

Comments Received from June 30th Greene County Comprehensive Plan Update Open House as of July 10, 2009

An open house was conducted between 4 and 7 Pm on June 30, 2009 in the Greene County Office Building to present the current state of progress in the 2009 Greene County Comprehensive Plan. A number of comment forms concerning current goals and implementation plans were collected. These comments have been consolidated under the categories of the plan and presented in this document:

General Comments

- What about housing issues?
- Need to have a full time grant writer for all departments

Solid Waste

- Improve signage. Move recycling sign inside recycling gates and label difficult recycling bins better
- Recycling advertisement and education should be an implementation strategy
- Good
- The current recycling facility could have better instructions or signs. It's not clear if it's necessary to separate green - brown bottles, where to put junk mail.
- Should put specific dates for when goals will be realized.
- I believe the recycling goal to be weak and the implementation strategy will not be that effective to meet the goal. There should be a strategy to work with solid waste contractors to provide adequate recycling options for customers.
- Prohibit household trash burning under County Code
- Identify grant monies to implement household hazardous waste collection days
- Implementation Strategies #1: While we believe household composting is a viable strategy for this goal, we believe the word voluntary should be included in this strategy.
- Given size of county, I doubt we will need another waste location, which would be costly and be beyond current budget goals.

Tourism

- Establish an attractive sign listing lodging, restaurant, and recreation opportunities at Rt. 29 North and South entrances and Route 33 East and West borders.
- "Promote and maintain" a visitor's center in Ruckersville.
- Niche farming should be under agriculture section.
- Promote event like the bicycling "Tour-de-Greene" in the tourism office or County web site.
- Have clear, strong plans to preserve the dark sky.
- Instead of "establish," continue to promote and fund a Visitors' Center in Ruckersville.
- Improved County Website both for residents and to attract business and tourists.

- Upgrade GIS map system to work with all computers. Work with GPS mapping to improve Greene County locations.
- Visitors' Center in Ruckersville : Congrats on accomplishing this.
- These are all so general as to be meaningless and weak. They should be specific, measureable, and date certain. For example, "by 2010, get all the historic civil wars sites in Greene County identified and mapped." (Just made that one up, but I am working on it if you could provide any help.
- Goal 1 "Preserve important scenic, historic and cultural resources as critical to tourism." The supporting implementation strategy reads "coordinate the preservation of important scenic, historic and cultural resources with the County's future land use plan and appropriate ordinances".
- We recognize the community desire to preserve certain parcels but do not believe the only options for such preservation are land use planning and ordinances. Other tools such as purchase of development rights should also be considered. Further we do not believe there is an existing inventory of such so called "important" parcels. Finally, if the community desires private property be preserved in a specific manner contrary to the current owner's wishes, the community must be willing to take the ultimate preservation step by purchasing the property.
- Goal 4 should be reworded. No comprehensive plan should have a goal of generating new tax revenue. The goal should be the creation of an environment that promotes economic vitality; the result is a multiplicity of benefits including new business opportunities, jobs and increased local tax revenue.
- Goal 5 Ruckersville Visitors' Center will be accomplished before the plan is approved by the Planning Commission let alone the Board of Supervisors, it should be rewritten to "provide support for the Visitors' Center in Ruckersville".

Education

- Improve health and wellness of students with exercise and diet.
- Implement: Continue to build coordination of school wellness programs with parks and recreation programs. Increase opportunities available through Parks and Rec. department.
- The goal on preparing high school graduates for success comes across as "boiler plate" because we stated "should be."
- Teacher salary goal and SOL objectives goal are not appropriate for comp plan. Too involved with inner workings (policy) of school board!
- Piedmont Comm. College is #1 priority. Offer them the top floor of library to get them started.
- Discuss efforts to ensure that all children achieve SOL objectives.
- These are great! I still believe you should have dates, but I realize it's hard to get agreement on them.
- Remove mention of teacher salaries...recommend changing to "retaining teachers"
- The fourth goal and the second implementation strategy should be reexamined for wording.
- Comp Plan should not deal with salary issues. "Retain qualified teachers" would be ok. Get School Board/Superintendent input.
- Look for opportunities to bring PVVC satellite to county.

Agriculture and Forestry

- Consider rural clustering, down-zoning, and other open space protection ordinances.

