

# Green-up

(continued from page 1)

actively illustrated how creating or changing borough regulations for landscaping, signs and utility lines could dramatically effect streetscapes.

New businesses would be required to adhere to new regulations, while already established businesses would conform on a voluntary basis. The changes to borough code would set a new aesthetic standard defined by the community at the cost of little more than the labor to write them. "To various degrees we can make land use regulations and change community character," said Cotrone.

Cotrone used before and after photographs of common sites such as main streets, parking lots and suburban strip malls.

Cotrone presented Jim Thorpe and Elizabethtown as two examples of communities that previously had no such regulations, but have worked hard to "green up." "I don't know if you've been to Jim Thorpe during the spring, fall or summer, but it's always busy," commented Cotrone. He attributed some of that success to it's now tree-lined downtown.

"In Jim Thorpe's case, the borough didn't want the trees, the businesses did," Cotrone said. He believes the greening efforts have helped the town become a destination place.

"It's great that Dallas is doing the visioning process, not just greening, but looking at planning as well. The shame is it wasn't done 20 years ago," commented Cotrone saying, however that it is a common phenomenon across the state.

Cotrone showed how adding shrubbery screen and tree regulations changed the character of empty lots and strip mall parking lots similar to those along Memorial Highway.

"An asphalt paved parking lot just doesn't have to be that way," said Cotrone. "Parking lots are going to grow, it's just making sure it's done properly."

Cotrone said any change in regulations would primarily affect new development, with the existing properties being grandfathered in. Current business owners may be persuaded to make changes, but not forced. Older parking lots, Cotrone



PHOTOS FROM PA BLUEPRINTS, PENN STATE DEPT. OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The demonstration last week used computer technology to illustrate how sign regulations and the addition of greenery can transform the appearance of a main street, above, and a typical suburban commercial strip, right.

said, could be modified to comply.

"That becomes an issue — 'Oh, we've got our parking lot now, we can't do anything about it.' Sure we can, we can retrofit it," said Cotrone. He said a parking space might be lost, but green space gained, and that makes a business more attractive to customers.

Cotrone showed how adding sign regulations could dramatically affect community character. Business signs and billboards can be regulated to be smaller, made of certain materials and mounted flat against buildings rather than jutting off of structures. Ordinances limiting the size or even the existence of billboards could be passed.

"We don't need signs that are 10' x 20' and 30 feet in the air; we can bring them down to pedestrian and vehicle level," said Cotrone. "People can find McDonald's without the sign being 30 feet in the air."

Cotrone gave examples of how the borough could take on and tackle "greening" on their own with the help of grants, volunteers and municipal labor. In December, he and Joe Moskovitz, Dallas Borough Manager, drove through the

borough asking themselves, "Are there ways we can green up or soften the area?"

Cotrone suggested several sites that could be improved quickly, along 415, just north and south past the main Dallas intersection.

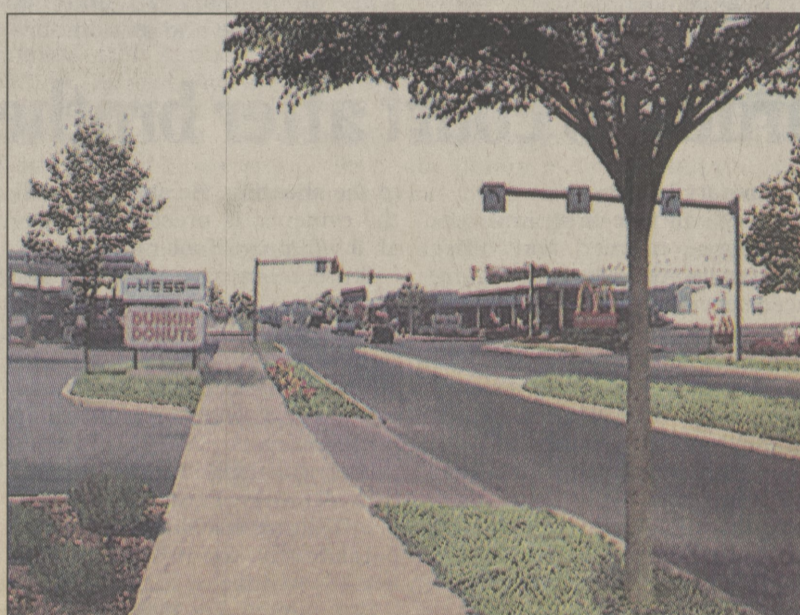
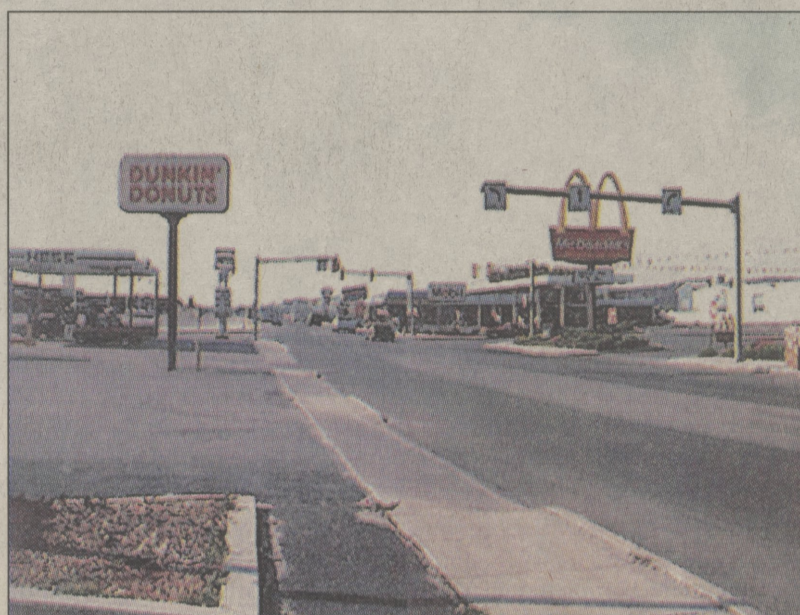
Cotrone suggested where Toby's Creek disappears under the north side of Fino's Pharmacy, the creek could be exposed and turned into a "wonderful asset. There is some potential to open it up and connect things — create a park-like setting," he said.

"Plantings are the cheapest way to start making a difference," said Cotrone.

"There are funds out there. Doing some initial plantings to get the momentum going, would probably cost \$1,000-2,000," for 10-15 trees.

John Oliver, vice president of Dallas Borough Council, said the presentation provided something tangible. "I think what it did was open our minds to some of the possibilities. I think there was renewed invigoration by the whole group."

"I guarantee the number one reason people live here is the natural beauty," said Moskovitz. "We want to maintain the pristine natural beauty and planting trees is a big part of that."



## Group lays out vision, gets down to work

By ERIN YOUNGMAN Post Staff

DALLAS — About 50 people braved barely above zero weather to make it to the "Our Dallas: Today and Tomorrow" visioning meeting January 22.

Long time participants and some new faces gathered at College Misericordia to hear a summary of last year's work and catch a glimpse of what the group is working toward. The meeting signified the completion of an intense year of planning and goal setting, and the beginning of an action phase.

After Misericordia president Michael McDowell's welcome, Michael McDavid, regional director of the Pennsylvania State Cooperative Extension, opened the meeting.

"We're at a crossroads — we're at a turning point tonight where we're going to move from a day dreaming phase to an action phase," said McDavid. McDavid summarized the last year's work and addressed the need for the visioning project.

"You might be asking yourself, why do we need a vision? Be-

See VISIONING, pg 6

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