

**Minutes of the Planning Board
Special Called Meeting - Electronic
June 24, 2024**

Members Present: Jim Robertson (Chair), Peter Hanley, Tamara Peacock (Vice-Chair), Donna Waters, Barbara Cromar, Laura Flores, Beth Robertson, Chauncey Whiting

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Tyler Morrow, Current Planning Manager, Matthew Manley, Strategic Projects Manager, Sam Hayes, Planner. Lew Holloway, Community Development Director

I Call to Order. *The Vice- Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. A quorum was established.*

Chair attended via Zoom.

II Approval of Agenda. . *Mr. Hanley moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waters and passed unanimously*

III Approval of Minutes - None

IV Old Business - None

V New Business

V(A) Gen H Comprehensive Plan Presentation.

Matthew Manley, Strategic Projects Manager discussed the process that staff and the consultants went through on the draft plan. He discussed having public comment on it and having the presentation by the consultants tonight. The Planning Board can make revisions on this tonight. He also discussed the Short Term Implementation that will be discussed after the presentation.

Lorna Allen with Bolten Menk gave a presentation to the Planning Board. Ms. Allen stated there are several topics to discuss. There will be several items to cover today. They will talk about the content of the plan. She knows the Board has a copy of that and they will still be gathering feedback and making tweaks. They will talk about the context and the intent of the plan as well as the vision for the future. That will be the Board's road map for the future. She had focus areas for over the next twenty years that they would also be discussing. They will also discuss the Downtown Master Plan asl well as how this plan will be implemented over the coming years. Also the collaboration with other entities will be discussed.

Ms. Allen stated today is a spotlight on the plan and focusing on the main chapters within the plan. The plan was developed over four stages. She explained how the plan was put together and each stage of it.

Ms. Allen stated this was a twelve month process and staff was involved in over 50 engagement opportunities. They also collected thousands of comments. She discussed how they arrived where we are today and the growth that has occurred.

Meg Nealon, Nealon Planning (Zoom) shared some of the context on the plan and explained how they began the process. She discussed how much growth would come to Hendersonville. She talked about the population of Henderson County for the city is about 13%. She discussed the data and building permit information and potential household growth. She showed a growth chart and explained this. She gave a presentation on the growth, vacant land and existing conditions. She explained the different uses and the different parcels. She talked about what the development pattern should look like twenty years from now. She explained the data they took in the come up with information for the plan. She talked about the land supply and density and fitting housing into these areas. She discussed the vision of the future and guiding principles. She showed a vision map to the Board and explained it. She talked about four major categories and discussed each one.

Ms. Allen explained the downtown part of the plan and design guidelines and the character downtown. She discussed the study area and explained what that was. She discussed the building height overlay.

Ben Hitchings, Green Heron Planning (zoom) discussed how to pursue the vision of the plan. He mapped out three things in the implementation plan and discussed each one. He discussed the goals and strategies and the operational policies. He discussed the components of the implementation plan.

Mr. Manley discussed the survey that was open to the public. The comments can viewed online. He gave the main take aways to the Board. He explained tonight there will be public comment time, the Planning Board will have time to review and then make a recommendation to City Council. He stated this would go to the Downtown Advisory Board July 9th and City Council Public Hearing July 10th and then for the rest of the month of July revisions and edits will be made by the consultants and then the final draft will be heard on August 1st for consideration and adoption by City Council.

Vice-Chair opened the meeting for public comment.

Ginny Faust, 727 Florida Avenue stated she was the City Planner from 1985 until 1991 and her late husband Roger Briggs was the City Planner from 1993 until 2005. Roger was the person who developed the ides of the Neighborhood Compatibility meeting. She talked about the Comp Plan from 39 years ago and how things have changed. She is impressed with the work that has been done to engage the public. She is impressed with the implementation. Her hat is off to everyone that has been part of this process.

