

SPECIAL SESSION:

State of West Virginia, County of Jefferson, to-wit:

At a Special Session of the County Commission of said County and State continued and held at County Commission meeting room in the Old Charles Town Library located at 200 E. Washington Street, Charles Town, WV 25414 on November 6, 2014 at 7:00 pm (An audio file of the November 6, 2014 meeting is available through the Jefferson County Commission Office.)

PRESENT: Walt Pellish, President
 Dale Manuel, Commissioner
 Lyn Widmyer, Commissioner
 Debbie Keyser, County Administrator
 Jennie Brockman, Director of Planning and Zoning
 Jessica Carroll, Executive Administrative Assistant

RE: Public Hearing on the 2014 Draft Comprehensive Plan

Commissioner Pellish called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and Jennie Brockman, Director of Planning and Zoning, provided the audience with a description of the timeline for the Comprehensive Plan process, noting the County Commission is required to take action on the plan within 90 days of the Planning Commission's recommendation.

Commissioner Pellish then opened the floor for public comment, which was made by the following:

Heidi Parker, resident – stated she believes it is important to plan for future infrastructure development in coordination with the projected growth of the County, as existing services (such as water and sewer) are barely able to support current county residents.

Ellen May, resident and Steering Committee member – stated there were seven substantive conceptual recommendations provided to the members of the Planning Commission during the Planning Commission's public hearing on the 2014 Draft Comprehensive Plan. Ms. May stated she sincerely hoped the County Commission would take these comments into consideration and listen to the voice of the citizens of the County.

Martin Burke, resident and chairman of the Historic Landmarks Commission – stated he believes the County Commission should reject the Planning Commission's suggestion to redline two recommendations in the plan, the first one being the suggestion to make ordinance recommendations to the Planning and County Commissions related to the protection of areas included in a series of view shed analyses and the second one being the establishment of a Transfer of Development Rights program for Jefferson County as identified in the 1986 Comprehensive Plan.

Chris Anders, resident – stated he believes zoning should be eliminated altogether as zoning laws violate the inalienable rights set forth by the United States Declaration of Independence.

Eleanor Finn, resident – stated she was pleased with the current draft of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan, and thanked the Steering Committee and the Planning Commission for all their hard work on the document, as she believes the Comprehensive Plan is beneficial to all residents of the county.

Pat Masters, resident – stated he would like to see the Ranson Urban Growth Boundary expanded to include Driswood Elementary, T.A. Lowery Elementary, Wildwood Middle School, and Jefferson High School so that it will be easier to develop and make improvements to the areas surrounding the schools and hopefully allow for some connectivity between the schools via walking trails. Mr. Masters also stated he would like to see connecting roads between housing developments to reduce traffic and congestion within the developments.

Hail Taylor, Director of the Shepherdstown Public Library and Gretchen Fry, Director of the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry library – stated libraries are vital to the future success of Jefferson County, as libraries provide essential services to the citizens of the county and the demand for these services will continue to increase with the growth of the county. Ms. Taylor also stated the libraries are dependent on adequate, sustainable, and predictable funding provided at the county and state levels.

Lawrence M. Wright, resident – stated he is completely opposed to the Comprehensive Plan as he believes the plan violates the rights of the citizens of the county.

Cheryl Keyrouze, resident and Director of the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority – listed all of the times the EPTA was mentioned throughout the 2014 Draft Comprehensive Plan to highlight the ways in which public transportation is integral for the growth and development of the county.

Peter Fricke, resident and Planning Commission member – stated he disagreed with the Planning Commission's removal of the suggestion to make ordinance recommendations to the Planning Commission and County Commission related to the protection of areas included in the viewshed analyses, as the viewshed belongs to all of the citizens of the county and is one of the key reasons tourists choose to visit the area.

Janice Schiltz, resident and Steering Committee member-at-large – stated she believes the Planning Commission should not have redlined the suggested two-tier Impact Fee system which would lower the Impact Fee in certain areas and provide incentive for development to remain in those designated areas.

Nicola Bastien, resident – expressed her concerns regarding industrial zoning areas in Millville.

Susanne Malesic, resident and Steering Committee member – urged the Commission to honor the residents' voiced opinions within the 2014 Draft Comprehensive Plan document in their complete form without rewording or deleting for the sake of accessibility, inclusivity, and openness in county government.

Ted Schiltz, resident and Board of Zoning Appeals member – stated he believes rural landowner's property rights should remain within the document.

Jerry Connelley, resident and Vice President of DC Partners – stated he was concerned that Breckenridge was no longer zoned “residential growth” on the Future Land Use Map within the latest draft of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan, though it has been zoned “residential growth” for the past 26 years.

Peter Corum, resident – stated the role of government is to provide safety and security for its citizens, not dictate what people can or cannot do with their personal property. Mr. Corum also stated zoning laws violate individual land rights and provide barriers to both industry and small business.

There being no further comment, President Pellish stated the record would remain open for two weeks to allow time for written comment; however, the Commission urged those who wished to provide written comment to do so prior to the previously scheduled November 13, 2014 work shop on the 2014 Draft Comprehensive Plan. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm on a motion by Mr. Manuel. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

WALT PELLISH, PRESIDENT

Respectfully submitted
Jessica D. Carroll
Executive Administrative Assistant