough. The options for Kennett Commons have often been discussed in terms of an either/or position with respect to accommodating the library or a community college.

The Kennett Commons project offers a wonderful opportunity to revitalize the heart of the Borough. Construction will have a big impact on the Borough, including shutting down of the library while a new facility is being built. But, there clearly is a need for community space and resources, as well as a need for a tourism and information center. With a committed client as a partner, the Kennett Commons concept would have a centerpiece for the revitalization of the site.

The Kennett Commons concept includes a plaza as a focal point. Feedback from High School students identified Anson Nixon Park as the most popular place in the Borough because it brought people together. There are lessons to be learned here as the community moves forward with the Commons concept.

Key aspects in the development of a vibrant town are creating an ambience for Kennett Square, increasing connections between cultural sites and providing infrastructure that encourages walking.

Traffic and provisions for parking have been recurring topics of discussion. It is clear that any revitalization of the downtown area will generate a greater demand for parking. There is a need to ensure ease of access to the downtown area by car. In all discussions, there has been a reiteration of the fact that every development needs its own car park on its own doorstep.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- During the review of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, all Townships in the Kennett Region should take the opportunity to reconsider their zoning ordinances and development plans in order to define ways of both contributing to a vibrant Borough and creating sustainable Townships.
- The Regional Planning Commission should secure commitments from all partners to embrace a vision of a Greater Kennett Square, with all partners committing to work together on the fringe areas of the Borough to resolve their own individual zoning issues for the mutual benefit and support of the revitalization of the Borough and Township. There is no suggestion that Borough boundaries need to be redrawn.
- The Borough and Revitalization task force should take decisive steps to secure a key cultural tenant for the Commons site as soon as possible. This would not preclude further cultural clients from coming on board in later stages. Cultural amenities such as the Community College and Library could be part of a campus setting.
- Consider using innovative design to develop a vibrant and dynamic architectural environment for the Commons. This approach has been used to great effect on a wide range of regeneration projects across the U.K. and Europe.
- Explore ways to create additional open public space in conjunction with initiatives for pedestrianization. Consider including works of public and environmental art, such as sculptures, mosaics etc.
- Explore ways to make Kennett a friendlier place for pedestrians by creating walking routes and green corridors that would link key sites in the Borough. Existing routes such as the link from the Y Centre to Anson Nixon Park need upgrading to clear trash and combat erosion. There is also a critical need for signage and the opportunity to use art work on the routes. Crossing the road is also a barrier to use, and if bridges or pedestrian tunnels are discounted, a pedestrian crossing should be installed. The Board of the Park should also work with Exelon to create a new pedestrian link from their site to the downtown area.
- Separate out traffic, parking and development issues. Develop a traffic plan for the

downtown area to ensure ease of passage for both visitors and residents. Suitable areas for parking should be identified that are easily accessible by car, linked to the pedestrian routes and provide access to downtown amenities.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY THROUGH CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

OBSERVATIONS:

The scale and scope of voluntary efforts and fundraising in the Kennett Region is astounding, notably the success of United Way and the YMCA. Nevertheless, there seems to be a lack of a strategic approach, which leads to duplication of effort, lack of understanding and awareness of what is available and how to become involved. Opportunities to raise funds and/or widen the base of those involved are potentially missed. For instance, whether you are Mexican or a Wilmington commuter, how do you learn about getting involved? Similarly, there is a growth of retirement communities where there are many people that might value wider community involvement, albeit at a somewhat slower pace.

As events, projects and agencies become more successful, they place greater strain on limited resources. For instance, the Mushroom Festival attracts increasing numbers of people, raising safety concerns. Rather than stop the Festival, more might be done to widen community involvement. Kennett has a growing reputation for festivals, but no overall plan that would maximize resources. There appears to be little forward planning to reinforce successful activities like the festivals. It appears that once the first step has been taken, success breeds success, as the event moves from an unknown entity to reality, e.g. the Cinco de Mayo festival.

There are a number of cultural assets in the Borough and neighboring Townships. Culture, embracing both arts and sports, plays a key role in the quality of life of a community. On this basis, culture should be seen as a core service and be allocated municipal funds accordingly. This commitment, at a municipal level, acts as a lever to attract matching, partnership and corporate funding to the Borough and Townships. Cultural activity should not just be seen as exclusive to the Borough and programming should include activities in the Townships - to reach out and give depth and breadth to cultural activities in the full Kennett Area.

In Britain, there is a longer term view to cultural planning and programming. Currently, all municipalities in Britain are required to produce a "Local Cultural Strategy". The purpose of this strategy is to identify gaps in provision of services and set targets for improvements under a definition and vision of culture that is developed in the municipality. The first step is to create a Local Cultural Forum that represents as many cultural interests as possible. For example, the Cinco de Mayo festival is very successful; however, it is not the Mexican's National Festival Day. Mexican Independence Day is in September. There is also an incredible potential to link up the Mexican "Day of the Dead" Festival (Dia de los Muertes) which takes place at the same time as Halloween, as well as the traditional Easter Celebrations, La Semena Santa.

