

**KNOX COUNTY TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS  
TASK FORCE  
MEETING**

**Wednesday, April 29, 2009**

**Main Assembly Room  
City County Building  
400 West Main Street**

**MINUTES**

**A. Call to Order**

At 5:39 p.m. Lisa Starbuck called the meeting to order. The following Task Force members were present: Lisa Starbuck, Victoria Defreese, Bob Wolfenbarger, Lynn Redmon, James Bletner, and Jim McEvers. The following MPC staff were present: Mark Donaldson, Mike Carberry, and Jeff Archer. CTV was also there to tape the meeting.

Lisa started the meeting by welcoming Jim McEvers to the task force, he replaced John Schoonmaker. Lisa stated that she was contacted by a neighborhood association person who was interested in TDR after seeing it on CTV. Lisa stated the agenda was to present and discuss the homework that each member was assigned at the March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, when everyone was asked to identify one receiving area and one sending area within their district or area.

**B. Presentations**

**Lisa presented the Northeast County Sector Area**

Lisa presented her work using an oversized land use map, supplied by MPC. She stressed how this exercise was really difficult, especially in identifying receiving areas. She took two approaches: a macro approach and a micro approach. She discussed that a majority of the area has road capacity issues (example, Washington Pike) and would need road improvements if a receiving area was designated. She discussed Rutledge Pike and the incompatible land uses along it. She highlighted McAnnally Ridge and how that is a visual asset to the community, along with House Mountain. She went on to orient everyone, pointing out landmarks such as the jail, schools, communities and the golf course. She proposed McAnnally Ridge and House Mountain as the sending areas.

In using the macro-approach for identifying the receiving areas, she identified Gibbs/Harbeson Crossroads as a receiving area, she pointed that road improvements would be needed and that the area needs an elementary school, stating this could be the carrot for people accepting additional density to the area. She discussed how today, elementary students are bussed all the way to Holston School. She believes that schools should be the center of a community and that in order to designate this area as a receiving area there would need to be a school located in the area. She pointed out the area to the southwest, between Rutledge Pike and the Holston River but, the area contains the dump, railroad yards and the cost would be too significant for this area to be a receiving area.

In using the micro-approach, she identified the Kern/Strong Farm as specific a receiving area instead of large swaths of land.

Questions/Comments:

- Lynn Redmon asked about sewer in the area. Lisa responded, KUB wants to extend sewer in the area. Mark Donaldson and Mike Carberry elaborated on the extent of where sewer is today in the area and how it relates to the Growth Policy Plan.
- Jim McEvers asked about the source of employment in the area. Lisa responded by saying it is difficult to pinpoint the areas employers, but the sheriff's office and schools are probably two main sources.

**Bob Wolfenbarger presented the East County Sector Area**

Bob presented his work using an oversized map, supplied to him by MPC. He used a black and white copy of a land use map that he marked up. He stressed at the beginning of the presentation that he took a long-term view of this process and planning for future generations. Bob described a transitional area (located generally just south of I-40 as a buffer between the rural area along the French Broad and receiving areas around the Strawberry Plains interchange and "Four-way in"/Asheville Highway area. Bob described the "X" on the map as transportation nodes (Carter School area and Strawberry Plains/I-40 Interchange area). He described how the rail corridor north of the Holston River could eventually be a light rail corridor and a spur could be developed to feed into the Carter area. He felt there is an opportunity to dramatically increase density within Carter with mid-to-high rise residential structures. He went on to discuss how areas could be better utilized such as the Forks of the River Industrial Park. He felt that along Asheville Highway higher density could be established since the infrastructure is already in place. He noted that some public infrastructure improvements would be necessary to accommodate added density in some areas. He felt that the area around Sunnyview Primary School could accommodate more density. The sending area that he identified, buffers both the Holston River and French Broad Rivers. Bob felt there will continue to be development opportunities along Brakebill Road.

Questions/Comments:

- Jim Evers asked about the schools and if they are land locked, like they are in the 5<sup>th</sup> District. Bob responded that unlike other areas within Knox County the areas around the schools are not constrained.
- James Bletner mentioned how he thought Bob was right-on in identifying the sending area, mentioning the limited road system, connectivity, and bridge crossings. James continues to ask about what people's reaction would be around the Carter area with a redesign of four-way-in. He recalled attending TDOT meetings in the past out in the community and he viewed resistance to change with what TDOT was proposing. He asked, what were people's feeling about it today? Bob responded by saying how the project was completed one year ago and Kitts Road is a key connection and that he could see the area as a transit node and it will eventually need to be redone for people who want to go towards Jefferson County. Bob pointed out that he sees the traffic volume on Andrew

Johnson as a positive, pointing out how high the traffic volume is on Andrew Johnson Highway.

