



MEETING NOTES STEERING COMMITTEE MAY 1, 2019

Attendees: Josh Coffey, Boyce Young, Michele Henderson, Key Bartow, Keith Spitznogel, John Reynolds, Lisa Safely, Beth Williams Holley, Amanda Clement, Michael Lauer, and Audra Miller

Committee had no changes to March 27, 2019, meeting summary notes.

Michael presented slides showing rural character areas.

Short-Term Work Program:

The short-term work program from the Comprehensive Plan calls for the County to:

- Coordinate with officials to ensure compatibility with Ft. Stewart operations
- Establish conservation subdivision standards
- Adopt agriculture protection standards
- Improve regulation of noise, lighting & signage
- Create a fishing village overlay
- Discourage reliance on septic systems – comment: need to discuss whether the County should be in the water and sewer business (expensive), septic issues with current houses, and extent of sewer services that should be in north end of the County (only Pembroke and portions of Interstate Commerce Centre industrial park currently have service)
- Adopt residential design guidelines (note: these are included in the IDO)
- Evaluate reclassification of residential zones

Zoning District Changes:

District/Character Areas do not cross-reference all zoning districts in the Comprehensive Plan. The UDO should clarify that the B-2 (general commercial) and O-I (office/institutional) districts may be appropriate in mixed use character areas, and the WB (waterfront business) districts may be appropriate in the privately and state-owned coastal character areas.

The AR-1, R-30, and R-1 are similar districts, having the same standards for density and lot sizes. While the zoning ordinance only requires 30,000 square feet, state law requires one acre for wells and on-site sewer service. Michael recommended combining AR-1 and R-30. Committee generally agreed. R-1 zoning could presume access to public water. Michael recommended Committee come back with a suggestion about what to do with these three districts. More information will be provided regarding community septic and other sewer systems following discussions with the technical committee.

Uses Requiring Conditions:

Michael explained each of the uses listed in the Steering Committee memo has unique impacts that require special conditions that are not unique to any one zoning district. For example, bars and nightclubs have noise and operational issues that can be addressed through limited hours of operation and other conditions. Mining also has special standards to address noise, dust, and truck traffic issues.

Committee Question: Will specific uses only be allowed in mixed use character areas? The district use standards will control where various uses will be allowed. While some may be allowed in



districts that are associated with the mixed-use character areas, others could be allowed in residential areas approved through the PUD process. Home occupations and accessory dwellings would be allowed in residential zoning districts.

Accessory Dwelling Units/Guest Houses/Short-Term Vacation Rentals: Guest houses are defined as providing temporary living space for another person absent rent payments. Accessory dwellings are assumed to be available as rental units for extended periods of time. Short-Term Vacation Rentals – may be a room or the entire house that is available for rent for short periods of time (e.g., less than 30 days). Enforcement of these distinctions is difficult to monitor and typically are only enforced upon complaint.

Steering Committee Recommendations:

- Allow accessory dwellings and guest houses through staff approvals in any district where units can meet setbacks, parking, and water and sewer requirements. Include an absolute maximum square footage in addition to a percentage of the principal dwelling limitation.
- Temporary Family Health Care Structures allow physically or mentally impaired relatives in single-family districts. Occupancy is limited to one person and physician certification of need is required for these 300 sq.ft. structures. No consensus on allowing this. Staff was not in favor.
- Short-term vacation rentals – are a concern for the committee, but members want additional details on their impacts and regulatory options.
- RV and boat parking – no changes recommended at this time.
- Address indoor as well as outdoor kennels.
- Provide more details on the regulation of temporary uses.

Planned Developments:

Applicability: Require PD approval for:

- Lots smaller than 15,000 square feet – additional discussion required as to whether smaller lots should be allowed under certain conditions without going through the PD process.
- Mixed-use or mixed-residential developments

Density:

Gross vs. Net: Committee discussed basing densities on net density (gross area minus wetlands, floodplains, and bodies of water) or gross density (number of units per gross acreage). While there is some agreement for using net acreage, additional discussion is needed.

Density Bonuses: Do we want to provide density bonuses for:

- **Work-force Housing?** Response, on work force housing, need to define exactly what this is. Michael noted that effective programs generally cannot just rely on density bonuses, but also include combinations of grants, subsidies and other tools.
- **Mixed-Use Development?** While County requires a mix of uses, it has not been enforcing these provisions, which is not necessarily a bad thing because commercial development is likely to fail if in the wrong location or lacks sufficient market demand. Images of Baxter Town Center were shown as an example where commercial works. Some members were okay with density bonus, but others not as sure. Additional details are required
- **LID/Green infrastructure?** Steering Committee member recommended bonus for saving trees or planting additional trees, referencing Pickney Retreat. Counterpoint, if a developer does a lot of disturbance around a tree, it will die due to stress; Consider a tree replacement



policy in lieu of strict preservation requirements. Member recommended that the minimum size of tree required for replanting should be increased (two-inch caliper are too small).

Development Patterns

- **Conservation Subdivision** – This pattern preserves open space, while allowing for smaller lots. Michael showed illustrations of the differences between conventional, cluster, and conservation subdivisions. Committee expressed general support for allowance of smaller lots in exchange for excess open space preservation. Additional discussion is required to determine whether density incentives should be used to promote this development pattern.
- **Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND/New Urbanism)** – is this appropriate for Bryan County? This occurs in urban areas and Comprehensive Plan focuses on preserving the rural character of the County. Some Steering Committee members commented that the lack of large tracts of land limits this development option in South Bryan. New ruralism (e.g., Prairie Crossing, Waterways) may be a better fit for Bryan County. Members pointed to Dunham Marsh as example of new urbanism.

Steering Committee Recommendation:

- Use the PD process rather than allowing patterns by right.
- Do not preclude new urbanist/TND development, but there is no need to include this development pattern in the UDO.

Manufactured Home Parks: No concerns were raised about existing parks and Committee members commented that it is needed as a form of affordable housing.

Tiny Houses: Steering Committee raised the issue of tiny houses. Michael noted that tiny houses are like manufactured homes in that they tend to lose value over time. Loan industry is making high interest loans for tiny houses so while they may provide affordable housing, they do not help owners accrue wealth.

Next meeting June 19 in Pembroke.