

Fork Union Community Plan

FINAL DRAFT



Prepared by
Fluvanna County and the
Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

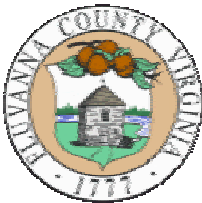


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Fork Union Community Plan

Draft Workshop Report

INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY

This report summarizes a community-based vision for the greater Fork Union area. It was developed by Fluvanna County and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission as an outgrowth of public workshops held on January 29th (kick-off meeting), March 13th (Facilitators Training), April 24th (Main Workshop), and May 25, 2004 (Follow-up Workshop).

Strong consensus was reached during the workshops about the importance of key economic and community development strategies to foster a sense of community in the village of Fork Union. Specific ideas generated included creating a village atmosphere through beautification and traffic calming, improved pedestrian access, and encouraging small-scale, community-based economic development. In addition to physical improvements, many participants voiced their desires to establish a community association or foundation to coordinate community activities and events as well as raise funds to make improvements to Fork Union.

The **priority themes** developed by the community during the workshop included:

- ❑ Define the entrances to Fork Union (signage, identity, sense of place, pride)
- ❑ Encourage the presence of core services (pharmacy, video rental, dry cleaning)
- ❑ Improve traffic safety conditions (streetscapes, landscaping, medians)
- ❑ Promote more collaboration, cooperation, and community involvement
- ❑ Create a more pedestrian-oriented community (sidewalks and trails, trees, landscaping, green space)
- ❑ Provide more activities and facilities for youth, families, and seniors

There was a clear consensus on the need to develop and implement realistic projects and create ongoing opportunities for community input and involvement.

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

Located in the southeast corner of Fluvanna County, the Fork Union District contains 2,906 residents. This includes the village of Fork Union as well as the surrounding areas such as West Bottom, Thessalonia, Cloverdale, Weber City, Dixie, and Columbia. While certain areas of the County have experienced dramatic growth in recent years, others have struggled to maintain economic viability. According to the 2000 Census, the median family income in the Fork Union District was \$39,293 compared with a median of \$51,141 for the County as a whole. Ten percent of the areas' families were living below the poverty level, and the racial and ethnic distribution was as follows: 55% white, 44% black, and 1% Asian and American Indian.

Most people who live in Fork Union commute out of the area to work. In 2000, the mean travel time to work for Fork Union residents was 35 minutes, indicating that many people commute to Charlottesville or possibly to Richmond for work. With many of its residents commuting long distances to work, maintaining a sense of place and community can be difficult. With the advent of additional roadways easing traffic flow from Richmond, it is anticipated that more people who work in Richmond will move to the area, and more Fork Union residents will commute to Richmond for work.

Another issue facing residents is safe, decent, affordable housing. Housing prices tend to be lower in Fork Union than other parts of the County, such as Lake Monticello, but housing prices are still out of reach for many residents.

As the residents of Fork Union confront new pressures related to economic development, housing, and transportation, they seek to maintain the rural character of their community. In order to build upon existing resources and plan for the future, a diverse group of local citizens led by Planning Commission members Sam Babbitt and Grant Tate organized to create a community plan for the future development of the greater Fork Union area. Recognizing the importance of including the outlying areas in any plans for the village of Fork Union, Thessalonia, Cloverdale, West Bottom, Weber City and Dixie were included in developing the plan. This plan is intended to guide future business and residential growth, as well as recreation, transportation and infrastructure development in the Fork Union area.

Community members met over the course of several months, including an organizational meeting, a facilitator's workshop, a community-wide workshop, and a follow-up meeting. Over fifty community members participated in the process including residents, civic leaders, business operators, county staff and elected officials, all of whom have vested interests in the future of Fork Union and its surrounding areas. There was an opportunity for everyone to make a contribution to the process.

During the main community-wide workshop, participants were guided through a series of four exercises. These exercises involved individual, small, and large group activities. By design each activity or task served to engage participants in a variety of ways - helping to set-up or conduct the activity, requiring interactions with other participants, and employing verbal and tactile

elements and movements around the room. Special care was taken to assure the workshop setting was welcoming, encouraged participants to be at ease with one another, invited the thoughtful consideration of the questions, ideas and tasks, and allowed for a degree of informality and social interaction. Results of the exercises can be found in the appendix.



