

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE REVIEW
October 16, 2018 - 5:00 PM

Board Members Present: J. Harry Lange, Susan Andrews, Martha Chewing, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

Facilitator: Rick Morris (RVRC), Allison Slocumb (RVRC) and William Griggs (RVRC)

Committee Members Present: Brian Williams, Colin Martin, Wayne Harbert, Will Cliatt, Randy Phillips, Craig Greenhaw, Keith Hammond.

Others Present: Scott Moye, Justin Finney.

CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lange called the meeting to order and asked that the Committee members present sit near the front (left) of the room. He reminded all that the Comp Plan update is required every five years. He then turned the meeting over to Rick Morris, with the RVRC, to facilitate the meeting.

Mr. Morris said that the notes from the last meeting, which were distributed, contain all the changes that have been made during that meeting and the preceding meetings.

Maps. Using a Powerpoint presentation, Mr. Morris showed, reviewed and discussed each of the maps:

- ▶ Block Groups Population per square mile 2016. Based on the population estimates, shows most of the County's population south of SR 315 and SR 208; the darker the color, the higher the density per square mile.
- ▶ Rural Population Areas. Based on US Census block data; the darker the color, the lower the density per square mile. Comments included that the map doesn't show many existing subdivisions and/or roads.
- ▶ Block Group Housing Units per square mile 2016. Based on ACS housing unit estimates; the darker the color, the higher the density of units per square mile.
- ▶ Block Group Average Parcel size. Based on Harris County Tax Assessor parcel data; the darker the color the greater the average parcel size. Comments included that the large tracts tend to skew the numbers making it appear there are many large parcels in areas where they aren't.
- ▶ Soils. Provided by the Harris County Health Department; perkability of soils gets worse going west toward the Chattahoochee River, but over all, most of County is good for septic systems.
- ▶ Water Resources. Based on GA EPD 2014 Water Quality Report; seven streams are contaminated (Dozier Creek, Long Cane Creek, Mountain Oak Creek, Mulberry Creek, Sand Creek, tributary to Williams Creek, and Williams Creek).
- ▶ County Water Lines. Provided by Carter & Sloope, engineers; shows 90% of water lines are south of the SR 315/SR 208 corridor.
- ▶ County Public Sewer Lines. County has only two sewer lines; one from West Point and one from Columbus for the Grove; there is not a line from Columbus to Woodland Hills.
- ▶ Existing Land Use. Shows current land uses.
- ▶ Future Land Development. Growth down SR 103, I-185 and along Chattahoochee River.

Suggestion was to have a traffic count map, and Mr. Morris indicated he will prepare same.

Characteristics of Rural

- ▶ trees/canopy and lot size
- ▶ dirt roads
- ▶ only wells for water
- ▶ inadequate internet
- ▶ big fields - are or used to be farms
- ▶ septic tank usage
- ▶ lack of infrastructure
- ▶ festivals, events, people getting together
- ▶ schools are hub of activity
- ▶ wildlife
- ▶ volunteer fire departments
- ▶ family farms
- ▶ conservation covenants
- ▶ low density

General discussion regarding growth

- ▶ entire County is "special"
- ▶ many citizens want the County to grow while others want it to remain the same
- ▶ many want the type of area that is in Sweetbay subdivision
- ▶ one builder essentially currently controlling growth (the home he builds sell as fast as he can build them)
- ▶ growth will probably be on SR 103, 185, SR 219, SR 85 and US 27
- ▶ County is easy to maneuver north and south, but not so easy east and west
- ▶ there is a natural block to growth moving north - Callaway Gardens
- ▶ millennials not looking to live in County; desire smaller lots, walking to businesses, parks and bike trails
- ▶ millennials can't afford to live here, no employment or affordable housing; those that are living here are

- living with parents
- ▶ identify parcels that might be critical to recreation or environmental resources
- ▶ need to look at infrastructure to offset tax base
- ▶ sewer changes everything; lack of sewer allows controlled growth
- ▶ sewer is key to commercial growth and roof tops

Next Comprehensive Plan Update meeting is November 20, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM, in Room 223 of the Courthouse.

ADJOURNMENT