Funding from the corporate sector has been ad hoc and focused primarily on donor giving. Corporate sponsorship is also an area that can be explored. Engage with businesses so that they get something out of the process. One example is to brand a festival as a way to raise the profile of the company and attract potential customers and markets. Another opportunity is available when a company wishes to develop a reputation as a community partner, thereby gaining a competitive edge over its rivals.

The nearest dedicated performance or arts space is in Malvern. There is a need for a flexible and multi-purpose auditorium to accommodate a variety of needs. The proposed Kennett Commons concept meets this need. There is also the potential to include artists' studio workspace and gallery space for exhibition. There are strong areas in the Borough such as the Symphony and High School bands, and a Mexican dance group in the area (Danzatenochtli), but very little drama and literature activity such as creative writing and poetry. A key area not yet addressed in the Kennett Commons concept is the operating cost and sustainability of the new facility.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Set up a Festival Task Force to plan and coordinate events, to share good practice, and consider issues of common concern e.g. safety, advertising, and sponsorship.
- Where festivals are attached to particular industries, e.g. mushrooms or brewing, those businesses should provide financial support - from their advertising budgets, for example. They may also offer in kind help such as volunteer stewarding of the initiative.
- The Police Force has access to a community fund that might be used for volunteer steward training to enable recruitment from the Hispanic community.
- Seek sponsorship from local industry and commerce and identify the activity as such, e.g. The Exelon xxxx Festival.
- Develop a Local Cultural Forum and Strategy and embrace the Kennett Area as plans for the arts and cultural facilities at Kennett Commons come to fruition.
- Approach local businesses, corporations and industries to discuss approaches and opportunities for donation and sponsorship.
- Once the Kennett Commons is built, the Revitalization Task Force must support the cultural forum and ensure that a mixed program of activities is developed that suits as diverse a range of audiences as possible.

IMPROVING COORDINATION AMONG CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

OBSERVATIONS:

There is an impressive range of local cultural activity happening in the Region – the Symphony, the Y Center, the Anson Nixon Park, the Library, the History Station, Festivals such as Cinco de Mayo and the Mushroom Festival – and the national attraction of Longwood Gardens. However, there is no central reference point for all these activities and no central coordinator or programming body. There are 2 leaflets – one for the Borough and one for the Park – but they do not cover all the cultural activities in the area and do not give comprehensive details of events.

Current analysis and planning by individual sites, including the Kennett Commons, limit their scope to the boundary of their site and tend not to be seen as part of a “Bigger Picture”.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Undertake a thorough inventory of all the diverse cultural assets and activities taking place within the Kennett Region.
- Consider how a cultural map of the area could form a linked infrastructure from a practical level of pedestrian and traffic links, to a strategic level of joint programming and marketing. Planned development for any cultural sites, including all options for the Kennett Commons, should include an impact assessment that considers in practical and strategic terms how the development will impact the broader vision for Kennett Square.
- Form a diverse body to coordinate cultural activity and programming based on consultation and outreach with all diverse communities of interest. The information gathered should inform programming, noting always that some groups excluded by gender, age, ethnic background, etc, may need a more active approach to ensure participation in this process.

RAISING MONEY FOR THE KENNETT COMMONS

OBSERVATIONS:

The concept of the comprehensive revitalization of the Kennett Commons area is to be praised; however, it is not an inexpensive project. Financial viability is a key issue, but the cost should not be a reason to cease the project development.

The extent of community involvement through the Charrette is laudable although it is interesting to note that it is described as “A Library Design Charrette” rather than “The Kennett Commons Charrette”. This perhaps sums up the fact that the Kennett Commons proposal has lost its focus as it has, understandably, become embroiled in the library argument.

The plans for the Commons are a “moving feast” and while flexibility is fine to a certain point, it now appears to change from week to week and the team was far from certain about what might be there and what might not. It is clear however, that there is a critical need to identify an anchor use and user. It is less important what the use is, than the need to resolve the issue promptly. Not to do so will jeopardize funding, affect project credibility and cause a loss of community support. Commercial investors, in particular, are not going to be attracted if the community itself is not certain what its priority needs are at the site.

In terms of revitalization, it does not matter whether the anchor use is the library or not. What is most important is that an anchor be identified quickly. A community college seemed to be a possibility.

An injection of private finance will ease the pressure on public and voluntary funding. This may mean that some hard decisions have to be made and a balance struck between community uses and activities, and others which produce a commercial income stream. Achieving that balance of public versus commercial space will not be easy and may produce tension within the community.

There is a need for a corporate rather than ad-hoc funding campaigns. Funding campaigns will be vital, but they need to be part of a plan, particularly if they are to be matched by private and public funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Identify an anchor use and related uses quickly.
- Move on! Feelings should not be allowed to cloud the issue of the revitalization. If the library relocates elsewhere, it would be a step backwards to attempt to replicate a library in Kennett Commons. Look for an alternative anchor use that will support community needs left vacant by the library move, such as offering Spanish classes and computer access.
- Viability is likely to depend on there being an element of private finance. In return for providing community benefits, the developer will need to have a commercial benefit. This is known in England as “planning gain”. A potential scheme might be a community college linked to housing, say affordable for the elderly, given its proximity to the center of the Borough.