Exercise One: Visions and Values



Exercise Two: Themes and Priorities



Exercise Three: Walking Tour



Exercise Four: Drawing and Mapping

WORKSHOP RESULTS

Through individual, small, and larger group exercises – and a walking tour – participants identified the **priority issues** in their community, summarized below.

Gateways and landscaping

Workshop participants felt the community needs sprucing up in order to feel more inviting and give it a village character. Participants' comments included adding:

- Welcome signs on Routes 15 and 6
- Landscaping at entrances and marking the center of town
- Streetscapes with amenities (sidewalks, benches, etc.)

Parks and civic engagement

Many people said that the Community Center was a valuable community resource, but that it was not well connected to the rest of town, and that the existing Center and the land behind it could be utilized to provide even more community activities and services. Suggestions included adding:

- Activities for youth and families (playground, pool, daycare center, and/or tennis courts)
- Walking and biking trails to downtown
- Parks and common spaces throughout the village (near FUMA, the Community Center, and downtown)

Transportation

Fork Union is located at the crossroads of Route 15 and 6. While this location could prove as a valuable resource, many participants said that the speed of traffic, especially truck traffic, through town was not conducive to a quaint, village atmosphere. Participants mentioned adding:

- Sidewalks and trails connecting separate parts of town (Community Center, downtown, and Village Shopping Center)
- Crosswalks and medians in strategic locations
- Trees and flowers

Economy

Many people mentioned that they would like to do more local shopping in Fork Union, rather than traveling to Charlottesville or Richmond for goods and services. While many participants expressed their desire for more economic development in Fork Union, they were explicit in their wishes for controlled, orderly growth that would make use of existing vacant and deteriorating buildings before building new structures. Participants said that they would like to see more:

- Local businesses (i.e. a second bank, ice cream shop, salon, video store, dry cleaners, gift shop, restaurants, 24 hour emergency care office)
- “Attractor businesses” such as boutiques or craft shops
- Rehabilitation of vacant and deteriorating buildings

Housing

Affordable housing, especially for seniors, was mentioned in each session as an important aspect of the future of Fork Union. Participants had various ideas about the best location for senior housing, but all agreed that affordable senior housing was a high priority for residents of Fork Union. Other suggestions related to housing included:

- Affordable senior housing near amenities
- Mixed income housing
- Affordable housing for people who work in the community

Preservation

Many participants emphasized the importance of preserving local natural, historic, and community resources. In particular, people wanted to highlight the existing resources in Fork Union and attract visitors, without losing its small town feel. Suggestions included:

- Concentrate growth to preserve rural areas
- Financial assistance for historic renovation and preservation

Infrastructure

The current water and sewer system in Fork Union is inadequate for existing and future businesses. Before much renovation or revitalization is able to occur, serious issues concerning the availability of sewer and water will need to be resolved. Infrastructure issues included:

- Sewer
- Water
- Cell phone coverage

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

These recommendations are general in nature, and will require more specific detailing in a future design workshop. Pictures have been provided of potential solutions that were implemented in similar situations.

Enhance village character

Many people expressed a desire to develop a village “feel” or atmosphere in Fork Union that would foster a sense of community, making it a comfortable and desirable location for residents and visitors, alike. This can be done by creating visual entrances to the village of Fork Union, beautifying buildings and landscaping, and encouraging more compact growth in the downtown area, while preserving the rural nature of the surrounding areas.

1. Define the boundaries of Fork Union with gateways and welcome signs at key locations on Route 15 from both directions and on Route 6 coming from Scottsville. There were various suggestions as to where a welcome sign should be located including in Dixie, on 15 S at the curve, near the Community Center, or near the William Frank Hotel. One suggestion was that the signs should read, “Welcome to the Heart of Virginia.” Placing welcome signs in medians would reduce traffic speeds even further, as well as mark village entrances. The photographs below show several different types of welcome signs in other towns and villages.



2. Adding trees, landscaping, and consistent facades to buildings along Routes 15 and 6, as well as near the commercial area of the Village Shopping Center, would create a village atmosphere and slow down traffic.



*Village Shopping Center
Fork Union*



Scottsville

3. Encourage reuse of existing buildings and growth in scale with, and in proximity to, existing village core to enhance village appearance. Explore the possibility of revitalizing existing vacant buildings through public and private partnerships.

