

**HENDERSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
AND THE HENDERSON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
APRIL 6, 2004 MEETING**

The Henderson County Planning Board and the Henderson County Comprehensive Plan (CCP) Advisory Committee met on April 6, 2004, for a joint meeting at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Land Development Building, 101 East Allen Street, Hendersonville, NC. Planning Board members present were: Tedd Pearce, Leon Allison, Vivian Armstrong, Mike Cooper, and Walter Carpenter. County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee members present were Jack Lynch, Hall Waddell, Paul Prosky, Larry Blair and Wayne Carland. Others present included: Josh Freeman, Project Manager; Nippy Page, Planner; Karen Smith, Planning Director; and Kathleen Scanlan, Secretary. Planning Board members Tommy Laughter, Paul Patterson, Todd Thompson, Paul Patterson and Cindy Dabaibeh were absent. Also absent was Selena Coffey, Budget and Management Director.

Tedd Pearce and Jack Lynch called the meeting to order.

Mr. Pearce said that the Committee will not review the revised Growth Management Element section because there were just minor changes. He was concerned about the time frame and whether the Plan would be completed in time. Mr. Freeman said that he is further along in the document and said that by the next scheduled meeting, 99% of the document will be complete. He said the Implementation section won't be complete because he needs guidance from the Commissioners, as well as the County Manager. After some discussion, Mr. Pearce said that he would like all Committee members to have by a completed document by Thursday, April 15, 2004, that will be similar to the document that will be turned in to the Board of Commissioners, if we had approved it. Committee members agreed that in addition to the April 19, 2004, meeting they would also meet on Wednesday, April 21, 2004 and decided to change the time from 4:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to enable the Committee to work longer on the sections received.

Mr. Freeman started his review with the Housing section. He said this draft is Land of Sky's document and added he did not make any modifications to it. He said the purpose of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for doing a full-blown housing strategy plan. Ms. Smith said the full-blown study will get into detailed information about the specific problems in different parts of the County and that, what is written in this draft gives a general overview. She said that the Housing Board that Selena Coffey is on has funding available the County can apply for to get a more detailed study done, but it was not accessible to us at this time for this portion of the Plan. Mr. Freeman said the broader purpose of the Plan for the Housing Element would be to nail down, in more detail, what needs to be done regarding affordable housing issues. He said that what this document is doing, is giving more broad-level changes that are needed to be made to the Zoning Ordinance in the near future. He said this Committee can express the desire for more detail of what specific changes we need to make to provide affordable housing. Mr. Waddell said his understanding of a Comprehensive Plan is to identify areas that need further study and it is not supposed to serve as ordinances or pass legislation or to try to get specific on issues, as this suppose to be a general plan about things that need to be looked at. Mr. Waddell feels that showing units should not be mentioned because no one is qualified to make those types of decisions. Mr. Pearce said he would like to have a mechanism to develop ways to create affordable housing. We need to take the populated areas of the county and do small area plans in all of these areas to see that they are properly zoned. There needs to be adequate protection for the other items that are being worked on so there will be follow through. Mr. Freeman said that a

small area plan needs to be as comprehensive, at a smaller scale, as a countywide comprehensive plan. He said a smaller plan should derive guidance from higher-level policy, like a sewer and water master plan, a recreation master plan, a housing master plan and an economic plan. He said by taking that higher level of information and zooming into a small community. We could find out how these policies affect the community. Mr. Lynch stated that Land-of-Sky should have all the information regarding affordable housing because they have been working with the County on this issue for over three years. Ms. Smith said that Land-of-Sky had looked at housing issues on a regional level. The last plan was done for four counties and the group that Ms. Coffey works with has also done a plan for all of these groups combined. Ms. Smith said that the funding the County is seeking would allow us to focus on Henderson County. There were some further discussions and the Committee said the County should consider incentive-based measures such as allowing manufactured homes in more residential zoning districts. After discussion on agriculture and affordable housing, Mr. Freeman presented the initial recommendation from the Land-of-Sky Regional Council. Ms. Armstrong questioned figures showing most people could not afford a \$141,750 home and insisted on wanting a definition of "affordable housing." Mr. Carpenter said the definition could be a home that costs \$ 80,000 or less. Mr. Lynch said a moderate-income housing market is to sustain quality of life. Mr. Freeman said many government, as well as grant foundations, give money for affordable housing and have their own definitions. Mr. Freeman expressed his concern against suggestions that there was not an affordable housing crisis in the County and felt that the situation would be better left to the market. Mr. Freeman added, "What in the world do you propose, if you don't propose regulation and you don't propose investment into affordable housing?" Mr. Pearce said there are things that can be done and people are working in affordable housing now that didn't exist previously and things are happening. Mr. Prosky stated that affordable housing has been defined over and over and depends on what you are applying that information to. He said that if it is income related than it is, but it does not have to exclude anything, it just can present a framework for discussing different types of housing. Mr. Waddell said that he cannot support all of the recommendations in this section. Mr. Pearce said that there should be less vague language because it would make it easier to find consensus among the Committee, Commissioners and the public.

The Committee reviewed the recommendations and made the following changes (indicated in **bold** the changes the Committee wanted added or changed or suggestions and ~~strike through~~ the items the Committee wanted deleted from the document):

1. "The County should consider more proactive planning **and zoning** through regulations...." The rest of the sentence was unchanged.
2. "Accessory dwelling units, including garage apartments, ~~should~~ **may be** allowed in **some or all** residential zoning districts." The rest of the paragraph was unchanged.
3. "The County ~~should~~ **may want to** consider undertaking historic assessment of housing stock...." The rest of the sentence remained unchanged.
4. ~~Manufactured homes are not allowed in many of the residential zoning district.~~ The County should consider allowing manufactured homes in more of the residential districts. Manufactured homes are not allowed in most of the residential zoning districts. Most of the manufactured homes are located in the Open Use District, because they are allowed there, and it is easy to place them there (no zoning permit required). The rest of this section was stricken.

