

Stakeholder Interview Summary

Developers, Builders, Realtors, HBA, Appraisers, Land Planners, Engineers, Surveyors

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019
Time: 8:30AM
Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
Attendees: Robbie Lowrance, Nate Bowman, Steve Vermillion, Rob Nanfelt, Matt Jones, Linda Kidd

Discussion Items

- Introductions/opening thoughts:
 - Difficult to do true Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) (ex – Vermillion, Birkdale)
 - Regulations have tightened (road sight triangles and radii, road design widths, alley widths, planting strips, parking requirements, stormwater quality requirements, side setbacks, etc.)
 - Not necessarily just Town regulations (NCDOT, stream crossings, etc.).
 - New road design (and Engineering Dept. taking over this function) is partially driving this trend.
 - Affordable housing and inclusionary zoning regulations (esp. in Davidson) are problematic legally and are difficult to enforce.
 - Have had good controlled growth, but town is not rural anymore. Rural zoning regulations are hurting the farmers on the outskirts. It prevents these landowners from selling their land at prices to allow them to retire.
 - Some developers do not want to work in Huntersville unless the zoning is already in place.
 - Reputation is that it's difficult and takes a long time to work on projects in Huntersville that are not already in the high-density zone.

- Other jurisdictions (ex – Cornelius) are more flexible than Huntersville. Huntersville has gotten tougher in recent years, but still easier here than Davidson.
 - Need to shorten timeframe for development approval.
Example: Storage units on US 73 have taken 2 years to approve.
- Density and development discussions:
 - Impervious area restrictions to the west, and eastern side is running out of land.
 - Open space requirements in Transitional and Rural Tiers are prohibitive.
 - Unwritten rule in Huntersville is that the Council will not rezone in the Transitional Zone, because the school system is overwhelmed.
 - Hard for existing farmers to actually make a living farming.
 - If it's not at least 3-4 units per acre or more, it's going to be unaffordable to most people. The downzoning reduced supply.
 - Tanner Ridge and Carrington have townhomes that seem to work.
 - Acknowledgement that sprinkling attached housing outside of the higher activity nodes is not good town planning, but will be desirable to developers because they can get more density. Attached housing is the only way to get "affordable" housing. Putting higher density housing in the town center and high-density activity nodes is important. Huntersville has a somewhat dead downtown.
 - Getting redevelopment downtown will require innovative stormwater management. Currently have to go underground to create walkable development.
 - Perhaps shared facilities that would serve a larger, dense area, to create TND opportunities downtown.
 - Need more coordination between Mecklenburg County, Huntersville, and development projects that are near the downtown (especially). Could exempt development in certain areas.
 - Water Quality
 - Condition of streams going into Catawba River is the issue.
 - County wants higher standard.
 - Need stream restoration badly.

- Sometime town supports things, but county can be complex.
- Huntersville has opportunities to increase greenway development.
- Schools are an issue.
 - Deny funds to the northern suburbs.
 - Splitting up the district might help – make Huntersville its own district.
- Road network is limited and struggles to provide internal connectivity.
- Downtown needs a plan to become more vibrant.
 - It does not compare favorably to neighboring downtowns. Infill is hindered because of lower median income in the town center.
 - Need to actively implement the downtown plan, faster. Town has done some good things (ex - aggregating and clearing blighted properties).
 - Having a major commuter rail or transit investment downtown would help, too!
- More incentives downtown to get vertical redevelopment
 - Shared, regional stormwater treatment could help.
 - Needs to be a special downtown district that handles water quality, design, flexibility, recap tax somehow. Need to incentivize developers to get to 4 stories.
 - Politically, apartments are risky, but maybe an easier political sell in downtown. Parking will be an issue, parking must be hidden behind the storefronts, etc.
 - Other public investments, especially in streetscape could be paired for better outcomes.
 - Cornelius Arts District, funded via \$7 million donation
 - Rezoning take too long and are a risky endeavor for the development community. Being too picky about downtown uses can be a hindrance, too (Pharmacy example—pharmacy proposed, but not supported by all)
 - Changes to the Downtown Plan
 - New development that is underway and proposed has been refined from Downtown Plan.
 - Vermillion Village: 120 Townhomes and 90 Boutique Apartments

- Vermillion Front will be different than the downtown plan.
Potential redevelopment in the Mill Village would be different. Blocks wrapped with apartments.
- Vacating public lands that are underutilized could create good infill opportunities, especially for affordable housing.
 - Town should have residual land around roundabouts.
 - Town and county owned land could be a part of affordable units.
 - Vacant county land. Think creative.