Addressing water and sewer concerns will be necessary in order to rehabilitate existing structures and allow for additional economic development.



Vacant building, Fork Union

Create community support and activities

Fork Union is blessed with many resources including dedicated residents and business owners, natural beauty, a Community Center, and religious and education institutions. In order to build upon these resources, community members should consider establishing an organization to implement priority projects as well as organize community events.

1. In order to guide the process begun with the development of this plan, a committee of residents, business owners, and County staff should be formed to implement priority projects. There are several forms that this group could take. One option is to create a loosely organized, fairly informal Fork Union Community Association or Committee. Another option would be to create a county-wide Community Foundation with one advisory board dedicated to serving Fork Union. Although community foundations take significant effort, they do have the benefit of being able to receive grants. Often an umbrella organization, such as United Way, can act as a fiscal agent (and administer grants) instead of developing a separate community foundation. The main goal of any of these groups or associations would be to continue the momentum created through the development of this process and mobilize residents to be involved in making improvements in their community. In particular, any committee or association should include residents of Fork Union as well as residents of outlying areas and representatives of FUMA to encourage further collaboration among FUMA, the community, and County.

Community foundations are tax-exempt public charities serving thousands of people who share a common concern - improving the quality of life in their area. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations create permanent charitable funds that help their region meet the challenges of changing times. The foundation invests and administers these funds. All community foundations are overseen by a volunteer board of leading citizens and run by professionals with expertise in knowing their community's needs. (From the Council on Foundations, www.cof.org). Community foundations can also apply for and receive grants for physical improvements and community services and activities.

2. Build upon the existing resources of the Fork Union Community Center to provide additional community activities and events. Conduct a needs assessment for community facilities to determine which ones are available nearby, and which ones should be a priority to be considered for the Community Center and the surrounding land (i.e. playgrounds, parks, daycare, senior housing, athletic and arts facilities).



Fork Union Community Center

3. Strengthen relationships among FUMA, community residents, and the County. Discuss ways for the community to better include FUMA staff and students in public events, and ways to increase community participation in FUMA events and activities. The new FUMA performing arts center may be a good opportunity to co-sponsor events (i.e. art shows, performances, speakers).
4. Develop additional parks and common spaces. Landscaping, picnic tables, and park benches can provide a focal point for the village and serve as a gathering spot for residents.

Improve community transportation network

There are several transportation related improvements that can be done to improve the safety and appearance of Fork Union.

1. Add a walking/biking trail between the Community Center and “downtown.” Determine whether a sidewalk set back from Route 15 would be most appropriate (see photograph below) or a trail, such as the Fluvanna Heritage Trail behind houses. Both of these options would require coordination and consent from landowners.



Fluvanna Heritage Trail

2. Conduct an engineering analysis to determine whether traffic calming devices (i.e. curb extensions, median crossings, roundabouts) can be installed at key intersections.



Dixie intersection



Fork Union intersection

3. Install marked crosswalks along Route 15 in strategic places. Example crosswalks that help calm traffic are shown below.



4. Improve existing sidewalks and add additional sidewalks along Route 15 connecting downtown to the Village Shopping Center.



*Sidewalk along Route 15,
downtown Fork Union*

5. Consider adding bike lanes on wide roads. Bike lanes make the roads safer for cyclists and slow down traffic by narrowing lanes. The photograph below shows a visualization of Route 15 in Fork Union with a bike lane.



6. Review building and zoning codes and recommend relevant changes to allow the type of development and infrastructure desired by residents.

Foster a thriving economy with local conveniences

Determine which areas are appropriate for more commercial development. Suggestions have included downtown (6 & 15) and the Village Shopping Center. Encourage concentrated development in the existing commercial areas to preserve rural feel.

1. The photographs below illustrate how adding new businesses and landscaping can revitalize an intersection and make it a desirable location to walk and shop.





Photos by Urban Advantage

2. Amend codes or set up a special district to produce the desired community vision. Downtown Scottsville may provide a good example for the future of Fork Union. Notice sidewalks, storefronts, and landscaping.



3. Consider conducting a design charrette to explore options and develop drawings of renovation and re-use of existing buildings, potential new buildings on available lots, and streetscape alternatives, especially for vacant buildings. Fork Union has several underused buildings available. These structures should be focused on prior to considering new growth.