Keeping the Library In-Town

OBSERVATIONS:

The library is an extremely divisive issue in this community, creating conflict and tension. The library is also a key element in any cultural strategy and there are clear benefits for all members of Borough and Township to have it situated in a central

location with strong pedestrian links to other key cultural sites. Keeping the library, high school, Y Center, proposed Community Cultural Center and possible community college, within easy walking distance of each other, would create a vibrant and dynamic set of complimentary relationships between key cultural sites. On the other hand, ease of parking for library users from further townships and traffic management must also be considered.

Key factors in siting the library are its distance from other amenities and how people will get there. A number of circumstances determine the mode of transport that people will use – not everyone can drive due to economic, legal, health or age reasons, while most people can walk provided they are in reasonably good health. To tackle the library issue head on, the team sent a member to “walk the walk”. This test was conducted in excellent weather, by the most direct route, at an average time of day and with minimal hand baggage, walking at an even pace. The walk was timed with a stopwatch. It took 11 minutes for a man in good physical condition to walk from the proposed new site to the entrance of the existing library. It took him 7 minutes from the Library to the Y Center.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All parties need to get back to the table and work tirelessly to resolve this issue for the benefit of all. If necessary, a mediator should be brought into facilitate this process and its resolution. All parties need to step back, focus on common objectives, review what has already been considered and think again to define a shared vision.
- The community and all parties concerned should honestly consider whether people would want to walk that distance? By answering this question, the community should be able to identify those who can or can't walk to the new site, will or won't make the walk and the reasons for this. This analysis should then inform thinking on the final decision with regard to siting the library.

ALTERNATIVES FOR URBAN REVITALIZATION

OBSERVATIONS:

The role of small towns in America as traditional providers of the full range of household goods such as groceries, clothes and hardware has changed with the car economy and mall shopping. The Borough has recognized the reality of this situation. This fact is also recognized by the wider community. While there is regret at the passing of say the hardware store, there is widespread acceptance that the clock cannot be turned back. There is opportunity, however, to build on the strengths of the town center such as the history, the specialty shops, the restaurants and other services.

Kennett Borough, the Revitalization Task Force, the Chamber and other groups have made great strides in marketing the Borough as an alternative destination as shown through the leaflets such as *Historic Kennett Square & the Kennett Square Walking Tour*. There is a high level of occupancy in the Square, with many individually owned

businesses, some specializing in local wares. La Comunidad has a shop and there are Mexican grocery stores. Turnover rates are apparently low. The town is becoming known for good restaurants and coffee shops.

Despite perceptions to the contrary, general stores do exist, they just happen to be Mexican. The team was told “You can’t buy an aspirin in Kennett Square”, but found that you can, at the Mexican grocery shop. Other perceptions are even more damaging. Many township residents regard Kennett Square as unsafe and unattractive – an almost unbelievable situation to those who live in and love the Borough. The team was told that many township parents would not allow their children to go to Kennett Square. The facts don’t support these fears. It’s safe to walk downtown. It’s not impossible to find a parking space. There *are* goods and services and entertainment that are useful to ordinary residents. There are safe and enjoyable activities for children and students.

Nationally, Kennett Square & the Townships are renowned for mushroom production and considered “the *mushroom capital of the world*”. The growers are at the leading edge of the production of specialty mushrooms such as the Portobello and others. The annual Mushroom Festival is a growing attraction, most recently attracting 60,000 visitors. Yet apart from this annual event there appears to be little to promote the area’s link to the mushroom. There was a mushroom museum, which is still featured in Chester County’s promotional tourism video, despite its closure recently on the curator’s retirement. There is opportunity to do more to promote the mushroom to the mutual benefit of the area and the growers.

The historic roots of the Borough & the Townships are strong, but under-marketed. A particular instance is the fascinating story of the Underground Railroad that has been so well researched and documented at the History Station. The story identifies Kennett Square as one of the main stops along the route that led slaves from the Southern states of Virginia and Maryland northward.

The team also noted that there is a vibrant African Caribbean community who are currently not users of the museum and their cultural connections and contributions to the region are not represented in the exhibits. The nature and sensitivity of the storyline and the current displays indicate the need for a revitalized exhibit that embraces all of Kennett’s rich historical past. The team believes that by engage the African Caribbean community, the museum will be able to attract new visitors. There is also a strong connection to Longwood Gardens through the Underground Railroad.

It is striking that there is no hotel or bed & breakfast in the Borough, despite the need for tourist and/or business accommodations generated by Longwood Gardens and Exelon. The Hilton Hotel is close to the Borough and is apparently well used, but it offers standard accommodations that can be found in many parts of the U.S.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Building on the work of the revitalization task group and develop an education and

marketing plan to attract people to Kennett Square. Counteract the negative perceptions by replacing the myths with fact. The marketing plan should start by targeting local people, representing Kennett Square as an attractive alternative to the mall. Present the Borough as recreating small town life in America, but with all the wonderful diversity and complexity found in the 21st Century.