Business Groups, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Large Manufacturing Industries, Downtown Property Owners

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019*

Time: 9:45AM

Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078

Attendees: Ryan McDaniels, John Lundsten, KeWanda Thompson

**These notes also incorporate notes from a meeting with Charles Guignard on 1/15/2020*

Discussion Items

- Introductions/opening thoughts:
 - Atrium Health covers northern communities
 - Setting aside land for job creation. Very key.
 - International manufacturing. Burker has been first, then others, Dalmar.
 - Need to think about the next 20-30 years for job creation.
 - Congestion is part of our life.
 - Huntersville needs planning. Traffic is horrible and getting worse. Can't take 77 and other roads right now.
 - Huge potential for business growth. Not a lot of vacancy. Could double or triple occupancy.
 - Exits are key. What is the plan for each exit area?
 - Branding and sense of place needed. In Davidson, you know when you are on main street.
 - Old Statesville Road, new space being constructed beside run-down development. Need to transition to better design.
- Transportation improvements and problem areas
 - Redevelopment of exit 25 on horizon, but need to know plan for traffic long-term
 - Need to plan for construction phase of upcoming projects. Everything takes 3 times longer than planned.

- Concern over super streets and changes to access and pedestrian crossings (e.g. - near Birkdale).
- Need to influence design of projects
 - Cannot count on the transportation improvements or projected schedules. NCDOT funding cannot be counted on, and lack of improvements has stymied some development. Are NCDOT financial challenges going to influence dates of construction?
- Superstreets and highway widenings will destroy prime commercial properties and pedestrian connectivity. NCDOT is not considering these impacts in their projects, especially in areas that have high pedestrian activity.
- Hwy 21 / NC 73 intersection (right near Northcross and I-77) is problematic.
 - Roads are too close to each other, and the no-left “solution” has created access issues in the Northcross area.
- Economic Development
 - Southend taking a lot of the regional office demand right now.
 - Lots of flex space coming. Not a lot of office coming.
 - Economic development opportunity around park-n-ride south of Hambright Rd (SW corner of Hambright and I-77, at the new interchange). There is no master plan for this area, and Charlotte Water provides water, but sewer provision is problematic.
 - Hambright interchange is just an express lane drop-in, and not a full interchange.
 - Kurz (thermal type pressing) is building a plant just NW of Hambright Rd area, and the north-south road will extend into the business park, providing a second entrance/exit to I-77.
 - Patterson Road, 800k sqft of space proposed
 - The business park (Reese Blvd area) is completely built-out or spoken for; and currently holds 7,000 employees
 - Need planned areas like the Huntersville Business Park. Where is the business Park?
 - Huntersville Industrial Park jointly owned by Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson.
 - Interest in expanding to the east.
 - Holbrooks Road Study by the ULI.

- Packtiv (single use plastics manufacturer) has expanded, along with industrial out to the east. This is just south of Southwire plant.
 - Atrium Health has an emergency medical services office in the north (just south of Northcross), and there are company plans to expand just north of Huntersville (in Cornelius). This may preclude new medical office development in Huntersville.
 - Need to be proactive about managing change, esp. during transportation project construction. Coordination with DOT and phasing is necessary.
- Small business support
 - Encouraging big businesses will trickle down to smaller companies and reinforce them. Huntersville still has the asset of space for bigger employers to move in and establish facilities.
 - Focusing on connecting employers with employees: New EDC website, current focus is on advanced manufacturing, but future focus will expand to healthcare and information technology.
 - Connecting students to employers is another focus. Internship programs. Tours of manufacturing facilities.
 - Town can continue to make the zoning approval and pre-development approval processes more streamlined.
- Downtown Issues
 - There has been a long history of downtown planning
 - Concern about tax increases and what is benefit of downtown landowners
 - Concern about removal of on-street parking with the main street improvement project. Need more parking, not less.
 - Concord has built 2nd parking deck downtown. Huntersville parking deck is full most of the time
 - Belmont as a precedent for a downtown Huntersville can emulate
 - Mt. Holly town hall – Old Train Depot is good precedent
 - NC 115 is a major pedestrian barrier, lots of truck traffic from industrial park on south side of town
 - Need to improve crossings and sidewalks (inc. maintenance)
 - Speed limit needs to be enforced
 - US 21 could be widened within existing right of way. This would help relieve traffic downtown
 - Currently I-485 traffic routes downtown. This is an issue.

