

MINUTES
YORK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Work Session
York Hall, 301 Main Street
April 24, 2013

MEMBERS

Christopher A. Abel
Alexander T. Hamilton
Melissa S. Magowan
Todd H. Mathes
Timothy D. McCulloch
Richard M. Myer, Jr.
Mark B. Suiter

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Richard M. Myer, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

The roll was called and all members were present with the exception of Mr. Hamilton.

Chair Myer stated that the purpose of the work session was to discuss the March 13 draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan. He stated that in order to provide structure to the work session, the Commission would go through the Plan one section at a time.

There were no comments on the Introduction, Citizen Input, or Demographic Profile and Projections sections.

Mr. Suiter noted that Table 11 in the Community Facilities element depicts a sharp increase in the number of County employees per thousand residents from 2002 through 2009 followed by a sharp decline after 2009 and asked what accounted for it.

Mr. Cross responded that staff would double-check the population figures that were used to calculate these ratios to make sure they are correct.

Mr. Barnett pointed out that the decline after 2009 appears to be sharper than it is because of the two data scales in the chart. He stated that in fact, the decline in employees per thousand residents was relatively modest at less than one employee per thousand.

Mr. Mathes suggested altering the scales on the charts to bring the sharpness of the line down so it is not so dramatic.

Mr. Abel suggested that the confusion could be addressed by dividing the chart into two separate charts.

Mr. Suiter asked what the future projections in the chart are based on.

Mr. Anderson responded that they are based on the population projections and the current ratio of employees to residents, which is explained in the text.

Mr. Abel asked about the purpose of the chart and questioned whether it was needed.

Mr. Anderson responded that the chart gives an idea of the amount of office space that will need to be accommodated in the future.

Mr. Mathes asked if the numbers of employees shown in the chart represent full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.

Mr. Anderson responded that they do and that it would be noted in the chart.

Mr. Suiter commented that the chart is useful and felt it should be kept in the Plan.

Chair Myer stated the consensus is that the chart should remain and asked staff to double-check the data in the chart and correct it, if necessary.

Mr. Carter noted that Libraries Implementation Strategy #2 needs to be reworded to match the language in the text referring to the memorandum of agreement – rather than a contractual agreement – between the County and the Williamsburg Regional Library.

Chair Myer asked where the language in Schools Implementation Strategy #15 came from and how the term “device” is defined, since anything can be considered a device.

Mr. Anderson responded that it came from the School Division and that the term could be clarified by referring to “internet-ready” devices.

Mr. McCulloch expressed concerns about stormwater management stating that he would like the Plan to recommend that the County take on more responsibility in this area. He stated that since the County and VDOT each have jurisdiction over some drainage easements, citizens often do not know where to go to have their drainage problems addressed.

Mr. Carter responded that when this was discussed during the February 27 work session, he recalled suggesting some implementation language to address the need to identify deficiencies in both County- and VDOT-maintained drainage systems and to develop funding priorities but that he did not see it in the draft Plan.

Mr. Abel suggested reviewing the recording of the previous work session and inserting the implementation strategy suggested by Mr. Carter.

Mr. McCulloch stated that he would like that language to be included in the Plan.

Mr. Suiter asked why the Route 17 widening is highlighted in Table 3 of the Transportation element.

Mr. Cross responded that it is highlighted because it is the only County road project in the State Six-Year Improvement Program that qualifies as a “significant new, expanded, or relocated roadway” that the *Code of Virginia* requires to be included in the Comprehensive Plan. He added that VDOT has reviewed the draft Plan and found it to be in compliance with state regulations.

Mr. Suiter asked if the Victory Boulevard Multi-Use Path, which the Board of Supervisors recently canceled, has been removed from the Plan. **Mr. Cross** responded that it is no longer identified as an active project, and **Mr. Carter** added that even though it is no longer an active project, the Regional Bikeway Map would continue to show a proposed future multi-use path along Victory Boulevard since the goal of having such a facility has not gone away.

Mr. Mathes noted a typographical error in Table 2 of the Land Use element where a period needs to be replaced with a comma.

Mr. Suiter asked what the term “semi-public” in the Land Use element means.

Mr. Cross responded that “semi-public” includes places of worship, civic club meeting places, the Sentara hospital, and similar uses.

Mr. Abel noted that at the April 10 regular Planning Commission meeting, a property owner had addressed the Commission to request that the Mixed Use overlay designation in the Skimino area be extended across Newman Road to include his two parcels, which are vacant. He stated that this would be just a minor extension of the designation and that he thought it made sense.

Ms. Magowan expressed concern about the request, noting that mixed-use development would likely include high-density housing of approximately ten units per acre, which is contrary to the goal of retaining the 80,000 maximum build-out population.

Mr. Abel responded that the designation would merely provide the opportunity for mixed-use development and that any such project would have to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors, which he felt gave the County the ability to reject any development proposal that is not appropriate for this area. By consensus, the Commission agreed to extend the designation as requested.

Mr. Mathes noted that the Commission had also received a request a few hours ago from another property owner asking that his 10.5-acre parcel at 6300 Old Mooretown be designated for either mixed-use development or multi-family residential development.

Mr. Cross stated that the property backs up to a mini-storage warehouse facility and the Sentara-Williamsburg Regional Medical Center and is currently designated Economic Opportunity. He added that the property is on the south side of Route 199, which is the southern limit of the Lightfoot area Mixed Use overlay designation in the draft Plan.

