

**Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting Minutes  
for the  
April 5, 2006 Meeting**

**Committee Members Present:**

Linda Jones, Rick Lowe, Sue Francis, Chuck Shaheen, Doug McDowell, Bill Douglas, Bob Hubbard, Chuck Ramsdale, Jack Steed, Alan Dooley

**Staff Present:**

Steve Engle, Jacob Cox, Jesse Fountain, Jessica Swecker, Michael Whipple, Mike Beecham, Phil Clark

Chairman Rick Lowe opened the meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC). Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and a motion made to approve. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Chairman Lowe then introduced Alan Dooley as a new member to the CPC as a representative of the City of Centerville. Mr. Dooley told the group a little about himself and expressed his desire to get acquainted with the local comprehensive planning process and the Committee's work to date as quickly as possible and to be an important contribution to the Committee and process.

Michael Whipple introduced Phil Clark of the RDC as the staff person who would replace Mr. Whipple on the CPC due to Mr. Whipple's resigning from the RDC to pursue law school. Mr. Clark made some remarks of self-introduction to the group.

Mr. Whipple asked for input from the Committee about the March 29 kickoff at the Vision 20-20 meeting. Members were pleased with the results and representation from the Committee, and Mr. Whipple mentioned the good press coverage.

On the subject of the housing element, Mr. Shaheen had a question related to zoning versus the cost, quality, and value of property was discussed. Jesse Fountain of Warner Robins responded to Mr. Shaheen and emphasized the fact that the Committee will not be dealing with zoning during the development of the comprehensive plan and provided the Committee several examples on the relationship between cost, quality, and value of the property. Mr. Clark then mentioned that the primary focus of this study will be to identify the types, forms, styles, and patterns of development in the various areas of the community and the implementation to achieve these desired development patterns. Chairman Lowe addressed the dramatic housing boom in Houston County by reading off statistics from the US Census Bureau. Mr. Engle indicated that the County was in good shape at this time related to the quality of housing because of the large number of new constructions in recent years, but may become an issue later in the planning period as people move out of older neighborhoods into new developments. Mr. Clark expressed to the Committee that they must go beyond the housing statistics before them when establishing specific strategies and policies for the future. They also need to see the relationship of housing to economic development (affordability), natural resources, infrastructure development (water, sewer, streets, fire/police protection), and land use.

Michael Beecham gave a power point presentation on character areas in Houston County, with pictures showing examples of the different categories of character areas as they relate to the handout provided to the Committee. Comments were raised on several of the categories including the Downtown District and Crossroads Town Center. Most of the discussion focused on the concept of “town center;” what constitutes a town center and how does it connect or relate with the surrounding land use. Mr. Clark mentioned that a “town center” acts as a focal point for a particular area; a place where people from that neighborhood come to shop, eat, work and be entertained. It is designed to be connected with the surrounding area by alternative forms of transportation, with less emphasis on the automobile.

The Committee was reminded of a design charrette developed by the University of Georgia’s School of Environmental Design for the Russell Parkway Extension area. Jessica Swecker was asked to speak with Jesse Fountain about presenting to the Committee this design charrette. Mr. Clark also brought to the Committee’s attention the DCA Resource Team design study for Warner Robins inner-city area. This would be discussed during the development of the Community Agenda.

Next steps for the Committee will involve identifying character areas on maps depicting Warner Robins, Centerville, Perry, and unincorporated Houston County. Mr. Whipple stated that Oakey Woods was an area to be especially watchful of and careful to pay attention to for signs of development.

**\*\* An evening CPC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 11, at 5:00 p.m. at Warner Robins City Hall.**

**Mr. Whipple announced that the next Committee meeting would be scheduled for Wednesday, April 19, at 8:30 a.m. at Warner Robins City Hall.**

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Lowe.

Minutes submitted by Jacob Cox, Community Planner – 542-2117.

The Comprehensive Plan website can be accessed and previewed at:

<http://www.mgrdc.org/jointplan>