- Work with the Mexican businesses to offer a wider variety of items that serve the convenience shopping needs of the whole community. Publicize what you can buy in Kennett Square.
- Promote the diversity of the town with bi-lingual signage.
- Establish a mushroom museum. The story of Kennett Square's mushroom industry is rich. Far from being "mere" promotion, a mushroom museum can make a significant contribution to documenting and presenting Kennett's history, both to residents and visitors. There are many potential sites for a mushroom museum. One is the building that served as the region's first mushroom house. It is within the outline of the Kennett Common plan and could contribute to it. Regardless of the precise site, the museum should be near downtown so that it can contribute fully to the vitality of street life, commerce and culture in the Borough. It should be developed at the highest level of museological competence.
- Modernized the History Station. Collaborate with the African Caribbean community on the content of the exhibits. The current collections need to tell the whole story, in order for visitors to understand the complexity of the moral, social and human rights issues that Kennett Square faced in the 1800s.
- In redeveloping the History Station, the Borough should collaborate with Longwood Gardens and other partners. This will ensure the development of strategic funding opportunities, education and creative programming, as well as creating a vibrant visitor attraction.
- Explore opportunities for developing small scale, high quality visitor accommodations, such as bed & breakfasts or inns with guest rooms. Kennett Square could then offer weekend packages, for example, combining visits to Longwood Gardens with a trip to the Historic Station and the mushroom museum.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

OBSERVATIONS:

Kennett Square is fortunate to have an architecturally distinctive and handsome Main Street, as well as neighborhoods with attractive houses, ranging from small row houses to magnificent mansions, from the mid-nineteenth century into the twentieth. Kennett Square's architectural heritage is representative of national trends and of distinctive

regional characteristics, such as wooden front porches and walls constructed of warm-colored and richly textured quartzite stone. Though Kennett Square has lost some significant buildings, the Borough's historic architecture remains largely intact and represents a significant resource for the future. Kennett's role as a cultural center depends on the continued existence of this architecture: to visualize Kennett Square as an exemplar of revitalized town life *without* its historic architecture is almost impossible.

Logically, the preservation of the Borough's historic architecture should be a high priority, yet the available tools are simply not up to the job. Despite the existence of a National Register historic district, most of the town's historic buildings are virtually unprotected from demolition and redevelopment. The same is true of the surrounding townships.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Adopt a local historic preservation ordinance that has teeth. The power to effectively protect historic resources rests at the local level and can best be implemented through a municipal ordinance that provides for the designation of historic districts and individual landmarks; establishes a landmarks or historic preservation commission; gives it the authority to regulate alterations and additions; and to prevent demolition, absent economic hardship established according to a clear legal test. These requirements may sound onerous, but they have worked for many years in numerous cities and towns across the country. Model ordinances are easily available and can be tailored to the Borough's particular needs and to those of the surrounding townships.
- Undertake a comprehensive survey to identify additional significant historic resources. This may seem unnecessary now as there appear to be few looming threats against the Borough's historic architecture, but this perception can change rapidly when a developer – perhaps from outside the region – reveals that s/he has purchased several historic buildings and is ready to demolish them to put up a new development. This could happen sooner than one imagines and Kennett's continuing success in revitalization increases the risk. It is wiser to undertake a survey now than to fight a desperate battle in the face of a looming crisis.
- The Townships should also adopt historic preservation ordinances that can be written to protect not only buildings, but historically or culturally significant agricultural landscapes. This could become a valuable tool in the region's arsenal of sprawl-containing measures. There is ample precedent for this. New York City's landmarks law permits the designation of scenic landmarks (mostly parks). The National Register of Historic Places has developed sophisticated techniques for assessing culturally significant landscapes ranging from individual farms to entire valleys and view sheds. The Kennett Region's agricultural heritage is significant to the region's history and culture, and indeed to those of the eastern seaboard. They can and should receive the protection that well-conceived historic preservation practices can afford them.

- Ensure that Kennett Square’s historic preservation programs are consistent with its goals for affordable housing and revitalized culture and commerce. Historic preservation and affordable housing are not incompatible and the enforcement of one should be harmonized with the goals of the other. The conversion of historic houses into apartments need not diminish their contribution to the Borough’s historical integrity. A policy that recognizes the reality of change over time and that encourages the construction of infill buildings where appropriate, need not compromise the value of Kennett Square’s architectural heritage. Conversely, the adoption of more effective historic preservation ordinances need not conflict with the provision or retention of affordable housing.

ISSUE TWO: THE CHANGING NATURE OF COMMUNITY

Sprawl

OBSERVATIONS:

The Kennett region is suffering from a blight that is afflicting the entire country - the uncontrolled spread of suburban development. This is a tragedy because the region is blessed with unusually beautiful landscapes that tell of a diverse natural environment and of a long and successful farming history. As urban and inner-ring suburban neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Wilmington, and elsewhere empty out, these landscapes are irrevocably transformed into sprawling suburbs. The change, so far as we know, is irrevocable.

The good news is that much of the Kennett Region’s landscape remains intact. The bad news is that the pace of change is extraordinarily rapid. Without quick and decisive action, it may soon be too late to save Kennett from suburban sprawl.

