

PRESENT: T. Cole, Chairman
S. Bridge
C. Foschini
K. Leonard
R.L. Earhart, Senior Planner and Secretary

ABSENT: E. Shipplett, Vice Chariman
J. Curd
K. Shiflett
T. Fitzgerald, Director

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, September 9, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mr. Cole stated as there were four (4) members present, there was a quorum.

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MINUTES

Mr. Bridge moved to approve the minutes of the called and regular meetings held on August 12, 2014.

Mr. Leonard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – INTRODUCTION CHANGES

Mrs. Earhart discussed the changes to the Introduction and Strategies for Growth section of the Comp Plan that have been made since the Planning Commission last reviewed it. She stated that while there has been some growth within the County, it has not been as significant as in previous years. She stated current developments that are already approved allows the County to see where growth can be accomodated. She referred to Table 3 of the Introduction and Strategies for Growth section in the Comp

Plan. This table shows the active subdivisions for the County, how they are zoned, the number of units currently built and the number of units remaining for build-out. She indicated the draft presents the table two ways; one with all the subdivisions listed individually and one where they are grouped by area. She asked the Commissioners if the information in the Table was helpful to them in determining where transportation and service needs are going to be and where growth is going to be.

Mr. Bridge asked if all the active subdivisions already have public sewer.

Mrs. Earhart stated they have public water and sewer as applicable.

Mr. Cole said he likes the Table with all the subdivisions listed.

Mr. Leonard stated he likes to see the subdivisions for each particular area of the County.

Mr. Cole stated for Comprehensive Plan purposes, a consolidated table may be more useful. The Commissioners agreed to have a consolidated table.

Mrs. Earhart explained that a periodic update could be presented to the Commissioners to show the active developments and what stage of development they are in.

Mrs. Earhart discussed the potential growth in Augusta County. She stated there is no limit to the amount of development that can occur. There are currently acres of single and multi-family residentially zoned property that could result in thousands of more dwellings being built in the County. There is also over 300,000 acres of General Agriculture zoned property that could create the potential for tens of thousands more building lots to be created. It is important to remember that the goals of the Comp Plan are not to stop growth, but to decide where growth belongs. The point of the Plan is to try to target the places the County can best provide services to the residents and to be able to keep service delivery costs down as much as possible. There will always be a need to provide services to Deerfield, Mount Solon, Sherando, and other rural areas; however, the more people that we can put in the Urban Service Areas and the more services that can cost efficiently be provided, the better. The strategic goals of the plan are to encourage development where it can occur with services and to encourage agriculture areas to remain agriculture.

Mr. Bridge asked if the Comp Plan will make it more difficult to build out in agriculture areas.

Mrs. Earhart stated some of the policies that are being implemented will encourage development to occur in the urban areas and not make it cost prohibitive to build, while at the same time trying to keep agriculture a viable choice.

Mr. Leonard referred to the last sentence of paragraph 4 – Potential Residential Build-out of the Introduction and Strategies for Growth section of the Comp Plan, which states “If the county were not to approve any further rezonings, development will likely occur in

locations and at densities very different from those envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.” He asked for an explanation of this statement.

Mrs. Earhart stated the Comp Plan would indicate the County wants a more compact development pattern. Even basing it on the medium density residential areas having three to four units an acre, if we don’t do any more rezonings, the development is going to occur on one or two acre lots in the agriculture areas.

Mr. Cole made the statement that we want to control what is rezoned and want to encourage people to develop in the areas that have already been rezoned instead of developing in the more rural areas.

Mrs. Earhart stated that certainly there is potential development in the areas already rezoned; however, once the lots are all built-out, the only place left to develop will be the agriculture areas if we don’t rezone in compliance with the Plan.

Mr. Bridge stated there are many lots still available that can be built on that have already been rezoned.

Mrs. Earhart stated there are going to be some development constraints on some pieces of undeveloped property, such as access constraints. There are still infrastructure improvements that have to take place and at what point does the infrastructure become affordable? Lots that were affordable back when property was first rezoned, and when it was possible to pass the costs onto the homebuyer, are no longer affordable. As the economy improves, property investment will improve as well.

Mr. Cole referred to Table 3 – Active Residential Subdivisions by Area of the Introduction and Strategies for Growth section of the Comp Plan. He stated that not all of the 4,292 units remaining to be developed will be developed.

Mrs. Earhart stated in order for multi-family development to occur, the market has to be right. There is a lot of multi-family zoned property waiting to be developed, but development constraints are holding some of these projects back as well.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – MAPS

Mrs. Earhart stated previously in the Comp Plan rural communities were slated as a future land use. These were traditionally places with pockets of development such as Churchville, Augusta Springs, and New Hope. Presently, with the type of utilities these communities have, the Village Mixed Use zoning will work better in these areas. Now we have a future land use category of Village Mixed Use, which would be expected to be a mixture of business and residential uses. It could be an older house or business that has been converted to an apartment, or it could be a business on the lower floor with an apartment upstairs, or any combination thereof. This type of land use pattern is currently seen in some of the villages. Staff, along with Planning Commission members, have looked at that pattern and have decided instead of having large areas of Village Mixed Use we should concentrate it more in what may be considered to be the older

downtown area, which is the core of these communities. The rest of these areas would be slated for Low Density Residential development.

