

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION WORKING GROUP OF THE COUNTY OF JAMES CITY, VIRGINIA, WAS HELD ON THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY OF AUGUST, TWO-THOUSAND AND FOURTEEN, AT 4:00 P.M. IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARD ROOM, 101-F MOUNTS BAY ROAD, JAMES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

1. ROLL CALL

Working Group Members:

Present:

Rich Krapf

Tim O'Connor

Robin Bledsoe

George Drummond

John Wright, III

Heath Richardson

Elizabeth Friel

Staff Present:

Paul Holt, Planning Director

Tammy Rosario, Principal Planner

Ellen Cook, Senior Planner II

Jennifer VanDyke, Planner

Savannah Pietrowski, Development Management Assistant

John Carnifax, Director of Parks & Recreation

Fran Geissler, Director of Stormwater

Scott Thomas, Director of Engineering & Resource Protection

Absent:

Chris Basic

Mr. Rich Krapf called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Krapf requested that Ms. Rosario comment on the statistical validity of the Virginia Tech survey.

Ms. Rosario stated that Dr. Willis of Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research has noted that low response rates are typical for surveys. Ms. Rosario stated that despite the massive resources devoted to it, the U.S. Census has only a 67% response rate. Ms. Rosario stated that with mailed surveys and telephone surveys there is a substantially lower response rate. Ms. Rosario noted that telephone surveys have a higher response rate than mailed surveys; however, the response rate even for telephone surveys has declined due to factors such as the inclusion of cell phone numbers in the contact pool. Ms. Rosario stated that despite lower response rates, surveys conducted by reputable research organizations are still accurate. Ms. Rosario noted that studies have proven that higher response rates do not improve accuracy. Ms. Rosario noted that the County's survey was tested against the criteria of whether everyone contacted had the same opportunity to respond and that there were a high number of randomly selected respondents who did complete the survey. Ms. Rosario noted that although the respondents were older as a whole than the rest of the community, the survey responses were similar to the previous survey. Ms. Rosario stated that based on these factors, Dr. Willis is confident that the survey responses are valid and are statistically representative of the community.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Krapf opened the public comment period.

Mr. Steven Sharp, 2305 Montgomerie Arch, addressed the Working Group with prepared comments from Dr. Christine Llewellyn, director of the Williamsburg Climate Action Network regarding the impact of land use, transportation and economic development on the environment.

Mr. Stan Sutliff, 224 Charleston Place, addressed the Working Group with comments on the survey and its validity.

Mr. Mark Rinaldi, 4029 Ironbound Road, stated that he was speaking on behalf of the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance and addressed the Working Group on observations of the Alliance regarding the opportunity to encourage a solid business base within the County.

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Krapf closed the public comment period.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 7, 2014

Ms. Robin Bledsoe moved approval of the minutes from August 7, 2014. On a voice vote the minutes were unanimously approved.

4. TOPICS FOR REVIEW

Mr. Krapf provided guidance on giving feedback on the draft section text and noted that the primary focus should be on Goals, Strategies and Actions (GSA).

A. Parks and Recreation

Ms. Savannah Pietrowski gave an overview of the statistics related to current Parks and Recreation opportunities, citizen input on future recreation needs and proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan text and GSAs.

Mr. George Drummond inquired whether there were any plans to establish a park in the Grove area.

Mr. John Carnifax responded that the need for a park in the Grove area is identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Mr. Carnifax noted that staff periodically reviews land as it becomes available to determine if it is suitable for a park. Mr. Carnifax noted that no additional property, other than what is currently being used at the Abram Frink Recreation Center at James River Elementary School, has been acquired; however, staff is looking at expanding the activities there when funding is available. Mr. Carnifax stated that staff has also looked at property along the James River which would also meet the need for a public water access in the area.

Mr. John Wright inquired how the number of visits to the recreational facilities was calculated.

Mr. Carnifax stated that there are counters at each park. Mr. Carnifax noted that vehicular traffic is counted at 2.5 persons per vehicle regardless of the actual number in the vehicle. This is based on a national average.

Mr. Tim O'Connor inquired if there were GSAs related to Sports Tourism and how those are being addressed; how they tied in with the economic development efforts; and whether there was one overarching vision for parks and recreation. Mr. O'Connor further inquired how projects are prioritized.