- Maintenance of pipes and basic infrastructure should be focus of town efforts downtown
- Could get tenants for 2-3 story mixed use buildings, but parking is the limiting factor
- Concern about the Gilead Road widening and removal of 40-50 trees.

NDOT, MPO, Transportation, Utilities, Town Transportation Staff

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019
Time: 11:00AM
Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
Attendees: Stewart Basham, Neil Burke, Brett Alkins, Stephen Trott,
Bill Coxe, Eric Howard, Bhavana Swayampakala

Discussion Items

- Transportation:
 - Many NCDOT transportation projects occurring in the next 5-7 years.
 - Design is starting for NC 73 improvements soon (this year and next), with right-of-way acquisition coming soon (2020, 2021), construction in 2023.
 - Hwy 21 is being widened
 - Improvements at two exits on I-77 (Exit 23 and 25)
 - Gilead Road widening
 - Main Street Upgrades
 - NC 115 Widening
 - Hambright Road Park & Ride
 - Many projects were funded through STI / Bonus Allocation Funding associated with I-77 improvements
 - Building an east-west network of arterials is important.
 - Improvements on Gilead Road will relieve a choke point.
 - Verhoeff Drive extension being studied, but cost is very high.
 - Stumptown Road extension could help US 21 intersection.
 - East side
 - North/South parkway proposed
 - No funding identified for corridor
 - CRTPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update is beginning. Will take 3 years.

- Will have reprioritization of projects.
 - N/S parkway not submitted as a priority yet. Knew it wouldn't rank well. May need to revisit.
 - Spring or Summer of 2020 project priorities will be submitted to MTP.
 - Prioritization criteria, modernization criteria may be added.
 - Question about whether this investment will be justified due to low density development allowed in zoning.
- Coordinating utility relocations can impede NCDOT improvements. This is not just a local issue but happens all around the Charlotte region. Given the significant number of projects in the Huntersville area, these impacts could significantly delay projects – up to a year or two.
- Charlotte Water/Sewer
 - New investments (lines, pump stations, etc.) are generally provided by the developers.
 - Potential to expand services in different parts of town respects and is in part dependent on the land use plan.
 - Coordinating a sewer upsizing/installation plan could be a big benefit to redevelopment or encouraging new private investment.
- Water infrastructure:
 - Investments are being made to replace Main Street waterline.
 - Charlotte Water has money in place to upsize/replace lines concurrent with large NCDOT road projects. They need a roadmap for timeframe of projects. Town staff can provide a timeline.
 - Expansion of the water reuse plant envisioned for 2030.
 - Expanding east-west waterline transmission capacity (possibly along NC 73) would allow water transmission to Concord, where demand exists.
- Sewer infrastructure:
 - The Hambright Road area faces challenges because it's on a ridge.
 - The Hambright Road/I-77/Mt. Holly Road area (proposed for economic development) could be served by running a sewer line under I-485, but would be developer-funded—nothing in CIP currently.
 - May be a casing under I-77 to serve east side of highway.
 - Sewer capacity might not be available in this area for higher intensity uses, which might preclude multi-story TOD-style

- development. If this TOD-style development is part of the plan, there is a need to begin coordination efforts.
- More coordination may be desirable between the Town, utility and transportation providers, and future land use and development/investment plans.
 - Master Infrastructure Plan needed for Economic Development and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas and potentially downtown.
 - Transportation, water, sewer, electric, telecommunications.
 - SCIP, south corridor investment program in CLT as precedent.
 - Huntersville Engineering:
 - In the past has primarily focused on smaller projects (intersections, turn lanes, etc.), but these larger projects will require more effort and resources from the Town, which may require greater manpower resources.
 - Engineering resources on the town side are going to be strained given the number of transportation projects in the pipeline and the coordination needed.
 - Policy questions:
 - How can town tackle the secondary road improvements that will not get state funding?
 - Need sense of resources needed to deliver projects
 - Costs, mechanisms for funding
 - Encouraging the Town to investigate their responsibilities vs. neighboring jurisdictions and the staffing of the different departments might help in establishing a proper level of staffing.
 - Transportation Issues
 - New mobility: Scooters, Rideshare, food delivery, etc.
 - EV charging stations – what is town’s position
 - Electric United:
 - Hambright Road extension and Catawba facility are being undertaken currently. Can provide service areas for electric providers.