Mrs. Earhart reviewed the Proposed Land Use Designation maps for the areas of Augusta Springs, Churchville, Deerfield, Middlebrook, and New Hope. The Planning Commission was in agreement with the recommended changes to these areas.

Mrs. Earhart referred to the Michael Grove property (TM 57-49), a 107 acre site located in the Barrenridge area and on a gravel road. Mr. Grove would like this area to be Rural Conservation rather than Agriculture Conservation. Previously when the Planning Commission viewed this site, they were not inclined to encourage development but the property owner has inquired about the possibility of rezoning this property for development, so staff wants to verify the Planning Commission's action on this.

Mr. Bridge asked if the road was going to be paved in the future.

Mrs. Earhart stated she did not believe it was on the plan for paving.

Mr. Foschini asked if there were any public utilities available.

Mrs. Earhart stated there are no utilities available. She stated this would be a good example where the property owner could create one lot per year from each of his parcels and could create a development over time. A developer may not be interested in it since the new lots that are created can't be re-subdivided for five years.

The Commissioners agreed not to change the Policy Area designation for this property.

Mrs. Earhart referred to the Ferguson property on Old White Bridge Road where the owner is asking to develop the property into quarter acre lots. Public sewer is not available for this property from the County but could be provided by Waynesboro, but no provisions were made for it in the new Sewer Agreement with the City. Public water could be extended by the Service Authority. Previously, the Planning Commission has been consistent in saying the Comp Plan for this area should not be changed.

Mr. Foschini asked what the property is being used for.

Mrs. Earhart stated it is being used for agriculture purposes.

The Commissioners agreed not to consider changing the land use designation for this property.

Mrs. Earhart referred to the EXPO property in Fishersville. Staff is recommending a land use designation change for this property. Currently the property is zoned for business use; however, the property is more of a public use site and EXPO is a non-profit organization so staff is recommending it be shown as Public use.

The Planning Commission was in agreement with this recommendation.

Mrs. Earhart stated there are not a lot of land use changes being recommended within the County. The net effect of the changes that are being made is to decrease the amount of land being proposed for development, although there are some places where additional land has been added for development. Once the Planning Commission is comfortable with the maps and the Comp Plan document, there will be worksessions with the Board of Supervisors and a public hearing. Property owners will be notified of the recommended changes and will have an opportunity to express any concerns about the changes.

Mrs. Earhart continued reviewing County land use designation maps with the Planning Commission. She stated that a concerted effort was made to be sure that everything that the County and the Service Authority owns are designated as public use, such as dumpster sites and water tanks.

Mr. Cole asked if the Service Authority controlled the dumpster sites.

Mrs. Earhart stated that the County controls them and contracts out for the dumpsters to be taken to the landfill.

Mrs. Earhart continued reviewing the maps and discussing land use options for several areas of the County.

Mr. Cole asked if the proposed Dominion gas line comes through the county, will it be added to the County maps.

Mrs. Earhart stated it will likely not be added and that the County does not have maps showing any major utility transmission lines due to security concerns.

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STAFF REPORTS

A. CODE OF VIRGINIA – SECTION 15.2-2310

Mrs. Earhart reviewed with the Commissioners the requests coming before the BZA.

The Planning Commission took the following action on the BZA items:

14-50 Neil Schroeder

The Planning Commission expressed concern about running a business in an area planned for residential development and noted this property is located in close proximity to property zoned business. The Planning Commission would encourage the business to be located in one of those areas rather than building a new building on this property for the business. Mr. Cole made the motion to pass along those concerns to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Bridge seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

14-52 Kenneth Ray Bradley, Jr., Inc.

The Planning Commission was concerned about the applicant's disregard for the existing permit restrictions and encouraged Mr. Bradley to adhere to his existing permit before asking the BZA to change any of the stipulations. They did note, however, that they did not feel that Sunday hours for the flea market would be out of character with the adjacent uses occurring on the Speedway property. Mr. Bridge made the motion to pass along those concerns to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Foschini seconded the motion, which carried 3-1, with Mr. Leonard opposed.

14-54 Kenneth Ray Bradley, Jr., Inc.

The Planning Commission encouraged the BZA to retain the 100' buffer between the residential uses on Rt. 340 and the transportation related business. They do not support the use of that setback area for equipment or material storage and, in fact, expressed concern over that type of use having more of a negative impact on the residential properties than truck and trailer parking might have. Mr. Bridge made the motion to pass along those concerns to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Leonard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman

Secretary