



TOWN OF CARRBORO

Northern Study Area Plan Implementation

Review Committee

Meeting Notes – Thursday, June 28, 2007

MEMBERS		GUESTS	STAFF
Susan Poulton	Alana Callimanis	Robin Langdon	Roy Williford
James Carnahan	Tom High	Will Dudenhausen	Kendal Brown
Amy Jeroloman	Jim Rabinowitz	Frank Thomas	Gene Bell
Jay Bryan	Mark Chilton		Trish McGuire
Renee Price	Carolyn Buckner		

Absent: Tom Wiltberger, Jannice Ashley, Alex Zaffron.

I. Call to Order. Mr. Bryan called the meeting to order at approximately 7:40 p.m.

II. Acceptance of Meeting Notes, June 11, 2007. The minutes were approved as written.

III. Moratorium Update: Ms. McGuire informed the group that the Board of Orange County Commissioners approved the Carrboro Northern Study Area development moratorium with an end date of October 26, 2007. Mr. Rabinowitz questioned why Orange County had veto power over the moratorium proposed by the Town of Carrboro. There was discussion about the history of the Joint Planning Agreement, and various agreed-upon joint approval procedures for various planning-related proposals. Mayor Chilton noted that the county was represented by several NSAPIRC members not living in Carrboro. Mr. Rabinowitz restated his concern that the county had ultimate authority over part of Carrboro's planning jurisdiction.

IV. Schedule Changes: Members agreed to reschedule the July 26 meeting to July 31. Mr. Bryan asked that the term "final recommendation" be changed to reflect that the recommendations would still be subject to change. There was discussion about whether or not to continue to aim for the September 25 public hearing on any recommended ordinance amendments. Members decided to stay on the current public hearing schedule. Mr. Dudenhausen noted that the current schedule listed this meeting as the last meeting facilitated by Dispute Settlement Center staff.

V. Follow up to the Second Public Forum: Mr. Williford described results from the visual preference survey, consisting of 950 comments. Members made observations about commenters' general tendencies. There was some discussion about how heavily the survey results should be weighted, given that turnout by the general public was low.

Ms. McGuire said that small group comments would be categorized by previously used theme categories. The group discussed different ways to categorize the comments. Members agreed it would be helpful to compare the comments against current policies and ordinance provisions, as well as to alternative development patterns, for example

regarding greenspace, traffic, roundabouts, and other transportation aspects. There was a request to compare the comments from the two forums as well, perhaps via a matrix format. Ms. Price asked for inclusion of community services such as schools, day cares, stores. It was agreed these would fall into the land use category. Ms. Buckner asked that maps be provided at the next meeting; staff agreed.

Members felt it would be helpful to compare the comments to current provisions. Ms. McGuire pointed out that the guiding document would be the Northern Study Area Plan rather than the Land Use Ordinance. She asked members to characterize their impressions, and to get more specific on emerging major issues, so that staff could compare these to the existing Plan.

Mayor Chilton noted that the overall density in the study area was projected at 2.1 units/acre, but some subareas, such as the Hogan properties, could develop out more densely than others, such as the land on the west side of Old NC 86. Such a pattern would be at variance with current policies. Mr. Williford suggested that if downzoning were proposed, it be at very low density such as one unit per 50 acres to more effectively slow the pace of development, observing that historically, zoning at one unit per 10 acres did not effectively slow development. Responding to a question, he said Lake Hogan Farms density was about 1.2 units/acre. Mr. Carnahan stated that density needed to be 7 or more units/acre to support public transit use. Mr. Williford noted that if zoning and density requirements were perceived by developers as “too onerous,” they resorted to proposing “exempt subdivision” to avoid the development review process, which resulted in very low density.

In response to a question, Mr. Williford responded that the Northern Study Area Plan was a land use plan. Ms. Price, speaking about how to incorporate Carrboro’s “community character” into this study area, noted that zoning should follow the density/use concepts embedded in the land use plan.

Mr. High suggested zoning every commercial lot as “mixed use,” and developing a definition for different size lots (for example, a 10-acre lot must include a day care). He felt that if density were increased, there would need to be specificity in the regulations to help ensure aesthetic appeal.

Mr. Carnahan reminded members that there had been general consensus to use the current small area plan as a conceptual basis on which this committee could elaborate. He recommended tying the forum comments to the goals and strategies already in the Northern Study Area Plan. He recommended a target overall density be specified, one that would support commercial development and use of public transportation. There was discussion about how restrictive to be in selecting or courting commercial development.

Mr. Dudenhausen suggested the group describe its vision of the final product and work backward to describe the tasks and schedule. After members’ discussion about how to analyze the forum comments and survey results in the context of the goals and strategies of the Northern Study Area Plan, Ms. McGuire agreed to list the comments next to the

Plan goals and strategies; to note which strategies had been implemented vs. those that had not; and to flag which suggestions could be incorporated under the existing Plan. Members agreed this would be helpful.

Members asked for a list of possible changes to the Plan's goals; a list of suggested changes to zoning; descriptions of existing and proposed zoning districts; and a map to illustrate site-specific suggestions from the fora as compared to the current Plan. Ms. McGuire suggested using the following questions to guide the next meeting's discussion: what is working vs. what is not working; is there something fundamentally wrong with the current Plan; have conditions changed since the Plan was developed and adopted; how has the area developed differently from the way envisioned in the Plan? Mr. Williford observed that there are more than 900 acres yet to be developed.

Ms. McGuire agreed to consult the Town Attorney about the circumstances under which a property could be rezoned while a conditional use permit application was pending. Mr. Bryan pointed out that the Joint Planning Agreement may need to be revised if proposed changes to the Plan are significant. Mr. High asked if the rezoning of a given property could be postponed until such time that a developer applied for a permit.

Members requested the analysis of forum comments be conducted and distributed prior to the July 19th meeting. Staff members noted this would be difficult but they would try. Mr. Bryan thanked Mr. Dudenhausen and Ms. Langdon for their meeting facilitation over several meetings and the two public fora.

VI. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m.