

Madison County Planning Board Meeting Minutes

May 31st 2022 Special Mtg. for Madison County Comp Plan Update

6:00 PM, A-B Tech Auditorium

6:00 PM: Welcome by Chair Jered Silver

Roll Call: Jered Silver, Jackie Ball, Mary Rice, Sue Keener, Jackie Ball, Kevin Morton, Daniel Rice in attendance, with Josh Norton absent (unexcused)...

- I. Introduction of evening's agenda by Terrey Dolan (Planning & Zoning Director), to review the updated draft of the Madison County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan).
- II. Brad Guth: Provided summary of his professional career, as many had yet to meet him in his four months as EDB Director and the Director of Development Services. He reviewed the summation of the various community out-reach mtgs. the staff had conducted throughout March and April to seek out public comment on the Comp Plan Update **Draft** needs. Seven Community Mtgs. throughout the entire county were held. Over 150 citizens attended these out-reach mtgs. Over 1,600 people viewed the created website (www.PlanMC.org), and 50 people completed the short survey, with over 250 completing the longer survey.
- III. He mentioned the outside Agency participation that was involved, with the County's Soil & Water Conservation and the U.S. Forestry Service weighing in on the Natural Resource Element draft language. Brad Guth then reviewed the updated Future Land Use Map, and showcased the (potential) expanded areas that could be designated for higher density residential areas around each town (Mars Hill, Marshall and Hot Springs), with connections to centralized water and sewer services. He discussed *Planning Board Findings and Statements of Consistency* that are required of the Board to provide the finished product to the Board of County Commissioners for their ultimate approval in June. **Noted the legally-imposed deadline of July 1st (2022) to have a "reasonably updated" Comp Plan draft adopted, and in place.**
- IV. Brad Guth then showed the Board and the audience a series of nearly 50 images that the county citizens had provided through the **Visual Preference Survey** within the PlanMC.org website.
- V. **Review of the four consolidated and updated (Elements') Goals, with Objectives and Strategies. (All four Elements discussed: Land Use, Economic Development, Natural & Cultural Resources and Housing, (in draft form) are attached as a completed compendium document, at the end of the Mtg. Minutes for reference)**
 - A. Land Use: Goals, Objectives and Strategies): Pages 1-3 of Draft Elements attached
 1. Objectives #1: Discussed Strategies 1-3
 2. Objective 2: Discussed Strategies 1-3

3. Objective 3: Discussed Strategies 1-3
4. Objective 4: Discussed Strategies 1-3
5. Objective 5: Discussed Strategies 1-3
6. Objective 6: Discussed Strategies 1-2
7. Objective 7: Discussed Strategies 1-2

2. Economic Development: Discussed Objective and Strategies (Pages 4-7)

1. Objective 1: Strategies 1-3
2. Objective 2: Strategies 1-3
3. Objective 3: Strategies 1-3
4. Objective 4: Strategies 1-6
5. Objective 5: Strategies 1-6
6. Objective 6: Strategies 1-4
7. Objective 7: Strategies 1-6
8. Objective 8: Strategies 1-3
9. Objective 9: Strategies 1-2

3. Natural Resources (Goals, Objectives and Strategies) Pages 8-12

1. Objective 1: Strategies 1-4
2. Objective 2: Strategies 1-8
3. Objective 3: Strategies 1-2
4. Objective 4: Strategies 1-3
5. Objective 5: Strategies 1-4
6. Objective 6: Strategies 1-2
7. Objective 7: Strategies 1-5
8. Objective 8: Strategies 1-3
9. Objective 9: Strategies 1-2
10. Objective 10: Strategy 1
11. Objective 11: Strategies 1-4

4. Housing (Goals, Objectives and Strategies) Pages 13-15

1. Objective 1: Strategies 1-5
2. Objective 2: Strategies 1-7
3. Objectives 3: Strategies 1-2
4. Objective 4: Strategies 1-4
5. Objective 5: Strategies 1-2
6. Objective 6: Strategies 1-6

VI. John Noor (Madison County Land Use Attorney) then briefed the Planning Board on the legal aspects of **Chapter 160D-501 (NC Gen. Assembly State Legislation)** in terms of all local governments meeting the imposed July 1, 2022 deadline for having a “reasonably updated” Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted.