- Encouraging niche farming needs and implementation strategy – through EDA as well as extension services?
- Needs more implementation on “actively” celebrating farming heritage. Collecting stories is one small step forward.
- Need farmers market in Ruckersville, but not in Standardsville.
- This is very good
- Name organizations to partner with for easements.
- To general. Should be more measurable, “like by 20xx realize no more than a x% decrease in Ag an Forestry lands in Greene County.”
- Mike Santucci expressed his concern on how little was mentioned in the plan regarding forestry
- Ag/forestral districts have no incentive for the landowner...identify incentives.
- For implementation plan, promote land use tax for forest land owners as well. Forestry is the largest land use in the county and very little goals and strategies address this, such as “encourage forest land owners to implement sound forest management plans,” and “provide educational programs.” Ask Jack.Kauffman@dof.virginia.gov for more suggestions.
- Question to the need for more Farmer’s Markets in Greene. Better to put effort into enhancing one market we have. I don’t think other counties have multiple markets.
- Work to develop demand for locally grown products. Get Farm Bureau and Young Farmer’s input.

Economic Development

- Omit “from Ruckersville to Corner Store” in the goal on supporting commercial growth
- Define the goal on supporting commercial growth as the growth area.
- Need and implementation strategy for recruiting business. EDA is trying.
- Implement: Develop a detailed master plan for the Ruckersville area ...
- Implement: Establish an officially appointed center or committee in Ruckersville to assist in harmonious design of residential and commercial development.
- Instead of “consider developing,” change to “develop” an ARB.
- Water is a scarce resource that we need to address forcefully in the plan – Greene County is now at max capacity!
- Town Center for Ruckersville
- Alter commercial building codes to upgrade standards (multi-storied metal shell building unattractive)
- Move enhance image of Greene County as business-friendly, Support rural broadband, and improve 29 corridor up on priority list.
- Develop an ambience and market positioning for Stanardsville built around its historic designation, small town atmosphere and special services
- Restore commercial base of structures in Stanardsville, particularly along Main Street.
- I think making it possible to have broadband fast internet access would be a great help for the Greene Co. economy.
- Typo: “Count-wide”
- What about tourism as an economic development tool?

- Goal #1: "Create incentives for development in preferred commercial growth areas" – Does Greene County have commercial areas where they do not want growth? Shouldn't this goal simply be develop incentives to attract new businesses and retain existing enterprises.
- Goal #2: "Support commercial growth in Ruckersville, Stanardville and the Route 29 corridor from Ruckersville to the Corner Store." Why are these called out considering the commercial success of Lowe's and Meadows Farms as well as the large tract of land ready for development past the corner store, these geographic restrictions are out of place in the comprehensive plan again the concept should be to support the attraction of new business and the retention of existing businesses.
- Goal #7: "Balance the need for increased economic development with controlled residential development and proffer acceptance" - How is this an economic development goal? How do one time proffers rise to the level of economic development? This entire goal should be stricken or at least reworded to remove the concept of proffers as an economic driver in the community.
- Implementation strategy #7: "Study the feasibility of an adequate utilities ordinance." Over the past ten years several attempts to enact an adequate facilities ordinance have failed. This strategy should be dropped as impractical under the current legal structure.
- Implementation strategy #9: "Consider developing an architectural review board to assist the County and development community in setting voluntary standards for new development and re-development." We're not familiar with architectural review regulations that are voluntary. The concept is a uniform set of guidelines that will provide design continuity in a neighborhood or corridor. While we believe a county wide architectural review board would be subject to regular legal challenges in court, if the community really supports such an idea it should be clear their participation will NOT be voluntary.
- Get EDA input.
- What is an "adequate facilities ordinance"?

Natural Resources and Environment

- Protect water quality for fish and habitat for wildlife.
- Very Good.
- Understand VA law may not permit limiting use of septic systems.
- The dark sky in most of Greene Co. is most valuable natural resource and could be an incentive for tourism, amateur astronomers.
- Need something about fish – good for streams and lakes, promotion of fly fishing, even agriculture. Important for new water impoundments/parks
- Again, would like goal to be more specific about what valuable resources the county is going to protect through its decisions and resources.
- Protecting existing buffers will also help to ensure that water quality is protected.
- Implementation strategy #1: "Limit the use of septic systems on slopes of 25% or greater" This strategy should be eliminated. Effective July 1, The Virginia Department of Health will be approving the use of alternative septic systems that will render this provision invalid.

