



Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

October 18, 2008 Ruckersville Community Focus Group Summary

The Greene County Planning Department, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), VDOT and Renaissance Planning Group held the second of three community focus groups on Saturday, October 18, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Best Western Hotel in Ruckersville.

The meeting was open to all County residents, but was intended to attract residents and business owners of the greater Ruckersville area. 24 residents attended. Attendees were asked to mark their home on an aerial map of the County when they signed in [digital version forthcoming].

The focus group meeting's intent was to solicit values statements from County residents that will be used to craft a vision statement for the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The following is a summary of the two visioning exercises that staff conducted.

I. Sticky Note Exercise

Participants were given four sticky notes and asked to write down two responses each to the questions "What Do You Value Most?" and "What Would You Change?" in reference to their community and/or the County as a whole.

A. What Do You Value Most?

1. Natural Beauty

Open space; Rural landscape; Natural beauty; Environmental beauty; Blue Ridge Mountains; Scenic beauty; Mountains (2); Nature; Scenic views; Planned development to preserve natural vistas.

2. Community

Quality of Life; Community is not overregulated yet; Sense of community (2); Community spirit; The people; Community; Relaxed lifestyle;

3. Rural Character

The color "Greene"; Rural lifestyle; Rural character (3); Rural characteristics; Rural nature of Greene County; Quality scenic views and habitat; Small



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[size] – ability to know or at least recognize inhabitants; Rural setting; Country atmosphere; Peace and quiet; Rural open space

4. Small Town

Small town atmosphere (2); Community involvement; Rural atmosphere; Small town feel; Community atmosphere

5. Transportation

Low traffic volume; Less traffic and congestion

6. Other

Very gradual development which does not traumatize the citizens or taxpayers

B. What Would You Change?

1. Land Use

Reduce rate of development; Inconsistent land use application; More compact growth area with good range of services; Slow down housing development; Focus more on "Smart Growth" to better preserve open space and maintain rural character; Do not allow tall buildings to block mountain views; Housing sprawl; Commercial sprawl

2. Tax/Proffers

Developers who aren't required to cover cost increases to county services; Employ impact fees in conjunction with proffers to fullest extent; Tax base

3. Recreation

More recreation

4. Transportation

Improve transportation (particularly 29 and 33 intersections among others); 29 corridor; Traffic on 29 (2); Make access roads interconnect along routes 29 and 33 for local traffic; Traffic flow both now and in future worsening; Develop a Ruckersville – Route 29 bypass; Road congestion and traffic patterns problems in Route 29 area; Change 29-33 intersection; Adequate transportation options; Traffic congestion; Better transportation



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5. Architectural

Underground wires and make building owners keep up their property in Stanardsville; Improve attractiveness and accessibility in Ruckersville commercial area; Stanardsville Main Street; Look of Ruckersville; Need landscaping ordinance, lighting ordinance, architectural requirements; Lack of architectural standards for commercial buildings; Business along 29 corridor, architectural and haphazard planning

6. Business

More appropriate commercial; More shopping opportunity; More technology business; Car dealers present on Route 29; Increased opportunity for good salaried positions close to home

II. Small Group Worksheet Exercise

Participants worked in groups of 3 to 4 on large format worksheets that included background demographic trends, a base map and a set of questions designed again to solicit values statements: "Where are the places of greatest value to you?" "Where are the greatest issues in the County?" and "Where are the places of greatest opportunity?" Each small group then reported out to the entire gathering with a summary of their work.

Table 1 Summary:

What should be the designated growth area. Sacred places: Middle River, West River, Route 33 to Shenandoah National Park, 810 corridor. Most beautiful places: Route 743 farmland, North of Routes 33 and 29

Issues: Water – having enough; Traffic – adequate roads, provide off Route 29 flow opportunity; Sufficient recreation space for growing population; Reserve space for school along Route 29 East; Space for parks, school; Adopt appropriate zoning to protect agricultural land and open space; harmonizing residential and commercial development around Ruckersville;



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Opportunities: Water impoundment area; Attract college, expand VOTECH (Adult education), community college; Truck farm, wine, agricultural use (Niche agriculture); Enhance County image to attract business; Farmers market location

Table 1 Worksheet:

Places of greatest value:

Beautiful viewsheds: 810 to Crozet; 33 West of Stanardsville to Parkway; South River; Middle River

Large farmland blocks and potential reservoir site along Route 743; Large farmland blocks on Route 29 and 33, North of Route 33

Table 2 Summary:

Places of value: Western Greene scenic beauty; Scenic views; Forested and natural areas; Town of Stanardsville; Ruckersville area for shopping and economic development; Proximity to Charlottesville and U.Va.; Easier permitting process;

Issues: Protecting rural quality while accommodating growth; Trying to cross Route 29; Architectural controls in Stanardsville; Public water supply; Energy efficiency; Preserve agricultural uses.

Opportunities: Parallel roads to Route 29; Good signage and gateways to the County; Safe limited crossings on Route 29; Visitors center on Route 29; Mixed use development.

Table 2 Worksheet:

Stanardsville and Ruckersville are centers for shopping, employment; Large percentage of participants shop in Albemarle County; Shenandoah National Park is popular place for recreation.

Table 3 Summary

Values: Stay in Greene; Encourage local shopping; Promote access to Shenandoah National Park; Preserve natural areas.



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Issues: Access to medical services; Appropriate zoning; Attention to transportation/access management

Greatest opportunity: Where we can still affect change: North of Routes 29 and 33.

Table 3 Worksheet

Shopping is focused in Ruckersville area. County fairground?

Places of value: Shopping; Shenandoah National Park; Rural Areas.

Greatest issues: Medical; Viewshed; Water; Zoning: Development – Smart Growth; Zoning densities; Walkable community; Access management.

Greatest opportunity: North of Routes 29 and 33.

Table 4 Summary

Places of greatest value: Mountains; Rural character; Neighborhood; Schools; Homes

Greatest issues: Protect Ruckersville – should look nice; Good access via roads, bike paths and pedestrian connections; Ruckersville is how through travelers view Greene County; Lacks a sense of place.

Greatest opportunities: Improve aesthetic value of Ruckersville/Stanardsville (tear down gas station) streetscape/curb appeal); Promote infill development versus wider growth; Green space for local food production and economic values to support farmers; Interconnectivity between commercial and residential on Routes 33 and 29 corridors; Pedestrian friendly – access in and around all business areas.

Table 4 Worksheet



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In addition to Stanardsville and Corner Store, shopping in Madison, Albemarle and Rockingham; Additional issues: Need recreation: Greatest opportunities: Improve the aesthetics; guidelines for types of buildings and communities that are attractive; Ruckersville/Standardsville develop into small village feel – Look for incentives to get owners to spruce up properties. Streetscapes for curb appeal; Inter connectivity of all development (commercial and residential) along Routes 33 and 29 corridors.