

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 14, 2013

3:00 p.m.

County Government Center, Building A

1.) Roll Call

Present

Ms. Robin Bledsoe
Mr. Tim O'Connor
Mr. Rich Krapf
Mr. Al Woods

Staff Present

Mr. Paul Holt
Ms. Tammy Rosario
Ms. Beth Klapper

Guests Present

Ms. Brittany Voll
Mr. Keith Johnson

2.) Minutes

Mr. Al Woods moved to approve the October 10, 2013 minutes.

In a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved (4-0).

3.) Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

4.) New Business

a. 2009 Comprehensive Plan Review Process – Methodology and Timeline

Ms. Tammy Rosario stated that a review of the Comprehensive Plan was required by State Code every five years. In preparation for that review, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors conducted a joint work session on May 28, 2013 and discussed the focus and scope of the review of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Rosario stated that the summary document and transportation study, as products of the Historic Triangle coordinated Comprehensive Plan review, would be endorsed and used as foundational documents. Ms. Rosario further stated that it was understood that the review would be limited in scope, with a focus on land use, transportation, and economic development.

Ms. Rosario stated that with this guidance in mind, staff developed a streamlined review process which allows the County to complete the review in approximately 18 months. Ms. Rosario noted that the community is very familiar and comfortable with the processes used previously and that this process retains many of those key components.

Ms. Rosario stated the process was currently in the Preparation phase. Staff is currently refining the communications plan and finalizing the community survey with Virginia Tech.

Ms. Rosario stated that the Kickoff phase would focus on public outreach efforts.

Ms. Rosario noted that a Community Participation Team (CPT) will be established, which will consist of the Policy Committee and members of the community, to help refine and implement the communications plan and mobilize citizens and business leaders to participate in the comprehensive plan review.

Mr. Rich Krapf inquired about the method that would be used to select the citizen members of the CPT.

Ms. Rosario stated the Planning Commission would identify individuals from the community and staff would forward this list to the Board of Supervisors, much as they had done with the Longhill Road Corridor Study PAC.

Ms. Rosario noted that once the majority of the public input has been gathered, the CPT will validate the information and will hand off the data to the full Planning Commission to review each section of the comprehensive plan and its related goals, strategies, and actions (GSAs), as well as any changes to the Land Use Map. A member of the CPT will serve as a liaison to the Planning Commission, providing a connection to the public during the work session discussions.

Ms. Rosario stated that joint work sessions with the Board of Supervisors will be conducted at milestone points in the plan's development to allow for valuable discussion between the groups prior to its final consideration and adoption.

Mr. Tim O'Connor inquired whether the survey would be the same as the previous one.

Ms. Rosario stated that the survey would be primarily the same.

Mr. Woods inquired about what changes would be made to the survey.

Ms. Rosario stated that staff is working with County Administration to refine the survey questions. Once the survey is fully developed, Virginia Tech will be responsible for implementing the survey process and analyzing the responses.

Ms. Robin Bledsoe inquired about when the survey would go out.

Ms. Rosario responded that staff would like to implement the survey in January 2014.

Mr. Woods inquired how widespread the participation would be for the survey to be statistically meaningful.

Ms. Rosario stated that last time the survey sample was approximately 600 households and had a 95% confidence rating. Ms. Rosario further noted that the survey includes a number of demographic questions for comparison against demographics for the County.

Mr. Krapf inquired how the survey would be implemented.

Ms. Rosario responded that the survey would be done by telephone, including both landlines and cell phones.

Mr. Krapf inquired if there would be an online survey.

Mr. Holt noted that an online survey would not have the benefit of being statistically random. Mr. Holt further noted that there would be opportunities later in the process for citizens to respond through web-based applications.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired whether citizens are receptive to the telephone surveys.

Ms. Rosario stated that there will be a publicity campaign to encourage citizens to participate.

Mr. Woods inquired whether any data will be supplied regarding the rejection rate.

Ms. Rosario noted that data might be provided on the number of calls required to obtain the necessary number of responses.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that the publicity surrounding the survey should present it as a positive and exciting opportunity for citizens to influence the future of their community.

Mr. O'Connor inquired about the award given for Best Rural Programs.

Ms. Rosario responded that the award was for the overall comprehensive plan and that "rural" referred to the County's designation as a rural locality due to its population size.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired whether staff will be prepared to respond to hot button questions at the community meetings.

Ms. Rosario further noted the community meetings were not anticipated to be general Q&A sessions but more individualized Q&A. Ms. Rosario further noted that the CPT could assist by informing staff about the types of questions and comments they are hearing from the community.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that she wanted to ensure that the information staff needed to get out to the community would get out and the questions from the community would be answered.