Farmers, Stormwater, Environmental Groups, Conservation Groups, Recreation, Tourism

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019
Time: 1:15PM
Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
Attendees: Erin Hostetler, Sharon Wilson, Stewart Gray, Elaine Powell

Discussion Items

- Introductions/opening thoughts:
 - The Charlotte/Mecklenburg Landmarks Commission serves as a resource for the Town of Huntersville for historic preservation.
 - Recently preserved: McCoy Barber Shop building and the Bank Building – both historic buildings on Main Street, in old Huntersville.
 - There are also other designated buildings around town and throughout the ETJ. Notable buildings include:
 - Bank of Huntersville
 - Torrence-Lytle School
 - Ranson House
 - Caldwell Station School
 - An existing survey of the historic buildings in the Town/ETJ exists.
 - Next project on their list would be to examine historic properties in the downtown area and encourage adaptive reuse, including a tax incentive / tax deferral for properties that have landmark status.
 - MacAuley Road is a designated landmark.
 - Railroad corridor (and future trail) has history and many resources along it.
 - Rivendell Farms of the Carolinas promotes and protects farmers interests in land use representation and decision-making.
 - Catawba Land Conservancy:

- Four major objectives: Water quality, Farms, Wildlife, and Connecting People to Nature.
- Holds several conservation properties and easements in the area.
- Priorities:
 - Gar Creek Area
 - County owns land, CLC has conservation Easement
 - Ramah Creek Watershed
 - McCaully Road is a landmark. Last gravel road public owned.
 - Cowan's Ford area
 - Partially in Lincoln Co and Mecklenburg and Gaston
 - West of Cowan's Ford
- Sean (from CLC) has been working on a priority water quality and tree canopy protection model (RTI) that shows an area near McCoy Road and Gar Creek Conservation Area as necessary in order to protect water quality going into Mountain Island Lake.
 - Contacts to pursue:
 - Sean Bloom, CLC staff member, Catawba Wateree Group
 - RTI, Vicki Taylor, Catawba Wateree Group
- Issues
 - Political boundaries, especially county boundaries, can be a significant obstacle to conservation.
 - The Watershed Protection area is an opportunity for land and farm conservation and for water quality protection.
 - Agriculture
 - 235 Farms in Mecklenburg Co
 - Need to be more supportive of farmers that are still here
 - Part of economic growth.
 - Can be partners in land conservation.
 - Actions supportive of agriculture would include:
 - Zoning designation for agriculture.

- Mecklenburg County does not have a voluntary agriculture district designation.
- Preservation of farms can help water quality.
- Conservation, water quality, farming, development, and economic development can exist side-by-side, in a synergistic space. They are not mutually exclusive or mutually detrimental uses.
 - Getting some of the older farming families to the table would be beneficial to inform the process. How to involve these families?
- Every stream in Mecklenburg County is listed as impaired.
- Water infrastructure
 - Water availability and capacity should be part of the conversation during development approvals.
 - Excessive development may tax water use capacity. How much capacity exists for the area moving forward?
 - Prediction is that Mecklenburg County will be built out in 11 years.
 - 100 people moving to the County each day.
 - Failure to make smart decisions now (relating to water quality and conservation in the Catawba River) will have severe impacts on the population of the future.
- Balance is needed
 - Between development interests and the environment, water quality, etc.
 - County will be built out in 10 years. 100 people moving to the County each day.
- Mecklenburg County is at bottom of the county in terms of access to parks and rec
 - County forester and biodiversity experts available.
- Holbrooks landfill, local residents are very concerned
 - Holbrook construction waste landfill is an environmental justice issue. It is on a substandard street to accommodate the truck traffic.
- Opportunities:
 - Education/Recreation
 - Carolina Thread Trail grants focused on this