Ms. Armstrong said that regarding inclusionary zoning, it is pretty much standard procedure in some other areas, such as the area where she used to live in New Jersey, but that Henderson

County is a long way from needing to do something like this. She feels there are other tools the County could use. Mr. Waddell agreed and said he had a problem with the words “inclusionary zoning” which would require developers to build a certain percentage of housing within the means of moderate-income persons. He said he does not want “inclusionary zoning” in the document.

5. “Inclusionary Zoning” section, as well as, the example table of inclusionary housing program characteristics was stricken at the request of the Committee. Many of the Committee members tended toward incentives such as allowing garage apartments in more residential zoning districts, but reacted against restrictions such as fast track review that would give priority to plans for affordable housing. The Committee wanted to add a general clause in other County Ordinances to foster affordable housing and possibly review the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to see if anything else can be done. The Committee also thought the issue of rental units should be addressed. By looking at County regulations which cause the lack of growth in the rental market. Again, the Committee wanted to see a better definition of “affordable housing” and want Staff to outline the problem.

The Committee discussed the Agriculture Element of the Plan. Mr. Waddell said he is trying to understand what the dollar value of the agricultural community in Henderson County is and the importance and the unimportance to place on it. He said it depends on the size of what the industry is. Mr. Freeman said that figures more recent than 1997 were hard to find. Committee members were concerned about the consistency of the figures. Mr. Carland said he feels that there are more jobs in agriculture than what is quoted in the Plan. Mr. Lynch said that he didn't feel there shouldn't be any details regarding this issue. Ms. Smith asked Mr. Freeman, “Since the County is under a grant dealing with agriculture, will they require figures that are in the Plan?” Mr. Freeman said no, they would like us to identify the overall economy.

Changes made in the agricultural element (shown as **bold** and ~~strike-through~~):

Mr. Pearce said consider stating in the beginning of the agricultural element of the Plan **that the statistics and information available are very scarce and do not seem to correspond with the reality of what is happening in our County as far as the number of jobs and income, but the following is an example that represents a summary of the information that is available.**

Note: Keep the table in, **but take the total agricultural sales and average net sales figures out.**

Policy A-01 – Action: Provide ~~equal~~ access for farm and forest enterprises to economic development and **ensure** tourism promotion support services.

Action: **Continue to** ensure a well-prepared agricultural workforce.

Action: **Continue to** support **and expand** a “buy-local” program for Henderson County agricultural products.

Note: Take out the sentence with this action that reads: “A goal is to consider agricultural products from outside the county only when they are not available locally.”

~~Take out~~ Action: ~~Provide ongoing product market counseling and marketing assistance to farmers and related professionals. A full-time county or Chamber of Commerce staff~~

~~person to provide this assistance. Regular office hours by NC Department of Agriculture Marketing Division staff in the Chamber of Commerce Offices. Regular marketing seminars for the agricultural sector will complement direct marketing assistance. This outreach effort could be organized by Chamber staff, NCDA, or other public, private and non-profit organizations. Direct marketing assistance and local seminars should be augmented by aggressive advertising, campaigns designed to make farmers aware of these services.~~

Action: **Consider establishing** a publicly owned retail facility for local agricultural, forest and craft products.

Note: Rewrite the body to word the need for establishing a publicly owned retail facility for selling agricultural products that is similar to the Hendersonville Curb Market and the WNC Farmers Market in Asheville.

Under Policy A-02

Action: **Consider establishing** a permanent ~~\$4 million~~ revolving fund to buy important farmland and to resell it with farmland restrictions. The Committee decided to keep the first sentence only that reads, "Once established this revolving fund is intended to operate indefinitely."

Note: All the rest of the paragraph ~~strike out~~.

Action: **Consider conducting** an annual campaign to solicit local contributions. (Delete the rest of the sentence).

Action: **Consider providing** affordable tax and legal advice to farmers each year related to estate planning and farmland preservation.

Action: **Consider establishing** an Adopt-a-View program for private contributions to protect farmland and scenic vistas in each community.

Action: ~~Write 10~~ **Actively identify and pursue** grant applications ~~each year~~ for state, federal, and other support for Henderson County farmland preservation. ~~including support for staff assistance to carry out the actions listed above.~~

Action: **Consider adopting** a buy-local policy for county government including a local preference policy for procurements such as food purchases by the school system.

Action: **Consider modifying** County and perhaps Municipal zoning and other land development codes to allow for increases in density **on and off site** in exchange for permanent farmland protection.

Action: **Consider introducing** the "paired parcels" concept to County and perhaps Municipal development codes that will allow density to be transferred from areas of important farmland to areas that are well suited to receive additional units.

Action: Review County codes to ensure that on-farm sales, farm-related bed and breakfast inns, agri-tourism related businesses, and other secondary, agriculture-related operations are permitted in (all districts).

Note: The Committee asked to consider adding to "operate in districts that are appropriate." Mr. Pearce said to consider an RA District.

Action: Encourage compact and infill development in contrast to sprawl on agricultural land.

Action: Review all future county codes to ensure that they support agriculture.

Note: Committee asked to consider combining both action wording together.

Note: Delete Policy A-06 and all Actions under Policy A-06 (Pages 27 – 29 from draft).

Adjournment. Mr. Pearce and Mr. Lynch made a motion to adjourn. All members were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Tedd Pearce, Chairman,
Henderson County Planning Board

Kathleen Scanlan, Secretary

Jack Lynch, Chairman
(CCP) Comprehensive Advisory Committee