Chester County citizens and leaders have energetically attempted to preserve rural open space through conservation easements and land donations to local or regional land trusts. In their own terms, these efforts have been remarkably successful, and that success is a testament to the generosity, as well as the sophistication of residents who care deeply about the region. Yet land donations and easements alone cannot preserve Kennett’s rural character and distinctive sense of place. Visualize a map. Draw in the protected land parcels. Project a credible rate of land or easement donation (or purchase) forward for ten or twenty years. Now imagine that everything else has been suburbanized and developed. This is, admittedly, a worst-case scenario. But by themselves, easements and land donations can accomplish no more than this. Without other measures, they can do no more than ensure the equivalent of municipal parks surrounded by a sprawling suburban megalopolis.

Other measures are needed to contain sprawl, and quickly. Fortunately, many such measures are available. The Community Planning Handbook produced by the Chester County Planning Commission to accompany its Landscapes plan describes many of them. What is needed, even more than planning tools, is the political will to use them. The

strong progress of regional planning, at both County and Kennett Region levels, provides the best basis for building and wielding that will. Again, as elsewhere in this report, the team urges the five townships to use the collective powers they have to protect the region's character, beauty, and economic productivity from suburban sprawl.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Use the power of intermunicipal zoning to protect the core of Kennett's rural and natural beauty by bringing the zoning - throughout the five townships - into accord with the planning vision set forth in Landscapes.
 - Adopt urban growth boundaries;
 - Use TDR's (transfers of development rights) to help move growth within the urban growth boundaries, while directing it away from open space;
 - Encourage cluster development and other methods of diminishing the impact of new development on open spaces; and
 - Adopt zoning that recognizes and protects scenic landscapes, roads and vistas.

Housing

OBSERVATIONS:

The area is experiencing rapid population growth that is due in most part to outmigration from Philadelphia, Wilmington & Delaware.

There is a full range of housing in the Kennett Region from barracks to apartments to mid-priced housing to mansions, but prices in all categories are rising. The new housing that is being built is mostly in the \$400,000 to \$500,000 range. The lowest priced housing starts at around \$80,000. It is in limited supply. Affordable housing is very important economically because it houses key workers such as teachers, librarians and government officials. It is also important for seniors and others on fixed or with limited income.

Rental housing is found mainly in Kennett Square where there are around 1,000 homes. Monthly rent prices are in the \$750-\$850 range.

A third type of housing that is promoted by organizations such as Housing for Humanity & the Alliance for Better Housing utilizes some form of subsidy such as government funding, equity loans, sweat equity or a community land trust combined with higher density to reduce land costs and increase profitability. Rents typically cost \$350 per month and sale prices are between \$100,000 and \$105,000. There is embryonic interest from at least one private developer in providing affordable housing, but the zoning laws provide obstacles. There is a possibility that this issue, in Kennett Township, may need to be resolved by resorting to law.

The single thing that is agreed upon across the area is the need for affordable housing.

However, there is no detailed understanding of what “affordable housing” is, where the needs are, how much is required and at what cost. The best estimates the team could find were a need for 60-70 units of senior housing; 250-300 dwellings for home ownership; and 75 apartments to rent. In income terms, a comparison of the average income against the median income shows an affordability range of \$80,000 to \$90,000 for purchase price. High density might mean 12 homes per acre.

Housing is a workforce issue affecting not only Hispanics or other low income groups, but also key workers on reasonable incomes, such as librarians, teachers and government employees. In short, affordable housing is both a decent home issue & a workforce issue. The extent of the challenge with regard to affordable housing is only starting to be recognized.

There are good initiatives around, particularly the Kennett Area Region Planning Commission, but these need to be expanded. For instance, how much is the planning information shared? How aware are people of affordable housing initiatives? What does higher density housing look like? The team visited the Buena Vista development in New Garden. Many residents had never heard of it, let alone seen it. It seems that awareness of the extent and degree of the housing issue, beyond seeing a need for affordable housing, is lacking.

Kennett Square is recognized as a potential focus point for affordable housing, but the Borough is said to be full. If affordable housing needs are to be met, there has to be a willingness to accept higher density zoning adjacent to Kennett Borough’s borders, but in the neighboring townships.

Many of Kennett Square’s historic houses are currently providing affordable housing. Part of the solution to affordable housing is ensuring that at least some of this stock – as well as units still to be constructed – remain affordable. Many forces work against this. Recent zoning changes have made it more difficult to create apartments in older houses and have raised minimum lot sizes – changes that exacerbate the housing problem. Conversely, overcrowding and poor maintenance by absentee landlords create genuine health and safety problems. With newly constructed units, the challenge is to ensure that, at the first resale, they do not rise to market rate and disappear from the affordable housing inventory. Solving these challenges can make a major contribution to solving the affordable housing problem.

Sewerage disposal is the governing factor in density and an important reason to focus activity in and around Kennett Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Raise awareness of affordable housing not only as a housing issue, but also as a workforce issue, by launching a campaign based on case studies, analysis of housing need (type and costs), and supply methods such as sweat equity, public subsidy and community land trust schemes. This need not be a comprehensive analysis, but it

must give an idea of the size and practical implications of the problem, both at an individual level and for the community generally.