- Urban farm trend, is there opportunity in Huntersville?
Rozelle Farm as precedent south of Mt. Island Lake
- Building local identity for the resources (Catawba River for drinking, water quality in creeks that feed to the river, food supply from farms, etc.), electric generation that supports the local communities.
- Historic resources
 - Rail corridor and historic built environment
 - Landscapes, farms, etc. in McAuley Road and Gar Creek watershed.
 - Local landmark designation > Property tax deferral is part of it
 - Not as high as timber or agricultural deferral.
 - Design review control over NCDOT and feds.
- Farming is a great historic preservation solution for historic farmhouse properties and farms.
- Creating zoning options for farms to exist and be accommodated. In particular, to allow farm uses to continue or be re-established in rural areas where it is appropriate.
- Mecklenburg County has resources for parks and recreation and for historic resources that can be used by local governments when dealing with land use decisions and review.
- Priority conservation areas are (primarily) around streams, and (secondarily) connecting to other conservation areas.
- How to get folks involved?
 - Can send out link to mailing list and flyers
 - Not everyone is connected and will get internet-based materials
 - Sign for public hearings are not adequate
 - Meet them where they are. Volunteer fire departments are a great place to meet farmers, a lot are part of them.
 - Stacey Phillips, Frank Bragg, etc.
 - Ambassador program is an idea. How can we get folks out in the community?
 - Catawba river keeper should be involved.

Schools and Boards, Char-Meck School System, Private School Representatives, Central Piedmont Community College, Planning Board Reps

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019
Time: 2:30PM
Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
Attendees: Shannon Stein, Matthew Kerlin, Elaine Powell, Lothar Kaierle, Acquanetta Edmond

Discussion Items

- Introductions/opening thoughts:
 - Sometimes school expansion/planning can be hindered by zoning process (example: cap placed on students as part of a condition for rezoning).
 - Land use plan can help: where are we going to put schools in the future?
 - How does integration of schools happen in this community? What are ideal locations for schools? State criteria, local criteria. Size needs.
 - Elementary is 15 acres (private), DOT approval for school traffic. Environmental conditions vary.
 - Need civic space in nodes reserved for schools.
 - Transportation to schools (especially charter schools) and access for emergency services are important to schools and can be troublesome sometimes, depending on location.
 - Traffic congestion is a significant concern and impediment.
 - Beatties Ford Road concerns
 - 6 schools there. Athletic fields at Davidson community school.
 - Backups very significant
 - Police response time on NC 73
 - This should be a factor in locating schools.

- Toll road (I-77 HOT lanes) is not currently a benefit because you cannot get over to express lane from Gilead Road. Streets need to keep up with growth.
 - Lack of public transportation services and infrastructure (commuter rail, BRT, etc.).
- Huntersville area may experience demand for up to 8,000-10,000 new students by 2035.
- Currently, CMS is meeting with local jurisdictions (meeting with Huntersville on Nov. 5th) to continue discussions about how to meet school demand.
- CMS schools and buildings are currently up to 133% of capacity. The growth is overwhelming these schools.
- Huntersville has Grade A and B schools in the area. It can be very desirable for realtors to sell to buyers.
- Top priorities for new, major employers are high quality schools and recreational opportunities.
- TOH needs to think about school capacity during development approval process.
- Competition from health care doesn't help with scarcity of land.
- Lake Norman Charter School had difficulty expanding in the Hambright Road area because a rezoning from Industrial was difficult, especially since the last land use plan supported keeping the industrial park intact. Eventually town staff was the force that helped the rezoning move forward. Expanding at existing facilities should be prioritized.
- Getting through zoning process, even for just adding students at an existing facility, can be difficult, at best.
- Even aside from funding concerns, it takes about 2 years to design and construct a school. Recent bond did not provide for any new schools in the northern part of the County.
 - CMS already owns some land in the area (north Beattie's Ford area?) and would be nice to designate these areas in the land use plan, and potentially even program land around these areas to support schools in this area.