Mr. Carnifax noted that there is not an overall master plan of prioritization. Staff reviews projects annually and moves forward where there is sufficient data to support the need where there is funding available.

Mr. Wright inquired about plans for a multi-use trail traversing the County.

Mr. Carnifax responded that the multi-use trail was part of the 2001 Greenways Master Plan and would be a focus of further effort once the Comprehensive Plan was complete. Mr. Carnifax noted that many developments have proffered easements for trails and the challenge would be to tie those easements together.

Ms. Rosario noted that multi-use trails are also considered during development of transportation projects and plans. Ms. Rosario further noted that in 2011 the Board of Supervisors adopted the Pedestrian Accommodation Master Plan which shows where it is appropriate to have sidewalks and multi-use trails.

Mr. Wright noted that his preference would be for one common type of facility that could be used by everyone and noted it would be a more economical solution when looking at maintenance.

Mr. Carnifax noted that there were two competing preferences among citizens: 1 wanting a hard surface and others wanting a softer surface for running. Mr. Carnifax noted it would be difficult to accommodate both in one facility and the multiuse paved trail was the best option.

Mr. Krapf inquired whether the Commissioners were satisfied with the draft text and changes to the GSAs.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that she has had the opportunity to visit numerous parks across Virginia and that James City County has the very best parks.

B. Environment

Ms. Jennifer VanDyke presented a report on the changes to the environmental section text and GSAs.

Mr. Wright asked for clarification on “living shoreline” and how that would impact property owners.

Mr. Scott Thomas stated that the living shoreline would use vegetative practices to control erosion. Mr. Thomas stated that living shorelines, although not applicable in all situations, should be considered first before considering bulkhead and rip rap.

Mr. Richardson inquired whether the Chesapeake Bay and Wetlands Boards would use the same criteria for decisions.

Mr. Thomas confirmed.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired whether the green infrastructure map recommended in ENV 3.6 has been created and, if so, who created it.

Ms. Ellen Cook noted that the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) has created such a map at the regional level; however, it is very generalized. Ms. Cook noted that the regional framework would provide a basis for developing a focused local map.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired whether the regional map and plan was referenced for development purposes.

Ms. Cook noted that because the plan was so general, it would be difficult to use it in development plan review.

Ms. Fran Geissler noted that the County has developed a green infrastructure plan for county buildings.

Mr. Wright recommended a wording change to use terminology related reducing water pollution, air pollution and energy efficiency, noting that these terms are something a majority of individuals would concur with, rather than referring to climate stabilization and sea level rise. Mr. Wright noted that he does not feel that climate stabilization encompasses those items.

Mr. Heath Richardson noted that there is scientific data on increased flooding in the Norfolk and Hampton Roads area.

Mr. O’Connor stated that there should be quantifiable and qualitative description included in the narrative as well as quantifiable goals and actions.

Mr. Richardson inquired whether the County has quantifiable data.

Ms. Rosario noted that the HRPDC and Old Dominion University (ODU) were conducting studies which the County could potentially use to pull specific James City County data into the text.

Mr. Krapf commented on the massive amount of State and federal regulations that the County has to comply with.

Mr. Krapf noted that many of the terms, such as study, evaluate and monitor, as used in ENV 1.5.4, ENV 1.5.5 and ENV 1.5.6 were more passive. Mr. Krapf recommended that staff consider including metrics to measure County's success.

Mr. Thomas stated that the guidance provided by the Virginia Marine Resource Commission (VMRC) was brought in to the narrative and the listing of goals was also brought in from a list of goals in the guidance document. Mr. Thomas further noted that the use of vague terms had been discussed during the prior Comprehensive Plan review; however, staff did not want to vary too much from the State guidance since the State will be looking at the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that it is compliant.

Using ENV 1.5.4 as an example, Mr. Krapf inquired how staff would quantify success for this goal.

Mr. Thomas stated that staff would quantify success by the number of wetlands permit applications that came before the Wetlands Board and determine how many varied from the policy.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired about the incentives to be provided for promoting reduction of auto dependency and trip distances, the construction of energy efficient homes and businesses, and use of alternative modes of transportation under ENV 4.3.