Photos by LPDA

4. Assess existing available services and determine what market segments are most needed. Invite potential investors/business owners to participate in a design charrette. Suggestions have included a second bank, ice cream shop, salon, video store, dry cleaners, gift shop, restaurants, and a 24 hour emergency care office. Focus on existing commercial space for renovation prior to building new structures.



Photos by Citizen Planner Institute and Urban Advantage

5. Develop a plan to attract visitors to Fork Union based upon existing resources as well as developing “attractor businesses” such as boutiques or craft shops. The newly released Heritage Tourism Toolkit may provide some guidelines (see box to the right).

The **Heritage Tourism Toolkit** presents legal tools for protecting buildings and landscapes, physical tools for rehabilitating and restoring sites, and management tools for operating these places as a tourist destination. The toolkit is intended primarily for use by individual site owners and localities, but will also be useful to public officials, economic development agencies, and others in the tourism industry (www.tjpd.org/workforce/tjV_heritageTourism.asp).



Photos by LPDA

Provide affordable housing

Healthy communities include housing for people of all income levels. As housing prices skyrocket in Fluvanna County, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for people of limited incomes to secure and maintain affordable housing in the area.

1. Develop senior housing behind or near the community center and/or near the nursing home. Senior housing should be well integrated with the rest of the community, connected by pedestrian-friendly walkways to shopping areas.



2. Encourage a diversity of housing types to meet the needs of all income levels through local codes and working with the public and private sector.



3. Study feasibility of developing an employer assisted housing program for people who work in Fluvanna County.
4. Support non-profit housing providers such as the Fluvanna/Louisa Housing Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and Piedmont Housing Alliance to assist low income families who work in Fork Union.

Preserve natural and historic resources

The Fork Union district is full of natural and historic resources to be valued and protected.



1. Conduct additional research to help develop historic themes and provide background for project design – for both streetscape and civic and commercial buildings to highlight historic resources. See above information about the Heritage Tourism Toolkit.
2. Maintain zoning to preserve agricultural and environmental resources.

Ensure adequate infrastructure to support existing and future needs

One of the major obstacles to revitalizing Fork Union’s downtown is the lack of an adequate sewer system. Securing an improved sewer and water system in Fork Union is a necessary step to developing the village of Fork Union.

1. Explore public/private partnerships, and encourage collaboration among FUMA, the County, and local business owners.
2. Set up a subcommittee of representatives from the County, FUMA, residents, and business owners to study the range of options available to the County to provide sewer service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Focus on the Streetscape

The greatest impact on the community’s quality of life will come from investing in the streetscape and open space network. Provide for traffic calming, safer pedestrian crossings, a row of shade trees on each side of the road, street-level lighting, street furniture like garbage cans and benches, and improved mini-parks at existing facilities. Private investors are less likely to risk capital where it isn’t clear that the public sector sees the same long-term opportunity. The initial investment typically needs to be followed up with an increase in standard of services.

Conduct a Design Charrette

Consider holding a design charrette to develop a detailed specific plan, including conceptual drawings for new buildings, park design, etc. This could be especially helpful for the community to have input into any new developments near the Community Center. Local developers can use the resulting plan and images to stimulate interest, project ideas, and funding.

Plan a Model Project

When the conceptual designs are presented, choose a model project to focus on. The best model projects show you what the whole area will look like when done. This could be done downtown, near the Village Shopping Center, or near the Community Center. Choose something visible that can be done in a relatively short amount of time, with immediate results (i.e. cleaning up a vacant lot, planting trees and flowers, adding benches, or creating a mini-park).

Determine Phasing

Develop an initial set of projects, and a phasing priority to help the County plan annual Community Improvement Program budgets and funding applications.

Combine Available Funding

Look first in existing budgets – for every County, State, and federal agency operating in the area. Funding for parks, schools, post office planning, housing assessments, environmental clean-ups, etc. can be creatively combined. Other sources include Community Development Block Grant, Community Reinvestment Act, Special Redevelopment Taxing District, Historic Preservation grants (State), and Transportation Enhancement Activity-21 (through Virginia Department of Transportation). Sometimes the best projects do not require additional funds, but can be done with volunteers and a small investment from local government and businesses.

Review and Amend the Codes

Since many existing codes and regulations get in the way of creating walkable mixed-use neighborhoods, attracting investment often requires reworking the codes to make it easier to ‘do the right thing.’

Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships

Creating great projects and partnerships starts with a shared vision and goals. A strong effort should be made to get greater participation from landowners, business people, potential

investors, and small-scale residential and commercial builders and developers. Work with the business community to understand their needs and incorporate them into the plan, and continue to make Fork Union a business and people-friendly place.

APPENDIX

Route 15 Crosswalk At FUMA



Existing



Add median with trees



Add streetlights to median



Remove Power lines

Route 15 improvement option



Existing shows underused section of wide road



Add grassy strip with trees or shrubs to fill unused space and narrow feel of road without affecting travel lanes. May be space for bicycle lanes as well.



Bury utilities and add street lights for extra beauty

Route 6 West intersection improvement



Existing area is painted out asphalt



Add grassy median with trees or shrubs and brick crosswalk



View from west

Route 6 West entry improvement



Existing entrance at creek



Paint pumphouse and clear vegetation



Add entry median with welcome sign

Community-wide Workshop Results

Exercise One: Visions and Values

Participants were asked to write down their vision for Fork Union on post-it notes, and affix them to the walls. Volunteers helped sort out the post-it notes into key themes representing the visions and values of Fork Union.

Preservation

- Historic
- Keep outlying areas rural
- Protect environment
- Preserve rural character
- Preserve historic, quaint character
- Preserved

Housing

- Well lighted safe walkable diverse housing
- Diverse residential community
- Community with affordable housing opportunities

Transportation/Traffic/Pedestrian

- Better transportation
- Fewer 18-wheelers plowing through at excessive speed
- Traffic
- Link central village with West Bottom and other areas
- Well lighted safe walkable diverse housing
- Integrated trail and sidewalk system in core village
- Walking and bicycle trails
- Sidewalks to civic centers
- Village style pedestrian friendly shopping area
- Sidewalks in village
- Pedestrian friendly
- Traffic control, crosswalks

Beautification

- More of a village scenic area
- More of a country feel to the village – warm and inviting to residents and perhaps tourists
- Warm and welcome, clean
- Beautification
- Clean up
- Clean up unsightly area of the William Frank Hotel
- More trees
- Leafy
- Village feel that is visually appealing

- Better grooming
- Community feel
- See more of the village restored with landscaping, quaint shops, good restaurants, a place for people to come for shopping, outings, festivals, etc.
- More street lighting
- To have the feel of a small town
- Make village more attractive
- Quaint, picturesque
- Make the village inviting
- Sign Welcome to Fork Union: The Heart of Virginia
- Charming
- Arts Center
- Neighborly

Community Activities/Support

- A park or shaded spot with benches
- Re-establish sense of village community in Fork Union
- Recreational destination
- Parks
- Soft ice cream
- Swimming pool at Civic Center
- Sports areas for basketball, baseball, and tennis
- Kids supervised hangout
- A pool
- Real community for real people
- Sense of community
- Has an attractor that draws people to the community (i.e. art, music, etc.)
- Support the arts – arts and crafts coop and related events and activities to draw people for fun and enjoyment
- Child friendly – safe and accessible
- Has a beautiful gateway
- Cultural Center
- Has a strong community spirit
- Establish a town governing body
- Safe
- Point of destination for visitors – tourism
- Make Fork Union a unique destination

Economic Development

- Restoration of existing buildings
- Small shops for more services
- Local economic center
- Invite business to shopping center
- Laundromat

- Industry (near community center)
- Revitalize existing buildings in disrepair
- No heavy industries, small businesses
- Business
- More business in Fork Union
- A place for food and small shops
- More stores
- Attractive to draw businesses
- Place to shop to draw visitors
- More local employment
- Expanded businesses
- A place that offers business opportunities
- Vibrant business – service oriented, restaurants, ice cream parlor
- Fewer closed businesses/More open businesses
- Commercial services included in all development plans.
- Business
- More doctors

Infrastructure

- Expanded infrastructure – especially sewer service

Growth

- Self-contained
- Controlled growth
- Compact development
- Planned commercial development
- Develop village as a more dense integrated development
- Keep Fork Union a village
- Bring in more residents to support village (Planned residential growth)
- For 100 years or so, the Fork Union area has been an ideal place to educate boarding students largely because of few distractions. To the extent possible, let's keep it that way.
- Rural with conveniences
- No growth in Fork Union village that is commercial.
- Village scale

Other

- People from surrounding communities are integral part of the culture
- Enhanced

Community-wide Workshop Results

Exercise Two: Themes and Priorities

Participants identified the main issues facing their community. After the brainstorming session, each participant voted for the issues that they felt were the most pressing in Fork Union. The number next to each item represents the number of votes received.

