

March 22, 2010

The Union County Planning Board met in a work session on Monday, March 22, 2010, at 8:35 p.m. in the Union County Board of Commissioner's Board Room, located on the First Floor of the Union County Government Center, 500 North Main Street, Monroe, NC, to review, discuss and comment on the draft 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

PRESENT: Mark DiBiasio, Kathy Broom, Jim King, Jeff Gerber

ABSENT: John Darsey, Thomas Steffen, Patricia Freeman, Jim Thornton, Scott Heslink

ALSO PRESENT: Richard Black

Chairman King called the meeting to order at 8:35 p.m.

The Planning Board continued the process of reviewing and comparing a group of development policies, vision statements and corresponding policies with the Goals, Policies, and Strategies contained in the Draft 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

After the three work session reviews, Planning Board and staff completed the identification of those vision statements, policies, and action requirements not addressed in the 2025 Comp Plan. Those statements, policies and action, not addressed in Comp Plan, were then organized and placed in the format of the 2025 Plan – Goals, Policies and Strategies. The following list is the results of the three work session reviews and the reorganizing/reformatting of the vision statements, policies and actions not addressed by the 2025 Comp Plan.

VISION STATEMENTS and CORRESPONDING POLICY: A Comparison with Draft 2025 Comprehensive Plan

F. Housing and Neighborhoods

Goal F-3: Encourage Infill Development/Discourage "Leapfrogging"

Create incentives to help provide for infill development and develop locational criteria to identify appropriate locations for multi-family developments.

Policy F-3.1 Factors used to determine preferred locations for multi-family developments shall include: close proximity to employment and shopping centers, access to major thoroughfares, the availability of public services and facilities, stormwater management issues, and compatibility with adjacent areas and land uses.

Policy F-3.2 Incentives may be provided for infill development and the rehabilitation of existing housing already provided with urban services to acknowledge the lower service and infrastructure costs to the taxpayer. Development requiring the expansion of services and infrastructure may be required to assist in the cost of such service expansions.

Policy F-3.3 New infill development shall be architecturally compatible with existing structures, landscape features and the streetscape within its vicinity.

Policy F-3.4 Housing throughout the county shall be required to meet or exceed minimum housing and nuisance abatement standards to eliminate unlawful activity and blight. Individual structures that have declined to levels beyond reasonable rehabilitation and repair shall be removed so as not to adversely affect the economic health of other nearby structures.

Policy F-3.5 All forms of housing development should be discouraged from “leapfrogging” into the countryside, thereby destroying the rural character of the County, breaking up large farmland areas, and making the provision of urban services more costly to taxpayers.

Policy F-3.6 Detailed neighborhood and small area planning (or public information meetings) shall be supported so as to encourage greater resident involvement and closer attention to area specific issues and needs.

Goal F-2: Strengthen and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods

Policy F-2.1: Use Appropriate Transitions to Protect Character

Strategies:

- . Preservation of tree cover (Inserted as the 4th bullet under Policy F-2.1)

Policy F-2.2: Improve Neighborhood Connectivity

Strategies:

- . Provision of pedestrian and bicycle linkages within developments and between residential and commercial areas (Inserted as the 2nd bullet under Policy F-2.2)

Priority Implementation Actions

2. Amend The County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance. (Page 41)

Q. Establish special design standards for big box retail stores so as to avoid accepting the “anywhere USA” standard, minimal building design.

R. Government may employ a combination of incentives and disincentives to protect existing trees and/or require the replacement of trees removed for development.

S. Large parking lots shall have landscaped planting islands and perimeter buffer strips and may use other materials and design technologies to intercept and absorb runoff from the parking surface. Parking requirements shall be carefully gauged by land use so as not to create excessive paved surface areas.

I. Attractive Community Appearance & Image

Major urban corridors and gateway roadways should be landscaped, contain understated signage, and architecturally appealing buildings. Both urban and rural roadways shall be free of clutter and litter. Strict enforcement of regulations concerning junked vehicles and dilapidated structures shall be observed. Area citizens place a high value on the unique history of our community, and emphasis shall be placed on preserving historic buildings and places.

Goal I-1: Appearance and Development Standards for Major Travel Corridors

Coordinate planning efforts with municipalities to improve the appearance and image of urban and rural roadways.

Policy I-1.1 The important economic, tourism, and community image benefits of attractive major travel corridors through the area shall be recognized. Such entryway corridors shall receive priority attention for improved appearance and development standards, including landscaping, signage, tree preservation, underground utilities, streetlights, and sidewalks.

Policy I-1.2 The significance of street trees in providing visual relief, summer cooling, improved air quality, and livability shall be recognized through public policies to encourage their planting and maintenance. Highest priority shall be give to gateway travel corridors and urban centers. Programs urging voluntary efforts by property owners shall be preferred. Power companies shall be encouraged to aesthetically trim trees under or near power lines when those trees do not interfere with power line operations.

Goal I-2: Appearance and Development Standards for Neighborhoods

Encourage preservation of the natural features of the development site and minimize the visual impacts of the built infrastructure.

Policy I-2.1 The placement of utility wires underground shall be required in all new public and private developments. Existing overhead utilities should be relocated to underground locations when redevelopment or new construction affords the opportunity and where high visibility justifies the cost.

Policy I-2.2 Clear cutting of trees (except those grown for timber) shall not be permitted without advance notice and just cause. Those proposing the removal of trees shall demonstrate a good faith effort to incorporate existing trees into their site designs. Incentives and disincentives may be used to encourage appropriate site development.

E. Intergovernmental Coordination and Cooperation

Goal E-2: An Active, Involved Citizenry

Area citizens have shown a keen interest in the affairs of their local government. There is a can-do spirit driven by civic pride and revealed through broad community involvement. Volunteerism is a constant source of energy and government officials should routinely seek the views of their constituents on growth and development issues.

Policy E-2.1: Local government boards and committees should be roughly representative of the constituent voting population of the planning area.

Policy E-2.2: Neighborhood and special area planning shall be encouraged to foster public involvement in the preparation of closely tailored, action-oriented, special area plans and improvements. Public participation should be a central, on-going feature in all plans.

A. Well-Planned Growth/Economic Development

Goal A-1: Promotion of New and Existing Development

Policy A-1.1: Business Expansion and Development

Strategies:

- Activities that bring new people and businesses to the area, including special events, sports tournaments, tourism, and convention activities shall be encouraged and supported.
- Local economic development and industrial recruitment efforts shall focus on businesses and industries that have a clean air and water quality impact.

Policy A-1.3: Actively Market the County to New Employers

Strategies:

- Economic development incentives shall be identified, evaluated and only implemented after cost-benefit analysis is conducted to encourage appropriate and desirable growth and development within the region. NOTE: Replace 2nd bullet under Strategies in Draft.

The meeting was adjourned around 9:40 pm.