Neighborhood/Unincorporated Community Leaders, Citizen Boards, HOAs, Historic Society Representative

Meeting Information

Date: October 30th, 2019

Time: 3:45PM

Location: Huntersville Discovery Place, Rotunda Meeting Room
105 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC 28078

Attendees: Peter Jacobson, Craig Sandhaus, Janelle Harris, Eric Griffin, Elaine Powell, Varona Wynn

Discussion Items

- Introductions/opening thoughts:
 - Huntersville needs better planning and growth management.
 - Concern about cut-through traffic from Cornelius and Davidson and lack of adequate roads and network to support the growth.
 - Road widenings are reactive and the current roads cannot adequately serve the existing and future residents.
 - 2030 Land Use Plan has not been adequately adhered to: in particular, growth has not been focused appropriately in the central areas where it was designated. Keeping high density development outside of the rural areas has been difficult, but is vital to maintaining the quality of life in the town.
 - Example: Northbrook proposal, 300 homes on 27 acres. Not ideal.
 - Providing emergency service in rural areas is challenging. Skybrook example, no fire department near it. Had to then put a fire dept out there.
 - Protecting interests of current residents should be key
 - Land availability in Huntersville is an asset, but need a good plan.
 - Protecting commercial land uses is important, to keep property taxes paid by residential owners low.

- Having an unpaid, volunteer fire department is unique for a town this size, and not necessarily a benefit.
 - Is there any other top-ten city in NC with a volunteer fire department?
- Police Department was understaffed and had inadequate response times, but that has been improved for the Skybrook neighborhood since then. However, Skybrook (and potentially other areas, such as Walmart) may hire out off-duty police officers to patrol in their off-hours.
- Road cross-sections are not adequate (particularly in Skybrook) to allow on-street parking *and* adequate EMS access. The street network is also not adequate to allow access during emergency situations; better connectivity could help. Neighborhood has requested parking on one side only to allow for fire engines and ambulances to pass.
- Huntersville is doing a good job with community communication and responsiveness.
- Costs for maintaining street trees, sidewalks, infrastructure, etc. should be given consideration.
- Pottstown neighborhood / Holbrooks Road area:
 - Extension of Verhoeff Drive needed, concern that it is not funded yet.
 - Could help truck traffic coming from landfill
 - Truck traffic on Holbrooks Road and the associated negative externalities (blow off of debris, degraded roads, high volume traffic) are always a concern.
 - Need bus or train service in town
 - New development is appreciated unless it wipes out or leaves behind existing neighborhoods. At the same time, existing neighborhoods need to be brought up to standards, including sidewalk installation and right-of-way improvements. There is also tension that gentrification is a fear in older neighborhoods, where town investments might create increased demand for the property.
 - Need affordable housing, community block grants.
 - Habitat has done work in town, but not in our neighborhood
 - Money to improve housing is needed
 - Don't mind smaller homes, need them to be in good shape.

- Increased traffic from nearby development (Vermillion neighborhood, landfill upgrade to include a transfer station and recycling) will add to the problems.
 - Conflicts of political boundaries (incorporated vs. unincorporated county) sometimes create problems with road maintenance. For instance, New Haven Drive (off of Holbrooks Road).
 - Limited sidewalks in the area. Need sidewalks and curb and gutter.
 - Church Street: Could walk from Holbrooks Rd to downtown. To Cashions grocery. But it is now disconnected. Could be extended.
 - Waymer gym building (near Waymer Park) is in disrepair and has not been kept up.
 - Partnership rehabilitating the building.
 - School has significance in the history of the neighborhood. During segregation it was a good high school for the community.
- Birkdale area, including the golf course.
 - NC 73 widening will disrupt pedestrian connectivity.
 - Traffic congestion and cut through traffic is a major concern.
 - Lighting of roads, especially pedestrian-scale lighting on rights-of-ways, is not a priority in the current land use plan, but should be a priority in the higher density areas.
 - Street lights at 150 ft apart, inadequate, 200ft for new communities is inadequate.
 - Affordable housing is an issue, and CDBG money would be appreciated. Assistance with home maintenance or public realm improvements in poorer neighborhoods is necessary.
 - Need to balance new residential development with nonresidential uses (places to work), so that people will stay in the community as they age.
 - New development, good investment but concern over high density housing as part of that.
 - Feedback on hotel is mixed. Recognition from community that they benefit from the golf course. Don't love golf course, but like the upgrades to the course that will be enabled as part of it.

- Some concern over 5 and 6 stories.
- Schools and parks should be planned.
 - Increasing charter and private schools will lead to further segregation of the community, so public schools should be maintained and invested in.
 - 64k people. 11k homes approved (estimated)
 - State owns roads, no attention to secondary roads. Town has limited funds to repair roads, only getting more.
 - 20 year plan is great, but things change. Guiding principles are needed. Baseline that can be applied no matter changes in things
 - i.e. pedestrian access is a priority
 - Tree selection, lighting specs/policy needed.

