

2017-08-07

Falls of Neuse Confirmation Group Meeting #4

Durant Nature Preserve – Campbell Lodge

Staff present: Jason Hardin, Bynum Walter

Members present: Bob Fry, Randy Ray, Robert Wilson, Olalah Njenga, Leon Cooke, Will Owen, Kerry O'Sullivan, John Purves, Andi Curtis

Opening remarks

- Project Manager Jason Hardin opened the meeting and discussed the next steps for the project, including the public presentation of draft recommendations on August 10. He stated that the group meeting would focus on ensuring that the draft recommendations would align with input received through the previous meetings and online survey.

Discussion of draft recommendations

- A question was raised regarding whether any residents of Fonville Road responded to the survey. Hardin stated that they had not, but that several residents in the portion of the study area west of Falls of Neuse Road had.
- A significant amount of discussion took place regarding tree conservation and forestation requirements. Group members expressed concerns about satisfying forestation with replanting rather than conservation and that community members understood forestation to involve preservation of existing trees. Hardin explained that the 40% forestation policy involved the watershed overlay and could be met either by conservation or replanting. He stated that staff would review the draft recommendations in light of the concerns.
- Another forestation question involved how the policy would affect already developed properties that do not meet the standard. Hardin noted that the policy mirrors an existing code requirement. He noted that the recommendation, as with most of the plan recommendations, is a policy that would be used when rezoning requests are considered, not a new legal requirement.
- Group members stated that the reference to a potential drive-through use at Site B/Dunn Road was not in keeping with input and should be removed.
- A question involved the proposed expansion of the commercial area at Fonville Road and whether additional impervious surface would be appropriate there. Hardin noted that watershed protection requirements are in place that limit impervious surface.
- The group discussed a potential name for the area at length. Hardin mentioned several suggestions provided through the online survey. The group agreed that a name would be helpful in strengthening the identity of the area. The group discussed both "Falls North" and "Falls Park" and determined the former would be a better option.
- For Site A, at the intersection of Falls of Neuse and Raven Ridge roads, discussion involved height and building type. Illustrations on meeting materials had shown height as 2/3 stories, but group members said they believed the residents preferred two stories. Some group members

stated that they did not understand that the term “multifamily” included apartments. After discussion, the group appeared comfortable with policy guidance that would limit apartments to being over office space, rather than in a standalone building.

- A question involved a recommendation that a Parkway frontage, which requires a 50’ tree area along the road, be applied to properties being rezoned along Falls of Neuse Road. The question involved whether it would be applied to Raven Ridge Road as well. Hardin stated that it should be applied to the portion of Raven Ridge within the study area.
- A follow-up question involved a setback for buildings at the intersection of Falls of Neuse and Raven Ridge.
- Group members asked whether the plan’s policy guidance would be heeded. Hardin stated that area plans carry significant weight because of the extensive input and high level of geographic focus involved in their creation.
- A question involved whether the project consultant, Rhodeside & Harwell, developed the list of uses and images for the scenarios. Hardin stated that the consultant developed the recommendations based on public input.
- The discussion returned to the potential height at Site A. Njenga stated that a limit in stories does not necessarily limit height in feet. She also stated residents would prefer two stories in that area.
- A question involved the term MUTCD, which was used in the draft recommendations. Hardin stated that it stands for Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and, noting that MUTCD is perhaps not a term used often in casual conversation, stated that it would be spelled out in future versions of the recommendations.
- A group member asked whether buildings at Site E, where draft policy guidance encourages the reuse of existing buildings, means that buildings would have to be preserved. Hardin stated that the plan contains policy guidance, not legal regulation. In the absence of a rezoning, no requirement to preserve a building would exist. If a rezoning is requested, then policy guidance would encourage retaining existing buildings, but leaves open the possibility for a property owner to show that a building could not reasonably be reused.
- Site E, the commercial area near the dam, was the subject of more questions relating to specificity about use related to recreation and scale. Questions involved hours of operation; drive through uses; and whether, if a bar is prohibited, then would restaurants? Hardin stated that restaurant is a separate category than bar, and that the draft recommendation envisioned allowing the former but not the latter. He stated that the intent of the recommendation was to create a destination that complemented recreational activities. Given that, hours should generally correspond to hours of recreational activities.
- A question involved uses allowed in the Neighborhood Mixed Use zoning category, and how change to the Future Land Use Map interact with zoning. Hardin stated that the FLUM provides guidance when a rezoning is requested. In this case, if the small area plan recommends that an

expansion of the area only allow small-scale retail or restaurant use and with limitations on hours, if a rezoning request does not include conditions that comply with those policies, then it would be deemed inconsistent with the plan.

- Group members asked whether any input had been received from Site D (the area along the east side of Falls of Neuse Road between Tabriz Court and Lower Farm Lane) property owners who might not wish to see the policy guidance changed from Office and Residential Mixed Use to Low Density Residential. Hardin stated that he had been contacted by one property owner who had made such a comment. He noted two scenarios had been proposed, one that envisioned a higher level of density, but that input had favored the less dense option. He noted that the nature of planning and land use regulation involves making decisions such as that.

Meeting Adjournment

- Jason Hardin stated that the recommendations would be revised before the August 10 public meeting and encouraged all group members to attend that meeting.