

2045 Comprehensive Plan Update Work Session Notes

February 14, 2023

Planning Commission Members: Mike Shepp, President; Wade Louthan, Secretary; Steve Stolipher, County Commission Liaison; and Jack Hefestay, were present in person. A quorum of the Planning Commission was not present for the Work Session.

Staff: Jennifer Brockman, Chief County Planner and Luke Seigfried, County Planner were present in person; and Alex Beaulieu, Deputy Director & Zoning Administrator, was present on ZOOM.

Executive Summary

On 2/14/23 the Planning Commission held a work session to review the SWOT analysis findings and discuss education and employment data. Both SWOT exercises were condensed into an interest in employment, new businesses, and regional connections. The Planning Commission also reviewed the first comments submitted through the Comment Portal on the County's website.

Agenda

1. Review of Work Session Notes: January 10, 2023
2. Review of Work Session Notes: February 2, 2023
3. SWOT Analysis Results
 - a. Review of January 10th SWOT Exercise
 - b. Review of February 2nd SWOT Exercise
 - c. Staff Conclusions
4. Livability Profile
 - a. Staff Presentation on Housing, Employment, and Education
5. Review of Public Comment
 - a. Report on Comment Portal

Item 1: Review of Work Session Notes: January 10, 2023

Planning Commissioners reviewed the Work Session Notes from January 10th, 2023. Planning Commissioners also requested that staff email draft copies of the Work Session notes to review before each work session.

Item 2: Review of Work Session Notes: February 2, 2023

Planning Commissioners reviewed the Work Session Notes from February 2nd, 2023.

Item 3: SWOT Analysis Results

Staff and Planning Commissioners discussed the key conclusions from the SWOT activities on 1/10/2023 and 2/2/2023. This included interest in increasing employment, agritourism, and family friendly activities. The conversation continued on ways to promote growth with broadband internet and natural gas access expansion. Proximity to large metropolitan areas and their amenities was also mentioned and related to the transportation challenges on the 340 crossing outside of Harpers Ferry and MARC train funding.

Item 4: Livability Profile

Staff displayed the Population Density map created by the GIS department to represent the distribution of people in the county. Staff also presented background data on education and employment in the county. This included educational attainment, public school attendance, primary industries, and average commute time for county residents. Planning Commissioners mentioned an interest in hearing from the municipalities about their long term planning during future Work Sessions.

Item 5: Review of Public Comment

Staff briefed the Planning Commission on the Comment Portal's function to take citizen comments and as a way to test the survey software. The link to the survey is live on the County website on the 2045 Comprehensive Plan Update page. Planning Commissioners reviewed the Public comments received from 1/26/2023 to 2/8/2023.

These notes were prepared by Luke Seigfried.