

Town of Youngsville
P. O. Box 190
134 US 1A South
Youngsville, NC 27596
(919) 556-5073
Fax (919) 556-0995
Townyngs@townofyoungsville.org

MINUTES

JANUARY 9, 2019

5:00 PM

WORK SESSION

YOUNGSVILLE COMMUNITY HOUSE

Mayor Fonzie Flowers called the Work Session of the Town of Youngsville Board of Commissioners to order at 5:16pm. In attendance were Commissioners Graham Stallings, Catherine Redd, Joseph Johnson, and Terry Hedlund. Commissioner Larry Wiggins was not in attendance. Also, in attendance were Interim Town Administrator Roe O'Donnell, Town Clerk / Tax Collector Emily Hurd, Planning and Zoning Administrators Bob Clark and Andrew Thomas. A representative of the Franklin Times was also present.

The only item on the agenda was to continue the discussion of the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) Draft. Rick Flowe explained he had been working with the Planning Board and Staff for approximately six months preparing the CDP. He stated this Work Session was so the Board could dive into the draft.

Mr. Flowe gave a brief recap of what a CDP's intended uses are. He explained the CDP is used as an information guide for decision making. Mr. Flowe stated that knowing how to move forward and identify opportunities was important. The CDP helps the Town create opportunities where it is desirable and encouraged. The CDP also helps to identify challenges, as well as helping owners / developers make decisions. Mr. Flowe explained the CDP shows the opportunities for growth that is respectful of taxpayers already in the community, "not just growth for growth's sake". He stated the CDP encourages the right kind of growth and will discourage the wrong types of development.

Mr. Flowe stated they had looked at how the CDP will inter-relate to other agencies. The CDP is structured to be useful so that other agencies can easily find the information they seek. Mr. Flowe stated the CDP needed to be clear so there will be no unnecessary risks.

Mr. Flowe stated there was a Blueprint Page that comes before the CDP which shows action items that need to happen, some sooner than others. He explained Youngsville was in good shape and there were minimal problems.

Mr. Flowe noted there would be enlarged maps included in the CDP for easier viewing. The CDP will be available for viewing at Town Hall and online. Mr. Flowe explained both Boards would have large binders with all this information, including the enlarged maps.

Mr. Flowe stated the Town should never lead with zoning, as zoning is a representation of what already exists. He explained the Town should always lead with the CDP, as it will help the Board see if timing is good for that area.

Concerning large growth, Mr. Flowe stated the CDP will help give the ability to make informed decisions when used as a roadmap. The CDP helps the Boards see the bigger picture. Mr. Flowe stated the Planning Board has undertaken this process and recommended the Draft CDP for consideration. He noted the highlighted items will need to be filled in after adoption.

Mr. Flowe noted that some data is misleading, so using linear growth for updating purposes is preferred. He stated the Boards would need to look at the most recent for a gage on change. When building a town, it's not about codes, it's about residential, commercial, mixed use, etc., along with the preservation of certain areas. The Town needs a plan to help with this. Mr. Flowe stated the CDP should never be finished, as circumstances warrant updates.

Mr. Flowe noted there was a lot of information to cover in a few hours. He explained information was repeated in the CDP, as most people do not read the CDP the whole way through. People only read the section that is relevant to them. Repeating the information in sections will help to ensure proper knowledge to those that read it piecemeal.

Mr. Flowe explained the first part of the CDP was made with public contributions, noted on pages 28, 32-34, that included questions about the present and future of Youngsville, top priorities, etc. He explained Youngsville was in a better position than a lot of communities our size due to leadership and location. Goals listed are direct from the surveys. Mr. Flowe stated the Board can list the goals in any order they want, though the Planning Board left them as they were. There is a checklist to knock out the most critical steps and tasks. The CDP become the backbone of the Youngsville Development Ordinance (YDO) to achieve these goals.

Mr. Flowe stated the CDP will help create opportunities for investment and is essential, so the Town does not bear all the costs of growth. If the right seeds are strategically planted, the Town can reap the benefits of what we are trying to achieve. Finding partners in investors and using the CDP the right way will help achieve what the Board wants. The CDP is designed to be feasible for people emerging in our community, such as transplants, retirees, baby boomers, millennials, etc. The language is written around future audiences. The downtown area is critical, and the Board needs to be careful to preserve it; for example, don't have a development what will draw people away from the downtown area. Mr. Flowe strongly noted that the "wrong decisions about the wrong projects in the wrong locations can change the town forever". The Board has a hand on the throttle of the commercial development market and they need to be careful not to oversupply. No decision is sometimes a decision and it can be tough. Mr. Flowe recommended some up-zonings in certain areas that don't have an oversupply yet.

