

MONTGOMERY AWARDS

Excellence in Planning and Design

2018 Award Winner



Centre Square Commons Whitpain Township

Centre Square Commons, an outstanding redevelopment project at a prominent intersection in Whitpain Township, earned a 2018 Montgomery Award for collaborative planning, creative design, and community investment. This project involved the compilation of several underused properties, a successful effort involving many partners, and the creation of a vibrant community focal point.

Collaborative Planning

Centre Square Commons is located at the busy intersection of Skippack Pike/Route 73 and Dekalb Pike/Route 202. This popular shopping center is the result of successful collaboration of various stakeholders over the course of many years. Early efforts by owners and developers resulted in the final assemblage of parcels, often involving land swaps, to



create a property that has become the focal point of Centre Square Village. The township, which was involved from the beginning with the project, was in the middle of updating its comprehensive plan, *Whitpain 2035: 4 Villages within a Community*. Centre Square Village is one of these four villages. The information gathered from the public through this planning process was critical to the design. Key concerns included mitigating traffic delays, improving pedestrian access, and creating an open space buffer that would separate Centre Square Commons from the residential neighborhood. In addition, many meetings and workshops took place to share ideas and gather input from the community. PennDOT, a stakeholder owning both roadways and a parcel designated for stormwater management, was also involved throughout as was the Centre Square Fire Company, a dentist office, and a day care. All parties worked together to ensure a successful design and thriving shopping center.

Creative Design

The creatively designed Centre Square Commons, an appealing pedestrian-friendly center, has wide walkways and a center drive of decorative pavers that transforms into a community event space, smaller parking courts framed by landscaping, and 5,300 square feet of outdoor seating as well as café-style dining. Circulation flows easily from the signalized main intersection on Route 202 and is calmed by attractive pavement treatments and the configuration of the central convertible event space. This creates the feel of a downtown village street which is comfortable for pedestrians and outdoor dining. The pedestrian spaces throughout the center are made possible by underground stormwater management. A master plan was developed based on design guidelines that established the architectural and site elements. The buildings have similar architectural features, but the combination of smaller buildings and offsets in the larger ones, as well as varied window treatments and roof lines, helps to create a town center feel. Coordinated signage, along with customized benches, waste receptacles, light fixtures, bike racks, cart corrals, fences, and bollards, all contribute to the well-designed, pedestrian-friendly center in the heart of Centre Square Village.





Community Investment

This development accomplished an important community improvement to pedestrian and traffic safety. Eleven uncontrolled driveways that provided access to the various parcels along the two roadways were reduced to six well-designed intersections, two of which are controlled by traffic signals. One of these is along Route 202 across from a Wawa. A parcel for a future stormwater management facility has also been reserved on the site to accommodate the future widening of Route 202. Collaboration with the Centre Square Fire Company resulted in a new state-of-the-art firehouse that blends in architecturally with the center and includes six bays, improved training facilities, and bunk rooms. Removal of the old firehouse allows for the other new signalized intersection, this one along Route 73 across from the existing Clover Mall Shopping Center. Another community amenity, which resulted from public input, is the 5.2 acres of open space provided to the side and rear of the property, which buffers the center from the adjoining residential neighborhood. The dentist office and day care, located on two of the original parcels along Route 202, have been incorporated into the new design along with vehicular and pedestrian access. The keystone of this exceptional village focal point is the unique convertible community event space, which provides vehicular access to the front of the shopping center most days of the year but will be transformed into a gathering space for four community events annually. These events, which are planned to start in spring 2019, have the potential to be the catalyst for the continued transformation of Centre Square Village.

Centre Square Commons is an outstanding example of community collaboration and creative site reuse. This exceptional redevelopment project transformed a collection of underused parcels into a community town center that not only reflects the vision of the township's comprehensive plan but also reestablished the heart of Centre Square Village.





Key Features

- Redevelopment
- Transportation Improvements
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Collaborative Effort
- Community Focal Point

Owner/Co-Developer

Kinsley Properties
6259 Reynolds Mill Road
Seven Valleys, PA 17360

Co-Developer

Madison Development Group, Inc.
902 Skippack Pike
Blue Bell, PA 19422

Engineer/Landscape Architect

Maser Consulting P.A.
410 Eagleview Boulevard, Suite 104
Exton, PA 19341

Architect

Bernardon
10 North High Street, Suite 310
West Chester, PA 19380

Location

1380 Skippack Pike
Whitpain Township
Montgomery County

Project Data

Land Use

Retail

Tract Size

21.78 acres

Zoning

Community Shopping Center Overlay District

Building Area

96,960 square feet

Parking

516 spaces

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