Economic Development

- Affordable start-up commercial space 4
- Comprehensive core service businesses salon, pharmacy, package delivery, video 18
- Dispersed commercial areas
- Jobs 11
- Deteriorated buildings 14
- Business attractors 4
- Underutilized and poorly maintained business properties 7
- Too many empty buildings 2

Community Activities/Support

- Arts presence 3
- Community spirit motivators – town design 6
- Environment conducive to education – great place to grow up 4
- Safe place for youth gathering/activities 11
- Places to gather 3
- Community activities 3
- Fork Union community association (separate from County)/More community organizations, create a foundation for grants 18

Housing

- Lack of affordable housing 10
- Living spaces above businesses 3
- Housing for seniors near businesses 12

Infrastructure

- Lack of sewer system balanced with growth control issues 17
- No cell signal 7

Other

- Zoning adjustments 6
- Academy community relationship 7

Traffic

- Dixie neck strainer 4
- Fast traffic 8

Beautification

- More flowers and trees 5
- Roadside clean up 5

Preservation

- Preserve drive-in 4
- Historic district/renovation assistance and assistance organization 5

Community-wide Workshop Results

Exercise Four: Drawing and Mapping

After going on a walking tour, participants worked in small groups on two maps. One included the area surrounding Fork Union, and the other was of downtown Fork Union. Each group wrote on the maps themselves and also reported their findings back to the group.

Notes from Group #1

- sewer system with controlled service area
- residential east Rt. 15
- mixed use business - boutique, salon, ice cream parlor, personal service and up-scale
- senior houses
- academy/community performing arts
- park area, play ground
- entrance to 15 S at curve
- improve Village Shopping Center buildings
- add secondary road system
- work within limitations of land ownership

Drawings and Notes on Map #1

- Add connector road from Rt. 6 to 15, east of existing road, behind houses
- Keep parks and rec at community center, and move arts to the new FUMA performing arts center, to make it a combined resource FUMA and community, have art shows open to the public, etc.
- Have an arts center downtown on 6 across from church,
- Park and preserve behind the church
- Expand the church
- Add park and playground on FUMA side of Rt. 15
- Residential connecting FUMA to shops (on 15)
- Mixed use development, including senior housing near the nursing home
- Improve Village Shopping Center – add trees and landscaping
- Mixed residential and business on the east side of 15 (north of village rest. Bldg)
- Add 2nd bank, dairy queen ice cream, salon, movie/video, dry cleaners, gift shop, restaurants, etc.

Notes from Group #2

- Traffic calming: Medians, trees, flowers, facades, extend and widen sidewalks, walking trail to the community center
- Infrastructure for business: water/sewer, cell tower
- Attract small business/core businesses: community association, SCORE, SBA
- Senior housing/Affordable housing
- Storefronts with residential upstairs
- Community center area for park, pool, multiuse, light industrial,
- Dixie gateway

Drawings and Notes from Map #2

- Dixie: clean-up deteriorating trailer park, create visual entrance to Fork Union, fix traffic problem “neck strain”
- Drive in as an amphitheatre
- Community center: add swimming pool, tennis courts, youth advisory? Activities council, playground, light industry, affordable housing, walking trails, benches, park,
- Jaunt connector from “downtown” to community center
- Connector walking/bike trail from community center and downtown – off the road – behind houses
- Cell tower on top of water tank
- Begin gateway entrance near William Frank hotel
- New store front on Rt. 15 mirror development across the street by JWS
- Lodging, meeting space, restaurant, businesses/residential, store fronts on rt 15, parking behind building, businesses/studio apartments,
- Tree-lined streets and flowers along 15 & 6
- Benches
- Improved storefronts along 15
- Attractor businesses along 15 & 6 to create/revive “downtown”
- Add senior housing near 15 & 655 (former Raceway)
- Ice cream stand (where Raceway was?)
- Village Shopping Center and commercial space across the street – add basic services, consistent façade to businesses
- bike/walking paths from downtown to Village Shopping Center buildings/senior housing
- mark parking stalls? State police – speed trailer? Rt 15 primary/abbitt/Ruff/Goode?

