

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF HENDERSON**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARCH 26, 2009**

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a special called meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, Hendersonville.

Those present were: Chairman Bill Moyer, Vice-Chairman Charlie Messer, Commissioner Larry Young, Commissioner Chuck McGrady, County Manager Steve Wyatt, Assistant County Manager Selena Coffey, Attorney Russ Burrell and Deputy Clerk to the Board Teresa L. Wilson.

Also present were: Planning Director Anthony Starr, Code Enforcement Director Toby Linville, Delinquent Tax Collector Lee King, Recreation Director Tim Hopkin, Planner Alexis Baker, Senior Planner Autumn Radcliff, and Public Information Officer Pam Brice.

Absent were: Clerk to the Board Elizabeth W. Corn and Commissioner Mark Williams.

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. The purpose of this special meeting is a Workshop for discussion between the Commissioners and the Etowah / Horse Shoe Communities Plan Committee and a presentation of the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Draft Plan by the Chair Kenneth Allison.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Planning Director Anthony Starr led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**INVOCATION**

County Manager Steve Wyatt gave the invocation.

**DISCUSSION / ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA**

*Commissioner Messer made the motion to approve the agenda. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

**WORKSHOP ON THE ETOWAH AND HORSE SHOE COMMUNITIES DRAFT PLAN**

Anthony Starr stated that the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Advisory Committee, formed by the Board of Commissioners on September 4, 2007, was responsible for developing and recommending a community-specific comprehensive plan for the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities. After meeting monthly for 1 year, holding two public input sessions, and utilizing available research provided by Henderson County and area experts, the committee has completed the Draft Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan.

On February 19, 2009, the Planning Board held a joint meeting with the Etowah and Horse Shoe Advisory Committee and voted unanimously (9-0) to send forth a favorable recommendation on the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan.

At its meeting on February 18, 2009, the Board briefly discussed the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan and decided to set a workshop to discuss the draft plan in detail. Mr. Ken Allison, Chair of the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Advisory Committee, will give a power point presentation highlighting each section and recommendation contained in the draft plan and answering any questions that the Board may have.

Staff requests no action to be taken at this meeting. Prior to adopting the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan the Board of Commissioners must hold a public hearing.

DATE APPROVED:

The Advisory Committee members are as follows:

Kenneth Allison, Chairman

Hayes Albea

Richard Briggs

Debbie Ducote

Bruce Gosnell

Jerry Merrill

Jeri Peterson

The following members of the committee took part in 95% of the process, they both moved out of the area. John Antrim was the original Chair and with his resignation Kenneth Allison took on the responsibility of Chair. John Antrim (9/4/07 – 10/17/08) Maryann Parish (9/4/07 – 10/17/08)

A public input meeting was held soon after the committee first met, November 2007, to obtain public input about the concerns, ideas, and vision for the community that citizens had for those areas. They utilized that public input throughout their planning process and arriving at their recommendations. It was a common statement to refer back to what the public input was; the board was well grounded in meeting the objectives they heard early on.

The committee met a number of times and developed a draft plan. Once they were comfortable with the draft plan they held a second public input session in which they took feedback. Most of the feedback was very positive. Minor adjustments were made to the plan based on the feedback and the plan was formally presented in December.

This committee was formed to study issues for the Etowah / Horse Shoe communities and charged with looking at a number of areas:

Etowah and Horse Shoe Plan covers:

- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Agriculture
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Services
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use and Development
- Community Character and Design

This process was identified by our County Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 2004 which outlines an objective of creating a series of smaller area plans throughout the county.

Process

- August 14, 2007 Communities Plan Charter Adopted
- September 4, 2007 Communities Advisory Committee formed (9 members)
- Public input meeting held November 13, 2007
- Committee met 16 times and developed draft plan
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Public input meeting held December 2, 2008 to obtain feedback on draft plan
- Planning Board review and recommendation (the Planning Board voted 9-0 to recommend the approval of the plan)
- Board of Commissioners review, public hearing and approval

Kenneth Allison, Chair of the Etowah / Horse Shoe Small Area Planning Committee provided a power-point presentation of the Draft Plan.

**Etowah and Horse Shoe Population**

1990 – 7209  
 2000 – 7919  
 2006 – 10396

This area has seen significant growth in the last sixteen years. Since 1990 the study area has grown 44.2%. The main thing heard early on and through the process was “maintain rural character.”

