

Town of Caroline Planning Board  
Minutes, 2/18/20

Present: Charles Eldermire, Katherine Goldberg-Forrest, Bill Podulka, Val Warke

Meeting began at 6:00 pm.

1. Regarding format and layout of Comp Plan: Maps and tables will be full page and at the back of the section they belong to. (Potentially small tables could be in-line in the text as long as it wasn't too confusing if tables were in two places. There may not be many cases of this so let's decide on a case-by-case basis.) Maps and tables labeled sequentially with <section number>-<item number>

Example: Map 3-2

Wil Lawrence (attending for "fun") suggested keeping sentences short and simple and using boxes around text to highlight important points.

2. Decided to include maps of the Ag Districts and Prime Agricultural Soil and to put them in the "Rural Character" section rather than "Environmental Protection & Natural Resources."

3. In the "Environmental Protection & Natural Resources" section, decided to move the aquifer material from the Environmental Protection part to the Natural Resources part. Comments about preserving and protecting water resources will stay in the Environmental Protection part.

4. Regarding Land Use/Land Cover table and map: Bill will see if Osamu Tsuda can generate a similar table for Land Use/Land Cover for 15 years ago. Results will go in either "Snapshot of Growth", "Environmental Protection & Natural Resources" or "Rural Character"-will decide that later.

5. Regarding "review and updating"-Val shared that when he started on the Planning Board that a lawyer (town lawyer?) advised that the charge to the Planning Board be a "review and update" of the comprehensive plan. If the action was more "throw out the old one and write a new one" then the process would have to be much more involved than what we have been going through.

Based in part on that charge, Val argued that we ought to have "Track Changes" versions to hand to the town board so they could easily see what was updated and what was not, that legal documents were typically handled that way.

We discussed Track Changes and decided that though Track Changes versions would be presented to the Board, it was fine (and simpler) to present the simple draft, not Track Changes, version at the public information and public hearing meetings.

6. "Environmental Protection and Natural Resources" section-folks should look over the draft (sent out 2/15) and get comments to Bill by early March. Topics missed? Topics to exclude? General comments? Word quibbles?

7. "Rural Character" draft is done (Katherine already sent it out on 11/10/19). Track changes version got garbled by the formatting of the old comp plan. Tonight Katherine sent us all a clean (non-track changes) version and resent the track changes version. Bill will try to build a "good" track changes version from Katherine's files. Get comments to Katherine by early March as well.

8. Charles has made progress on "Livability" and will send a draft out by the first week of March so that we have time to review it before our next meeting.

9. Val has worked on the "Process" appendix; Bill will send him approximate attendance numbers from the three workshops.

10. Val will start working on the "Reflections on the Old Comp Plan" piece.

11. "Snapshot of Growth" section: we decided to use the same size symbols for "new" stuff as for "old" stuff. Decided to use a 15-year window so "old" is 2005 and before and "new" is after 2005. Decided it was good enough to map dots at centroid of parcels rather than actual building location (the later would entail a lot of "by hand" work). Once Bill has finished checking and cleaning the data provided by the Assessment Department, he will have Sharon make three maps to discuss at our next meeting: one with just residences, one with just commercial properties, and one combined map.

Biggest recent housing event is the construction of the apartments on Boiceville Road and construction was both before and after 2005. Val will contact Bruno Schickel to get the number of housing units added each year.

The growth section could either stand on its own or be incorporated into "Livability" or "Rural Character." Charles thought it would be best on its own so that it stood out and was noticed.

Bill stated that he expected to list two Actions/Recommendations in the Growth section:

- (1) Hire a professional to do a more in-depth growth analysis for Caroline [not said at the meeting, but suggest doing it in 2021 at the earliest so that 2020 census data is available].
- (2) The town should have a community discussion about whether or not to institute zoning or some other method of land use planning (after the above-recommended growth analysis is done). ["It's time to have the discussion."]

Any zoning discussion should be even-handed as there are good things and bad things both about having it as well as not having it. Pending the results of the growth analysis, it is time for the community to grapple with the pros and cons of the status quo compared to implementing some form of land use plan.