



# Bike Delaware [www.bikede.org](http://www.bikede.org)

*A coalition of like minded citizens and organizations that promote bicycling as a healthy alternative to driving and advocate safe provisions within our transportation system.*

July 3, 2011

Re: "Newark Town Center" (northwest corner of Possum Park Road and Kirkwood Highway)

Dear Chairman Singer and Members of the Planning Board,

The PLUS Review from the Office of State Planning Coordination notes that "the ['Newark Town Center'] proposal shows what appears to be a typical shopping center design with the dominant feature being the parking lot – certainly not a town center as its name suggests."

Indeed.

The Comprehensive Plan is supposed to discourage such inappropriate development, ideally long before it gets to the stage that the Newark Town Center has already progressed to. The Comprehensive Plan, however, is not self-executing. If a developer ignores it, it falls to entities such as the Planning Board and the County Council to use what legal means that are available to see that, as much as possible, the Plan is implemented. In this case, there is a clear legal basis to deny a rezoning request because of its inconsistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan.

As we wrote to you less than a month ago on a similar request for rezoning at Barley Mill Plaza, Commercial Regional zoning is not consistent with either pedestrian or bicyclist accessibility. And such accessibility is a *central* concern of the Comprehensive Plan. As County Executive Chris Coons wrote at the very beginning of that document (4th paragraph in Section I). "[o]ur 2007 Comprehensive Development Plan envisions a future for New Castle County that more closely reflects the county many of us experienced as children: a place where children grow up and play in safety, where neighbors know each other and feel connected, and where schools, stores, community centers and houses of worship are accessible to many on foot or by bicycle, as well as by car or transit."

We would like to thank you for voting to recommend against the rezoning of (part of) the Barley Mill Plaza parcel last month. We would urge you to do the same for the inaptly named "Newark Town Center." If you think it could help the developer, perhaps you could also provide them with a copy of the County's Comprehensive Plan with the relevant section highlighted and ask them to come up with a better proposal, and one that does not require rezoning to Commercial Regional.

Sincerely,

James Wilson  
Executive Director  
BIKE DELAWARE

