



Clarke County Planning Commission

MINUTES – Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 7, 2022 – 2:30PM

Berryville/Clarke County Government Center – Main Meeting Room

ATTENDANCE:			
Matthew Bass (Board of Supervisors)	X	Bob Glover (Millwood)	✓
Anne Caldwell (Millwood)	✓	Randy Buckley (White Post)	✓
George L. Ohrstrom, II (Ex Officio)	✓E		

E – Denotes Electronic Participation

NOTE – Chair Ohrstrom participated electronically due to health issues related to the current pandemic and served as the alternate voting member for this meeting.

STAFF PRESENT: Brandon Stidham (Director of Planning), Jeremy Camp (Senior Planner/Zoning Administrator)

CALL TO ORDER: By Mr. Stidham at 2:50PM.

1. Approval of Agenda

Members approved the agenda by consensus as presented by Staff.

2. Approval of Minutes – March 10, 2022 Meeting

Members voted unanimously to approve the March 10, 2022 meeting minutes as presented by Staff.

Motion to approve March 10, 2022 meeting minutes as presented by Staff:			
Bass	ABSENT	Glover	AYE
Caldwell	AYE (moved)	Buckley	AYE
Ohrstrom (Alternate)	AYE (seconded)		

Mr. Stidham said that the primary objective for the meeting is to see if the Committee has any additional changes to the final draft Comprehensive Plan document and whether members are comfortable forwarding the draft to the full Commission for review in May. He said that if there is time left at the end of the meeting, he will introduce the Double Tollgate Area Plan review project. He added that he will review the current plan area and properties to which the County is working to extend public water and public sewer from Frederick County. He said that we also need to schedule the next meeting date for some time in mid-May.

3. Comprehensive Plan Update – Review of Final Draft

Mr. Stidham suggested reviewing the final draft by section to see if members have any edits or questions and noted that Chair Ohrstrom provided comments in advance of the meeting. He

noted that one of Chair Ohrstrom's comments is to list the Comprehensive Plan Committee members under "Acknowledgments" on the back of the front cover page.

Regarding the fifth bullet point in the "Foreword" section, Chair Ohrstrom said that he did not think that "distinctive attributes" was the correct wording and suggested using "different ecosystems" instead. Commissioner Caldwell said that this was a good point. Chair Ohrstrom said that "different regions" might be a better alternative as well. Mr. Stidham replied that "attributes" is a general term and "ecosystems" is more specific, but "regions" would be too general. Members agreed to use "different ecosystems."

Regarding the third line in the second paragraph of the "Introduction" section, Mr. Stidham suggested adding "natural resource protection" after "preservation" per Chair Ohrstrom's comment. Chair Ohrstrom noted that we talk about natural resource protection a lot and he thought it should be included in this list. Members agreed with this change. Regarding the last line of the "Historic Resources Plan" description, Chair Ohrstrom had noted that he did not like the wording "in furtherance of historic preservation." Mr. Stidham suggested "to further the County's historic preservation goals" and members agreed with the change.

Regarding the third bullet in the "Summary Statement of Purpose" section, Commissioner Glover said that he is concerned that the wording about broadband internet means that the County is going to make broadband work in the rural areas. He is concerned that this might be viewed as a promise that we will not be able to keep. Mr. Stidham replied that this language means that, with the exception of broadband internet, residents should not expect that the County will expand public infrastructure into the rural areas. Chair Ohrstrom suggested "with the exception of attempting to expand broadband," and Commissioner Caldwell suggested "with the planned expansion of broadband." Commissioner Glover noted that in order to plan expansion of broadband, you have to have it in the rural areas in the first place. Mr. Stidham suggested, "With the exception of efforts to expand broadband internet service." Commissioner Glover said that this addresses his concerns.

Regarding the "County Profile" section in Chapter I, Chair Ohrstrom noted in the second paragraph that language should be included to explain how much of the County land area changed since the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Stidham replied that language will be included to address this concern. Chair Ohrstrom also noted that Route 50 is mentioned in the fourth paragraph but should be moved to the third paragraph where all of the other major County roads are discussed.

