



## **P. Grove presented with makeover concept**

Monday, February 07, 2005

**By BEN SCHNEIDER**  
Staff Writer

**PENNS GROVE--** The borough is looking into undertaking a downtown redevelopment plan that would be geared at attracting commercial developers, improving transportation and generally make the borough a nicer place to live.

At the borough council meeting last week, officials from Urban Engineers and other organizations gave a presentation on the potential of Penns Grove to adopt a more traditional, small city, downtown layout.

They were quick to remind everyone in attendance, however, that the proposals remain just that for the time being, and that there are currently no plans to undertake the project.

Using slides that showed "before and after" shots of cities across the country, Ian Lockwood, a representative from Glatting Jackson Engineers, showed the kinds of pragmatic and aesthetic improvements those areas took in, and said Penns Grove could undergo similar design standards.

Mike Reeves, special projects coordinator for South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, said corridor surveys being conducted by SJTPO led to the organization suggesting Penns Grove look into undergoing a downtown overhaul. The study was geared toward identifying mobility and safe issues in the area, Reeves said, but they also found that Penns Grove would benefit from a revamped downtown.

In addition to improved roadways and pedestrian areas, Lockwood said city properties could be refurbished. The architecture of many buildings is excellent, Lockwood said, and they could be renovated to restore their beauty.

New buildings could also be constructed, Lockwood said. Built close to the street, with their store or residential fronts close to pedestrians walking and driving by, these buildings would make the downtown area feel more inviting, Lockwood said. Such investments in the street layouts and buildings of the borough will attract developers, Lockwood said.

Mayor John Washington said the borough would be interested in pursuing these changes, but noted significant state aid would be needed to fund it.

Copyright 2005 NJ.com. All Rights Reserved.