Ms. Rosario stated staff will do some education ahead of time and have information available on the internet that citizens can review prior to coming to the community meetings.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether there would be a separate website for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Ms. Rosario confirmed that there would be a separate website.

Mr. Woods stated that the community meetings could be structured in a way that would keep the discussion on target.

Mr. O'Connor inquired how key stakeholders would be identified; noting that balancing the diverse interests is a difficult part of updating the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Bledsoe concurred that it was important for staff to have an opportunity hear all voices.

Ms. Rosario stated that staff is always seeking new ideas to improve public outreach. Ms. Rosario noted that during the last comprehensive plan process, the CPT held two CPT forums where citizens or groups could make presentations without being confined to a particular topic. Ms. Rosario stated that the presenters encompassed a wide range of interests from square dancers to literacy groups to the Land Conservancy.

Mr. Krapf stated that those forums allowed some of the voices that staff might not normally hear to provide input. Mr. Krapf noted that the CPT forums should be repeated as part of this process.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that staff would be using almost every medium to inform and to solicit input.

Mr. Paul Holt stated that this process provides opportunities for everyone to participate and be heard. Mr. Holt further noted that providing the varied formats reaches across all age groups; accounts for individual schedules; and allows individuals to provide input in a setting where they feel comfortable expressing their ideas and concerns.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that staff has put a tremendous amount of thought and effort into developing the methodology which should be well received by citizens.

Mr. Krapf inquired when the proposed methodology and timeline would be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Staff responded that the proposal would be reviewed by the Board in January 2014.

Mr. Holt noted that the proposal would be brought before the full Planning Commission in December before going to the Board.

b. Other Discussion

Mr. O'Connor requested a review of meeting dates for December 2013.

Ms. Rosario responded that the meeting dates are December 2, 3, 5 and, if needed, 9.

Mr. Holt noted that last year the Committee was able to go through all of the CIP applications in two meetings. The first two meetings are firm but the remaining two meetings are built in to accommodate additional review or presentations.

Mr. Woods noted that he would not be available on December 9.

Ms. Rosario recommended that, prior to the first meeting, the Committee identify those groups that they would like to make presentations. Ms. Rosario noted that the Committee had already identified the WJCC Schools to make a presentation.

Mr. O'Connor noted that it would be better to have representatives on hand even if not needed, rather than bring an item back at a later meeting.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that the ability to ask the applicant questions can make a tremendous difference in the Committee's understanding and evaluation of a project.

Ms. Rosario suggested identifying a fourth date in the event an additional meeting was necessary.

The Committee determined that December 13 at 3 PM would be mutually convenient.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired when the Committee would review the zoning regulations on backyard chickens.

Mr. Holt noted that staff would be conducting the necessary research in December and January so that it could be reviewed by the committee in February.

Ms. Bledsoe noted that the regulations should be reviewed soon because of the violation notices that have already been issued.

Mr. Holt noted that the enforcement actions are on hold pending the outcome of the review.

Mr. O'Connor asked what the review process would be.

Mr. Holt stated that the Committee would review ordinances from other localities and all of the citizen feedback. Mr. Holt further noted that staff would provide some recommendations and options to the Committee for consideration.

Mr. Krapf noted that he would be interested in research related to the types of predators attracted by backyard chickens. Mr. Krapf suggested that the Committee provide staff with a list of research it would like to review.

Mr. Krapf suggested that a citizen comment period could be added to a regularly scheduled and advertised Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. O'Connor noted that it would be beneficial to gather that public input so that the Committee could create a better policy to take before the full Planning Commission.

Mr. Holt noted that there would also be robust public outreach and a variety of opportunities for citizens to provide input.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that it appeared that the Committee was in agreement to hold a public comment period at the meeting where the policy is discussed.

Mr. Woods inquired whether any dates had been determined.

Mr. Holt responded that the 2014 calendar has not been set; however, the meeting schedule should not change significantly from the current framework.

Mr. Holt noted that staff would review the schedule and the totality of citizen input opportunities before setting a date for the review.

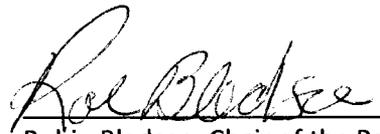
Mr. O'Connor noted that the review would encompass several meetings. Mr. O'Connor further noted that it would be helpful to develop a draft policy prior so that citizens would have a framework for their comments.

Ms. Bledsoe concurred with that approach.

Mr. O'Connor noted that he wanted to ensure that citizens have ample opportunity to be part of the process and express their concerns.

5.) Adjournment

There being no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robin Bledsoe", written over a horizontal line.

Robin Bledsoe, Chair of the Policy Committee