VII. **General Public Comments:**

1. **Paul Allen (Beech Glen resident):** recognized this draft as a “*Vision Document*” and encourage the audience to see it as such. Desired to have the 24” diameter tree measurement criteria (for encouraging tree preservation) to be reduced down to 18”.
2. **Jim Tibbetts (Marshal resident):** Noted how beautiful Madison County is and desires to keep heavy industry that pollutes greatly from being welcomed or encouraged here. “Some listed land uses in our Ordinance are not desired!”
3. **Tony Ponder (Mars Hill):** Not wanting higher housing densities, as it promotes more crime in the communities. “Why do we need more housing?”
4. **Forrest Gilliam (Marshall).** Noted he was strictly commenting only as a private citizen tonight. Economic Development Board Member (EDB). Believes the county’s Comp Plan only needs to updated, and not wholly completed by July 1st. Stated the EDB rejected (by unanimous vote) in not formally approving the draft document, as they had no opportunity until last week when it was finally presented to them for review. “This whole process was rushed” !....

Mr. Gilliam recognized that Brad Guth and Terrey Dolan had only been with the county for a short time, 4 months and 18 months, respectively...and this Update Document needs much more vetting with the business community.

5. **Todd McCord (?):** Stated he was a life-long 62-year resident of Madison County. Claimed there are 1,125 businesses in the county, and there are 20,112 parcels. Doubted that more than a few, (or a very small percentage of all businesses), had the opportunity to review any of this material, or had even be consulted on it.

Down-played the efforts of county staff to get the word out, (in spite of the seven conducted Out-Reach Mtgs., and the website surveys)... He strongly wants a larger community opportunity to comment on the Draft and have businesses comment.

6. **Justin Silver:** 7th Generation resident of Madison County. General comments about needed employment opportunities, and recognizes the county shall be growing.
7. **Lee Wilde:** (Grapevine resident) 4th Generation “multi-generational” resident of the county. Builder within the county. Noted the contradiction of attempting to provide

affordable housing, yet with the additional rules suggested, it all goes to additional costs for the home.

8. **Monica Olmhausen:** Noted that she does not want Madison County to become like Buncombe County. "Not sure she even wants to stay here any longer"....pro farming.

End of Public Comments

- VIII. **Board Comments:** Vice Chair Allan Wyatt asked a series of questions about the imposed July 1st deadline process.

John Noor attempted to re-explain that a "reasonably updated" Comp Plan must be on file for all local governments by July 1st of this year. He noted there are no legally-defined descriptions for what "reasonably updated" means, per the NC State Legislature.

Jered Silver expressed his desire *that more than roughly 5% of the citizens of the county need to provide input*; but that he understood the deadline we are now facing as a county, and appreciated the efforts of Staff to engage as many within the overall county community as they did. But concluded that there just needs to be more community and business input on the Update being reviewed, in his opinion.

Terrey Dolan directed comments to the Board, in that as of now the majority of the existing 2010 Comp Plan's tables, graphs and charts, (utilizing any available means of updated data, including the updated U.S. 2020 Census Data) had been updated and implemented within the draft Comp Plan document, over the past several weeks of work. This work also includes an "editorial edit" of the corresponding Comp Plan narrative sections, based on the new data (i.e. updating those graphs, tables and charts).....

Discussion by the Board (with some participation comments by Forrest Gilliam) on how to proceed with adequately meeting the **July 1st Update Deadline**, essentially by only updating the Comp Plan document to "reasonably update" it. This was considered via using T. Dolan's existing narratives (with all corresponding updated graphics); and not to include any new Goals, Objectives or Strategies at this time.