Karen Hensley stated her concern is about the elderly and the senior population that we have. Has transportation coming into town been addressed such as Apple Country Transit? Lew Holloway, Community Development Director stated Apple Transit is right in the midst of their master plan, their routes and how they plan to operate. He believes Council will be receiving a presentation on that the same evening the Comp Plan is being presented on July 10th. Apple Transit is being overseen by Henderson County in partnership with a local non-profit that actually runs the bus system. The city does contribute financially each year to that and it is federally funded. The routes are driven more by the county.

Vice-Chair asked if there was anyone online via Zoom.

Ken Fitch, 1046 Patton Street stated the 400 pages of the draft plan had many issues and the Planning Board has a big decision to make. They are representatives of the public and it will effect the lives of the residents of Hendersonville. He discussed the future being in the balance and the visual aspect of the plan. He discussed having buffering elements and the interchanges and thoroughfares should be included. He talked about the Entry Corridor. These protections must be specified in any plans going forward. The vision map is unsettling. There are many areas of concern which the comments have shown. He discussed development and infill outside the Main Street corridor. Great care needs to be taken with the downtown plan. He talked about some of the historic properties in the area that we must not forget that are not on Main Street. He talked about 9th Avenue and Fleming Street and remnants in that area that are

historic. It is a place holder that has great meaning. This is a distinctive workforce neighborhood and he was concerned about the designation of Institutional. He suggested redesignation of that area. He talked about Sam Mills being the first black City Councilman and the area where he lived being considered institutional. He was concerned about the overlay here and that neighborhood being at risk. The blue area needs to be changed to yellow in this area. There are issues with the orange areas as well. This orange area will contain infill development. He was concerned about this orange area and all the traffic it will generate with the multi-use category. There was previous discussion on infill areas several years ago. He discussed those issues and concerns. Multi-family and multi-story development will effect the neighborhoods. He stated we are not Asheville and we are a historic community. We do not want to be Asheville. He was concerned about the removal of trees. He asked that they look at this as a resident's point of view. He talked about the city's vision statement and priorities which is to protect existing neighborhoods and provide a high quality of life for all citizens. We should not forget this. He gave examples of development intruding on residential areas impacting the quality of life. He discussed the "long term" already being here and we are arriving soon in a situation where we might no longer see Hendersonville as a small mountain town nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Vice-Chair thanked Mr. Fitch and stated they still have work to do on the details and the changes that will be coming so as a vision is he in support of the master Comp Plan? Mr. Fitch stated he is support of the first part the revitalization but he has issues with the map. The map is the problem. He talked about the green spine not being adequate because it is really concerned only with wetlands and there are other natural areas that need to be considered. The vision and revitalization is wonderful and thinks they will have support for this.

Lynne Williams, Chadwick Avenue stated she has been to all these meetings along the way. She honored Neil Brown for his work on the Planning Board. The ETJ and the Ag areas that is employment and she did not see this on the employment map but it is employment for our communities and needs to be considered. To Ken's point the backbone is not enough to keep an organism alive. Just having a simple backbone is not enough and why don't we see the tree canopy overlayed on these maps to really understand what we need to preserve. She talked about the western Ecusta Trail and her belief that it is a marketing scheme. She stated unless we show people we are serious about preserving land along the trail then it will be a marketing scheme and all that rural land will be built into apartments. She stated Lennox Park is a historically black neighborhood and what she is seeing here is gentrification. She has a huge problem with that. She felt like there needed to be height restrictions in the Blue Ridge Mall section. There is terrible traffic over there and she was concerned about putting residential in this area. She talked about online shopping pushing and how will you support the local shopping. That pushes all the money out of our neighborhoods. She felt that open space should be preserved. She talked the Spartanburg Highway area and seeing five floors there. That is too dense. Her concern is all the green space areas on Spartanburg Highway will be gone. She asked how will we prevent gentrification downtown and in the 7th Avenue area. Did the consultant team have any non-white employees? She stated a lot would be changed downtown if the plan is to stack it with four story buildings. How will this plan protect our small independent businesses? She discussed the 7th Avenue District and when she hears surgical infill she hears gentrification. How will we prevent that? The renderings show white skin on everyone and she has a problem with that too. The implementation strategy, how does this protect Ag land? How does the plan address sustainability and design, land management, character and history? How does this address air bnb's, second homes and investment firms buying up all the housing? She stated currently she objects to the fact that our City Council there's four out of five members that aren't elected and she thinks it is inappropriate for them to vote on this plan and she wanted to state that for the record. She asked this team to avoid fee in lieu of to prevent the out of town developers from buying their way through everything. They talked about the Boards and the Boards are currently stacked with developers and real estate agents and architects. Where are the people that represent the non-private interests. If the Comp Plan isn't about to expire, what is the rush. We have a 2030 Comp Plan. She was concerned about protecting the birds and wildlife and how they will be protected. How did the elderly get to submit their comments with limited