Mr. Flowe stated the Land Use Plan will have the proper balance of residential and non-residential in the Mixed Use District (MU). He noted there was a lot of the MU along US

#1 Highway. Mr. Flowe stated the CDP proposes to replace it with multifamily or light commercial, as we want to see a combination of things that are driven around the grand plan. He stated we want to continue to use the spirit we currently have, which is mostly existing commercial. The MU district has a great deal of opportunity but should not be rezoned all at one time. There is no need to flood the market. Mr. Flowe noted some areas may need to change sooner than others.

The Downtown Plan has opportunities for “seed planting”. Mr. Flowe stated there were areas marked in the CDP that represent growth opportunities, noting the area was under-utilized. Some areas may intensify, which is good for the Town and the property owners. Mr. Flowe noted there was less flexibility on West Main Street. He stated there was already some residential on Main Street and encouraged more residential as Youngsville needs a downtown population. The YDO will have flexible tools for areas outside of downtown and won’t be as detailed as the downtown area. Mr. Flowe stated the people are the base of the Town; everything is based on the people. The Board needs to create good, safe places for the people along with conservation areas.

Growth Opportunity Maps show where the growth will start, then expand. These maps show where they think the pressure points will start to appear in town. Several catalyst areas include downtown and US #1 Highway, though growth is limited due to highway restrictions and future corridor plans.

Mr. Flowe stated the NCDOT bypass was a great concept at the time but was no longer healthy for this community. He explained traffic was like water and will flow the path of least resistance. If we create a flow of traffic away from downtown, then the motorist will flow away from downtown as well. Mr. Flowe explained they developed a southern Truck Route that will help remove the trucks from Main Street but not the regular traffic. He noted this would be a more expensive path, but the feeling is NCDOT will also do other improvements as well. The southern Truck Route will connect US #1 Highway with Highway 96. Removing the truck traffic, but keeping other traffic on Main Street, will help to maintain the downtown area. Mr. Flowe gave several examples. He stated the Town would need to start working on funding as soon as possible since these projects do not happen quickly. He noted the truck traffic was a huge issue at this point and a dialogue needed to start now. Mr. Flowe noted that railroads also divide towns, especially underground railroads.

Mr. Flowe explained the Blueprint breaks down all the steps that need to be taken. Some can be taken at the same time and others can be done down the line as funding becomes available. He reiterated this was a short list and the Town was in good shape. Mr. Flowe noted updating the YDO goes in hand with what the Board wants to achieve. The Board needs to create win / win situations where the community wins but so do the projects / developers, without losing the character components that make Youngsville “Youngsville”. Successful ventures will be a success for everyone and will also call attention to the downtown area. Some items on the Blueprint will take longer than others. Mr. Flowe noted the sidewalks were very important and were a component of new development. He noted everything would need to work well together so that Youngsville ends up with the desired outcome.

Mr. Flowe asked for any questions, comments, or ideas on where the Board would like for Youngsville to head. Commissioner Redd stated the content of the CDP looked great to her, but she had minor edits. Mr. Flowe explained the CDP was written by committee and acknowledged that edits would be needed to make it flow better.

Clark wanted to discuss the map that included the Utility Service Area (Future Land Use) and Mr. Flowe reminded the Board they wished to extend their area to lead to more annexations / growth. He explained the Town already had an annexation agreement with Wake Forest, which means the ETJ would need to be refined to exclude those areas. Mr. Flowe also noted that subdivisions / developments were split on the current zoning map and those partial subdivisions would be given up as well since it creates confusion. He stated there was not much for the citizens to gain from keeping them in the ETJ. Moving outward, they created a boundary based on what made sense along both sides of US #1 Highway and the future utility service area. Mr. Flowe stated Staff was working with Franklin County to expand the ETJ at a later point. Clark explained this related to the concept that O'Donnell brought before the Board. O'Donnell stated the first step would be to ask Franklin County to pass an Ordinance that would allow Youngsville to annex if the developer wanted water and sewer services in the Utility Service Area. If the discussions / Ordinance with Franklin County takes too long, Mr. Flowe noted the CDP, including the maps, can be amended. Clark explained this would strengthen the tax base to cover services and Franklin County is already leaning towards helping Youngsville with the Utility Service Area Policy, as they acknowledge this is a valid concept. Mr. Flowe noted that it would be prudent to not show the land uses during negotiations. He also stated that it would be harder to get Franklin County to give up areas if they are already engaged in a project.