Notes from Group #3

- Defined Fork Union area: sidewalks, both sides, signs “Welcome to the Heart of Virginia”, banners, street scaping
- Defined entrances to Fork Union
- Break up traffic patterns to slow traffic
- Upgrade water and sewer
- Affordable housing
- Senior houses and services central to doctors offices
- Parks near senior areas – w a carousel
- Seating areas landscaped common areas like between Novus and Town & Country
- Daycare center kids and seniors near community center near Fork Union Medical
- Basic community services: Dairy Queen, Drycleaner/Laundry, video, hair dresser, bowling alley, skate park, dance hall, bike trails, dog park, hiking, playgrounds, autoparts, discount department store, garden/craft store, 24 emergency care office, emergency squad

Drawings and Notes on Map #3

- Expanded community center services
- Round-a-bout in Dixie, Traffic calming

- Add commercial development to Dixie
- Add Formal Entry either in Dixie or near the Community Center
- Offer kids day care at the community center
- Add senior housing near the community center
- Add formal entrance near community center
- Add sewer systems
- Add sidewalks on both sides wholeway on 15 from 656 to William frank hotel
- Add senior housing and services next to raceway near nursing home
- Beautify Village Shopping Center
- Add a park (with the lake) near the FUMA stadium

Results of Follow-up Workshop

A follow-up public workshop was held on May 25, 2004 to review the preliminary recommendations. During the presentation and discussion, it was noted that the conceptual ideas presented by each group at the first workshop were very similar, incorporating many of the same features. Previous participants remembered and spoke up for specific elements of the group plans, to assure their inclusion in the final report and recommendations. New attendees focused on more generalized issues related to current conditions.

The team's recommendation was to start with something small, achievable, and visible. They stressed the importance of having a clear, phased plan for how the improvements would progress. The next step in the process will be to meet in late summer to review the final report.

Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Discussion regarding the placement of welcome signs including on Route 6 near the firehouse, on Route 15 at the community center coordinated with slower speed zones signs
- Focus on improving streetscapes at entry locations and downtown
- Put on-line survey on County site for residents to express their views
- Possibly set up a community association or community foundation with committees depending on various needs
- Add crosswalks with medians
- Walking trail between community center and downtown, possibly a sidewalk far off the road. Check right of ways on highways
- Importance of including local business owners in this process.
- Add street trees
- Tie different parts of town together
- Sewer is a major problem. This is one of the reasons why buildings downtown are still vacant. The lack of adequate sewer has led to businesses being established outside of downtown.
- Affordable housing is needed for seniors
- There is some cell coverage with US Cellular.
- Importance of security, community policing through environmental design
- Need more gathering places, set up a picnic table and benches.
- Start a farmers market
- Should we plan our first activity? It should be visible, such as cleaning up a vacant lot.

Participants from all workshops

Conrad Aasen
Nancy Aasen
Jake Alexander
Sam Babbitt
Deanna Barshenger
Alan Batson
Phil V. Beyey
Steven Biel
Jerome Booker
Mozell Booker
Katherine Bradley
Hazel Buggs
Mo Cahill
Helen Carter
Phillip Carter
Cecil Cobb
Alan Crockett
Patricia Eager
Howard Evergreen
Chris Fairchild
Cheryl Falvella
Jay Falvella
Emerson Farley
Rob Feathers
Shae Garwood
Chris Gensic
Page Gifford
Pat Groot
Beverly Hanlin
Sharon Higgenbotham
Melissa Hill
Cathy Hitchcock

Frank Hughes
Lewis Johnson
Lula Johnson
Russell Johnston
Warren Johnson
Nancy King
Ron Lauziere
Cabell Lawton
Bob Layne
Mary Leland
Carol Lewis
Jackie Meyers
Nancy Miner
Marvin Moss
Tom Payne
Hilda Pendergrass
Jane Pendergrass
R.L. "Red" Pulliam
John Robias
Harrison Rue
Dave Sagarin
Mary Jo Shea
Beth Sherk
Jay Sherrill
Bob Shumake
Andy Sorrell
Denise Tarver
Grant Tate
Dan Thompson
Sue VouderBecke
Bill Wanner