

VIRGINIA:

A Special Joint Meeting of the Lancaster County Board of Supervisors and the Lancaster County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board/Commission Meeting Room of the Lancaster County Administration Building in Lancaster, Virginia.

Board of
Supervisors

Members Present:

Jason D. Bellows, Chair

Ernest W. Palin, Jr., Vice Chair

Jack D. Larson, Board Member

William R. Lee, Board Member

Robert S. Westbrook, Board Member

Planning Commission

Members Present:

Ty Brent, Chair

Tara Booth, Vice Chair

Robert Smart, Member

Glenn Pinn, Member

Steve Sorensen, Member

Tom Richardson, Member

David Chupp was absent

Staff Present:

Don G. Gill, County Administrator

Brian D. Barnes, Planning and Land Use Director &
Environmental Codes Compliance Officer

Crystal Whay, Clerk to the Board and
Building/Land Use Assistant

Mr. Bellows and Mr. Brent called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Discussion of a County Vision Statement

Mr. Bellows stated that the purpose of the special meeting was for both the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission to work on the vision statement for the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that in 2015, the Board of Supervisors held a retreat and they looked at a vision statement and mission statement for the Board and developed some good initiatives in four different categories with added action items under each. He stated that the goal for tonight's meeting was to try to blend the Board of Supervisors' vision statement and the vision statement in the Comprehensive Plan into one unified statement.

Mr. Bellows stated that he would read the two statements and then listen to other members' drafts and ideas. He read the Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement: "The signature of Lancaster County is its river vistas, farmlands and natural heritage. Convenient neighborhoods and commercial areas are connected to reduce interaction with traffic. Development decisions are fair to everyone and consistent with promoting economic opportunity that improves communities. Visionary elected officials and business and community leaders work together to enrich and create a legacy of healthy, beautiful places where jobs are abundant and services are accessible to all citizens."

Mr. Bellows read the Board of Supervisors' Draft Vision Statement: "The character of Lancaster County is reflected in its natural beauty, rich history, rural heritage and its relationship with the river and the bay. The promise that is Lancaster County is delivered by community, business and government leaders who work in tandem to create a legacy of healthy, beautiful places where opportunities and quality services are accessible to all citizens."

Mr. Bellows stated that Mr. Lee had written a draft statement.

Mr. Lee stated that he took the two statements and tried to blend them together. He read his draft statement: "The character of Lancaster County is reflected in its natural beauty and heritage. Its blend of farmland, commercial areas and waterfront is a perfect combination for all citizens. Elected officials must continue to engage both business and community leaders to work together to provide opportunities and quality services to all citizens. Elected officials' decisions must be fair and consistent with promoting economic opportunity that improves the entire county."

Mr. Richardson asked what was the difference between a vision statement and a mission statement.

Mr. Bellows replied that they were similar.

Mr. Gill stated that the Board of Supervisors had drafted both a mission and a vision statement at the retreat, but the Comprehensive Plan just has a vision statement.

Mr. Lee stated that a lot of places have two statements, but they are concentrating on the vision statement now.

Dr. Westbrook stated that, in his opinion, the vision statement tells you where you want to go and the mission statement is how to get there.

Mr. Brent stated that he had perused the internet to see what other communities have for their vision statement. He stated that the theme seemed to be that every place is the best place to be.

Mr. Sorensen stated that he liked Mr. Lee's statement. He stated that he liked things to be simple and to the point. He suggested that the word "fair" be replaced with the word "consistent" in the last sentence. He stated that it makes it seem as if things were not fair in the past.

Mr. Bellows stated that the word "fair" can be subjective.

Mr. Bellows stated that he liked Mr. Lee's statement overall, but would like to see it reworded to not have the words "elected officials" twice.

Dr. Westbrook suggested using the word "officials" instead of "elected officials" because the Planning Commission members are not elected.

Mr. Larson suggested using the words "elected and appointed officials".

Mr. Bellows suggested the words "county officials".

Mr. Larson stated that, in his opinion, "county officials" was too general.

After more discussion, Mr. Bellows read the revised vision statement: "The character of Lancaster County is reflected in its natural beauty and heritage. Its blend of farmland, commercial areas and waterfront is a perfect combination for all citizens. Elected and appointed officials must continue to engage both business and community leaders to work together to provide opportunities and quality services to all citizens and decisions must be consistent in promoting economic opportunity and services."

