



Chatham County Comprehensive Plan Steering Meeting

Meeting Notes

September 22, 2016

Attendees:

Jim Elza, Chair
Kalyan Ghosh, Council on Aging
Del Turner, BOC At-large
Esta Cohen, Ag Advisory Alternate
James Fogleman, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Sharon Garbutt, BOC At-large
Marcia Herman-Giddens, Board of Health
Linda Harris, Chatham Economic Development Corporation
Tandy Jones, Ag Advisory Board
George Pauly, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Terry Schmidt, Environmental Review Advisory Committee
Caroline Siverson, Planning Board
Sherri Steuwer, Environmental Review Advisory Committee
James Crawford (Affordable Housing substitute)
Kyle Touchstone, Chatham Economic Development Corporation

Staff:

Jason Sullivan, Planning Department
Dylan Paul, Planning Department
Hillary Pace, Planning Department
Jennifer Park, Public Health Department
Jake Petrosky, LandDesign
Greg Payne, Economic Leadership
Miller Cochran, VHB

Attendance: 16 SC members + 3 consultants + 4 county staff

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Jim Elza opened the meeting at 6:03pm. Every committee and staff member introduced themselves. Jake Petrosky reviews the meetings' agenda. Commissioner Jim Crawford arrives at 6:05. Jake reviews the upcoming Committee schedule. He asks if the Committee should move public meetings to January. Chairman Jim Elza agrees, in order for the Ag focus group to have enough time to identify "strategic farmland" for the creation of a strategic farmland map. Chairman Elza emphasized the need to quickly identify these strategic farmlands. He stated that moving to the public meetings to January won't hurt the committee's schedule.

Tandy Jones stated that this was the first time he had heard that it is the responsibility of the ag focus group to develop the strategic farmland map. He stated that he had attended the ag focus group meeting and that the small group may have a long way to go in identifying the strategic farmland. He said “any map will be controversial”. He said more public input is needed from the farming areas of the county “to create more trust in the process”, and he suggested that there is a need to broaden the ag focus group if it is to be tasked with developing a map. Chairman Elza replied there will be a draft map coming from the ag focus group, and then the public would be given the opportunity to comment, and then the comments will be incorporated into a final map of strategic farmland. Jake interjected with laying out roles of Ag Focus Group in creating this strategic farmland map. He says the focus group is not solely responsible for creating the strategic farmland map. Esta Cohen says more public meetings and Ag focus group meetings are needed for working with the Agricultural community to make these maps. She wants the same questions asked of the Committee to be asked to farmers (“What keeps you up at night? What do you want to see for your county? Etc...”) She wants the public to be involved first, then build the maps from there. Chairman Elza reaffirmed his desire to give more time for the Ag Focus Group and thinks the strategic farmland map can be more inclusive rather than exclusive. James Fogelman stated that more public input would be needed (Ruritan Club, in particular). Commissioner Crawford inquired about asking the Farm Bureau to see if they would like to see on a strategic farmland map and asked if a delegation would be willing to reach out to them for their input. Marcia Herman-Giddens asked why don't we direct mail farmers for their input? Jake says we use umbrella organizations to do that. Chairman Elza reminds everyone that Goal #2 of the Comp Plan is “to protect the farmland”. At the end of the discussion, the Committee agrees to push the Public Meetings back to January.

Review of Minutes

Chairman Elza addressed the minutes from the January, February, March, May, June, and August 2016 meeting. All meeting minutes were unanimously approved by the Committee, with the following changes: for the June 2016 meeting, Tandy Jones did not attend that meeting.

Intermediate Findings - Greg Payne's Presentation on Economic Development and Land Use

Greg Payne gave a PowerPoint Presentation on Chatham County's Economic Development and Land Use. The presentation is available from Planning Staff.

Intermediate Findings - Miller Cochran's Presentation on Transportation in Chatham County

Miller Cochran gave a PowerPoint Presentation on Transportation in Chatham County. The presentation is available from Planning Staff. Del Turner mentioned that the studies for both presentations largely focused on the NE part of Chatham County, and there is a need for more studies in the western part of the county. Chairman Elza asks if the Pittsboro Comprehensive Transportation Plan and Chatham County's Comprehensive Transportation Plan could be connected. Jason mentioned that no, this can't happen because Pittsboro had a CTP that was adopted, but with Chatham Park coming in and new DOT methodologies, Pittsboro decided to hold off revising their CTP at this point. James Fogelman asks if flashers will go up on the American Tobacco Trail. Miller mentions that a study is being done with regards to flashers and signage.

Finalize Draft Goals

The Committee moved finalizing Draft Goals to the next meeting.

Strategies Work Sessions

Committee members were broken into groups of several members each and participated in strategy work

sessions. At each session, a consultant was facilitated the discussion based on the following themes: Economic Development, Land Use, and Transportation. After several minutes of discussion at each group, the groups shifted from one table (and topic) to another, until all topics were covered. Committee members were also required to play the “Chip Game”, which required members to place a “chip” representing their input for a particular land use or regulation (such as “more green space” or “economic development”) on an electronic map of Chatham County. The inputs were gathered by Jake Petrosky.

Other Business

None.

Adjourn.