A Motion was made by the Chair Jered Silver to ***Retain the Madison County's Comprehensive Land Plan, "to keep in place the current Plan's Goals, Objectives and Policies, while including all of the updated graphics and corresponding updated narratives, in order to "reasonably update (maintain)" the Madison County Comprehensive Plan, as required by North Carolina State Law. This Motion is made with the full understanding that additional public (comment) meetings shall be forthcoming to provide the county citizens, the Madison County Planning Board, and the Economic Development Board (EDB) further commenting time to address any additional or possible amendments, subsequent to the imposed July 1, 2022 deadline."***

Motion was Seconded by Vice Chair Allen Wyatt, with a **Board Vote of 7-0 (unanimous) in Favor of the Motion.**

- IX. **Other Board Business:** It was announced that the Board of Commissioners' next meeting has now, (as of this evening), been moved up from June 28th to June 21st. As well, Terrey Dolan announced the next Regularly Planning Board Meeting shall be held on Tuesday July 19th.
- X. **Having no further business, Mary Rice made a *Motion to Adjourn*, with a Second by Jered Silver, Vote 7-0 to Adjourn. Time 8:22 PM.**

Signed: Terrence S. Dolan, CZO
Madison County Planning & Zoning Director

**Madison County
Comprehensive Plan
2030**

A Plan to Guide Future Growth and Development

**Land Use
Economic Development
Natural and Cultural Resources
Housing**

Elements

Goals & Objectives

[DRAFT]

Prepared by:
Madison County
Development Services Department
2022

Land Use

Goals and Objectives

Goal: To ensure the orderly and efficient layout and appropriate use of land in Madison County to protect the health, safety and welfare of all citizens, protect individual property rights and to leave future generations a desirable place to live, work, play and belong.

Objective 1: Decrease the proliferation of incompatible land uses.

Strategy 1: Remove conflicting uses from zoning districts

Strategy 2: Manage new land uses in the zoning ordinance that have an adverse effect on the health, safety and welfare of county residents

Strategy 3: Amend the zoning ordinance to require transitional features between land uses such as buffers, tree plantings, lighting and noise reductions.

Objective 2: Protect and Enhance the quality of Madison County's natural environment and natural resources.

Strategy 1: Reduce impervious surfaces [ie Change parking minimums to maximums, require use of pervious paving materials]

Strategy 2: Increase limits on development in watershed [Water]

Strategy 3: Increase tree cover of impervious surfaces to reduce runoff velocity [ie tree to parking space ratios, canopy coverage ratios, tree per acre requirements]

Objective 3: Protect and Enhance the quality of Madison County's built environment and man made resources

Strategy 1: Identify eyesores and nuisances, eliminate them and prevent them from occurring in the future

Strategy 2: Create local incentive programs to leverage investment in existing buildings

Strategy 3: Complete an architectural survey of Madison County to identify historical resources worthy of preservation.

Strategy 4: Enhance and expand county building maintenance program to include community centers.

Objective 4: Establish and Maintain an effective land use regulatory program to implement the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and as a means to control growth and development in rural areas of the county.

Strategy 1: Review and Amend all applicable land development ordinances to address the goals and objectives in the Madison County Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 2: Develop separate free standing ordinances as necessary [ie noise pollution/unwanted or disturbing sound, light pollution/unwanted or disturbing light, others]

Strategy 3: Use the Comprehensive Plan consistently as a guide in reviewing and improving rezoning applications [ie Planning Board consistency statements to the Board of County Commissioners G.S. 160D-605].

Objective 5 Discourage undesirable or unattractive land uses, especially within high visibility areas

Strategy 1: Enhance and enforce sign regulations for all classes of signs used in outdoor advertising

Strategy 2: Enforce existing ordinances and amend as needed to regulate junkyards and junked motor vehicles

Strategy 3: Improve and Maintain the appearance of major gateways to Madison County

Objective 6: Encourage future development within the corporate limits of Mars Hill, Marshall and Hot Springs to continue a more compact development pattern and keep the unincorporated areas of the county rural.

Strategy 1: Create new zoning districts outside corporate limits to allow higher density and mixed-use development [ie two miles around existing town limits]

Strategy 2: Create small area plans for unincorporated communities in Madison County such as Spring Creek, Ebs-Chapel, Beech Glen to protect and preserve the rural character of these unincorporated areas.

