



## Agenda Abstract

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date:	June 12, 2023
Department:	Planning and Econ. Dev.
Agenda Section:	Regular
Public hearing:	Yes
Date of public hearing:	April 20, 2023

#### PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Stephanie Trueblood, Public Space and Sustainability Manager  
Shannan Campbell, Planning and Economic Development Manager

#### ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

**Subject:** Hillsborough Comprehensive Sustainability Plan (2030)

##### Attachments:

1. Executive Summary
2. Comprehensive Sustainability Plan Link (Full Version):  
<https://assets.hillsboroughnc.gov/media/documents/public/draft-comprehensive-sustainability-plan-full-plan.pdf>
3. Resolution adopting the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan

##### Summary:

The Hillsborough Comprehensive Sustainability Plan will establish a framework for achieving the community's vision for growth and development while establishing feasible steps to meet the town's renewable energy goals.

Town staff together with consultants VHB have spent the last two years researching, reviewing relevant documents and plans, conducting significant community outreach/visioning, and drafting the plan for review. Public comments on the draft plan were invited for six weeks in March and April 2023. Staff and consultants continue to make minor edits and corrections as they are found. No major content edits are anticipated between now and adoption, however if any edits are identified by the Town Board they can be incorporated.

All comments and feedback compiled through the planning board review process, joint public hearing, and public comment period have been captured and incorporated into the current version, linked above to the town website due to file size. The only remaining changes will be grammatical and formatting- no content changes.

##### April 20, 2023 Joint Public Hearing Draft Minutes:

###### A. Hillsborough Comprehensive Sustainability Plan

Casadonte said the Planning Board and town board have been reviewing the draft plan for several months and will continue to review. He said tonight is mainly for public comments about the plan. Campbell said a staff presentation about the plan has been prepared and asked Casadonte if he would like to hear the presentation or the public comments first. Casadonte called for the presentation.

Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood came forward to summarize the background for the draft plan. She said she and Campbell are the town's project managers for the plan, and they have worked with VHB for third-party consulting work. She said some representatives from VHB were present to answer

questions. Trueblood said that the draft plan has been in development for two years and that all municipalities are required by general statute to have a comprehensive plan in place. Trueblood walked through the plan's key elements and implementation with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. She emphasized the town's objective to develop the plan through the lens of sustainability and equity. Trueblood said drafting of the plan began with extensive community outreach to conduct a survey May-August 2021. She said all town departments and some employees from Orange County government have provided input. She said numerous town boards and committees have been involved in the plan's review, which have all been conducted in public meetings. Trueblood said that several focus groups were involved in forming the draft plan and that the plan includes an appendix to inform of all participating organizations. Trueblood said the plan is in the adoption and review phase and the public comment period will close the following day at 5 p.m. She said the plan is on track for adoption in the summer, but ultimately the town board will decide when the plan is adopted.

Casadonte asked for any comments or questions from the boards prior to calling for comments from the public. Chandler asked if outreach was done to specific neighborhoods to ensure input from a neighborhood perspective. Trueblood affirmed and said the town's communication division maintains a neighborhood liaison list that includes homeowner association and community watch contacts.

Hillsborough resident John Dempsey came forward and said he read the plan and was impressed with the amount of work and thought that had gone into it. He said he is encouraged that the document exists and is moving forward. He said Hillsborough sits in a unique spot within the watershed and he would like to see the town think about partnerships with other communities with the goal of conservancy for Seven Mile Creek. He suggested utilizing the document as an opportunity to update the town's unified development ordinance with watershed protections, as well as having the town hire a watershed manager.

Johnston asked if anyone on staff already oversees watershed management. Assistant Town Manager Matt Efird said the town has a stormwater and environmental services division with two staff members. He said one is a recognized expert and serves with many stormwater management groups. Trueblood said conservancy is also addressed through her division's collaboration with groups like Eno River Association and Triangle Land Conservancy. Weaver said the town is also a member of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association.

There were no other public comments on this item.

#### **May 18, 2023 Planning Board Recommendation Draft Meeting Minutes:**

##### **B. Hillsborough Comprehensive Sustainability Plan**

Casadonte asked about the timeline for adoption of the plan. Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood said the Hillsborough Board of Commissioners would review the plan in its final form in June. It could adopt the plan then or postpone adoption.

Casadonte asked if board members had any new questions, noting that members had previously made extensive comments on the plan.

Polly asked if something could be added to the chapter on tourism and economic development about the town's efforts to procure Hillsborough-owned businesses and historically underutilized businesses. Trueblood said there were plans to develop a database for underused businesses. Campbell noted that updating the current database of local businesses will require significant staff time, especially to identify businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, or other people of color because many businesses are owned by more than one person.

Salvi asked if the plan had been made accessible for the general public. Trueblood said staff had used best practices for making it user friendly. At this board's suggestion, a four-page executive summary was added at the beginning of the plan. Acronyms are avoided, and each chapter follows the same format.

Johnston asked if there was a version history to track changes made to the plan. Trueblood explained that staff maintains a database that tracks all changes made in response to public comments, but it includes changes at all levels, so it would be hard to convert it to something broader that reflected high-level content changes only. She said staff will probably include the database in the packet sent to the town board.

Polly asked if the board could have more time to review the document. Trueblood noted that the six-week public comment period had ended, and staff were no longer considering content changes. Since the plan was meant to be generated from the community, not by town advisory and elected boards, she was reluctant to add content at this stage. She added that the plan would probably be updated every five to seven years.

Motion: Schultz moved to recommend adoption of the plan by the Hillsborough Board of Commissioners as is. Polly seconded.  
Vote: 7-0.

**Financial impacts:**

Various.

**Staff recommendation and comments:**

Staff recommends approval.

**Action requested:**

Approve, approve with conditions/modifications, or table/continue discussion of the item.