Under the "History and Historic Resources" section, Chair Ohrstrom suggests adding language to explain why the County is named after George Rogers Clark but the County name is spelled with an "e." Vice-Chair Buckley noted he read somewhere that the discrepancy was a mistake in the clerk's office in Richmond when they named the County. Chair Ohrstrom said this would be an interesting fact to include. Mr. Stidham said that Staff will develop language and add it to the third paragraph on Page I-11. Chair Ohrstrom noted on Page I-12 that a total area of land in historic districts should be included at the end of the bulleted list. Mr. Stidham replied that this can be added.

On Page I-27, Chair Ohrstrom noted an apparent error in that the last paragraph states that the density of Clarke is less than half the density of Warren County, but Table 5 shows Clarke at 5.3% and Warren at 8.4%. Mr. Camp replied that Table 5 does not show density, it shows growth rate. Chair Ohrstrom also asked about Table 8B depicting 2,182 people commuting to Clarke County to work. Mr. Stidham replied that the table on the right depicts the County's non-resident workforce and where they reside. Chair Ohrstrom said that this sounds like a lot of workers. Mr. Stidham replied that most may come to work for Berryville Graphics or the Schools.

Members had no additional comments on Chapter I. Mr. Stidham noted that the titles of the maps need to be edited and those changes will appear in the draft that is sent to the full Commission.

Regarding Chapter II, Chair Ohrstrom commented that Goal #7 should read "...to determine their consistency not only with the Comprehensive Plan and implementing component plans, but also with the County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and with our land use philosophy," or "with the County's land use philosophy." He added that he thought as written it is a run-on sentence. Mr. Stidham suggested cutting out "County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances." Chair Ohrstrom replied that this works. Mr. Stidham asked whether "our" or "the County's" should be used and Commissioner Caldwell replied the latter.

Members had no additional comments or edits on Chapters II or III. Regarding the Appendix, Mr. Stidham noted that Commissioner Caldwell said that Figure 1 is confusing because it does not have a key. He added that since this was taken from another document, Figure 1 could be taken out if the members also think it is confusing. Commissioner Glover said that he did not think that it is needed. Commissioner Caldwell said that it would be interesting if the different areas were labeled but that it makes no sense otherwise. Mr. Stidham read the paragraph at the top of Page A-4 where Figure I is cited, noting that it mentions how the layers of rock have been folded and fractured as depicted. He then asked if it is necessary to keep the picture. Commissioner Caldwell said no and Commissioner Glover said that we should not add a legend to another person's map. Commissioner Caldwell said the verbiage describes it perfectly. Commissioner Glover asked if Map 12 is going to be removed as well and Mr. Stidham replied that only Figure 1 would be removed.

With no additional questions or comments, members voted 4-0-1 to forward the final draft as edited to the full Commission for review in May.

Motion to forward final draft Comprehensive Plan as edited to the full Planning Commission for review in May:			
Bass	ABSENT	Glover	AYE
Caldwell	AYE (seconded)	Buckley	AYE
Ohrstrom (Alternate)	AYE (moved)		

4. Discussion – Double Tollgate Area Plan Review

Mr. Stidham stated that a copy of the five-year review resolution for the Area Plan is included in the packet. He noted the two key issues in the resolution are to address the impact of serving the plan area with public water and public sewer, and whether to change the plan area's current "deferred growth" status. He said the second of the two issues may fold into how we determine what the revised plan area map will be for properties to be served by public water and sewer.

Mr. Stidham said he wanted the members to be comfortable with the properties in question and reviewed a map depicting the current plan area and a map identifying the State-owned properties. He noted the current Area Plan does not recommend expanding the plan area until full build-out is achieved. He said the challenge is the change in ownership of the State-owned properties. He also reviewed which agencies currently own each of these properties and their development status. He noted that the 65-acre parcel located along U.S. 340 was assigned by the General Assembly to the Virginia Port Authority for economic development purposes. He added that this is the most likely parcel to treat differently from the rest of the State-owned properties. He noted that the L-shaped parcel is owned by the Department of Military Affairs, adding that they approached the County about obtaining water and sewer to serve a future regional training center on that property. He said the remaining two properties are owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Department of Corrections, and it is not known whether those ownerships will change in the near future. He added that the VDOT parcel contains their maintenance shop and that the Department of Corrections parcel contains the older of the two prison buildings and the current package sewage treatment facility which has a valid permit from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). He noted that there is also an existing waterline to this property that was extended many years ago from Frederick County to serve the former prison facility.

