



**Open Forum Comments  
Northeast Triangle and Surrounding Area Community Forum  
February 27, 2012 – Williamsburg Community Building**

Keith Sadler, James City County, asked if someone could define mixed use and what is considered residential.

Sarah Stafford, Williamsburg Planning Commission and moderator, responded that specifics for each depend on the jurisdiction – each jurisdiction has different classifications for mixed use and residential uses.

Keith Sadler stated that her answer was vague and that mixed-use is ground-floor retail with 2-3 floors of residential above the ground floor. He noted you need high density to justify the retail and that high vacancy in the retail and residential cost taxpayers' money. He noted that light rail was not on the agenda tonight and expressed a concern on its cost to taxpayers.

Terence Wehle, Williamsburg, expressed a concern about Route 132 and its commercial designation in York County and what the future plan are for this area and its protection.

Sarah Stafford noted the scenic easements shown on the map and that commercial areas would need to be located behind these buffers.

Victoria Gussman, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, added that extensive conservation/scenic easements exist on both sides to protect Route 132, which is a major entrance corridor to the City.

Linda Reinke, James City County, stated she likes this area because it doesn't look like other areas, but she is concerned about vacant properties and allowing for more development. She expressed a specific concern about vacant units in the Williamsburg Marketcenter on Mooretown Road and said that when properties become vacant and derelict it doesn't help our area.

Victor Smith, Williamsburg, stated he was concerned that the scenic easements along Route 132 would not be maintained as stated. He stated that other buffers have been adversely impacted over the years.

Mary Ann Cory, York County, stated that we do have Section 8 housing and substandard housing in the area, contrary to one of the written comments, and that we need to address these issues.

Mary Leedom, York County, stated that this is a regional plan; it is a coordinated, long range vision. Citing the Historic Triangle Collaborative's "vision project," Agenda 21, the Economic Diversification Task Force, she stated and non-governmental organizations are making decisions and spending tax dollars. She stated that House Bill 430 should be killed and that grant monies, regionalism, and globalization disregard property rights.

She expressed opposition to coordinated Comprehensive Plans, stating that decisions should be left to local officials.

Joe Swanenburg, James City County, asked if any grant monies are being used for the coordinated comprehensive plan update.

Sarah Stafford responded that no grant monies are being used for the update.

Reed Nester, Planning Director, City of Williamsburg added that the purpose of this process is to create good plans for the future for each of the individual communities. He restated that no grant monies are being used in the City for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Gina Thorne, Senior Services Coalition, encouraged planners to look at regulations that allow seniors to age in place, universal design elements for new homes, providing accessible sidewalks, curb cuts, bike lanes and research smaller homes that are accessible.

Sue Sadler, James City County, stated that “smart growth” is not smart at all, that the American Planning Association advances this issue and attacks property rights, and increases taxes. She stated that she doesn’t like denser communities, public transit, “stack and pack”, that attempts to reduce carbon footprint don’t work and infringe on property rights. She stated that all Comprehensive Plans have the same basic elements and UN Agenda 21 does not promote truly “smart” growth.

John Bookless, James City County, said he was troubled by reluctance, the Vision Project, and comprehensive plan and that they are connected with Agenda 21. He noted he has lived and worked all over the world and expressed concern about trash, emissions, higher gas prices, unsanitary conditions, undrinkable water in other countries and that such countries should not be directing policies in the United States through the U.N. Agenda 21. He did not want the United States to suffer the consequences.

Gail Keller gave Keith Sadler permission to talk on her behalf. Keith Sadler stated he does not believe grant monies are not being used for the comprehensive plan process, which he said is set up with pre-determined outcomes based on manipulated questions. He stated that citizens will not be able to vote on their comprehensive plan and are losing our ability to regulate our area and that sustainable development is not smart growth. He does not like the coordinated Comprehensive Plan review process or the Regional Planning District Commission. He stated that we need to protect our individual rights and that no questions were answered at the last meeting.

Gregory Hancock, Williamsburg, supported the efforts of the three jurisdictions and was excited about a park on Queens Creek and asked when that might be implemented.

Sarah Stafford responded that a proposed park has been in the plan since 1953, that the property is privately owned and that it is in a critical area with unique character and view shed. She noted that no current plans are in place to develop a park at this location.

Victor Smith, Williamsburg, liked that in Williamsburg citizens can come to meetings and voice opinions. He stated that he doesn’t think this process is part of a global conspiracy

and expressed a concern that not enough homeowners take the time to participate in government.

Mary Cory, York County, noted the uniqueness of the area and that the combined cooperative effort among the localities is good because it is hard to tell where you live based on the confusing boundaries of the three jurisdictions.

Bob Tubbs, James City County, liked the efforts of the region and noted a paper he had written in 2010 titled “Strength through Collaboration – Economic Diversity, Tourism & Community Building Opportunities,” which is a plan for the region’s future. He noted that we may be able to attract a Children’s Museum, educational centers and positive things for Hampton Roads are good for Williamsburg. He stated that we need to encourage other opportunities to become economically diverse. He said he would provide a copy of this document so Planning Commissioners can review.

Janet Casanus, James City County, expressed concern about the amount of both commercial and residential development in the area. She added that agriculture is very important to the area because we need it to provide food.

Seth Merritt, York County, thanked the three jurisdictions for coordinating the three plans, which are required by the State. He noted that New Urbanism and Smart Growth have been going on for some time and cited Hilton Village, constructed during WWI, as a good example of where affordable housing was constructed along with commercial uses. He stated that today it is still a great community with homes and commercial areas. He stressed that we need to respect private property rights and protect the unique aesthetic appeal of the area. We may need to have more agricultural use and we don’t need more strip shopping centers. He said thoughtful redevelopment may be smart, and noted that some smart growth may not work.

Karen Berquist, York County, noted that this area is configured with exciting opportunities to talk to your neighbors, enjoys idea sharing, appreciated the City taking the lead with the Northeast Triangle Area and the three jurisdictions should be reviewing their plans together at the same time.