- This project should be initiated by Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission, bringing together all sectors of the community e.g. employers, agencies, housing groups, developers, local government and those in need of housing.
- Use existing affordable developments as models e.g. Buena Vista.
- For new housing, examine a concept of Greater Kennett Borough with tighter zoning ordinances & higher densities at the east & west ends immediately adjacent to the Borough such as the Ways Lane & the Genesis site.
- Beyond simply zoning for affordable housing, the municipalities should take the lead in getting a substantial development underway. Through an intermunicipal agreement, the municipalities could buy the land for the purpose of developing affordable housing, thereby eliminating the most difficult financial obstacle. Alternatively, the municipalities could provide low-cost loans or bond funding.
- The municipalities should convene a team of investors and developers to discuss the issue and develop best practice by encouraging and insisting on high architectural and urban design standards. The developers could then submit proposals for the municipally owned pilot project. A development like this should provide a range of costs and unit sizes.
- Look for examples in Pennsylvania and New York where housing is built and remains affordable. Techniques are being used by The Westchester Land Trust in New York to restrict prices from soaring to market rates at first resale.
- Extend the public sewer, but only if linked to higher density development.
- In Kennett Borough, increase population density but not housing density by relaxing ordinances on occupation standards and sub-division of houses in the conservation areas.

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH CULTURAL AWARENESS AND PROVISION OF SERVICES

OBSERVATION:

Our team has been struck by the spirit of good will with which many town leaders are approaching the task of building a broader sense of community within Kennett Borough's multi-ethnic and changing community. That spirit is one of the area's key assets. At the same time, to hope for a single, shared sense of community that subsumes and erases every difference of ethnicity, race, culture, wealth, gender, sexual preference, taste, and

lifestyle is an impossible and perhaps misguided dream. Far better to work towards a commonwealth that distributes opportunities and resources equitably, recognizes difference as well as commonality, and makes space for constructive ongoing debates. No one needs to be told that this is a constant process, not a fixed point.

The growing trend in migration in the Kennett Region, which is likely to continue as long as there is a demand for a migrant labor work force in agriculture and other industry sectors, has forced the Borough and Region to look at ways of integrating the minority communities into the local community and celebrating the cultural diversity the Kennett community. To date, a significant amount of effort has been made by the Borough, local planning commission and other social/caring agencies in identifying and addressing some of the key issues. Some examples of the achievements include:

- A range of actions within the education system to accommodate the needs of the Hispanic students;
- The establishment of La Comunidad, a dedicated support organization for the Latino community, which provides advisory services, as well as activities;
- A limited amount of housing provision and the desire to address the housing needs through the building of more low cost housing; and
- Some attempt to introduce bilingualism especially in the areas of sign posting and key staff engaged in providing public services.

Despite these achievements, key concerns remain among the various agencies, organizations and individuals the team met with during their visit. They include the following:

- “White Flight” - as Caucasian families move out of the area to find schools where white students do not constitute a minority of the student population.
- Reluctance on the part of the Latino community to integrate with the mainstream community;
- Over-occupancy of dwelling units that is due to lack of low income housing. However, this situation is perceived by a significant percentage of the majority community as a failure on the part of the Latinos to comply with the housing legislation;
- General resentment against the Latino community caused by their presence in the locality and the perceived burden of the costs for the white residents in maintaining a migrant population in the Borough;
- The need for the Borough to share the cost of supporting the migrant community with the other townships in the region;

- The need to change the mind set among those who want assimilation (where by the minority community loses its own identity by taking on the host community's culture) rather than integration and cultural diversity, which results from the harmonious coexistence of the two cultures;
- The need to build and/or improve existing facilities and provisions as the needs of the community evolves. For example, the need to provide health care for aging Latinos who return to Kennett due to ailing health; and
- The need to overcome the negative perceptions of the minority communities, especially the Mexicans in the Borough.

On the other hand, the minority communities, especially the Latino community, though interested in living and working in Kennett, feel that there are a number of obstacles to achieving a meaningful integration of the communities. The key obstacle is the inequity and hardship they experience in the areas of housing, employment, income levels, and health and social care. There was the suggestion that inadequate health care has contributed to fatalities in the minority population. These are urgent issues that are key to the basic physical and mental well-being of the community and must be addressed if there is to be meaningful integration. There also appears to be a strong sense of exclusion among the Latinos from the decision-making process, especially as it relates to the planning and delivery of the social care services and the revitalization of the Borough. The Latino community has not been contacted to provide a perspective of their needs and the issues critical to them.

The Borough and agencies' response to the needs of the minority communities appears to be ad hoc and reactive in nature. It is also desperately in need of coordination. The structures responsible for driving change and managing the business of various public boards do not reflect the communities they serve. There is a culture of "it would take years and we need to wait for the second generation to come through to make the difference".

All agencies and groups, and the majority of individuals the team engaged with are aware of the issues and have expressed a desire to move forward in making Kennett a culturally diverse place to live. The team noted a genuine desire to involve the minority communities in making this a reality.