**Age Composition in Planning Area in 2000**

|     |       |      |
|-----|-------|------|
| 19% | 70+   | 1501 |
| 7%  | 65-69 | 590  |
| 40% | 35-64 | 3218 |
| 13% | 20-34 | 1009 |
| 5%  | 15-19 | 387  |
| 11% | 5-14  | 846  |
| 5%  | >5    | 368  |

Between 1990 and 2000 the greatest increase in population age groups in the Planning Area is in the 70+ range at 44.9%. The greatest decrease in population age groups in the Planning Area is in the 20-34 age groups at 16.3%.

**Income Groups in Planning Area in 1999**

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Less than \$10,000   | 6.00%  |
| \$10,000 to \$24,999 | 18.90% |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999 | 16.30% |
| \$35,000 to \$44,999 | 13.70% |
| \$45,000 to \$59,999 | 16.50% |
| \$60,000 to \$74,999 | 11.20% |
| \$75,000 to 99,999   | 9.00%  |
| \$100,000 +          | 8.50%  |

**Key Recommendations**

**Section 3.1 Natural and Cultural Resources**

Maps were shown reflecting the natural resources of the area including streams, wetlands, flood plain, public water supply areas, natural heritage inventory sites, and regulated mountain ridges.

- Prohibit public waterline extension in areas designated by the Henderson County 2020 Comprehensive Plan as Rural/Agricultural
- Incorporate water supply standards into major subdivision regulation
- Adopt local stormwater regulations
- Conduct a feasibility study to consolidate wastewater treatment plants
- Incorporate environmental assessment requirements into major subdivisions
- Incorporate stricter steep slope regulations into LDC

The committee would like to ensure that water is available prior to subdivision approval and a significant amount of construction is finished. The committee is not recommending more stringent rules than are already in place. No environmental inventories are done prior to development and should be compiled as part of the subdivision approval process. Currently in the study area (Etowah / Horse Shoe) 24% of the land area is in present use as farmland which would include forestry, horticulture, and food crops.

**Section 3.2 Agriculture**

- Make agriculture appealing to younger generations by creating incentives for these generations to keep farming (the average age of farmers in Henderson County is sixty – statewide is fifty-eight)
- Determine the need for and possibly establish a small farmers’ market in the Planning Area.
- Continue to expand education efforts for farmers and adjoining property owners

- Encourage schools to buy and use local foods

**Section 3.3 Housing**

Statistic – In the last three (3) years 171 homes and approximately 3,662 lots were approved in the study area by two (2) very large developments were proposed and one (1) has been tabled with a little over 600 lots.

- Affordable Housing should make up 10% of housing in new major subdivisions with 100 or more dwelling units
- Create partnerships between residents of the Communities and organizations like the Community Foundation
- Establish a funding stream for affordable housing projects by creating an affordable housing trust fund

**Section 3.4 Community Facilities & Services**

- Increase school capacity at Etowah Elementary, Mills River Elementary, and Rugby Middle School
- Establish multifunctional YMCA, governmental or nonprofit full service recreation facility and community center in Planning Area.
- Consider establishing a service district to create revenue to support recreation in the Planning Area.
- Incorporate pedestrian and bicyclist friendly measures in the core of the Communities.
- Establish greenway on existing Norfolk-Southern railroad line
- Increase law enforcement presence and patrol

**Section 3.5 Transportation**

- Implements improvements such as traffic signals or changes in road geometry at:
  - Cummings Road and US Hwy 64W
  - Etowah Park Road and US Hwy 64W
  - Battle Creek Road and US Hwy 64W
  - Broyles Road and S. Rugby Road
- Create a new connector between Morgan and McKinney Roads
- Improve transportation network:
  - Widen and Straighten Brickyard Road from NC 280 to McKinney Road
  - Implement better access management standards along Brickyard Road from US Hwy 64W to its intersection with McKinney Road
  - Lower speed limit along US Hwy 64W from 45 MPH to 35 MPH from Morgan Road at the fire station to Etowah Valley Golf Course

**Section 3.6 Economic Development**

- Continue to support small local manufacturing operations by avoiding regulations that would inhibit these types of business
- Encourage small retail centers in Etowah and limit commercial expansion in Horse Shoe

**Section 3.7 Land Use and Development**

- Eliminate maximum densities allowed for multifamily development from all residential districts except R1
- Replace R-40 in the southernmost portion of the planning area with R3
- Replace R2MH and remaining R-40 areas with R2
- Replace RSMH zoning around north course of Etowah Valley Country Club with R1
- Create a Main Street along Brickyard Road in keeping with the character of the communities
- Add Local Commercial Zoning:
  - Between Old Highway 64, Sunset Hill Drive and Oakland Hill Drive
  - Along both sides of Morgan Road between its intersections with US Hwy 64W
  - Along south side of US Hwy 64W from Horse Shoe Gap Village LC Zoning District to existing CC District in Horse Shoe
- Add Community Commercial:

- To south side of US Hwy 64W between County border and Old US Hwy 64
- Expand around existing CC District in Etowah to include additional commercial uses and property

Ms. Jeri Peterson stated there were more comments on the Main Street recommendation at the public input meeting than any other that showed an area of concern. One citizen was very upset and voiced that the committee was thinking of it as a town, as incorporation was on the minds of a lot of the people attending the meeting. The citizen was satisfied after further discussion explaining that the area would be the nucleus of Etowah.

### **Section 3.8 Community Character & Design**

- Create Planning Area Overlay District
  - Establish design standards for nonresidential uses in the Planning Area Overlay District
  - Require sidewalks for new commercial business
  - Create new sign requirements
  - Eliminate front and side yard setbacks along Brickyard Road from US Hwy 64W to McKinney Road (or other suitable roads)
  - Incorporate standards to limit light pollution

Chairman Moyer asked for comment on Appendix 3 – Implementation Schedule, which reads: The following table shows an approximate schedule for implementation of the plan's recommendations and action strategies. It is anticipated that this schedule will change over time and need periodic revisions and updates.

Anthony Starr responded that a lot of the specific times assigned were initially indicated by staff based on what they felt the Planning Staff work load would be at the realistic timetable in terms of accomplishing some of these tasks. These are flexible and certainly would change over a few years.

Chairman Moyer questioned that staff has looked over the plan and felt it was feasible.

Anthony Starr responded that this was the discussion by the committee and staff and that some plans such as the plan to conduct a feasibility study focused on consolidating the existing wastewater treatment plants into one publicly controlled and operated plant, not actually consolidate the plant by then, just a study to see if it makes financial and operational sense to do so.

Chairman Moyer asked if the NCDOT has provided help with the transportation issues.

Anthony Starr stated that this is a starting point; from a staff standpoint the transportation recommendations are something that can be used to work from at the MPO level if it is a project to be accomplished or work with the district staff toward seeing if they would be warranted.

Commissioner McGrady noted that this presentation was given to the Transportation Advisory Committee today.

Kenneth Allison stated that some of the issues are state regulations and beyond the scope of local.

Anthony Starr stated that he had observed a lot of processes back and forth and agreement was not met on every issue. The committee has done their homework and put a lot of their individual time into this plan.

Commissioner McGrady felt that a lot more discussion was warranted before a decision was made. He commended the committee and staff for their work on this project. In regards to the reduction of solid waste and recycle piece he was surprised given the other recommendations i.e. wastewater etc. that the idea was put forward on the need for a regional incinerator in Etowah.

Ms. Jeri Peterson stated that this had been a personal passion / idea from Jerry Merrill just to bring it to attention.

Chairman Moyer asked Anthony Starr in regards to the Land Use section, if this had been approved by the Planning Board and brought to the Board of Commissioners as a recommendation.

Mr. Starr answered yes.

Chairman Moyer asked if these recommendations could be acted upon without going back to the Planning Board.

Mr. Starr answered no; this will act as an extension of the Comprehensive Plan. There will be a separate mechanism as required by state law; the rezoning process.

County Manager Steve Wyatt stated that the Board's action would be to direct the process to begin and provide public input and public notice.

Chairman Moyer stated that the Board of Commissioners could proceed, adopt the plan, and then have the Planning Board work through the process.

Commissioner McGrady noted with respect to zoning changes recommended there's a lot of different parcels and owners and questioned if these changes were a reflection of interest of the property owners?

Anthony Starr stated that the process afforded an opportunity to give input. They did not get a lot of push back on the zoning regulations.

Commissioner Messer felt that some of the issues of the plan were already in place or in the works.

Commissioner Young stated that all of these plans would be at a cost to the county.

Chairman Moyer felt that the Board would need to have further discussions.

Commissioner McGrady noted that there are some interesting concepts within the plan, one in the recreation area, the committee is recommending considering the establishment of a service district to create revenue to support recreation in the planning area. This is a new concept for Henderson County.

Chairman Moyer stated that based on the questions and comments, at the Board's next meeting a public hearing would be set to allow input from the citizens.

**ADJOURN**

*Commissioner McGrady made the motion that the meeting adjourn at 7:50 p.m. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

Attest:

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Teresa L. Wilson, Deputy Clerk to the Board

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William L. Moyer, Chairman