Mr. McCulloch observed that it appears a lot of property owners are requesting a Mixed Use designation for their property simply because they want to develop multi-family housing and they see mixed-use as the only opportunity to do so.

Mr. Carter agreed, noting that there have been several such requests, and he mentioned that a similar request had been received from a real estate broker trying to market the “Town Center Park” property on Bulifants Boulevard off of Mooretown Road, which is designated Economic Opportunity.

Ms. Magowan reiterated her concern about the maximum build-out population and stated that a Mixed Use overlay designation makes no sense for the Old Mooretown Road parcel. Following discussion, the Commission agreed not to recommend a Mixed Use overlay designation for this property.

Discussion ensued regarding a strip of property along Old Mooretown Road that is designated Low Density Residential but zoned Economic Opportunity. **Mr. Cross** stated that the property owners had requested the Economic Opportunity zoning in the hopes of marketing their land for medical offices or other development connected with the hospital.

Mr. Anderson provided additional background information, explaining that as part of the previous Comprehensive Plan review in 2004-05, these properties were redesignated from Economic Opportunity to Low Density Residential in order to recognize their existing residential use and prevent encroachment

by commercial development. He stated that when the comprehensive rezoning took place in 2006-07, these property owners petitioned the County to retain the Economic Opportunity zoning rather than have their property rezoned Rural Residential as proposed, and the Board of Supervisors approved their request.

Mr. Mathes noted that in other cases the land use designations have been recommended to be changed to match the zoning, so he thought that would be appropriate in this case. Following discussion, the Commission agreed to recommend redesignating this area from Low Density Residential to Economic Opportunity.

Chair Myer noted that the Commission had received a letter from Captain Crow, Commanding Officer of Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, expressing concerns about future development that could occur in the areas around the base that might not be compatible with base operations. Based on these concerns, Chair Myer indicated that it might be prudent for the Commission to reconsider the Mixed Use overlay designation in this area.

Ms. Magowan agreed, stating that land use compatibility is a major issue for military bases and that she did not think residential development would be appropriate in proximity to the Naval Weapons Station. She added that the letter expresses concern about the possibility of excessive lighting in proximity to the base, which could have a negative effect on training operations.

Mr. Abel stated that if the federal government has concerns about what might be built on property near the base, then it should purchase the property.

Ms. Magowan stated that the military has no funds for such purchases.

Mr. Suiter noted that even without the Mixed Use overlay designation, there are a lot of permitted uses that could have significant lighting.

Mr. Cross responded that lighting is not the only concern. He stated that trespassing is also a significant concern, particularly with regard to residential development.

Mr. Abel asked if there is a fence around the base.

Ms. Magowan responded that based on her experience, fences are not always an effective deterrent to trespassing on federal facilities.

Chair Myer agreed, noting that there have been problems at other facilities.

Mr. Mathes stated that the rezoning process that would be required for any mixed-use development to be approved provides an opportunity for the Navy to express any concerns it may have with regard to a specific development proposal and for those concerns to be considered by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors and potentially addressed by the developer through modifications to the proposal.

Chair Myer recommended that the issue of compatibility could be addressed with the addition of language specifying that any development in the vicinity of the Naval Weapons Station should take into consideration the needs and concerns of the base.

Mr. Cross noted that there is already such language in the sub-area description for Camp Peary/Cheatham Annex/Naval Weapons Station area.

Chair Myer referred to the previously mentioned "Town Center Park" request, stating that the real estate broker who made the request had stated that the property is much more marketable for residential development than for office development.

Mr. Carter added that developers in recent years have lobbied the County to consider allowing the construction of multi-family housing in this area as the residential component of a larger mixed- or multi-use area, the commercial component of which – Williamsburg Marketcenter and the Michael Commons office park – has already been built. He stated that such an approach is not consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance provisions for mixed-use development.

Following discussion, the Commission agreed not to recommend a Mixed Use overlay designation for this property.

Ms. Magowan stated that she had recently attended the Certified Planning Commissioner Program and that one thing she learned is that a number of other localities prioritize the implementation strategies in their comprehensive plans. She felt that some type of prioritization should be included in the Comprehensive Plan as a means of tracking the County's progress in implementing the Plan.

Mr. Carter responded that one way to address this would be for the staff to provide an annual progress report to the Commission and Board of Supervisors on the implementation strategies in the Plan. He added that such a report was provided to the Commission a few years ago.

Ms. Magowan stated that an annual progress report would be a step in the right direction.

Chair Myer added that he would like to see parenthetical notations for each strategy to indicate whether it is a short-, medium-, or long-term priority.

Chair Myer raised the topic of the project schedule. He noted that Mr. Abel and Mr. Hamilton would be completing their final terms on the Commission as of June 30 and he felt that having spent more than a year working on the Plan, they should have the opportunity to vote on it. Therefore, he would like to schedule the Commission's vote on the Plan for the June 12 meeting.

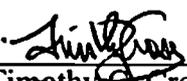
Mr. Suiter asked why the Commission cannot vote at the May 8 meeting.

Mr. Carter responded that the County Administrator has consulted the Board members, who indicated that because of other items coming up on the Board's schedule and the fact that they will have only one meeting in July, they did not want the draft Plan transmitted to them before June.

ADJOURN

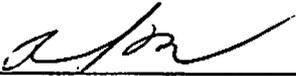
There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

SUBMITTED:



Timothy Cross, AICP, Principal Planner

APPROVED:



Richard M. Myer, Jr., Chair

DATE:

12 June 2013