

**Georgetown Scott County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
May 24, 2022, Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. All Committee members were present, except Les Jarvis, Rob Jones, Dann Smith, Mark Sulski, and Kandice Whitehouse. Eric Colson with the Georgetown Fire Department and Todd Johnson with the BIA were present for observation. Director Joe Kane, Commission Engineer Ben Krebs, and Planners Matt Summers and Elise Ketz were present.

Introductions

Motion by Jack Conner, seconded by Todd Stone to approve the minutes from the April meeting. Motion passes unanimously.

Consultant Project Scope

Joe Kane presented the proposal to hire a consultant for the Economic Development component of the Comprehensive Plan. Jack Conner explained the context of the study in further detail, items listed below:

- Review and Make Recommendations in the Development Review Process
(Identified as “Item #1”)
- Identify at a Minimum Targeted Sites that Satisfy the Land Use Goals in the Economic Development Strategic Plan, along with Land Use Recommendations and an Infrastructure Needs Assessment for Each Site
(Identified as “Item #2”)
- Provide siting recommendations and best practices for controlling design for the following districts/sites proposed in the Economic Development Strategic Plan
(Identified as “Item #3”)

The total cost of the proposal is \$38,500, split 50/50 between the Planning Commission (PC) and Scott County United. Kane explained further how the three items would reflect into the current Comprehensive Plan.

Tom Prather expressed concerns on Item #1. He stated that those employed in the City of Georgetown and Georgetown Municipal Water and Sewer Service (GMWSS) have established the current systems of technical review are sufficient. The process is based off of years of expertise and is made for Scott County and should not be altered.

Conner explained that the document was outdated and that the scope of Item #1 has been expanded to include all utilities providers within Scott County. Prather stated that the processes and operations of the GMWSS system have been overshadowed by current facility concerns. He reiterated the existing system works, is appropriately scaled and well executed and should not be altered.

Ellison discussed how an area's ability to be developed and any limitations to development are not the fault of one infrastructure system. In particular, he expressed how multiple factors impact the development of a property, such as the US-25/Singer Property subdivision. Charlie Mifflin clarified that the development in question was approved despite technical concerns as it satisfied current development standards. Ellison commented that the order and requirements of the current development standards could possibly benefit from reconsideration of placement within the development timeline.

Kane discussed how the future growth is controlled by the constraints that exist today. He identified that there are constraints that drive the regional development outside of the ability to provide utilities to a site. He stated that the consultant would involve all of the providers in the area to bring to light concerns or complications that the PC and local government is not aware of.

Alonzo Allen disagreed with the use of a consultant, saying that there are experts in the field within the community that should be consulted prior to reaching out to an outsider. He proposed a working team of government staff and regional stakeholders that would discuss the development process instead of a consultant. Kane expressed instances where past working groups of volunteers get bogged down and that retention in citizen and advisory groups tends to be poor.

Kim Menke supported the benefits of a consultant. He stated that they would be able to pull from years and work in diverse regions of the US, which someone local may not have had the opportunity to study. He also stated that the benefits would outweigh the costs as the consultant would present a series of options that could work for the community, but that the community and local government would make the decision on if they should adopt or reject these comments.

Allen asked that the working group should be planned for now for the implementation of Comprehensive Plan Goals & Objectives (G&Os). His proposal involves the Judge-Executive and Mayor leading the conversation at the same level as the working team, and that each would be responsible for providing information to both the Fiscal Court and City Council. The working team would be made of representatives from the following groups: City Council (2), Magistrates (2), Planning & Zoning (2), Economic Development (3), and Tourism (1); with additional members being added as interested. The working team would meet bi-weekly, give monthly updates to the Judge-Executive and Mayor, and give quarterly updates to the collective team.

Ellison expressed reservations on Allen's proposal, stating that the Judge-Executive and Mayor both have time demanding schedules. Prather concurred and commented that the Comprehensive Plan is a driver for the future of the area and should not be driven exclusively by the Judge-Executive and Mayor. He stated that people change roles and responsibilities often in local government, which adds a layer of difficulty to the process.

Kane stated that the intent is to have the consultant, Scott County United, and PC staff work together to supply information, progress, and results on a regular basis to the Executive Steering

Committee (ESC). He stated that if more structure is required from the local governing bodies, it would be presented as it became available.

Mifflin supported the inclusion of outside expertise but emphasized that someone local is better at understanding the area's unique dynamics. He said that there should first be a request for qualifications (RFQ) made out to target economic development professionals Bluegrass Region. He also requested further engagement to see what the local professionals think and if they would help with the process.

Joe Pat Covington discussed the relationship between Item #1 and Item #2. He stated that they are interlocked, which poses a challenge if the items would be separated or isolated when being studied. He stated that an unbiased lens from an expert in the field would be the best value for the community. He requested that an engagement plan be developed with the consultant be produced.

