



Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

October 23, 2008 Stanardsville Community Focus Group Summary

The Greene County Planning Department, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), VDOT and Renaissance Planning Group held the third of three community focus groups on Thursday, October 23, 2008 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building in Stanardsville.

The meeting was open to all County residents, but was intended to attract residents of northern Greene and the Town of Stanardsville. 30 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. Rural Beauty

Rural Beauty : County Beauty (2) : Environmental Beauty : Beautiful Drive (2) : Rural Scenery : Mountain Views (3) : Open Space (2) : Clean Air : Clean Water: Rural Atmosphere : Abundant Green Areas : National Park : Untouched Mountains

2. Economic Diversity

Small Businesses : Tourism : Economic Diversity (2) : Economic Vitality : Diverse Population : Private Enterprise : Private Property (2) : Balanced Growth of Residential and Commercial : Affordable : Recognition of Economic Areas of Interest: Livable Development : Walkable Development

3. Atmosphere



Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

Small Town (3): County Government : Friendly Community : Charlottesville
Proximity : Country Living

4. Water/National Resources

Clean Water: Sustainability: Forrest: Low Population Density: Open Space:
Recreation: Proximity/Access to Shenandoah National park

5. Heritage

Stanardsville Historic Sites: Protect Roads

6. Land Use/ Transportation

Not Too Over-developed: Good roads: Low Traffic Density

B. What Would You Change?

1. Land Use

Lack of Regulation on abandoned buildings, cars and junk (2): Zoning
System for A1 and C1 land use: Control Sprawling Access to Rte. 29: Ease
regulations for rural property owner land use (2): Ruckersville: Unplanned
Development

2. Services

Provide area for children/teens to hang out: Library open more
often/longer: More Parks: Drug prevention

3. Business/Tax Base

Diversify tax base: Controls that uneconomic business decisions: Increase
skilled employment opportunities: Variety of Stores/restaurants: Fill existing
empty commercial space around county: Increase diversity of enterprises

4. Aesthetics

More commercial architectural design control: Aesthetics of Ruckersville (2):
"Hodge-Podge" appearance of Rte. 29 corrido : Curb appeal of
Ruckersville in Rte 29 corridor

5. Traffic

Congestion and access difficulties and improved appearance in
Ruckersville: Truck traffic through Stanardsville: Increased efficiency of Rte. 29
corridor between Ruckersville and County line: Widen shoulders on roads to

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists: More pedestrian friendly, pleasant and attractive downtown Stanardsville: Lack of Sidewalks: Improve traffic look and traffic flow of Rte. 29

6. Social

Polarization between newcomers and long-term residents

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

- Value
 - Parks
 - Rural Character
 - Open Space
 - Gateway to Blue Ridge
 - Preservation of viewshed along route 33
 - Easy access to park
- Issues
 - Attract business in a beneficial ratio to residential to improve employment and services and improve tax revenue
 - Property rights
 - Cluster/reduce sprawl
 - Architectural standards in Ruckersville and Stanardsville
- Opportunities
 - Increased park land in Ruckersville area
 - Water Impoundment for recreation
 - Rural preservation ordinance to curb net increase in density
 - Possibility to change ordinance to preserve open space

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

- Downsizing
- Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance/Program
- Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance/Program

- Tax base

Table 1 Worksheet

Table 1 summarized many of their views from the worksheet. Due to the vast summary, all comments are included.

- Value
 - Shenandoah National Park
 - Open Space blocks along routes 743 and 29 north of route 33 and east of route 29
 - Open space along Middle river and South river
 - Easy access to attractive corridor between Ruckersville, Stanardsville and Skyline Drive
- Issues
 - Transportation in mountain areas such as Mutton Hollow
 - Appropriately locating growth to protect open space and allow reasonable growth
 - Water and sewer capacity and enhancements needed in Stanardsville – aging infrastructure
 - Financing infrastructure to support growth – make sure growth does not outstrip infrastructure and resources
 - Ordinance development and revision to accomplish goals such as cluster ordinances/division rights
 - Attract business development in a beneficial ratio to residential to improve employment and services within county and improve county tax revenues
 - Harmonize residential with commercial development in town areas to keep more density still attractive and resident friendly
 - How we develop high quality small city with adequate services in Ruckersville and attractive amenities including schools and parks
 - What is our goal in Stanardsville and how do we retain and enhance small town character

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

- How do we encourage improved architectural standards in Ruckersville/Stanardsville and improve overall appearance
- Opportunity
 - Establish a central park in Ruckersville now, before it is too late
 - When we find water impound, combine it with open space recreation and watershed protection
 - Rural preservation development ordinances such as clustering without increasing total rights
 - Possibility of changing zoning in other ways to preserve open spaces such as TDR, PDR , timed zoning, etc.