Perceptions of place and community can be formed at a young age. At the same time, children can be agents of positive change as their feelings of comfort with other children of different ethnic or economic backgrounds, and with town life, are shared with their families and friends. In fact, this is happening. We heard from students at Kennett High School that they do not share the discomfort that some of their parents' generation feel at mixing with town life. We also observed, there and at Mary D. Lang School, the dedication of school officials and teachers to encourage a positive relationship with the town. This is good news in many ways: while children may not have large amounts of

spending money, they bring activity to town life, participating enthusiastically in activities at Anson B. Nixon Park, the “Y,” the Garage, the library, and elsewhere. The team has little doubt that, given more opportunities to participate in musical, artistic, and other cultural activities, the region’s school children would eagerly step forward. Meanwhile, their feeling that Kennett Square has much to offer will spread to others.

School age children represent a great resource for building a shared sense of community and regional identity. While this is already happening, much more can be done to realize the potential.

The team has been struck by the depth of attachment that many area residents demonstrate to Kennett Borough and the greater Kennett region. This too is a valuable asset for the future, and one that can be expanded.

Whatever can be done to build social equality, whether through cultural recognition, provision of housing and health care, or greater inclusion of Hispanic community members in the town’s governance, will also promote a stronger collective sense of community. As one resident said to us, “The entire community must move beyond indifference and dedicate itself to search for a solution,” and there are many citizens who are motivated to do just that.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Determine the needs of the minority communities in Kennett. La Comunidad should play a leadership role in this project from the very beginning, defining the problems and organizing the project. It is equally essential that established Kennett area and Chester County organizations invest fully in the project. A public forum or conference might provide one opportunity for gathering community input as well as exposing findings and recommendations to public review. Employment of a grant-funded Hispanic community organizer to build participation might be a foundation-stone towards building the community’s long-term capacity to participate fully in public life and provide civic leadership.
- Explore the possibility of designing a dispersal policy in relation to housing provision at a regional level.
- Design and implement a range of relevant training programs including business start up and interpretation skills in partnership with local colleges, educational establishments and private and public sector employers to improve minority access to the employment market.
- Enable the Hispanic community to secure business space in the Kennett Commons area and elsewhere, as appropriate. Explore the possibility of setting up a special loan scheme or grant to kick start Hispanic and other minority community businesses.
- Work with the Mexican and other minority entrepreneurs to break down the

boundaries between them and the larger potential white majority market, thereby incorporating them more fully into the borough's economic life. Some simple steps include breaking down the reluctance that some white residents feel at entering a Mexican business. Consider the following:

- Produce a leaflet explaining how to order lunch in a Mexican restaurant, or bread in a Mexican bakery;
 - Help Mexican businesses explain and market their products to a broader public;
 - Produce a newspaper supplement featuring minority businesses; and
 - Create diverse networking opportunities for all downtown business owners and operators, whether Latino, Mexican or Caucasian.
-
- While steps like these would obviously benefit minority entrepreneurs, the team would like to stress that they will also benefit the entire town.
 - Facilitate improvements in employment conditions for minorities employed in agriculture and other industries.
 - Devise a publicity campaign to promote a positive image of the Latino community that is geared toward dispelling myths and promoting facts about the community.
 - Develop an audit of services that are provided to the Hispanic community. The audit should be distributed to all service providers, both public and not for profit organizations, as well as the public at large. This will educate the agencies regarding the services provided by others, as well as inform the community at large of facilities for the minority community, thereby improving access.
 - Recruit more bilingual staff in all public sectors and non profit organizations.
 - Teach Spanish (and/or other appropriate languages) to English speaking staff.
 - Develop a list of interpreters who can open up the communication channels with the minority communities.
 - Provide the minority communities with regular information about services and activities through bilingual news letters.
 - Pilot Spanish as second language with a view toward rolling this program out to all schools in Kennett.
 - Organize a community forum on the theme of "Building Bridges" sponsored by the Bridges consortium. Such a forum could help develop mutual understanding by providing an opportunity to publicly air differing perceptions of life in the Kennett Region and of the needs and desires of its residents.
 - Implement an annual school exchange program between Unionville and Kennett

District schools to promote cultural exchange and diversity.

- Sponsor a joint field study trip to Mexico where students can learn about the culture and language.
- Adopt Kennett Borough as a “laboratory” for school courses and after-school programs that create positive experiences for students in Kennett Consolidated and Unionville-Chadds Ford School Districts. Consider the following:
 - Incorporate a civic betterment campaign in Kennett Borough, in which students work with a community group to identify a problem and help solve it through direct participation in the American system of government? The town has many civic organizations that might be glad to participate with the schools in a venture like this.
 - Local history courses could be taught “on site,” using Kennett Square as a focus of study. Students could carry out architectural surveys; interview shopkeepers, firefighters, and residents; and delve into the local history collection of the Bayard Taylor Memorial Library. Expeditions into Kennett Square could also be incorporated into many other subject areas, such as art (sketching street scenes); architectural drawing (creating measured drawings and perspectives of favorite buildings); the natural sciences (examining the building stones used throughout town); and mathematics and geometry (measuring and calculating the area of building facades or public places). The possibilities are almost endless. A concerted effort to incorporate them throughout the curriculum would have the effect of developing a shared sense of attachment to Kennett Square among both Borough and area residents.
 - Design a “Discover Your Neighborhood” program where young children identify, document, and discuss the places they enjoy including buildings, shops, parks, and so forth. At the end of the program they present their findings, complete with artwork and maps, to parents, teachers, and community members. By bringing together students from different neighborhoods and backgrounds in the same program, organizers can create opportunities for discovering the common ground they share, as well as the differences between their experiences of town life.
- Provide leadership programs in the schools for white, Latino and black students to champion public issues and causes and involve students in key decision making processes when appropriate.
- Improve the quality and quantity of Spanish and bilingual materials in libraries and schools.
- Extend bilingual staffing to support services in the school.
- Change the “it will take time culture” to a “can do now culture” with regard to securing leadership participation and involvement of minorities in all issues, not just those that effect the minority community.