Kane stated that the comments made would be reviewed by Scott County United and PC staff and edits would be made to the scope document. He stated that a draft engagement plan will also be made as part of those edits.

Prather expressed concerns on Item #2. He stated that targeted development of specific parcels or properties is an atypical way of promoting development. The methodology fails to consider the interests of the parcel and surrounding landowners. Conner expressed that the targeted sites were general ideas of location where developments could occur and were non-binding to the landowners.

Rick Hostetler brought up the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and the system used to determine if a property should be accepted into the program. The PDR program uses scores to determine the developability of a specific parcel. He stated that the properties in Northern Scott County were consistently scoring low as the property's topography makes it difficult to pursue development on.

Kane emphasized that the aim of using a consultant would be to understand the best practices for the region, and that the consultant could bring ideas on supporting the entirety of Scott County, not just the South and Georgetown areas. He stated that the community sentiment takes the forefront; the intent is to weigh the consultant's ideas against the community interests to ensure that if action is taken it is what is best for the area.

Hostetler reiterated that development is disproportionately not in Northern Scott County. He stated that the community determines the "winners" and "losers" in the process of developing, and that Southern Scott County and prime farmlands often times are the "winners" (are developed) whereas Northern Scott County parcels are often times the "losers" (are not developed). He asks to consider more northern properties in the county as future development sites and for ideas on how to distribute the development be provided as part of this process.

Debbie Osborne asked how Item #2 would shape the USB and Greenbelt plans. Prather stated that the Greenbelt has the ordinance and positive community sentiment in favor of its continued existence. Matt Summers stated that the Greenbelt will continue to be protected and may be expanded.

Motion by Menke, seconded by Hostetler, to approve the hiring of Ted Abernathy as a consultant.

Introduction to Land Use

Kane introduced the current land use policies established in the 2016/2017 Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the intent for the 2022 Comprehensive Plan is to update the existing system, using current information to address the existing and projected needs for the area.

Covington discussed the Greenbelt principles and the Legacy Trail extension project. He stated that there should be land dedicated now for trail use once the Legacy Trail extension is completed through that area to support further use of parks properties. He also stated that further research into Rails-to-Trails programs should be done, and similar programs should be adopted to increase recreation and walkability options.

Covington and Hampton mentioned community interests in development around the I-64 and Paynes Depot Road interchange.

Kane discussed the types of residential growth at the county scale. There were 3,529 dwelling units added over 6 years, 65.6% of which are single-family dwellings, and 34.4% are multi-family dwellings (51% within Georgetown). He stated that the building permits have remained steady since 2008. He showed a graphic depicting the mix of residential dwelling unit types by land use in 2021. In total, there are 15,833 dwelling units in Georgetown (30.1% multi-family), 146 dwelling units in Sadieville, 296 dwelling units in Stamping Ground, and 7,553 dwelling units in unincorporated Scott County.

There were further conversations regarding residential density in the area. Hampton proposed considering rates and standards that reflect other large communities in the Bluegrass Region, such as Lexington and Richmond. Prather discussed community sentiment regarding the production of single-family and multi-family developments in the city. He stated that there is a possible budget proposal to hire two individuals would study housing demands and issues in the community. The individuals would be part of a joint office, Affordable Housing and Housing Affordability, with a director and a specialist role available.

Todd Johnson with the BIA discussed the differences between terms of “Affordable Housing” and “Housing Affordability”, where the former is construction of federal voucher recipient only residences with strict accessibility and design standards, and the latter is construction of housing that is reasonably/achievably priced with the median income for the region in mind while also considering community attitudes regarding home style and neighborhood appearance.

Kane discussed the 2016 FLU map categories. He stated that there will be further research into the transition between “Urban Residential” to “Rural Residential” and “Rural Residential” to “Agricultural”, with the intent to determine an alternative that more accurately depicts the area.

Kane showed a map depicting the conversions of agricultural land to rural residential or strictly residential uses. From 2010 to 2021/2022, 5,745 acres of agricultural land (522 acres per year) was converted to rural residential uses. 688 parcels/lots between 5-30 acres were created in the same time frame, either formed through subdivision off of a larger farm or through complete division and conversion of a farm to rural residential sized lots. 249 lots were created in existing Rural PUD subdivisions (lots/parcels with acreage under 5).

He also discussed agricultural properties which are in either the PDR or designated as Agricultural Districts. He explained how each program works and that these areas agreed to have limited development in favor of retaining their agricultural character.

Further discussions on land use were continued to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Concluding Comments

Kane gave concluding comments. The public meeting date for the G&O is scheduled for Tuesday June 7th at the UK Ag Extension office from 6-8pm. An open house meeting at the GSCPC office on Wednesday June 15th during the workday. Meetings with Sadieville and Stamping Ground are proposed for mid-July. He reiterated that the ESC meetings would remain on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

There being no further business, the Meeting was adjourned by Kane at 6:00pm.