Objective 7: Ensure new development enhances the rural character of Madison County and doesn't use corporate architecture that appears in every other community [ie

Strategy1: Establish design guidelines ensuring compatibility of new development with community character [ie build-to lines, density, size, screening from roadway, existing vegetation, building built to blend in with rural character.]

Strategy2: Incorporate a maximum square foot requirement for commercial buildings to ensure more oversight and discussion for very large buildings. [ie < 50,000sf]

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Economic Development

Goals and Objectives

Goal: Enhance the factors of productive capacity - land, labor, capital, and technology in Madison County.

Objective 1: [Marketing] Assess current and future market conditions in Madison County

Strategy 1: Conduct in depth market analysis to identify market forces

Strategy 2: Provide independent third party data to developers and investors

Strategy 3: Ensure planning and investment decisions for Madison County are grounded in market and economic reality

Objective 2 [Organizational Development] Continue to develop organizational capacity for economic development

Strategy 1: Demonstrate a pro-business attitude by actively supporting economic development activities through funding, policies and programs

Strategy 2: Encourage key local leaders to be active in local government and economic development efforts

Strategy 3: Participate in regional and statewide economic development efforts

Objective 3: [Organizational Development] Develop an annual economic development work plan

Strategy 1: Identify types of businesses that fit the needs and are desired by Madison County citizens

Strategy 2: Target and attract businesses that are most likely to locate in Madison County

Strategy 3: Develop a program to encourage and support existing businesses

Objective 4: [Business Retention & Expansion] Support Existing Businesses in Madison County

Strategy 1: Conduct assessment of existing business base

Strategy 2: Proactively connect with existing businesses to understand and respond to their needs

Strategy 3: Make regular visits to businesses with economic development staff and volunteers

Strategy 4: Identify and work with at-risk businesses

Strategy 5: Create annual business recognition programs [ie 'milestone awards']

Strategy 6: Partner with downtown programs in Hot Springs, Marshall and Mars Hill to support downtown businesses and downtown development

Objective 5: [Business Attraction] Attract new business and industry to Madison County

Strategy 1: Create marketing plan to attract new business and industry that have been researched to determine the likelihood of locating in Madison County

Strategy 2: Actively recruit targeted businesses

Strategy 3: Create and train a business attraction team from both the public and private sectors

Strategy 4: Work with existing businesses to recruit new businesses

Strategy 5: Target attraction efforts at manufacturing, outdoor recreation, tourism, technology, and entertainment venues to diversify and expand Madison County's local economy and improve the local quality of life.

Strategy 6: Develop incentives to encourage businesses to locate in Madison County [ie. Job creation, capital investment, building reuse]

Objective 6: [Deal Structuring] Evaluate development opportunities to determine impacts

Strategy 1: Conduct a fiscal analysis to determine the public service costs and revenues associated with a development project

Strategy 2: Conduct an environmental impact assessment to determine and avoid any detrimental effects on natural resources

Strategy 3: Conduct a socioeconomic analysis to determine the effects of a development on community well-being-community demographics, housing, employment

Strategy 4: Evaluate potential transportation impacts including infrastructure improvements and traffic congestion

Objective 7: [Infrastructure & Site Development] Build Economic Development Infrastructure

Strategy 1: Develop an economic development infrastructure capital improvement plan

Strategy 2: Purchase or option at least 40 acres of developable industrial or commercial zoned land

Strategy 3: Install 10" water line and 12" sewer line for water and sewer service to the property

Strategy 4: Develop an industrial building to attract the interest of new business

Strategy 5: Identify local investors who could assist in financing a speculative or build to suit building

Strategy 6: Submit proposals for regional, state and federal funding for infrastructure development

Objective 8: [Workforce Development] Create an effective workforce development effort in Madison County to build a deeper pool of qualified workers and entrepreneurs and fuel economic growth

Strategy 1: Encourage local students to build skills, content knowledge and literacy in STEM[CS [Science, Technology, Engineering, Math including computer science]

Strategy 2: Encourage Madison County schools and A|B Tech to continue to expand Career Technical Education and entrepreneurship programs

Strategy 3: Create effective feedback program to measure graduates

Objective 9: [Organizational Development] Increase collaboration between the Economic Development Board, Tourism Development Authority and the Madison County Chamber of Commerce.