Police and Fire Services

Meeting Information

Date: January 15th, 2020
Time: 1:30 PM
Location: Huntersville Town Hall, Town Board Chamber
101 Huntersville Concord Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
Attendees: Police and Fire Departments – 4 attendees

Notes

- Police Dept.: 102 sworn officers, 10 civilians.
 - 4 Response areas (11, 12, 13, 14)
 - Jurisdiction is split into quadrants; 78% of all shoplifting in Walmart, ~15% at the Target
 - One police station, with an office at the Fire Station, too. Current station has been operational since 2012.
 - Expected station expansion needed within the next 10 years.
 - Response times are good – better than Charlotte.
 - Traffic and lack of connectivity can hinder response

- Staffing currently at 1.54 per 1,000 residents, which is below the national average of 2.5. 1.75 or better would be a good target.
- Catchup needed for problem areas (e.g. – Hwy 21/Gilead Road pedestrian fatalities, especially where crosswalk is missing). Tunnel is existing and greenway is planned but not coming soon enough.
- North Meck High School (on Hwy 115) is a problem area, where pedestrians/school kids crossing the highway to McDonalds/shops/etc.
- The greenhouse complex (Metrolina) has an abundance of commercial truck traffic, and the road (and bridge) is not wide enough to support the type of traffic. This road/bridge not currently scheduled for any transportation improvements.
- Crime Analyst (Bryan Danehy) can provide data on cost of serving different areas, based on address of service call and time spent, etc.
- Fire Dept.: Combo of paid and volunteer. All part-time employees (20 daytime, 15 nighttime). Total 110 people employed.
 - Second highest workload of any fire department in the region. Lowest tax rate..
 - \$4 million budget, \$2.5 million for staff. 62 square mile service area.
 - Four fire stations. New fire station (#5) envisioned on Hiawassee Road, but no public water system; only wells. This is a problem because the fire station must also be sprinklered, and functions as an emergency shelter. 1.5 mile extension of utilities needed.
 - When Hwy 73 upgrades happen AND Ervin Cook Road cut-through is completed, Fire Station #2 will attempt to relocate to Ervin Cook Road, near Graham Park. Must remain within 5 miles of the nuclear power plant. 2-3 acres needed.
 - Call volume has expanded from 2,000 to 6,700 calls per year in last 10 years.
 - Big service generators are high density medical buildings (ex. – rehab facilities), retirement centers, high density apartments, and other uses that have high frequency of medical emergencies.
 - Goals:
 - Primary, short-term goal (asked for in past 3 budget years): Establish a full-time leadership position(s) (Chief, deputy chief, etc.); has been a budget ask for the past three years.
 - Davidson has fire chief and battalion chiefs

- Current \$2.5 million budget would double if all full-time employees were hired. Would require shifting from current volunteer, part-time combo system to full-time employees.
 - Town Department Alternative: 110 full-time employees (90 firefighters, with 20-ish support/leadership), without reliance on volunteers, fully housed under the Town.
 - ISO Rating of 4. Addition of stations and personnel could get to 2 or 3. Would benefit home owners and businesses due to lower insurance premiums.
 - Fire trucks are in the CIP, in a thirty-year horizon.
 - Fire Station #4 opened up in 2018.
 - Two fire marshals currently, for investigations, permitting, plan review, inspections, etc. Mooresville has 5.
- Problems:
 - Big challenge in getting fire trucks down the new, TND-style streets (e.g. – Vermillion).
 - Lack of connectivity (to meet secondary access requirements) in new greenfield development.
 - Street widths too narrow. Need to have 20' clear road width, exclusive of on-street parking.
 - Problems also emerge when tight developments do not provide adequate off-street parking on tight streets, leading to too much parking on-street.
 - Street trees too close to the edge of pavement also a problem.
 - Commercial parking lots without pull-through spaces can create problems for overflow on-street parking in undesirable locations.
- McGuire Nuclear Power Plant has an evacuation plan which covers most of the Sphere of Influence for Huntersville.
- Worst areas for problems:
 - Fire:
 - Vermillion
 - Stone Hollow neighborhood, has no hydrants.
 - Fire access is limited by amt of hose. Have 1200ft on truck. 150ft connected and 200ft preconnects.
 - Police:
 - Walmart and Target
 - Greenway behind Birkdale is a problem, esp. youth crime.
 - Tunnel will be an issue when greenway is connected.

