

STAFFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MINUTES
October 24, 2012

The meeting of the Stafford County Planning Commission of Wednesday, October 24, 2012, was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Chairman Michael Rhodes in the Board of Supervisors Chambers of the County Administrative Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rhodes, Boswell, Hazard, Apicella, Hiron, Schwartz, and Gibbons

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Baker, Bensten, Zuraf, and Knighting

3. DECLARATIONS OF DISQUALIFICATION

4. DISCUSSION OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. Review of issues from the last meeting.

B. Consideration of and comments on the Population Projections.

C. Direction to staff regarding PC recommendations to the Board.

Mike Zuraf gave the presentation and stated at the October 10, 2012 Planning Commission Work Session, staff presented background information on Urban Development Areas, a summary of planning concepts and evaluation points for the Commission to consider. The Commission provided additional commentary and questions for staff to research. An idea was raised by Mrs. Hazard for discussion to consider taking into account the larger residential development projects that were already approved and planned, including, but not limited to Westlake and Embrey Mill, and consider new land use designations in and around these projects. In place of some of the UDAs, areas could be designated as Targeted Growth Areas and Approved Growth Areas. This item was noted in the event the Commission wishes to continue discussion of the idea. A question was asked if the Urban Development Area land use designation provided the County any privileges or tools that were not otherwise available, such as federal grants or funding. Staff noted that the UDA legislation implied that funding for various types of public infrastructure may receive some level of priority inside UDAs. Section 15.2-2223.1 F. of the Code of Virginia stated to the extent possible, federal, state and local transportation, housing, water and sewer facility, economic development, and other public infrastructure funding for new and expanded facilities shall be directed to designated urban development areas or to such similar areas that accommodate growth in a manner consistent with this section. Questions were asked if UDAs could be identified as some other name in the Land Use Plan and still provide the same benefit. The language in this Code provision would allow the County to change the name of the designation to something else and not jeopardize funding. A statement could be included in the Comprehensive Plan clarifying that the Area was consistent with the standards established for UDAs in Virginia Code Section 15.2-2223.1. Mr. Gibbons asked if there would be a conflict with the Federal designation also because Stafford was located in 2 urban areas. Mr. Zuraf stated he believed those urban areas may be different than the urban development area provisions. Mr. Gibbons stated in the future there could be confusion. Mr. Zuraf stated the area of north Stafford that tied into Boswell Corner was mainly designated suburban on the Comp Plan Map. Questions were asked if designations, such as Redevelopment Areas or other terminology would provide any benefits

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not otherwise available. Staff did not believe the name designations would provide any special advantages or disadvantages. The more important point would be the detailed recommendations of specific areas more so than the name. Information on the latest population projections was previously provided. The Commission was asked to consider the information and provide comments at this meeting.

Mr. Rhodes asked Mr. Zuraf if he had a map displaying the UDAs available. Mr. Zuraf stated yes and provided a slide presentation with the each individual UDA shown. A recommendation for the Planning Commission to consider was further modification of the redevelopment area boundary to bring that more in line with the Urban Development Area Boundary. This redevelopment boundary was made larger because it was completed when the specific location of the Courthouse interchange was not completely agreed upon. The redevelopment areas extend all the way out beyond Celebrate Virginia. He also reviewed additional modifications the Commission may want to consider. Mr. Rhodes stated from his understanding there was not a lot of benefits specifically targeted to the designation of a UDA. Certainly the planning construct of knowing where they want the more intense growth was an important construct that the Commission should maintain and continue, but other than the implied, maybe staff should target some funding towards the areas mentioned. Mr. Gibbons stated what bothered him was that there was a lot of government programs that go into the metropolitan planning area and receive more money in the urban areas. Mr. Rhodes stated he did not believe it was tied to the designation under the State Code of a UDA. Mr. Zuraf stated the language was very general, so it may be eligible for CMAC funding but it was not specifically stated that way. Mr. Harvey stated Mr. Gibbons pointed out that the Commission had two different issues. The urbanized area identified by the Census Bureau that identified the existing population density, which stated if the county had enough population density to be classified as an urbanized area. Mr. Gibbons mentioned there were two in the County, one in North Stafford and one in South Stafford. With our Comprehensive Plan, you would look at where the Commission would want to have future growth. The question he took from Mr. Gibbons comments was did the Commission want to marry future growth and intensify the urbanized areas, so the boundaries coincide. That would be an option, another option was if the Commission did not feel they had enough land to be able to do that based on the existing pattern that they would identify other areas for urban development so that in the next 10 to 20 years, a future census would state the urbanized areas expanded to the places the commission planned for. Mr. Rhodes stated that was an important consideration. The Commission would have to apply that consideration to the final decision for this item.

Mr. Apicella requested staff request input from the development community on how they view the County's Urban Development Areas. Related to the previous request, Mr. Gibbons questioned the County's bonding capacity to fund all the needed improvements. The Commission requested an analysis of the UDAs, as it relates to the readiness of the locations to develop to identify which UDAs may develop in the near-term and long-term. The analysis was based on analyzing infrastructure capacity. Staff was also requested to look at other areas as part of the analysis. The other areas evaluated by staff included areas inside the USA not within a UDA. This information would allow the Commission to see the readiness of individual areas to develop and which areas may develop prior to others. Staff noted that this was information the Commission may want to forward to the Board, if they wished to consider amendments. The Commission also requested a summary of the Capital facility needs projected to be required to serve all the projected growth.

Mr. Rhodes suggested deferring this item for discussion at the next work session.

5. ADJOURNMENT

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With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.