Strategy 1: Develop a joint program of work for collaborative projects

Strategy 2: Support the development of a county brand that is identified in the marketing of all three organizations

Create wealth through the mobilization of human, financial, capital, physical and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Goals and Objectives

Goal: Ensure the protection, preservation, conservation, use and management of the natural and cultural resources in Madison County.

Objective 1: [Scenic Resources] Protect the natural topography in Madison County specifically the mountain slopes and ridges

Strategy 1: Create slope and ridges overlay district to limit development and include additional guidelines for building in areas with steep slopes

Strategy 2: Avoid destroying the shape, slope, elevation aspect or contour of the natural topography

Strategy 3: Avoid excessive cut and fill of steep slopes

Strategy 4: Work with private property owners to permanently preserve or protect areas identified as being worthy of protection

Objective 2: [Forest Resources] Maintain and Improve Madison County's urban and community forests

Strategy 1: Encourage tree planting on private property

Strategy 2: Ensure that tree planting and preservation are important elements in local ordinances

Strategy 3: Preserve existing wooded areas and plant trees in parks, natural areas and other public spaces

Strategy 4: Partner with NC Forest Service to implement Madison County's Forestry Plan

Strategy 5: Develop tree removal/replacement policy for publicly owned land

Strategy 6: Protect native heritage trees—trees with a diameter at breast height equal to or greater than 24 inches

Strategy 7: Ensure that development projects include provisions for identifying and protecting existing trees

Strategy 8: Utilize existing programs, technical services and educational opportunities with the North Carolina Forest Service and the Madison Soil and Water Conservation District

Objective 3: [Water Resources] Minimize soil erosion and prevent sedimentation associated with land disturbing activities to prevent the pollution of water and other damage to waterways and other public and private property.

Strategy 1: Ensure land disturbing permits are secured from NC DEQ

Strategy 2: Continue to enforce approval of an erosion control plan as part of the Preliminary Plan review process in the Subdivision Ordinance

Objective 4: [Water Resources] Reduce and control stormwater runoff to reduce flooding, protect people and property and support healthy streams and rivers [ie French Broad and tributaries]

Strategy 1: Identify and adopt stormwater management best practices such as riparian buffers, reducing impervious surfaces, maintaining natural drainage systems, minimizing clearing and grading. [More techniques for detaining runoff are demonstrated in the Bailey Mundy Stormwater Education Park in Mars Hill]

Strategy 2: Review any existing ordinances such as the Watershed Protection Ordinance and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance for any needed updates or revisions

Strategy 3: Incorporate Low Impact Development techniques into Madison County's land development ordinances

Objective 5: [Scenic Resources] Reduce light pollution and the poor use of artificial light at night that obscures Madison County's dark skies.

Strategy 1: Adopt an outdoor lighting ordinance

Strategy 2: Investigate installing timers on public lights after 11pm

Strategy 3: Avoid using lighting that accidentally crosses property lines

Strategy 4: Encourage private use of sky-friendly outdoor lighting

Objective 6: [Wildlife] Protect environmentally sensitive wildlife areas and habitats

Strategy 1: Identify environmentally sensitive wildlife areas and corridors that need to be protected to preserve the rural character of Madison County

Strategy 2: Redevelop existing developed areas to their full potential to take advantage of existing infrastructure and reduce greenfield development

Objective 7: [Wildlife] Encourage conservation based subdivision designs that leave large, unfragmented natural areas intact

Strategy 1: Review and update Madison County's subdivision ordinance to encourage and consider requiring conservation based design [Randall Arendt] and development plans for all types of development

Strategy 2: Encourage use of planned unit development regulations to create conservation designs of subdivision|developments to protect a large portion of the subdivision|development as open space

Strategy 3: Arrange lots on a small percentage of the site

Strategy 4: Allow for a variety of lot sizes [ie lot size averaging]

Strategy 5: Require lot sizes and development densities to be exclusive of environmentally sensitive areas to protect these areas from the encroachment of development

Objective 8: [Wildlife Resources] Minimize harm caused by exotic and invasive species

Strategy 1: Require the use of native shrubs and trees in the restoration of the sites disturbed through development.

