

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting
 October 22, 2013
 Lord Spencer Compton Conference Room

Present:

Steering Committee Members	Bonnie Nelson
Kemp Burdette	Tom Pollard
	Jennifer Rigby
Deb Hays	Robert Rosenberg, Chair
J. Clark Hipp	
Paul Lawler	

Absent:

Carlos Braxton	Randy Reeves
Howard Capps, Vice Chair	Frank Smith
Liz Hines	Kevin Smith
Linda Pearce	

Staff Members
Glenn Harbeck
Christine Hughes

Others Present: Ryan McAllister, Kathleen Riley, Jamal O’Neal

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 PM by Robert Rosenberg.

The minutes from the August 27th meeting were discussed. Paul Lawler noted that the “things that can be improved” list did not rank or weight the entries. Clark Hipp noted that none of the lists were ranked or weighted. The minutes were approved.

Christine Hughes led a discussion on the Neighborhood Planning Areas effort, including how the city was divided into 12 planning areas and 43 neighborhood planning areas. One meeting will be held in each of the 12 planning areas as part of the comprehensive plan development. Steering Committee members are asked to serve as small-group facilitators during these meetings. Each group will be lead through a “Keep it, Change it, Dream it” activity and the feedback gathered during these meetings will form the foundation of the neighborhoods policies of the comprehensive plan. A map of the planning areas and the neighborhoods is attached, along with the meeting schedule.

The committee was presented with the bound version of the GFA. Ms. Hughes noted that copies went out to 33 local business leaders and “key person interviews” would be conducted. Several members of the committee offered to help make necessary contacts for these meetings. Bonnie Nelson asked that each document be labeled “draft” and dated. Ms. Hughes outlined the scenario planning process, which will expound on the GFA and create scenarios for the public to

consider. The first scenario will be a base-line, or status quo, scenario of what Wilmington might look like if current trends are carried forward. Two additional scenarios will be created, a moderate change and a significant change scenario. All will be put forward for public input.

Glenn Harbeck offered a review of the “City of Wilmington Comprehensive Plan Information Update,” stating this plan is unprecedented in Wilmington. He further stated that there may be some confusion between this process and the CAMA plan, and indicated that the city’s comprehensive plan is going to be an urban framework plan. The city’s outdated zoning code, which demands a suburban-style built environment, will be updated following the adoption of the comprehensive plan. A staff implementation committee has been set up to help ensure participation and ownership among the implementers of the plan; this will also help ensure that we have staff resources and budget in place to make the plan happen.

Mr. Harbeck reiterated that this will be a CIP-driven and land development-oriented plan. While efforts to integrate with the work being done by FOCUS, the county, CFPUA, the MPO, and other groups are ongoing, the city’s plan stands alone in terms of form and function.

The committee engaged in discussion of the process itself. Deb Hays asked about the joint city-county unified development ordinance (UDO) efforts of the late 1990s/early 2000s. Ms. Hughes stated that, while much effort went into the process, and the city did emerge with a UDO, the code itself was not significantly changed from its previous iteration. Ms. Nelson indicated that we should be considering a no-growth scenario for Wilmington and that the national trends being presented are not relevant to Wilmington. Mr. Lawler stated that we need other perspectives on the growth projection presented in the GFA. Tom Pollard noted that the projections came from the North Carolina Department of Commerce and that the baseline scenario should illustrate the carrying capacity based on existing vacant land and the current land development regulations; that result would yield a reasonable growth projection. Mr. Lawler and Ms. Nelson stated that there needs to be discussion of what the issues are. Mr. Harbeck indicated that the GFA is primarily a study of history, not projections, and suggested that, once completed, the urban framework would be a valuable companion to the GFA.

It was suggested that each of the committees agendas include some time set aside for such general discussion of issues.

Mr. Hipp asked that staff pull together information on past plans to determine what research and/or projections were used for their creation.

The committee confirmed that the next meeting, scheduled for November 26, remain as scheduled.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM by Robert Rosenberg.

The next steering committee meeting is November 26, 2013 at 4:00 PM.