



MEETING MINUTES (STEERING COMMITTEE)

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING #4 OF VISION AND STEERING COMMITTEES

July 14, 2016

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Suite 220, County Administration Building

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representing the Vision Committee: Linda Duncan, Ruth Goode, Thomas Murphy, William Endo

Representing the Steering Committee: Betty Pita, Bobby Thomas, R.J. (Pete) Amos, Jayne Iglesias, Liz Shaw, Tim Perry, Vanessa Bernstein-Goldman

Representing Forsyth County: Tom Brown, Director of Planning and Development; Vanessa Bernstein-Goldman, Deputy Director of Planning and Development

Representing the Consultant Team: Jonathan Bartlett, Amanda Hatton, and Allison Stewart-Harris (Jacobs); Eric Bosman and Ben Miskelly (Kimley Horn and Associates)

JOINT MEETING (6-6:15pm)

Joint Welcome & Planning Process

- **Joint Welcome**
- **Planning Process Update**
- **Public Outreach: Highlights from Recent Activities**

Amanda Hatton, project manager with Jacobs, called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm with five members of the Vision Committee and two members of the Steering Committee absent (Steering Committee – Claudia Castro, Greg Dolezal; Vision Committee – Beth Tipton, Kris Darnell, Niti Patel, Ruth Goode, Troy Brumbalow).

Before beginning the meeting, Ms. Hatton asked if there was a quorum of both committees; there was a quorum for the Steering Committee but not for the Vision Committee. The meeting then began with a brief presentation that reviewed project status and timeline, remaining public meetings, and highlights from recent public engagement activities.



The presentation included high level outcomes of the implementation workshops, including the vision statement and goals feedback activity and small group priorities discussions. Mr. Bosman summarized the results of character area exercises at the workshop.

Ms. Hatton completed presentation, including an overview of results from the Meeting in a Box Activity and the web mapping tool.

Group Discussion of Community Feedback

The planning team, led by Ms. Hatton and Mr. Bosman, then opened the floor for questions. There were no questions from the group.

VISION COMMITTEE SUB MEETING

No official meeting of the Vision Committee took place due to failure to reach of quorum of Vision Committee members. The group met informally with Allison Stewart-Harris and Tom Brown of the planning team to review the status of and provide informal input to the vision and goals statements.

STEERING COMMITTEE SUB MEETING (6:15-8:00pm)

Amanda Hatton with the planning team called the Steering Committee sub meeting to order at 6:23 pm.

Adoption of Minutes

There was a motion by Pete Amos and a second by Tim Perry to adopt the meeting minutes from May 25, 2016 as provided. Motion carried with seven members in favor (Pita, Thomas, Amos, Iglesias, Shaw, Perry, Bernstein-Goldman) and two members absent (Castro, Dolezal).

Plan Element Priorities Review

Ms. Hatton led the group in review of draft priorities lists, which will drive actions in the five-year community work program. Committee members were asked to provide input on initiatives to address each priority area as well as provide other general feedback on the lists.

Economic Development

- Public demands fees; wants business to pay for residential.
 - We do not want fees to prohibit businesses – they will move to neighbor communities like Dawson County.



- Have to be business friendly.
- Need to incentivize businesses to come here.
- Town Centers: we have one town, with no center.
 - Can we designate a public gathering space? Make better use of space we have? (e.g. fairgrounds)
 - Certain laws prohibit congregating in some places.
 - Alcohol policies need to be revisited.
 - May want to explore shuttle options.
- Commission has to send message to business community that new business is welcome here.
 - Look to nearby counties as a roadmap.

Housing

- Is housing priority list based on existing housing or what is zoned and not built?
 - There have been several zonings for senior housing.
- Expecting new developments to pay “fair share” of costs – remember it may be existing residents moving into these new developments
 - What is “fair share”? Need to define this.

Transportation

- Kids do not take the bus; this causes congestion on school days.
- There is a current Safe Routes to School program, but it is not considered effective, in part because kids are not allowed to walk or bike to school on their own per school policy. Also, the program is not robust enough – with events occurring once a year rather than a regular emphasis on the program.

Land Use

- No Comments.

Quality of Life

- No Comments.

ACTION: Ms. Hatton will send priorities to committee members to fill in and return comments.



Review of Character Area Map & Zoning

Mr. Bosman (EB) led the group through a review of each of the eleven character areas with a focus on zoning districts and associated design requirements for each character area.

Discussion of Unified Development Code and Other Regulatory Needs

- Need to raise the bar for quality development.
- EB: Consider ideas like rezonings that expire after 36 months if no activity.
 - Suggestion that there is a provision to renew.
 - GA is a vested rights state – need to consider this.
- EB: There is rational basis for a tree ordinance.
 - There is a current tree ordinance that is ineffective, bureaucratic.
 - Lots of the current tree cover is pine forest that doesn't have much value or history.
- Need to consider new zoning districts that actually get you the development you want.
 - Particularly the case in mixed-use development, where it is easy today to skirt the commercial component to get more housing density.
- Missing a high density residential code – gets you more walkable, higher quality housing.

Discussion of Character Areas*

McFarland

- Size/location of business node should be shifted.

South GA 400

- Should node along 141 be narrower?

South Forsyth

- Need to be encouraging Res 1 and 2, but it looks as though it is encouraging Res 3 and 4.
- Lots of discussion about higher density in the South Forsyth node and if that is appropriate.
- RES4 should only be appropriate in nodes.

Haw Creek

- Need to address commercial setbacks in images.

Lanier

- Need to show Lake Residential (cannot rezone to this so okay not to show).
- Add images of public/entertainment/culture.



The Village

- No comments specific to this area.

Campground

- Only allow CR2 with appropriate design standards.

North GA 400

- Allow RES1 and RES2 to be appropriate everywhere in this character area.
- Discussion on Conservation Subdivision (doesn't incentivize use).

Chestatee Jot em Down

- Need to ensure chart matches document.

Northwest Forsyth

- Need to require large setbacks in this area.
- CR2 should be addressed in a conservation style.

Sawnee Mountain

- Res3 should be the upper end.
- Only allow CR2 with appropriate design standards.

**It was determined that RES3 and RES4 should have overarching design standards that clean up their appearance and form across the entire county.*

Medium Density Housing Policy Discussion

Ms. Hatton facilitated a brief discussion regarding missing housing products in Forsyth County. In advance of the meeting, committee members had received a memo highlighting housing policy in similar communities and possible shortcomings in Forsyth County's residential zoning districts.

- Concerns in the medium density residential – what should medium density housing look like in Forsyth County 20 years from now?
 - Not seeing small quality homes; we're seeing small "starter" homes – we want nicer products.
 - Multi-generational doesn't have to be age restricted.
- Vickery is special, and has taken a long time to evolve. It is still not an easy place to do commercial.



Adjournment

There was a motion by Pete Amos and a second by Bobby Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 pm. Motion carried with seven members in favor (Pita, Thomas, Amos, Iglesias, Shaw, Perry, Bernstein-Goldman) and two members absent (Castro, Dolezal).