

MEETING NOTES
York 2040 Committee

Wednesday, December 5, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.
Public Safety Building Meeting Room
301 Goodwin Neck Road, Yorktown, Virginia

Members Present: Mark Bellamy, Gregory “Skip” Brooks, W. Chad Green, Eric Henegar, Leigh Houghland, Montgoussant “Montee” E. Jons, Michael S. King, Vivian McGettigan, R. Anderson Moberg, Richard Myer, Sheila Myers, Jacob Rizzio, Eugene Seiter, and Cowles (Buddy) Spencer

Staff Present: Susan Kassel, Director of Planning and Development Services; Timothy Cross, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services; Amy Parker, Senior Planner; Earl Anderson, Senior Planner; Gail Whittaker, Public Information Officer; James E. Barnett, Jr., Justin Atkins, Assistant County Attorney; and Victoria “Vicki” Diggs, Clerk

Call to Order/Opening Remarks – Chairman Michael King

Chairman King called the meeting to order at approximately 7:12 p.m. at which time he welcomed everyone and asked that those who were present for the first time introduce themselves. Eric Henegar, representing the 2nd District, stated that he is a pharmaceutical sales representative who wants to make York County an even better place in which to live for his son and for future generations. Vicki Diggs explained that she is a Work-As-Required (WAR) employee in the County’s Public Works Department and is in attendance for the purpose of recording the meeting notes.

Following the introductions, a group photograph of the Committee members was taken, and the November 7, 2018 meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Proposed Comprehensive Plan Review Process

Chairman King asked Mr. Tim Cross, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services, to lead the discussion on the proposed Comprehensive Plan Review Process. Mr. Cross reminded the members that after providing the details of the process at the last meeting, he had asked everyone to review the information and be prepared to provide feedback at this meeting.

Chairman King pointed out that a chart illustrating the proposed Comprehensive Plan process and timeline was included in the Committee’s agenda packet and he asked Mr. Cross to elaborate on the scientific telephone survey.

In response, Mr. Cross explained that the survey will be performed by a professional, contracted research firm, Southeastern Institute of Research. He stated that the Committee will use proven random sampling techniques to ensure that the survey respondents are representative of the County as a whole. He stated that the consultant will have access to both the landline and cell phone numbers of County residents. In addition, he stated that the contractor will be required to achieve a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error, which requires the successful completion of approximately 400 calls. These calls will be divided between the upper and lower County in proportion to their respective shares of the total population. Mr. Cross added that the survey is projected to be completed sometime this winter or spring and that the Committee will have an opportunity for input into the questions that will be used.

Chairman King stated that a few demographic questions will likely be included in the survey; however, he reminded the Committee members that the phone survey will not be the sole means by which input will be garnered for the Plan, as the County website, TV access channel, social media, and other venues will be utilized to educate and engage the public in the Comprehensive Plan process.

In response to Committee member queries, Mr. Cross offered the following information:

- Text messages will likely not be used in the information gathering process and that it is not known if voice mail messages will be left as the telephone survey;
- The survey will be well advertised in advance so that citizens should be expecting these calls;
- The survey is only one of several ways to get citizen input;
- The County will coordinate with Williamsburg and James City County in at least two areas. Specifically, the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) will conduct a joint transportation study of the three localities, as it did as part of the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2012-13, and the three localities will again prepare joint land use maps showing existing and future land use.
- The goal is to hold the first round of public hearings in the spring at various locations throughout the County; and
- Staff recommends interactive “open house” public meetings where citizens can interact one-on-one with Committee members and staff to give their input and ask questions. In the past, this type of meeting, which would also include large-scale maps on which citizens can make their recommendations, has worked better than more formal, structured meetings with presentations.

Mr. Jons stated that when he attended his first Comprehensive Plan input meeting many years ago he was overwhelmed, but that a member of the Board of Supervisor quickly engaged him in relevant conversation which assisted him in understanding the process. He suggested that this same approach be utilized at the upcoming public input sessions.

Chairman King suggested that the attendance of Committee members at the input sessions would help the citizenry to feel less intimidated and more likely to provide critical input.

Mr. Seiter commented that he expected low attendance at the input meetings since most residents are content with the manner in which the County operates. However, he did suggest that prior to each Planning Commission meeting, perhaps there could be a brief mention of the Comprehensive Plan update process, including information about the status of the project, opportunities for public input, items to be addressed, etc.

Chairman King concluded from all previous comments that the Committee is in agreement that making citizens feel comfortable in attending meetings and providing vital input as it relates to the Comprehensive Plan update process is a priority.