Commissioner Hedlund noticed the round-a-bout was not mentioned in the CDP and Clark explained the improvements at the 5-Points intersection were moving quickly. These improvements will push the round-a-bout out further, so it was left out of the CDP. Clark stated it hasn't been forgotten, just pushed further back. O'Donnell stated NCDOT Staff has approved the upgrades for the 5-Points Intersection and they will recommend funding during the March meeting. Mr. Flowe stated the first drawings did have the round-a-bout, but were taken out based on the upcoming improvements.

Mr. Flowe stated all changes needed to be sent to either him or Clark and the CDP can be updated before Board action. Clark noted there were several activities / investments over the past couple of years. Based on these improvements, Clark requested the developers leave alleyways behind their businesses for future through alleys, for example the parking lot behind the Woodlief's building. He noted the infill will help both the downtown and property owners. Mr. Flowe stated the ability to handle parking is always important in downtown areas, such as how to connect and flow smoother. The CDP highlights a pattern for alleys to help connect downtown, including pedestrian meeting and stopping delivery trucks from using the parking on Main Street. The CDP also shows how to tie Main, Cross, and Railroad Streets together without using other side streets. Mr. Flowe noted the infill of residential in the area will need clear, multipurpose paths to allow access to housing, restaurants, shopping, etc. We need to make sure that we take

advantage of the unique pattern of buildings, which includes gaps, to keep downtown looped together. Mr. Flowe encouraged the Board to look at the area in new ways. He stated the YDO would encourage easements to have pedestrian access. Mr. Flowe stated this was a great opportunity and did not see any down sides for infill development in downtown. The CDP does not show any drawings over existing buildings, but they do show some future usages. Mr. Flowe noted the Town did not want a building to stay vacant and go to waste. He stated there was great potential with the surrounding network around the downtown area and it needs to be looked at carefully. Mr. Flowe noted there was a good pedestrian grid where sidewalks either need to be installed or retrofitted. Touches such as these add a lot to the community. The CDP shows the sidewalks; however, it did not touch on them as much as the buildings / properties. Mr. Flowe stated the sidewalks need to be connected so as not to discourage pedestrian traffic.

Clark noted both he and O'Donnell have received comments from some citizens. Mayor Flowers stated several people were at the last Board Meeting, but he wasn't sure how many people in town knew this was on the table. He noted there were comments about keeping the public informed and expressed the Board and Staff do everything they can to get the information out to the public. Mayor Flowers stated he wasn't sure what else we can do to let people know about the projects / plans. Commissioner Hedlund stated he always shares this information with the Kiwanis Club and Franklin County Economic Development Committee during their meetings.

Commissioner Johnson noted the lack of sidewalks on the side streets takes away from the downtown feel and expressed concerns about how this effects the downtown businesses. Mayor Flowers agreed with Commissioner Johnson and noted that he also agreed with Mr. Flowe's concerns about the bypass killing the downtown businesses. Mr. Flowe stated that a wrong situation could turn bad quickly. Commissioner Johnson noted the High-Speed Rail did want to lower the tracks and agreed with Mr. Flowe's assessment that it would divide the town. Hurd noted that, not only did they want to have the railroad tracks below grade, they also wanted to close two out of three streets that cross the railroad tracks. Mr. Flowe noted that even though things have quieted down on the High-Speed Rail, the Board needed to stay on top of that situation as it could drastically change things for the worse.

Mr. Flowe reminded the Board to send him any edits and he will get the edited Draft back to the Board. He noted they have started work on the YDO and it is moving along. O'Donnell asked the Board if they wanted to have a Public Hearing during the February Board Meeting to hear comments from the public on the CDP. If needed, the Public Hearing can be continued to the March Board Meeting. The CDP can be adopted by Resolution after all the discussions have been completed.

Mayor Flowers thanked Mr. Flowe for the in depth look at the CDP Draft. He stated he appreciated all of their hard work.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.