

Denton Planning Commission

Minutes

Town of Denton

September 28, 2021

Planning Commission Members:

Doris Walls, Chairperson*

William Quick*

Joseph Mayer, Jr.**

Stephen Mead*

George Schwaeble*

David Burroughs*

* Those Present

** Excused

*** Absent

Participants:

Walter Keith Johnson

Peter Johnston

Donald Mulrine, Jr.

Recording:

Donna Todd, Planning and Codes

George Bacorn, Chief of Police

PROCEEDINGS

Call to Order:

The Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Walls at 6:00 p.m., on September 28, 2021, at the Denton Town Office. Chairperson Walls lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

This Meeting was made available to the public via Zoom Video Conferencing, and access to the meeting was made available on the Town website.

Approval of Minutes:

August 31, 2021, Planning Commission Meeting minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved as submitted.

Old Business #1 – Comprehensive Plan Update:

Mr. Johnston reviewed the Public Engagement Survey Results that were provided to the Planning Commission. The purpose of the survey was to determine the best way to communicate with the community about the Comprehensive Plan. The result was a very low response rate to the methods used to communicate with the community.

The survey was posted on SurveyMonkey with a link on the Town Website and the Town's Facebook page. In addition, hard copies were distributed to the apartment complexes, and the local churches were contacted to distribute hard copies within their church.

The conclusion of the survey results determined the process needs improvement for more public participation. Other methods recommended to communicate may include coordinating meetings with the Lions Club, YMCA, developers, and Homeowner Associations.

At the Joint Working Session, the Town Council expressed the Council has the same problem reaching the community and community involvement unless it's a controversial subject.

Per the County, low-income housing has an impact on the schools.

The Land Use Article for the Comprehensive Plan requires all jurisdictions, County and Town, to include strategies addressing affordable housing.

Mr. Johnson provided information regarding the school cost. The maintenance of effort cost for the County is approximately \$15,000 per student per year. According to Councilman Johnson, when the State-mandated the Kirwan Bill for funding of schools becomes effective, it will increase property taxes at the County level and impact Town residents.

Mr. Johnston's summary of the Joint Meeting included infrastructure priorities for fiber optics, Legion Road improvements, traffic access, circulation, and marketing Denton.

There was a discussion of the Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) with the Town for the Village at Watts Creek project and the potential impact on sewer and water allocations. This arrangement has implications for the Water Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice Chairperson Quick recommends creating visuals/maps of how the Town can be developed for the public engagement process and providing information in a format that to which the public can better relate.

Sue Simmons, Director of Caroline County Parks and Recreation, is currently preparing a comprehensive parks plan for the County. The Commission would like to coordinate a meeting to discuss the Town's plans and the comprehensive park plan.

Promoting Denton's Choptank River for outdoor recreation is an item to be included in the next Comprehensive Plan.

The capital improvement plan for the next five years should be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Old Business #2 – Other:

None.

New Business #1 – Other:

None.

Staff Items #1 – Other:

At the next Planning Commission Meeting, the park plans will be available for the Planning Commission to view and discuss.

Joe Mayer will not be able to attend Tuesday meetings. Would the Commission consider changing the meeting day?

Mr. Mead recommends soliciting citizens and other organizations to help facilitate the dialogue for the public engagement.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.