Gail Whittaker, Public Information Officer, stated that a brief commercial on the County’s TV access channel featuring one or more Committee members would be beneficial in publicizing the

input meetings and making the process less intimidating to residents. Ms. Myers agreed, stating that this venue has proven quite effective in engaging the public in special projects in the past.

Mr. Cross explained that internal and external professionals with specific expertise will be addressing the Committee relative to each topic under their purview. Chairman King suggested that representatives from the Historic Triangle Bicycle Advisory Committee be invited to attend the meeting at which sidewalks and bike paths are considered, and Mr. Houghland added that members of the Parks and Recreation staff should be invited to attend appropriate meetings as well. Chairman King asked Mr. Bellamy to invite Department of Public Works staff to attend applicable Committee meetings to discuss such items as streetlights, roads, the Capital Improvements Program, etc. In response, Committee Member Bellamy stated that he would ensure that the most knowledgeable staff member(s) would be available to address these issues. He also suggested inviting a representative from the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) to an upcoming meeting to talk about current and potential future bus routes. Mr. Brooks suggested inviting representatives from the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and Mr. Seiter suggested contacting the City of Poquoson, which recently completed a sidewalk/bike path study, for additional ideas on sidewalks/bike paths/pedestrian trails. Lastly, Mr. Spencer suggested that a professional land planner address the Committee when the Land Use element of the Plan is discussed as there is minimal developable land remaining in the County.

Chairman King reiterated Mr. Cross's previous comment that staff will ensure that a host of appropriate internal and external professionals will attend applicable upcoming Committee meetings.

Mr. Cross stated that the dates listed in the Comprehensive Plan Process/Timeline handout are target dates only and are subject to change. Chairman King explained that subsequent to collecting citizen input, the Committee will ensure that the draft plan reflects that input, after which the plan will be forwarded to the Planning Commission. Once the Planning Commission makes its formal recommendation on the Plan, he stated, the Board of Supervisors will take it under consideration. Chairman King concluded by stating that staff is here to work with the Committee to create the draft plan.

A Demographic Overview of the County

Mr. Cross stated that population and demographic data are a critical component of any comprehensive plan, and he presented a demographic overview of the County, which highlighted the following:

- The population has been steadily growing over the past eighty years; however, the average annual increase has varied over the decades;
- On the Peninsula, the County's growth is second only to James City County, with slightly more than half of the increase being attributable to net migration;
- Resident births continue to exceed resident deaths by a large margin;
- Although the County's density is low in comparison to neighboring localities, it is the 7th highest among the 95 Virginia counties;
- Approximately 20% of the population lives in the upper County with the County's racial makeup remaining stable, while the median age is relatively high and continues to grow;

- The percentage of school age children remains high and the senior (65+) population is comparatively low but growing;
- On average, households have been getting smaller over the past several decades but are still relatively large compared to neighboring localities, the Hampton Roads region, and the state;
- The County has the largest proportion of married couple families on the Peninsula;
- In general, the County's population is well educated, relatively affluent, and enjoys higher levels of employment than the region as a whole;
- Most County residents work outside the County, more so than in most neighboring localities; and
- Most residents live in single-family detached homes.

In conclusion, Mr. Cross stated that the steady growth over the past 70 years is a testament to the County's identity as a desirable place to live, especially for families with children. However, he also pointed out that this identity is not as attractive to the "millennials" born between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s. In response to a Committee query, he explained that the upper County is defined as that portion of the County which is north and west of the Naval Weapons Station.

During the conversation on County demographics, the following comments were offered by Committee members:

- The County needs to ensure that future generations can afford to buy homes and remain in the County.
- Younger people are generally not interested in single-family detached homes and as such, realtors and developers need to address the lack of desirable housing for rent or purchase.
- Many of the projects considered by the Board of Supervisors in the past year have been senior housing developments.
- Many federal employees are choosing York County as their retirement community.
- According to information provided at the recent Board of Supervisors/School Board meeting, the number of school age children in the County is expected to peak in 2023.

Chairman King thanked Mr. Cross for his presentation and inquired as to the date of the next Committee meeting. Following discussion, it was determined that the next meeting would be held on February 6, 2019 since the regular meeting date in January falls on the 2nd and would likely conflict with the New Year's holiday and the Board of Supervisors meeting.

In conclusion, Mr. Cross stated that additional information on the telephone survey should be available at the next meeting, which will take place in the Multi-Purpose Room in the Public Works Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.