

**BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2022, 11:00 AM
1500 BLOWING ROCK ROAD**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Tim Futrelle, Mayor Pro Tem Edie Tugman, Todd Carter, Dalton George, Becca Nenow, and Virginia Roseman

PLANNING & INSPECTIONS STAFF PRESENT: Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections, Stacey Miller-Chief Building Inspector & Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, Jessica Mitchell-Long Range/Special Projects Planner, and Brenda Henson-Administrative Support

OTHER TOWN STAFF AND REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Amy Davis-Town Manager, Mark Freed-Director of Cultural Resources, Andy LeBeau-Chief of Police, Rick Miller-Public Works Director, Todd Moody-Public Works Deputy Director, and Allison Meade-Town Attorney

Call to Order

Mayor Futrelle called the meeting to order at 11:11 a.m.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mayor Pro Tem Tugman motioned to approve the September 29, 2022, Comprehensive Plan meeting minutes as written. Council Member Roseman seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay - None

The motion passed.

RFQ/Process Update

Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning & Inspections, stated she had further discussed the RFQ with the Town attorney. They felt sending an RFP would be better than reposting the RFQ. It was discussed that waiting to send out the request as an RFP would give time to evaluate and clearly identify what was being requested with a consultant.

Ongoing and Pending Reports/Processes Update

A handout from the School of Government, Development Finance Initiative (DFI) was provided (**copy on file**). Ms. Amy Davis, Town Manager, explained that the DFI would facilitate two workshops with elected officials regarding the community's housing needs. Ms. Davis stated that the DFI would need 45 days' notice to prepare for the first workshop and 60 days after the workshop to complete a digest containing an assessment of housing needs. Then the second workshop could be held after the delivery of the digest. Ms. Shook felt these workshops could be beneficial when considering the housing portions of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Davis stated she would try to schedule the first workshop for early January 2023. Discussion ensued that the DFI workshops would provide relevant information to include with the housing portions and housing themes of the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Shook noted that the Climate Action Plan was in progress, and Mr. George Santucci, Sustainability/Special Projects Manager hoped to have the modeling done in December and a plan by June. She stated that the Tree Canopy Assessment was also in progress, which is being completed by Mr.

Brandon Wise, Environmental Planner, and other Planning and Town Staff. Ms. Shook provided a memo from the American Planning Association (APA) that recommended a Development/Capacity (Market) Analysis be completed for the Comprehensive Plan (**copy of APA memo on file**). She also noted that a market analysis was contained in the Boone 2030 Plan. Ms. Shook provided everyone with a copy of that previously completed analysis (**copy on file**). Ms. Shook stated she would meet with David Jackson from the Boone Chamber of Commerce next week to see if there was opportunity to collaborate on the analysis.

Initial Data Gathering Summary

Brief discussed ensued on the RFP for the comprehensive plan. Ms. Shook mentioned that she had gotten word that there were consultants that looked at the Town's RFQ, but did not apply. She emphasized that this pause in putting the RFP out would help redevelop the goals of where the Town wanted a consultant to assist. Ms. Allison Meade, Town Attorney, noted that the Town would not want an off-the-shelf Comprehensive Plan. She felt that Town Council, staff, and herself should be very involved in the process. Ms. Meade expressed concern that having a consultant come in too early in the process would allow the consultant to take over before the Council and staff could frame and create the substance of what they wanted in the Comp Plan. She felt it was important to allow staff to have the deepest creative element in developing the Plan.

Council Member Roseman felt it was a good idea to rethink sending out the RFQ and agreed with sending out an RFP.

Ms. Shook mentioned data sources such as the Census, mapping, population estimates, and other official Town plans.

Ms. Shook mentioned previously used data and plans, such as the Smart Growth Audit. Council Member Roseman asked how accurate that information would still be. Ms. Shook replied that the principles would still be the same. Mayor Pro-Tem Tugman asked about access to this audit; Ms. Shook replied that it is available on the Planning and Inspection webpage.

Discussion ensued as to how other adopted plans could be incorporated; She mentioned that this could be an area of work to begin while waiting for the four pending items: School of Government DFI Affordable Housing Technical Assistance, Climate Action Plan, Tree Canopy Assessment, Development/Capacity (Market) Analysis.