Table 2 Summary

- Value
 - Mountains
 - Roads to Mountains
 - Concentration /Dense Development
 - Trout Streams
 - Farmers Market
 - Lack of Traffic (in comparison with other areas)
 - Town of Stanardsville
 - Library
 - Great Valu
- Issues
 - Antiquated water/sewer in Stanardsville
 - Limited Retail
 - Urban Sprawl
 - Well defined/integrated town center (mixed use)
 - Continue to improve schools - quality
 - Need Skilled and higher paying jobs in area
 - Need PVCC center in area
 - Water Availability

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

- Opportunities
 - Town of Stanardsville
 - Blue Ridge Mountains/Skyline Drive
 - Redevelop/Beautify Ruckersville

Table 3 Summary

- Value
 - Home
 - The County Park
 - Economic Growth: Wal-Mart and Lowe's
 - Peoples' Land Rights
 - Rural Area
- Issues
 - Taxes
 - By-rights gone
 - 29 Traffic around Sheetz
 - Peoples' land rights
 - County does not provide enough recreational areas for play
 - Decrease size of rural area
 - Caring for the elderly
- Opportunities
 - Library – to look for jobs
 - Wal-Mart and Lowes to increase employment and the tax base

Table 3 Worksheet

- Issues
 - Hope that 80% of workers for Wal-Mart and Lowes could be hired from within the county
 - Urban sprawl was further elaborated on asking to concentrate growth of households/cluster
 - Skilled and higher paying jobs outside the area is a negative

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- Opportunity
 - Getting shoppers from other counties doing their shopping in Greene County

Table 4 Summary:

- Value
 - Forestry
 - Scenery/Views
 - Local Heritage
 - Homes with large lots
 - Elementary School
 - Food Lion
- Issues
 - Route 29
 - Too Much Traffic
 - Hodge Podge of Signs and Buildings
 - Stanardsville: Face lift
 - Needs a park, side-walks
 - Planned design
 - Affordable Housing
 - Junk Yards and Well water
 - Dogs running loose
 - Preddy Creek Road and Amicus is too dangerous
 - Need bike lanes
- Opportunities
 - Stanardsville

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

- STAR and Planned New developments with sidewalks and park
- Speed up Ruckersville bypass
- Vacant businesses need maintenance
- Consistent signage
- Contain Junkyards with tall fences

Table 4 Worksheet:

Some differences not included in Table 2 Summary:

- Value
 - Corner Store
- Issues
 - Bypass killed Stanardsville business
 - Starter homes for young families and singles
- Opportunities
 - Enforce dog regulations

Table 5 Summary:

- Value
 - Beauty
 - Parks
 - Open space
 - Night Sky
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Bicycling on rural roads
 - Diverse shopping
 - Close Proximity to Charlottesville and Harrisonburg
 - Downtown/Town Center
 - Stanardsville Library
- Issues
 - Transportation
 - Lack of Bikeways, Bike racks, Pedestrian Paths
 - Moving people more efficiently
 - Lack of Community Wide Participation

Greene County 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update

- Maintaining Identity
 - Night Sky and entrance corridor protection
 - No clear cutting, provide buffers/landscaping
 - Lack of Master Plans and ordinances
- Water and Sewer
- Opportunities
 - Planning
 - Park
 - Open spaces
 - Progressive ordinances (without over-regulation)
 - Attracting businesses
 - Learning from other countries
 - Agricultural
 - Grow and buy locally
 - Interconnection Between Communities
 - Bike paths, sidewalks

Table 5 Worksheet:

Some differences not included in Table 1 Summary:

- Issues
 - Transportation
 - Lack of walk-able community in Stanardsville
- Opportunities
 - Planning
 - Learn from mistakes of Albemarle County
 - Interconnection between Communities
 - Pedestrian and bike paths with greenways
 - Transportation
 - Commuter Ride Share Facilities