

The Post-Journal

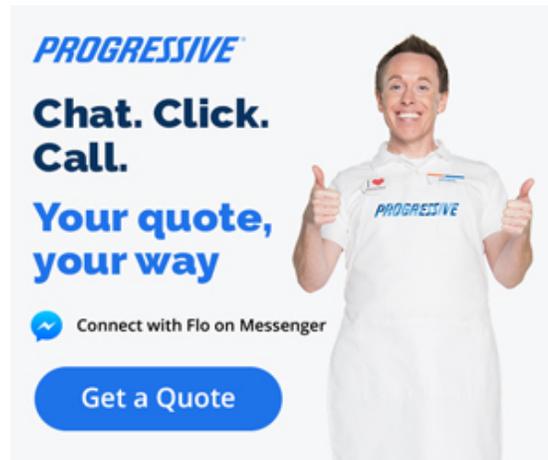


Sherman Seeks New Comprehensive Plan



John Steinmetz of Barton & LoGuidice helps a participant in the Sherman Visioning Workshop to find the location of their home on a map. Photo by David Prenatt

SHERMAN — More than 50 residents of the greater Sherman area gathered recently to take the first step in planning the future of the municipality.



John Steinmetz and Robert Murphy Jr., community planners for the engineering firm, Barton & Loguidice, led the first of several visionary workshops, planned by village officials.

The ultimate purpose of these sessions is to help develop a comprehensive plan for the village.

“We are excited about getting started on this project. We’re here to help you articulate a future for Sherman,” Steinmetz said. *“Our goal here is to facilitate your future ... over the next 10 to 20 years.”*

Murphy noted that Sherman’s current comprehensive plan was created in 2006, and focused on the preservation and redevelopment of Main Street, but also set goals, such as providing assistance for businesses and retaining and attracting young people to the area.

Steinmetz then posed the question of why Sherman needed a new comprehensive plan. He cited technological changes, such as the advent of smart phones and blu-ray players. Also, he said the trends in population and housing preferences have reversed themselves.

Furthermore, Steinmetz said in 2006 baby boomers (those born between 1949 and 1964) were the most powerful group. Currently, however, the

millennials (those born between 1982 and 2004) have become the most influential group in society.

“Millennials have more spending power than any other age group,” he said.

The demographics of the village have changed in those 13 years, as well, Steinmetz said. Not only has the overall population aged, but the actual population has decreased from 775 to 680 persons.

There are several benefits to creating a comprehensive plan, Steinmetz said. Basically, a plan promotes the health, safety and welfare of the public. It provides a guide to decision-makers in a municipality, it can strengthen a village’s position in a legal dispute, it serves to make the government more efficient and responsive, and, of course, it increases of acquiring funding, he said.

Steinmetz then presented a general timeline for the completion of a comprehensive plan for Sherman. During the fall of 2019, the firm will summarize data and create a community profile, as well as integrate input from the community, he said.

During the winter months, the final goals of the plan will be solidified and the firm will draft an action plan. Finally, in spring of 2020, Barton & Loguidice will present a final action plan, which will be reviewed with the steering committee and then presented at a public hearing, he said.

Steinmetz and Murphy then led participants through a community preference survey, which was designed to *“determine community attitudes toward different types of development and investments,”* Steinmetz said. *“The purpose is to get your preferences on a wide range of ideas.”*

Those attending then viewed 65 images of outdoor scenes in municipalities and rated each one on a scale of 1 to 9. The categories of the images they viewed included: streetscape and corridors, landscape and screening (using greenery to screen areas), residential development, and commercial development.

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