There was a consensus of both the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission that they were satisfied with the revised vision statement.

Mr. Bellows asked if any Board members wanted to bring anything to the Planning Commission members' attention.

Dr. Westbrook stated that he took the supervisors' certification course and the first course was on planning and land use where they talked about the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the course basically said that the Comprehensive Plan was supposed to be a plan of where you want to go. He stated that the statements in the plan should be

directional. He stated that his opinion was that the County's Comprehensive Plan discussed the pleasant things about the County, but not so much about the direction it needed to go, except for the last chapter.

Mr. Bellows stated that, in his opinion, the Comprehensive Plan needs to be aspirational and include what they think is valuable and want to protect, too. He stated that the way the Comprehensive Plan was written was critical in defending this County in the Dominion Energy case concerning the towers.

Mr. Larson stated that he thought it would help to go back and look at the history of the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the first plan was created around the year 2000 and there was none before that. He stated that an outside firm helped to facilitate that one with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. He stated that firm did a poor job and was ultimately let go and the plan was finished internally. He stated that the way the Comprehensive Plan is structured is actually the result of good work done by Pat Frere. He stated that, as the years have gone by, he thinks the plan has become more directional than it was. He stated that there is an area that they have gotten away from that he thinks needs attention and that is the water situation. He stated that, about twenty years ago, there was real concern that they were drawing down the aquifers to the point that they would be in trouble. He stated that the Planning Commission, in the early 2000's, worked hard to try to come up with some alternatives, one of which was surface water. He stated that there were a lot of potential impoundment areas around old mill ponds. He stated that the US Army Corps of Engineers used to be adamantly opposed to any surface water solution, but he did not know their position now. He stated that he would ask that the Planning Commission look into that issue.

Mr. Bellows stated that there was a substantial amount of information where the Rappahannock River Basin Authority is concerned. He stated that the Hampton Roads Sanitation District is overseeing a pilot program to pump wastewater back into a drilled well for recharging. He stated that Pete Mansfield in Middlesex County has been pushing for decades to build a pipeline to the paper mill in West Point. He stated that there are a lot of things that are going on concerning this issue. He stated that it is both a water problem and a society problem. He stated that the West Point paper mill just received another approved permit.

Mr. Palin stated that he was concerned about the phrase "in close proximity" when they were reviewing commercial zoning applications near towns. He stated that he thought they might want to think about determining boundaries for future commercial activities.

Mr. Gill stated that, currently, the Comprehensive Plan states that commercial activity be directed to the Primary Growth Area (PGA) and things that are in close proximity to that area would be favorably considered. He stated that he thought Mr. Palin was saying that the words "in close proximity" might be too subjective.

Mr. Palin stated that, in his opinion, where the Carlson request was located in the application last year should be as far as they go in that direction.

Mr. Gill suggested that, instead of having definitive road boundaries, that they use mileage from the towns instead. He stated that this issue will be covered in Chapter Seven of the Comprehensive Plan, so that can be discussed in more depth during that review.

Mr. Gill stated that the Code of Virginia requires localities to review and revise their Comprehensive Plans every five years. He stated that the last review lasted approximately eighteen months. He stated that, in the past, the Planning Commission has reviewed the plan chapter by chapter and sent a chapter at a time to the Board of Supervisors for its review and approval. He stated that, during the last review, Gayl Fowler came to speak about potable water as well as a VIMS representative to discuss test wells and he would try to get similar presentations for the meetings again.

Mr. Lee stated that one of his concerns is substandard housing for the elderly population in the County. He stated that they needed to determine what the County's approach would be for assisting these citizens. He stated that it might be a good idea to have Edna Davenport, Director of Social Services, to come talk to them about what she sees concerning the elderly. He stated that there are some pretty bad situations. He stated that another one of his concerns is about drawing boundaries for commercial activities. He stated that the County wants more economic development and wants to be business friendly, so they need to find a balance. He stated that he thought it may be better to continue to consider those requests on a case by case basis.

Adjournment

Mr. Bellows adjourned the Board of Supervisors meeting.

VOTE:	Jason D. Bellows	Aye
	Ernest W. Palin, Jr.	Aye
	Jack D. Larson	Aye
	William R. Lee	Aye
	Robert S. Westbrook	Aye

Mr. Brent adjourned the Planning Commission meeting until 7:00 p.m. **VOTE: 6-0.**