Strategy 2: Identify the plants that pose the biggest threat to environmentally sensitive wildlife areas

Strategy 3: Prioritize problem species by the threat exhibited and the potential for successful control [ie Miscanthus sinensis-Wildfire Grass]

Objective 9: [Parks, Open Space and Recreation Resources] Provide recreational opportunities to experience natural resource interaction and observation

Strategy 1: Develop and adopt a Recreation Element for the Madison County Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 2: Develop and adopt a new Recreation Master Plan for Madison County

Objective 10: Partner with local, regional state and federal public and private agencies to implement natural and cultural resource preservation, protection and use efforts in Madison County

Strategy 1: Establish public private partnership organizations to harness the wealth, wisdom and work of Madison County citizens, visitors and volunteers. [ie Volunteer Madison Inc.]

Objective 11: Protect, restore and promote Madison County's cultural resources

Strategy 1: Identify documented cultural resources within Madison County using the National Register of Historic Places (the nation's official list of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture), Historic American Building Survey (HABS), study list eligible places, and architectural surveys

Strategy 2: Assess potential for cultural resources that may not have been identified yet in Madison County

Strategy 3: Identify threats to Madison County's cultural resources

Strategy 4: Establish a Historic Properties Commission to make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on items of concern on cultural resources within the county and three municipalities.

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Housing

Goals and Objectives

Goal: Madison County shall have an adequate supply of housing available to meet the needs of the community

Objective 1: Improve and conserve the existing housing stock in Madison County

Strategy 1: Promote maintenance codes that require owners to provide basic maintenance

Strategy 2: Continue to apply for housing grants

Strategy 3: Continue to apply for HOME Rehabilitation Grants

Strategy 4: Continue to promote the NC-Housing Finance Agency's Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation Program

Strategy 5: Create new local housing rehabilitation programs [ie Madison Makeover]

Objective 2: Promote the development of new housing which provides a range of housing choices to meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs.

Strategy 1: Adopt a voluntary inclusionary housing ordinance that can provide developers incentives when affordability conditions are met

Strategy 2: Encourage all development proposals of 10 units or greater to include affordable housing options

Strategy 3: Allow a variety of lots sizes by right to permit smaller lots to accommodate smaller houses

Strategy 4: Create local incentives for developers who are willing to commit units for affordable housing.

Strategy 5: Allow ADUs [Accessory Dwelling Units] to be created and used as permanent housing units by right in all zoning districts

Strategy 6: Partner with developers who can utilize tax credits to create affordable housing.

Strategy 7: Establish benchmarks for creating new affordable housing units each year with a 10 year goal.

Objective 3: Enable Madison County citizens to age in place.

Strategy 1: Provide support for older citizens.

Strategy 2: Incorporate universal design principles in new and rehabilitated housing units to facilitate access for aging adults

Objective 4: Protect and Support Existing Communities in Madison County

Strategy 1: Encourage the creation and support of community organizations working to improve housing conditions and community services

Strategy 2: Adopt small area plans with a housing element

Strategy 3: Continue to improve build relationship between communities and county government

Strategy 4: Encourage identifiable community centers with mixed use nodes and civic facilities

Objective 5: Maintain the rural characteristics of Madison County when developing new housing opportunities

Strategy 1: Encourage new affordable housing to locate in Hot Springs, Mars Hill and Marshall where water and sewer, sidewalks, transportation

and other infrastructure exists to support seamless integration in the fabric of the Madison County Community

Strategy 2: Encourage conservation based designs

Objective 6: Partner with local, regional state and federal public and private agencies to implement the objectives and strategies in the 2030 Madison County Comprehensive Plan and other affordable housing initiatives in Madison County.

Strategy 1: Convene a stakeholder meeting for affordable housing in Madison County

Strategy 2: Develop an annual work plan for affordable housing development in Madison County

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