Mr. Stidham suggested that given the different agency ownerships and future potential uses, the State-owned properties may need to be treated in two different ways on a revised plan area map. He said while the 65 acres is slated for economic development purposes and the most-likely candidate for Highway Commercial zoning, the remaining properties would house State uses to be served by public water and sewer with no change in zoning.

Chair Ohrstrom asked how you would keep other nearby AOC-zoned property owners from wanting to be included in the plan area and have access to the public water and sewer. Mr. Stidham replied that the utilities are being extended to serve the current plan area and the State-owned properties. He added that you can also continue the concept of not adding new privately-owned parcels to the plan area until build-out of the existing plan area is achieved.

Commissioner Glover asked if the 7-11 store has public water and sewer. Mr. Stidham replied no and added that they are really interested in getting it. Commissioner Glover asked where the current water line in Frederick that would be extended into Clarke is located. Mr. Stidham replied that no decisions have been made on the locations of the water or sewer lines. He added that any new sewer line would ultimately run north to Frederick County's Parkins Mill treatment plant. He said he did not believe that either water or sewer would be connected to the Lake Frederick system.

Mr. Stidham said that before the Board of Supervisors can authorize Frederick County to serve areas in Clarke County, our land use plan has to match that objective. He said that since we review the Area Plan once every five years, changes in growth and utility allocation can also be considered during that review. Commissioner Glover asked about the residences across U.S. 340 who may want to replace their septic systems with public sewer and whether they were part of the discussion at the Board level. Mr. Stidham replied no, adding that only the State-owned properties have been discussed at this point. Chair Ohrstrom said that he would leave it this way for now. Mr. Stidham noted that public water and sewer will bring additional development pressures and you may see a lot of those houses get purchased for redevelopment. Vice-Chair Buckley said that some of those houses and lots are vacant. He also noted that the triangle property between Double Tollgate Road and U.S. 340 is currently for sale but may not be feasible for development. Mr. Stidham said that you could see a developer attempt to purchase all of these properties to redevelop as a block and potentially ask the County to abandon Double Tollgate Road. Commissioner Glover asked for confirmation that the goal is to bring utilities to the State-owned properties. Mr. Stidham replied yes as well as to the properties in the existing plan area. Commissioner Glover asked if the flea market is in Frederick and Clarke. Mr. Stidham replied that it is located mostly in Frederick.

Mr. Camp asked if the State-owned properties would be added to the proposed water and sewer service district but not designated for commercial growth in the Area Plan. Mr. Stidham replied that the 65 acres would be designated for economic development uses and the remaining parcels would be for State government uses. He added that your plan area may have three different sub-areas, each with their own descriptions of what can and cannot be developed there.

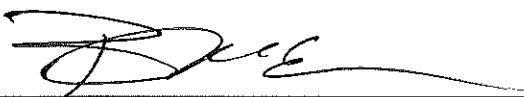
Chair Ohrstrom left the meeting.

Mr. Stidham proposed to identify potential edits to the current plan and to create a new area plan map with different planning areas containing descriptions of what uses can or cannot take place in each. Vice-Chair Buckley asked if the reason for the water and sewer extension is because the State agencies have requested it. Mr. Stidham replied yes as well as property owners within the current plan area that have asked for it for years. He also noted that for many years, Frederick County would not consider serving Clarke but that their recent water supply planning efforts has made this a possibility.

5. Scheduling of Next Meeting

Members agreed to schedule the next meeting for Thursday, May 12 at 2:30PM.

ADJOURN: Meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:39PM.



Brandon Stidham, Clerk