

Steering Committee Notes ▼

Town Hall, Dec. 13, 2018

Attendance:

Steering Committee Members: Oliver Johnson, Sarah Edwards, Warren Grimes, Donna Bailey-Taylor, Mark McDonnell, Mike Fleming, Teresa Daughtry

Town Staff: Stephen Wensman

Stewart: Jake Petrosky, Jay McLeod

Talk of the Town:

- **New Smithfield app has been launched by the downtown association**
- **No BUILD grants were awarded to the Town**
- **New communications/marketing officer for the Town, starts work next week**

Draft Goals Modifications

Presented the modified goals for approval and got feedback on proposed changed and wording that may need minor modifications.

- **Vibrant Downtown goal re: “smart placemaking”**
 - redefine “creating unique places or spaces”
 - “creating unique place and programming”
 - don’t use the word “events” in lieu of “programming”
- **Balance Growth goal re: “key corridors”, defined as entry gateways and entry corridors**
 - Use “gateway and commercial corridors”, and may be worth defining explicitly (roads, intersections, etc.)
 - One member mentioned that a recent interested business (a national restaurant) was not interested in moving to Smithfield because of the appearance of the entrances into town. No consistency of buildings/uses/traffic/etc. at entrances. “Jumbled up”

Transportation Recommendations

Presented Kimley Horn’s preliminary transportation recommendations and got feedback.

- **Roundabout at Outlet Center Drive (Alternative 1)**
 - General unhappiness about confusing nature of alternative, but better than what’s currently there.
 - Locals hate this intersection, and will probably be unsatisfied with any solution that does not provide a “real” fix. This needs to be balanced against what is actually achievable.
 - Possibility of overhead signs before the roundabout to replace the small signs, which are inadequate.
 - Kimley Horn to investigate further and create cost estimate. Include overhead signs in cost estimate.
- **East Market Street (underpass)**
 - Received well by the steering committee.
 - Creates an appealing connection between Outlet Center and downtown.

- Would require additional right-of-way, so need to designate that on a plan.
- Ask Kimley Horn to investigate location/configuration of the bike lane, given the potential design speed of the road. Committee support for off-road bicycle facility, possibly one side sidewalk / one side multi-use path.
- **West Market Street (downtown)**
 - Get updated traffic counts, particularly on individual lanes – outside lanes probably underutilized, could lead to conversation about actual volumes on Market Street. Also, regional traffic vs. local traffic – how much freight traffic / thru-traffic is actually on this road, esp. since the 70 Bypass carries regional freight?
 - Keep collision records, esp. with parked cars.
 - Downtown Association might be able to include a study of realignment of Hwy 70 Bus. as part of a new vision for downtown.
 - How will conversion of 70 Bypass into an interstate affect Hwy 70 Bus.?
 - Priorities for improvements to Market St:
 - Preserve or add on-street parking
 - Enhance safety
 - Enhance pedestrian environment, for downtown businesses
- **Road Hierarchy**
 - Intersection spacing requirements may need updating.
 - Planning Dept. needs to know how much right-of-way to require for each road type.
- **Ditch vs. Curb-and-Gutter**
 - Need more guidance for which cross-section is appropriate when and where.
- **Priority Pedestrian Improvements**
 - Need to add connection to the east of I-95 to the school, and MST to the north of town.

Future Land Use Recommendations

Presented residential suitability map, residential character areas map, and proposed Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and character areas, and got feedback.

- **FLUM Draft Map (new)**
 - Area around outlet center might have some mixed-use component
 - Question about how to convert existing uses in the Conservation area to something else.
- **Industrial / Office**
- **Office / Residential**
 - Comment about removing the O-I zoning district, and sprinkle those uses throughout other zoning districts as appropriate, with standards for design/development (where appropriate)
- **Commercial**
- **Mixed Use Center**
- **Downtown Core**
 - Discussion of “Active Use” map
 - This map positively received, and want to use to present concept to Council
 - What is the extent of downtown?
 - 4th Street on the east
- **Downtown Supportive**
 - Charleston style homes could be going on Narron property NW part of downtown

→ **Corridor recommendations**

- Need to intro entry corridor overlay district zoning (in plan and presentation for public mtg)
- Brightleaf Blvd, mention shared driveways and cross access

→ **Heavner property**

- Colors on site need to be fixed – (projector was washed out and need to remove all white from the slide, if possible). MF reads as COM and COM buildings are gray.
- Need large poster with call outs and precedent imagery for public meeting

→ **Floodplain protection**

- Jake: maybe not require additional stormwater measures, revise to green the floodplain.
- Stephen: Requires floodproofing or raising floor
- Q: What is property value of properties in floodplain? (total town and as a proportion)

General discussion

General discussion about ideas and areas that need addressing, including wrap up and next steps.

→ **What about 100-year farm and farm protection layer/areas?**

- Potential for specific requirements for residential subdivisions next to farms.

→ **Discussion about area around the West Smithfield Elem. School – topic was breached, but no conclusions reached.**

→ **General discussion about traffic improvements and that concern over traffic should not restrict future growth or development opportunities.**

→ **Next public open house scheduled for 02/19/2019, at the Fire Station. Press release materials coming soon.**