Ms. Rosario stated that this action is addressed through the Zoning Ordinance where there are density incentives for energy efficient homes and recognition for businesses that meet the criteria of the Green Building Policy.

Mr. Richardson inquired how ENV 1.2.7 relating to providing education to the public about BMP maintenance would be accomplished.

Ms. Geissler responded that the PRIDE program has been rebranded as the Clean Water Heritage Program. Ms. Geissler noted that this program is partly driven by the MS4 permit. Ms. Geissler stated that in addition to workshops for the public and BMP owners, staff would be developing BMP maintenance procedures specifically for BMP owners such as HOA. Ms. Geissler noted that these programs are also responsive to the requirements of ENV 1.15.1.

Ms. Elizabeth Friel requested that staff provide more detail in the summary of changes. Ms. Friel also noted that certain maps were not included with the draft text and requested that staff clarify within the text whether those maps would still be used.

Ms. Friel inquired whether the Forest Inventory had been updated since 2002.

Ms. VanDyke responded that there is no updated information at this time.

Ms. Friel inquired whether the 1993 Piers and Dock Inventory had been updated.

Ms. VanDyke responded that there will be updated shoreline information available in the coming months.

Ms. Rosario stated that when reviewing each section, staff looks to ensure that the most current studies and data are being used. Ms. Rosario noted that if an old study is all that is available, a determination is made whether the data is still relevant and adjustments are made accordingly.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether there would be a benefit to the County to include large stream restoration projects or stormwater management projects completed by a Home Owners Association (HOA) in MS4 and TMDL calculations.

Ms. Geissler responded that there would be benefits to the County and that Stormwater staff is developing plans for partnerships with HOAs to address situations which would improve water quality.

Mr. O'Connor inquired whether there were additional watersheds that need to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Thomas responded that the goal is to study all the sub-watersheds within the County over time. Mr. Thomas noted that the Ware Creek Watershed Study has been completed and a study of the York River Watershed is underway. Mr. Thomas noted that studies are done when funding is available and watersheds are chosen at that time based on need.

Mr. O'Connor stated that it would be helpful to have a listing of all the watersheds even without prioritization.

Ms. Bledsoe inquired about how the plan to improve environmental quality would be implemented based on the green infrastructure map referenced in ENV 3.6. Ms. Bledsoe stated that she was concerned that this map would be used to affect where development can occur even though the map is currently more regional than County specific.

Ms. Rosario stated that staff could review this action for potential revision. Ms. Rosario noted that the County has been doing some cultural and natural assets mapping which will show at the local level what the assets are and provide guidance for further development to preserve those assets.

Mr. Krapf summarized the Working Group's discussion regarding revisions to the Environmental section noting the following:

- Inclusion of a County specific green infrastructure map.
- Add quantifiable data to the section on climate stabilization related to sea rise.
- Include more detail on significant changes to all sections.

- Identify all the watersheds within the County.
- Use quantifiable measures where possible.

Ms. Rosario added a clarification to her response regarding incentives for improved air quality and noted that such incentives would also be considered when looking at future updates to the Zoning Ordinance.

V. Other Items

Mr. Krapf noted that the next Working Group meeting would cover Public Facilities and Community Character.

VI. Public Comment

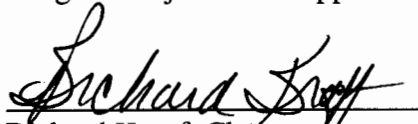
Mr. Krapf opened the public comment period.

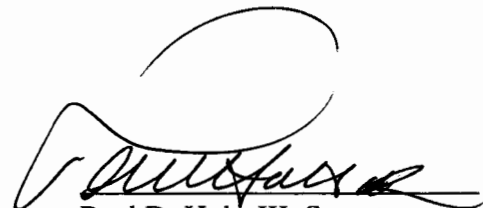
There being no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Krapf closed the public comment period.

VII. Adjournment

Mr. Wright moved to adjourn until to the next Planning Commission Working Group meeting scheduled for September 4, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:15 p.m.


Richard Krapf, Chairman


Paul D. Holt, III, Secretary