- Need for better access (esp. paved) and EMS addressing for greenways and trails, mile markers, better maps of access points.
- No dedicated greenway police. 3 motor cycle units. Police and Fire don't have key to greenway bollards..
- Fire dept. have UTV for greenways.
- Rural Hill can be a traffic issue during big events (i.e. beer festival)
- Concern about school clustering and impact on traffic
- Concern about affordability. Starting salary of police officer is \$42,000.

Water quality and stormwater

Meeting Information

Date: January 15th, 2020

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: Huntersville Town Hall, Town Board Chamber
101 Huntersville Concord Road, Huntersville, NC 28078

Attendees: Stormwater: Rusty (County Water Quality Program Manager),
Tim, Mike,

Notes

- In 1993 Mecklenburg County adopted water supply/water quality protection regulations.
- Protecting the Gar Creek watershed is extremely important due to intake near its mouth, it has been saved from degradation when many other tributaries in Mecklenburg County have been degraded; also the Catawba River watershed and Mountain Island Lake is important.
- The SWIM buffer rules also protect a lot of land and water quality, water supply. In Huntersville, the SWIM buffer also includes the floodplain, which can cover vast areas in places. Not too dissimilar from neighbors (i.e. Davidson), but in the top tier of neighbors. This larger protected area is important to water quality.

- Huntersville's Low Impact Development Ordinance is also cutting edge. This involved modeling the McDowell Creek cove (this is where the wastewater treatment plant is).
 - LID features include rain gardens, swales, sand filters. These feature mitigate sediment and other water quality stressors from new development.
 - Core of the LID ordinance is used, but several portions of the manual are under-used or awareness is not present early enough in the process to significantly affect development before design.
 - Stormwater Control Measures (SCMs) are used, would be good to see more unlined wetponds.
 - There is an active, established program for inspections of LID features, to ensure they continue operating effectively.
 - Some concern about the competency of HOAs and POAs to effectively replace or perform major repairs when the time comes.
 - LID goes hand-in-hand with stream restoration (performed by the County and Town, in partnership) and has resulted in significant water quality improvements, especially in the McDowell watershed.
- Opportunities:
 - Program for regional stormwater controls, possibly retrofitting older neighborhoods, to improve stormwater flows and quality.
 - Possibly establishing a fee-in-lieu program for new development, to create regional stormwater control measures that serve many private developments, but are maintained by local government.
- State law changed in 2018 to disallow the requirement of stormwater fees for redevelopment. Replacement of impervious surface is ok. Ordinance has fee in lieu option due to recent text amendment. Need to research how these work together. Could be optional alternative for SCMs for intensifying redevelopment.
- Town does not have an established land-banking program for stormwater, but does partner with other agencies (CharMeck schools, Mecklenburg Parks & Rec, etc.) for acquiring land for other purposes.
- Stormwater fee is tiered and split between the County and the Town.
- Town has responsibility for stormwater review now and inspectors
- County and Town have a history of partnering on stream restoration projects. Acquiring easements and land is usually the major obstacle for these projects.
- County uses existing land use and future land use layers to project stormwater runoff through modeling. This is used to model future floodplains based on anticipated upstream impervious surfaces at build-

out. Subsequent downstream development is then required to build slightly higher, in anticipation of the increased, future upstream runoff. Any significant increases in impervious surface area allowances for land uses should be communicated to the County stormwater modelers.

- Need to send Rusty a list of what type of data is needed for the Community Plan.
 - Future floodplains are available from County GIS / open data
 - County has GIS inventory of impervious surface coverage and water quality data for each stream reach.
 - County's future floodplain data is available on the open data FTP site.
 - Subwatersheds of 50-acres have been delineated
 - New (free) tool has been developed by Texas A&M, called the CHARM tool, which shows differences between current and future flooding maps based on land use.
- Upcoming County, local events (for possible outreach):
 - Big Spring Clean (stream cleaning event), in May
 - Creek Week, a week-long water quality event, in March
 - County can provide a roadshow of water quality achievements as needed for any of the Community Plan outreach events.