Stakeholder Discussion

Ms. Shook suggested up to three in-person meetings with Town Council and invited stakeholders. She stated that attendees would be provided with a list of specific and open-ended questions for discussion at the small group meetings. Ms. Shook noted that the meetings would be facilitated by staff and the Town attorney to reduce the political perceptions that could cause reluctance to be candid. Ms. Meade added that Council members would primarily listen to the discussion.

Ms. Shook felt there should be stakeholder meetings concerning low-density and high-density housing and general business development.

Mayor Pro Tem Tugman asked if the DFI workshop should take place first. Ms. Shook suggested having the first DFI workshop before having stakeholder meetings related to affordable housing. Ms. Meade did not see a need to wait and felt the stakeholder meetings could proceed at the same time. Ms. Shook read a list of possible stakeholders compiled by the staff that they felt should be included in the Comprehensive Plan development process. She asked Council members to let her know of other stakeholders they felt would be important in the process. It was suggested that Habitat for Humanity be added to the list. Ms. Shook stated she would email Council a copy of the full stakeholder list.

Ms. Shook noted that the next Comprehensive Plan discussion with Town Council was scheduled for November 30 at 9 a.m. It was suggested that this meeting be a stakeholder meeting for local/small businesses. Mayor Pro Tem Tugman asked if the County or the Chamber needed to be included within the economic plan development, and about the County's plan. Council Member George mentioned that it would be helpful to have an initial model for the stakeholder meetings and for listening to these groups. He continued that for housing stakeholders, it should include renters and homeowners, and the Watauga Housing Council could help identify individuals. It was mentioned that the Downtown Boone Development Association and the Chamber could assist in identifying new businesses. Council Member Carter expressed that the main question asked would most likely be regarding system development fees. Mr. Rick Miller, Public Works Director, said a decision could be made on those fees before July 2023 since they are adopted by Council.

Ms. Shook presented a list of possible stakeholder attendees, and Council members added to that list. The following list of names was agreed upon by Council to be invited to the November 30 stakeholder meeting: Carson Coatney (Stick Boy, Booneshine), Joe Mager (Wildwood), Seth Sullivan (The Cardinal), Chelsea Kozlowski (Howard Station), Sam and Jennifer Parker (Our Daily Bread), Chris Grasinger (Center 45), Jeremy Bollman (Hatchett Coffee), Josiah Davis (Venture Chocolate, Local Lion), John Winkler, David Jackson (Boone Area Chamber of Commerce), Megan Mason (DBDA Chair), and if possible a banking and mixed-use business owner representative. Ms. Shook stated she would send the stakeholders a list of questions before the meeting to prepare them. She offered the following as possible questions: What could the Town do to incentivize small/local business recruitment and retention? What do you feel are barriers to entry to opening a business in Boone? What do you feel are barriers to business retention in Boone?

There was some discussion about mixed-use developments and their success. Council Member George suggested inviting the owners of Cup Craze at The Standard and the Marathon Chiropractic Clinic at King Street Flats to a future stakeholder meeting. Ms. Shook mentioned the businesses at Boone Point.

Ms. Shook discussed that the Town Council should consider the stakeholder list, that would be shared following the meeting, and stakeholder questions before the November 30 meeting.

Ms. Shook mentioned photos taken and presented to the Community Appearance Commission depicting a 10-year window of new construction in Town. Council members asked if they could see those photos.

Planning – November Meeting

Due to many invitees, it was decided that, if necessary, two sessions would be held on November 30, one beginning at 9 a.m. and the other at 12 p.m., with an option for Town staff to attend virtually. Mayor Pro Tem Tugman requested time to regroup after the second session. Ms. Shook stated that Staff would contact the current stakeholders list of business owners for the November 30 meeting.

Mayor Futrelle and Ms. Davis left the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

Ms. Shook asked that Council members review the current Comprehensive Plan, the Boone 2030 Plan, and the other adopted Town plans before the November 30 meeting. She stated she would send them the 10-year new construction photos. Ms. Shook noted she would also compile a list of issues with the mixed-use text and send that to Town Council. Placing superseded and/or repealed plans on the Town's website and possibly creating a dedicated website for the comprehensive plan were suggested.

Council members agreed to have a 1–2-hour work session before their first regular meeting in December. It was mentioned that ASU was already scheduled to meet with Council before that meeting.

Adjournment

With nothing further, Council Member Roseman motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Council Member George seconded the motion.

Vote: Aye – All
Nay - None

The motion passed.

Tim Futrelle, Mayor

Brenda Henson, Administrative Support