internet access and mobility? She talked about the percentage of feedback that was given and roughly only 5% gave any feedback. She asked that the survey be reopened prior to the City Council meeting. She stated the photos looked like Asheville and how will they maintain the character of Hendersonville. She talked about the different projects and their impact. The Planning map need to be customized with consideration from street to street. Design the plan around protecting our land and wildlife. She talked about the climate and Apple Country.

Vice-Chair closed the public comment and opened for Board discussion.

The Board discussed adding recommendations to the plan. Mr. Manley stated they are looking for feedback and primarily Chapter 4 and Chapter 6. Anything they take issue with.

Discussion was made on the ETJ and this not being incorporated into the city but city zoning will still remain. Mr. Manley explained why the ETJ was brought into this plan. Mr. Holloway explained having the city and the county working together on the development areas to figure out what that will look like. Ms. Cromar suggested that since this was a city plan the areas in the county should be noted and defined in this plan. She discussed living in Charlotte and wanting to live in a little town and the historic areas that were torn down there because of development. She talked about having little new neighborhoods and what it has become now. She does not want this to happen here.

Mr. Holloway discussed the Strategic Housing Committee that has been put together. They have held a kickoff workshop and he discussed what their goals would be. He discussed the implementation plan and what the Board should be looking at. The vision map was discussed and the land use map. He discussed creating a UDO and that being one of the primary projects that will come out of this. The plan does lay out an intent and a direction but it does not establish a rule of tomorrow in terms of the zoning code. The zoning code is the legal document and this is the visionary document.

Discussion was made on land bank and Mr. Hitchings explained establishing a land bank and dilapidated properties.

The term affordable housing was discussed and having definitions for assisted and affordable. Mr. Holloway stated we don't have a definition section. He stated the term affordable changes year to year.

Chair apologized for not being in attendance and he discussed being involved with the committees and talked about Mr. Fitch's comment and the area between the high school and hospital. Goals are great but need to be achievable.

Vice-Chair stated they would do one motion for the Comp Plan and one for the Implementation Strategy.

Ms. Waters would like for the photos to be smaller and the maps to be larger. She discussed adding things to the map.

The Board discussed various items about the plan. Mr. Holloway stated the Planning Board and City Council by state statute are required to review their Comprehensive Plan and determine whether or not a proposed rezoning is consistent or inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. That is the legal role that it plays. If you want to have zoning you have to be thinking about your future land use and Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion was made on the renderings and the proposed uses. Discussion was also made on the recommendations in the motion.

Ms. Robertson moved the Planning Board recommend City Council adopt the Gen H Comprehensive Plan as presented with the following recommended revisions:

- 1. Adding a statement about the jurisdictions reflected in the map, the ETJ, unincorporated county, etc. on the character area map.***
- 2. Add definitions related to housing affordability.***
- 3. Look to address readability of maps.***
- 4. Look at the zoning near the hospital that was referenced in the discussion and if not zoned MIC currently then reconsider the Institutional Designation.***
- 5. Streamline where possible the main body of the document.***
- 6. Look for opportunities for better photo examples that's relevant to Hendersonville.***

Mr. Hanley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

More discussion was made on the implementation process.

Mr. Hanley moved that the Planning Board recommend City Council adopt a resolution accepting the list of Short-Term Implementation Projects Table associated with the Gen H Comprehensive Plan and that there be additional communication between Board and staff regarding any changes. Mr. Whiting seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VII Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Jim Robertson, Chair