



City of Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan Update  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, April 19, 2016  
6:00 p.m.  
Chattahoochee Hills City Hall

Meeting Summary

A. Opening Opportunity for Public Comment

There was no public comment at the opening of the meeting.

B. Recap from March 22 Open House

The Steering Committee opened the meeting with a discussion of observations from the March 22 Public Open House. Allison Duncan (ARC) offered some observations from the review of issues presented to the community.

- Language taken out of context of the Comprehensive Plan is not user friendly
- Need to identify a specific “wish list” for economic development; what types of companies should the city try to recruit
- Industries such a film and television production, sporting goods manufacturing, bicycle manufacturing, could all fit into the vision for the city
- Educational needs were a common topic – is it possible to get a higher education institution here; charter schools that allow a preference for Chatt Hills residents may be more desirable; education institutions are an amenity, but don’t necessarily bring in tax revenue
- Consider the type of revenue that economic development prospects will bring into the city; consider issues such as wear and tear on the roads, extra expense created by the need for more police patrolling
- What would a Cost of Community Service Study say for Chattahoochee Hills? Is the tax base balanced? There is a need for businesses that can be taxed. As a community, the subject of economic development hasn’t been broken down. Consideration should be given to the barriers to bringing business and industry to the city. Infrastructure might become more of an issue than it is today. Revenue is needed to help maintain roads.

C. Discussion Point #1 – does more need to be done to develop the agribusiness/ industrial section of the current plan?

*Initial Recommendation: Ensure that the vision and intent of the agribusiness/ industrial character area matches the market realities of community. This is one of the few areas the future development map encourages higher intensity development, and could respond to the need for increased tax base to support the community. Aligning goals and priorities could occur through a couple of ways, such as a professional market assessment of viable uses in that area, or active marketing of this area to developers that would understand and support the vision.*

Discussion

- What types of businesses would fit into this area?



- Would they need to have a smaller footprint?
- Are the greenspace requirements limiting the types of businesses that should be willing to come here
- The city's vision would have to fit into a business's marketing plan, which may eliminate some potential candidates
- The vision for the city is great, but it is not everybody's vision; the city needs some tax revenue other tickets and residential property taxes.

**Outcome: It is not anticipated that there will be any change to the Character Area description or map at this time. A work program item could direct the staff/ Planning Commission/ City Council to consider an amendment at a future date.**

D. Discussion Point #2 – should more development be allowed in the crossroads communities?

*Initial Recommendation: Develop small area studies for each of the crossroads communities that contain a discernible historic footprint. Adopt the study as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan and develop zoning that supports the desired pattern of appropriate infill development.*

Discussion:

- At one point, Goodes had some commercial zoning, but that has probably gone away
- There is not a critical mass in Goodes or Friendship to build on – if we are going to spend energy on economic development, spend it on something that can be leveraged
- Goodes could benefit from its proximity to Serenbe
- The zoning was written to protect the hamlet, village, and town concept – this pre-empts the opportunity to deal with the “out parcels”
- If someone is willing to put capital and sweat equity into their dream of opening a business that fits within the character of a crossroad community, maybe this could be an opportunity for those areas to become incubators
- Is there a mechanism that could be built into the zoning that would allow for this type of entrepreneurial activity without running the risk of spot zoning?
- Would it be better to treat the crossroad community as a type of planned node than create scattered, one-off commercial establishments?
- There is a need for amenities for people who live in the city, and crossroad communities could be an opportunity for people to open a small commercial business

**Outcome: There has been some initial support for revising the Rico Character Area/ Crossroad Community in the Comprehensive Plan. This was the only Crossroad Community specifically called out in the current Plan for some additional limited development. However, the plan lacks detail, and there is an opportunity to provide some additional information and shape a vision for this area. Another Crossroad Community that may have potential for limited development is Campbellton, but it may still be premature to consider expanding a node-pattern of mixed use development into all of the Crossroads at this time.**

E. Discussion Point #3 – does the Parkway Commercial Zoning Category need more detail on character and design?



*Initial Recommendation: Develop detailed design guidelines to support the implementation of the Parkway Commercial zoning; Encourage developers that understand the city's unique design aesthetic to consider opportunities in Chattahoochee Hills; Consider undertaking a demonstration project to set the standard for this development pattern.*

Discussion:

- Most of the zoning categories are designed to hide development through buffers and setbacks; the intent of the Parkway Commercial is to allow development to be seen
- Some of this comes back to the discussion of infrastructure; in the past, there has not been the desire to see water/ sewer infrastructure expanded; people don't want to pay to tap onto lines if they run past their house
- Many people still don't want to see the expansion of development. They may not show up at the public meetings, but the sentiment is still prevalent in the community.
- Many consider that development would be opening up Pandora's box – the community would get flooded with high density and high intensity uses that would deter from the vision.

**Outcome: There is no clear direction to move on this topic at this time. Additional conversation may be needed about moving forward with incorporating the Parkway Commercial elements into the Comprehensive Plan.**

F. Discussion Point #4 – is the community accomplishing its preservation and conservation goals?

*Initial Recommendation: Undertake a detailed natural and cultural resources element for the Comprehensive Plan, including and inventory of significant working agricultural landscapes. Develop an implementation program that includes the appropriate mechanism for preservation and conservation.*

**Outcome: There was generally support for moving forward in this direction. A work program item will be developed to direct activities to be undertaken in this area.**

G. Discussion Point #5 – Should the preferred development areas be expanded to include the newly annexed portion of Highway 154?

Discussion:

- See who else may be annexed into that area by July
- Need more information about what the community in that area would like

**Outcome: No immediate action is recommended to be taken at the time of the Comp Plan Update. A work program item could be developed that directs the staff to undertaken outreach in this area.**

H. General Comments and Discussion

- It is important to present specific ideas, rather than talk in generalities. When someone comes along with a good idea, the community can get behind it.
- Need to develop talking points about the importance of economic development; make sure that everyone is getting the same message
- Is a Development Authority a possibility for Chattahoochee Hills?
- What is the Aerotropolis, and how does it impact Chattahoochee Hills?



- Chattahoochee Hills is writing a new genre of city – need to look at similar cities that have these values – need to learn from the success and failures of other cities
- Many of these topics draw a very emotional reaction for city residents; need to figure out how to deliver a message that can get past the emotion so the community can have a conversation about its needs to function as a city

#### I. Closing Opportunity for Public Comment

There was no additional public comment at the conclusion of the meeting.