



SURRY COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

Steering Committee Meeting #1
October 9, 2017 6:30pm

NOTES

Attendees: Catrina Alexander, Frank Beals, David Caudle, Tony Childs, Corey Easter, Andy Goodall, Sean Heath, Freddy Hiatt, John Q. Shelton, Andrew Wright

The meeting began at approximately 6:30pm, following some planning board business items.

Jesse Day went over the plan update and schedule emphasizing an inclusive and open process to gather as much meaningful feedback for the plan development. Public involvement is a key component of the process, which will include the steering committee, public meetings, stakeholder interviews and a community survey. New legislation at the State level requires municipalities and counties to have consistency with an updated comprehensive land development plan for rezoning decisions.

Jesse then reviewed demographics and trends. Population, age, ethnicity, top employment, unemployment rate and income was reported for Surry County. There was interest in adding comparison counties such as: Forsyth, Yadkin, Stokes, Wilkes, Lincoln, Caldwell, Chatham, Lancaster and York County. In addition, it was requested to find income by census tract, median as well as average income and to look at vineyard or viticulture growth over time. Committee members were surprised to see the manufacturing job loss over the last 15 years and that Surry County had a higher rate of associate degrees than the State average.

A discussion on key issues centered on the following question:

“What are the key issues concerning future growth and land development? What would be the first step to address the issue and what would determine success?” Committee members worked in pairs to identify issues and talk about how success could be measure.

The following are results of this discussion by issues area:

Senior and Accessible Housing (Provide)

- Quality and appropriate housing
- Trail and recreation access
- Locate near shopping
- Provide transportation support services
- Events, programming and clubs

Economic Development & Tourism (Promote)

- Promote and market Surry Community College programs and classes
- Recruit a ready workforce
- Recruit companies and have available sites and buildings

- Engage youth and businesses in entrepreneurship and apprenticeships
- Encourage outdoor recreation and sports
- Increase availability of high paying jobs
 - o Encourage green and tech jobs (e.g. renewables, solar, wind, hydro-electric)

Diversity and Inclusion (Plan)

- Engage representation from diverse populations in all aspects of planning

Marketing and Branding (Promote)

Following the key issues workshop, there was a general discussion about housing conditions, the opioid epidemic and other issues outside the control of the planning department.

The meeting concluded a little before 8pm. The next meeting was scheduled for November 9th, with a suggested earlier start time of 5:30pm.

- Encourage regionalism for branding purpose
- Make urban areas more attractive (e.g. micro-breweries, sports, community activities)

Natural and Cultural Resources (Preserve)

- Prioritize the connection of cultural, historical and natural resources
- Leverage clean water as a resource
- Connect County municipalities with trails

Infrastructure (Provide)

- Preserve and enhance broadband speeds and access