

Floyds Fork Area Study – Third and Final Meeting

March 24, 2009 – Ramsey Middle School, 6:35 p.m. – 7:40 p.m.

Present:

Charles Cash, Director, Planning and Design Services
Ken Baker
Chris French
Connie Ewing
Aida Copic
Chris Cestaro (minutes/notes)

Consultants from Wallace, Roberts & Todd:

Christopher Atkinson
David Rouse

Charles Cash introduced the meeting and explained some notice difficulties that had occurred and confusion based on Courier Journal notice for the wrong date. The mistake was later corrected. He said the goal for this meeting is to gather public input on all aspects of the study and to examine some ideas that have already come from previous meetings on the Floyds Fork Area Study. He said WRT, the consulting firm which has done the work on the Floyds Fork Area Study, is also working on the “21st Century Parks” project. This was intentional – it is important to coordinate between parks planning and the future of the Floyds Fork area.

He said the WRT representatives will make a presentation covering the general framework of the plan and then talk specifically about community design.

David Rouse, from WRT, gave a brief overview of the project and its purpose. He said the focus had been on Centers, but it became clear that the project needed to be expanded to include balancing land conservation with population growth; creating compact mixed-use centers to limit sprawl; preserving natural resources; and integrating planned parks with this area.

He reviewed the growth framework of the proposed plan. Public input strongly supported preserving rural character. He showed an aerial view/map of “resources” – future parkland and an emerging greenway pattern along Floyds Fork. He said there is still much agricultural land in the area; also, there are many environmentally sensitive resources (steep slopes, floodplains, etc.) He discussed residents’ feelings about development (comments from the last two meetings.) He showed a map of various types of developments (residential, commercial, etc.) and population density.

He explained that the Floyds Fork area is located between East and West development centers, and how these other areas may affect development in Floyds Fork. Preserving character, working greenspaces into development, and utilizing existing infrastructure was discussed.

He talked about Conservation Subdivision regulations and said those would be helpful in this area. He discussed floodplain protection and recreational development.

He explained briefly about Transfer Development Rights (TDR) and said there were no recommendations made on this yet. Louisville Metro is just beginning to explore this option. This can transfer density from certain areas to preserve rural character. He showed a map and explained the four areas (centers) that might be more suitable for compact, mixed-use developments.

He discussed connections (greenways, open spaces, trails) and how they work together to connect development areas.

Chris Atkinson of WRT discussed some questions about what the centers should look like; specifically, that form districts describe development characteristics. He said that Regional, Town, and Village Centers appear to be the most appropriate for this area. He showed photos of “Town Centers” from other cities in the country. He also explained some design principles for each (including square footage) and how this could apply to some of the centers that have been identified for the Floyds Fork area.

He detailed some environmental factors that were taken into account for each of the centers (encourage energy-efficient “green building”; integrate best practices for stormwater management; establish stream and floodplain buffers to mitigate impact on flooding and water quality; encourage alternative transportation choices.)

Some of the concepts for guidance discussed included such things as encourage mixed complimentary uses, establish transition from higher-density to lower density uses, implement “complete streets” (pedestrian, vehicular, bicycle use, etc.), explore building height and street right-of-way ratios, include parks within five-minute walks of residential areas, provide gathering places near entrances of public buildings (churches, town halls, etc.), provide parking on-street, preferably in back of the buildings, streetscapes – accommodates shade trees, a place to sit, cafes, etc., and provide bus shelters where appropriate.

Mr. Cash introduced the “Q and A” portion of tonight’s presentation and asked for the audience to fill out surveys and to ask questions/make comments. He said the actual creation of the plan document will be crafted over the course of the next three months. This plan will then go through a series of meetings open to

the public (Planning Committee, Planning Commission, Metro Council) for review and adoption.

An attendee asked about “un-sewered” portion of Floyds Fork. Is this plan evolving into a guideline for development standards for the rest of the Floyds Fork area? Mr. Cash said there was input from citizens at the last meeting that indicated that residents wanted “creative alternatives” to the design standards. That was part of the discussion about conservation subdivisions – and the idea of TDR. He said this can set the tone for future development. He said that Metro is trying to put as many development options on the table as possible and then let the community decide how they want to proceed.

In response to a question from an attendee, Mr. Cash said the timeline for achieving the goals of this plan is far into the future –this is intended to be a long-term growth plan. The adoption process could take about a year.

An attendee asked if this means that, from this day forward, any development in this area has to adhere to the general principles as presented at this meeting. Mr. Cash said the design principles are for the centers only; also, there is nothing official being decided tonight. Mr. Rouse said the ideas being presented tonight are ideas only. Mr. Cash said these are “smart growth” patterns to try to plan ahead.

One attendee was concerned about crime connected with big shopping centers. She does not want development in Fisherville, people walking on paths behind her house, etc. She mentioned a piece of property that has already been rezoned as C-1 from R-4. She is concerned about water runoff/environmental issues also. She and Mr. Cash discussed sewer installation at length. He suggested that it might be better to plan sewer installation instead of installing them one parcel at a time.

Another attendee also discussed sewers and said commitments to get sewers aren't honored.

Stephen Porter said he wants to see some portion of this plan devoted to historic preservation. Mr. Cash said that had been addressed. Mr. Porter also said he wants more “overlay districts” – the plan needs guidelines for neighborhood areas as well as conservation development areas. He suggested separate overlay districts. Mr. Cash said that the conceptual framework will be put into place over the next three months. At that time, there will be public discussions about TDR, overlay districts, etc. that can be examined in greater detail and with community input.

Jeff Frank said there was no tool to address an engineered septic system for a cluster of 15-30 homes. He wants means to address higher density buildout, and

would like to address the integration of water and sewer services (utility coordination.) Mr. Cash agreed that utility coordination is needed.

David Rouse discussed a “smart growth toolbox” that he/his company developed in another city, which might be applicable here. There were ideas that could be used (conservation subdivisions, etc.)

There was an suggestion made by an attendee to create 5-acre lots in the area.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.