- Implementation Strategy #7: "Consider the adoption of a Mountain Protection Plan" The Free Enterprise Forum has been very involved in this highly divisive issue in Albemarle County and does not believe there is significant public support for this measure in Greene County
- Implementation Strategy #8: "Discourage road construction of slopes of 15% or greater. Permitted roads should follow natural topography and minimize grading cutting and filling." This strategy is internally inconsistent. It should be reworded to indicate roads of greater than 15% should be designed to permit safe passage of emergency vehicles and preserve as much of the natural condition as possible.
- Implementation strategy #9: "Discourage excessive grading, cutting and filling and significant changes to the existing topography and tree cover particularly in the designated growth areas where major development is appropriate." Not only is this strategy internally inconsistent it fails to recognize the reality of major development in the development areas. Virginia Department of Transportation's new secondary street requirements include a minimum number of nodes and hubs and actively discourage the use of cul-de-sacs. This connectivity requirement generates the need for significant grading of our naturally rolling topography. To follow this implementation strategy to its logical conclusion, you would have no development in your development areas.
- Hydrological study should be required for A-1 or C-1 properties.
- Mountain Protection Plan would cause a big uproar.
- Don't we have a dark sky ordinance?
- For any residential development in rural areas promote conservation/cluster development.
- Consider adopting a purchase of development rights program.
- Adopt LID for developments. Review Items in the Blueprint for Regional Soil & Water Conservation CCS.

Parks and Recreation

- Complete phase I of park master plan.
- We need to touch base with Bishop Michael Jackson on his plans for teens in the future!
- Ruckersville should be a Town Center with park.
- The roads to access the Town of Stanardsville need better shoulders to make it possible to safely walk and bicycle: Celt Rd., Swift run Rd., and especially Saddleback Rd.
- "Inform residents" and "activities for teens" are vague.
- County wide mailings should also mention email
- Need to mention adult programs
- Cannot include swimming pool in water impoundment. Private property with no public access.
- The Park Master Plan for the Greene County Community Park calls for a community center with swimming pool. That needs to come first before Ruckersville.

Law Enforcement and Emergency Services

- County grant writer.
- Communications infrastructure needs to be adequate to the time by establishing an equipment replacement plan (equipment life span is 5 – 7 years).

- Finish all phases of ongoing radio communications project.
- Simulcast/microwave the communications system.
- Delete the substation in Ruckersville, add a new Public Safety Building to include a Communications Center that addresses future growth issues.
- Do we need a goal to effectively deter gang activity?
- I believe Greene County has inadequate resources to handle a significant disaster. We need a strategy to be able to handle such a disaster.
- Goal #1 "Manage growth so that it does not outstrip infrastructure, including emergency services and sheriff's department." The Free Enterprise Forum believes this statement to be both improper and likely illegal (see adequate public facilities). In addition this has only tangential relationship with Law Enforcement and Emergency Services. We propose rewording this goal to "Provide emergency services and Law Enforcement the support necessary to protect and defend the citizens of the County"
- New Goal: Consider future facility needs for emergency services
- New Implementation Strategy: Assess need for Ruckersville EMS station.

Community Services

- Assist in finding appropriate location for service enriched independent senior living facility in Greene.
- Goal on supporting affordable housing is weak.
- Research the possibility of MJH placing an emergency room at their facility in Ruckersville (reduces response times and turn-around times).
- IAW state directive – we need to address affordable housing in the comp plan!
- For affordable housing goal: Thank you!
- Typo: "Emergent health care"
- Emergency room would relieve some of the reserve squad runs to Charlottesville.
- Feasibility of Branch library is more of a strategy than goal.

Water and Wastewater

- Greene County has started work on a water impoundment study guide on this. State that "a water impoundment area must be identified within the year and the process of developing this impoundment must be started immediately thereafter.
- Give incentives and technical support to landowners that want to implement riparian buffers.
- Erase "sooner rather than later" from moving forward with water impoundment
- Encourage green roofs where "feasible" not where "possible"
- Developer where adequate sewer *and water* supply is provided.