- Identify appropriate resources for providing necessary services for minorities.

INCREASING LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

OBSERVATION:

The team found good examples of partnerships in action such as KARPC and the Revitalization Task Force. However, organizations that focus on promoting social inclusiveness were less evident. A notable exception was Bridging Communities. A frequent comment was that leadership had a narrow base falling on the same few persons, especially within the minority communities.

RECOMMENDATION:

The need for promotion of social inclusiveness goes to the heart of the team’s findings, whether it’s on diversity, culture or housing. This means that recommendations on strategies to increase community participation are found throughout the report and are not separately duplicated here. For example, by developing relationships with Mexican entrepreneurs, the Kennett Revitalization Task Force will also be “growing” potential new civic leaders. Again, education, job shadowing and mentoring are activities that will be mutually beneficial in promoting social inclusiveness.

NEXT STEPS (STARTING TOMORROW)

This list of proposed action points is neither comprehensive nor authoritative. It is the Countryside Exchange Team’s pointers as to practical assigned tasks that could move the situation forward.

TO DO NOW	WHOSE JOB	PARTNERS
Convene a closed meeting of the 8 municipalities and other major stakeholders to seek immediate resolution of the issue of the siting of the new Bayard Memorial Library. In the event of failure here, seek outside professional mediation. Whatever the outcome of the Library discussions, identify and secure an anchor tenant for the Kennett Commons as the necessary next step in the development of the broader Kennett Commons initiative.	Library Board The Borough	Townships
Widen the focus and potential reach of the Kennett Square Revitalization Task Force by renaming it the Kennett Area Revitalization Task Force Further tasks:		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek involvement and support from the wider region; • Identify and secure representation and involvement from the emerging Latino business sector; • Facilitate and secure funding for the Director to access training in arts and cultural development. 		
<p>Pilot and fund an ethnically-mixed educational trip to Mexico around nature conservancy, or heritage.</p>	<p>Kennett High School; The District School Boards; Kennett Educational Foundation and Unionsville High School potentially leading to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public presentation • Evaluate with a view towards establishing a regular program 	
<p>Pilot a Spanish language program for all students at the Mary D. Lang elementary School with an eye towards eventual roll out to all elementary and middle across the Kennett area.</p>	<p>Kennett School Board Mary D. Lang School Board</p>	
<p>Produce and distribute a bi-lingual fact sheet around housing need in Kennett District, quantifying the need and making the case for affordable work force housing for key workers and low income groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Buena Vista Development as a demonstration model; and • Include personalized case studies from a worker’s perspective. 	<p>Alliance for Better Housing working with Kennett Area Planning Commission</p>	
<p>Identify the lead strategic organization and key individual to bring the Municipalities and the Borough together to create zoning that will preserve the region’s open space, and make it possible to provide affordable housing.</p>	<p>KARPC</p>	
<p>Upgrade existing pedestrian links</p>	<p>The Borough working</p>	

between Anson Nixon Park, Rotary Club and the YMCA with (bi-lingual) signage and enter into discussions around creating a new pedestrian link between the park and the Exelon facility.	jointly with Kennett Township.	
Set up a strategic working group that works exclusively with the African Caribbean community, in partnership with other agencies to look at ways of establishing their “own voice” and presence within the Kennett District’s notion of its own history.	The Mayor Longwood Gardens Kennett Square Historic Commission	
Start the planning for a Community Conference for minorities in the region. Set up a small planning group comprised of a large representation from the minority communities. Bring in a conference organizer to assist the planning group until a community activist can be appointed.	UNIDENTIFIED	
Identify funding from the County for a community activist to galvanize minority communities to participate in the conference and mainstream decision making structures and to champion causes on behalf of these communities.	UNIDENTIFIED	
Develop interpreting and translation services as a voluntary network and resource in the Kennett Area to facilitate involvement and participation from minority communities.	UNIDENTIFIED	

ACTIVELY CONSIDER: the possibilities of developing a Housing Conference in the Kennett Region to shape experience, to understand the need, to educate the public, to highlight the perspective of low income and key worker group and to find solution.
WHOSE JOB: Kennett Area Regional Planning Commission; La Comunidad; Alliance for Better Housing, Housing for Humanity and Developers.

ACTIVELY CONSIDER: Bi-lingual signage of all public buildings main routes throughout the Borough as a clear public statement, to residents and visitors, of the sort of town the Borough aspires to be.
WHOSE JOB: Kennett Borough