- Lisa agreed with Bob's approach and highlighted to key successful elements needed, including rail access (she talked about the proposed inter-modal transit center outside the county) and schools (need to be included, were areas are walkable and implements the Town Center approach).

### **Victoria Defreese discussed the exercise**

Victoria discussed how she was uncomfortable with this exercise and did not want her name on any maps. She stated how she liked the idea of centralized schools and brought up an example in her hometown of Indianapolis where there was a community building that was used for gatherings. She spoke to how uncomfortable she was with this subject from a political since, it is alarming and the book that Bob handed referred to at a previous meeting, called Landowners Option, reminded her of the some of 10 Planks, as stated in the Communist Manifesto. She talked about this is an attempt to rid private property rights and a heavy tax burden placed on land owners. She acknowledged that some items that are in the book are voluntary. She said that carrots need to be developed such as paying less tax. She stated that the maps and concepts presented would prove to be contentious in designating areas. She said that she did identify top three issues that she thinks would jeopardize the establishment of a TDR program in Knox County: 1) receiving areas need additional infrastructure and services; 2) strong zoning would need to be in place and there would need to be political consensus; and 3) given the political climate our sector plans and other plans can insure that areas are conserved in the future.

### **Questions/Comments:**

- Lisa commented that there were some interesting points raised, she described the video that Bob forwarded to everyone through MPC. She elaborated how different communities in the video dealt with the political support and the bottom line was that when you related it to taxes and schools people began to care.
- James Bletner agreed that good planning could accomplish conservation and that proceeding with this program would be a slippery slope, we would need to proceed very carefully, if at all.

### **Lynn Redmon discussed the exercise**

Lynn asked the members to imagine a new urban center called "Powelltown." He went on to describe how Powell is a perfect example of sprawl. He thought if we could fix Powell, we could fix any part of Knox County. Powell has the infrastructure including utilities, 3 schools, I-75, railroad, and railroad spurs. Emory road is going through a widening, the third phase is scheduled to be completed. He continued saying: imagine an urban center at the Powell Airport site; he mentioned how Target had an option on this property and the option has since expired due to the economic downturn. It will eventually be a sight for another big box development, but that is not the best use for the land. The area does have some geographical constraints such as floodplains and topography. He believes that there is room for expansion and the area could accommodate high density housing, it already has employment, a hospital, a college, and

industrial land. The idea is that density could be received anywhere in Powell. Lynn highlighted the key is to get explosive growth, were everyone wants to get in there, creating a large demand. One obstacle is that people who live in the county traditionally are there for a reason and do not want the things that come with the city/urban environment, such as additional regulations. One thing that would help is to get a key anchor, such as a corporate office in Powell. The thing that has to be clear is that this does not solve sprawl in the county.

Questions/Comments:

- Lisa commented that she liked the transportation component and the importance on the demand for real estate.

### **Jim McEvers discussed the exercise**

Jim discussed how difficult this is to identify the areas out west. He can see that over time farm preservation is important. He mentioned that he needs to get up to speed more and he will get the map from MPC to do this exercise for the next meeting.

### **C. Discussion**

Bob discussed how he felt constrained by only planning for his sector. Bob went on to say how he is happy to put his name on maps and that it stimulates discussion and education upon the citizenry. He stated that people are looking for options. He discussed the consequences of sprawl and what got his attention during the video was water quality and how utility companies are the ones testing the water and they are only concerned about pathogens and not hormones, they go untested. Bob said 60% of our drinking water comes from the French Broad and 40% comes from the Holston Rivers. He referred to the video and India where the glaciers are melting in the Himalayan Mountains and how this is the source for the country's water and how with the projected melts it will leave the society without water.

Lisa asked MPC staff about their perspective of a recommendation. Mark talked about the Beaver Creek Green Infrastructure Plan and how it identified Karns, Powell, Carter and Gibbs as density nodes, while preserving the areas in between. The four areas could easily become receiving areas, so we have a model. This would protect the watershed while assisting to reinvent the agricultural system. Mark said MPC would draft two working papers, one with a recommendation to move forward with a TDR program and the other with a recommendation to not proceed with a program. In developing the paper staff will identify problems and opportunities with a TDR.

### **D. Housekeeping Items**

Lynne reminded Lisa that they needed to pass the minutes from the past meetings. Lynn made a motion to pass all the minutes from previous meetings and Bob seconded the motion, the motion unanimously passed.

### **D. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be scheduled in approximately 4 weeks. MPC will contact members about the meeting.

**E. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:42 p.m.