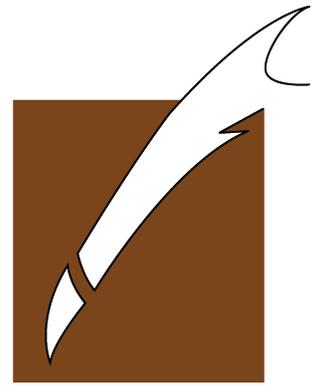


To: Pam Graham, Elon
From: Chad Meadows, CodeWright
Date: 6-26-19
CC: File
RE: Stakeholder Meeting Comments 6-19-19



MESSAGE

This memorandum summarizes the comments provided by Town-identified stakeholders in the LMO process. Meetings were conducted on June 19, 2019, and were conducted in confidence. As such, comments are not attributed to individual interviewees. Rather, comments are summarized by 10 topic areas.

This information will be used by Town staff and the study team in identifying the range of aspects to be addressed in the LMO project.

The stakeholders identified by the Town and interviewed on 6.19.19 are listed below.

- Mark Danieleley – Alamance County Agricultural Extension
- Tim Schwantes – Alamance Wellness Collaborative
- Mac Williams – Alamance County Chamber of Commerce
- Diane Gill – Planning Board Member (ETJ)
- Lawson Brown – Vernon Law Firm
- Joel Brown – Elon Rentals
- Mike Brown – Acorn Inn
- Marcy Green – Impact Alamance
- Ruby Brinkerhoff – Mediterranean Deli
- Ann Meletzke – Healthy Alamance
- Quinn Ray – The Root/Tangent
- Kathleen Patterson – Downtown Development Administrator
- Aerial Miller – Piedmont Conservation Council
- Sammerah Qawasmy – MaGerks
- Janice Ratliff – Ball Park Community
- Elizabeth Halacheff – Downtown resident

codeWright

The following pages list the stakeholder comments received, organized by the following general topic areas:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Current Regulations | 6. Lands Outside Downtown |
| 2. Town Staff / Leadership | 7. Economy |
| 3. University | 8. Agriculture |
| 4. Downtown | 9. Transportation Network |
| 5. Parking – In Downtown / University Area | 10. Student Housing |

1. Current Regulations

- Need more latitude for health-related planning and initiatives as part of the planning process.
- The “grey” areas in the UDO make administration and compliance overly difficult.
- The review process takes too long- applicants have carrying costs to deal with.
- The review process yields rounds of successive reviews with new comments coming up each time.
- Infrastructure requirements can make downtown projects cost-prohibitive.
- The current LDO is mis-leading with respect to requirements for sidewalks, roads, vehicular turn-arounds, fire hydrants.
- Requirements for vehicular turnarounds are unnecessary.
- The two-story minimum building height in downtown is an obstruction – some business owners or landlords do not want to rent to students.
- The Town’s current parking requirements for downtown are inadequate. The Town could use more municipal parking lots around downtown.
- The Town is attempting to address parking problems after-the-fact instead of making sure new development has adequate parking when it is approved.
- The City is sending mixed messages about the desire to increase densities in the downtown. A recent zoning case was denied by the Planning Commission to establish mixed use zoning on two lots. If the University were proposing this it would have been approved, but since it was proposed by residents, it was denied.
- Applicants and people tend to stumble over the current regulations. The “Sparks” rezoning was provided as an example of this situation.
- Davidson, NC, is an example of a community that is successfully planning for health. They used a Centers for Disease Control Grant to prepare a series of specific health impact assessments of land use aspects like the extension of light rail from Charlotte or pedestrian connection studies.
- The Town’s Health in All Policies resolution is a good policy guide for helping ensure healthy outcomes, though there has not yet been many opportunities to publically use the resolution, and would like to see it used more frequently. Health should be enmeshed into all Town policy documents.



2. Town Staff / Leadership

- The perception of many Town residents is that the Town caters to the University too much.
- Town staff is good with communication, professional, and punctual. Interim planners in the past have lack sufficient knowledge to help applicants.
- Pleased with new staff's responsiveness. It has been difficult to work with some surrounding municipalities.

3. University

- College students can be poorly behaved, rude, and drink excessively.
- The University should be providing more parking for its students.
- What are the University's long range plans for growth and development? It is important to understand these. We should consider getting in sync with the University's plans.
- The University has secured options on much of the vacant land around downtown.
- Wonders how much the university has to follow the Town's rules.
- Elon is a university town, and is captive to the University. There is a complex relationship between the Town and the University.

4. Downtown

- Town residents don't go downtown: there is no available parking downtown, there is little or no shopping for residents, there are pedestrian conflicts with students, the University police are stopping residents and giving tickets – even off campus.
- Things that would encourage residents to come to downtown: more sidewalks and pedestrian destinations, a small grocery store, 'nice-looking' neighborhoods, less trash, aesthetic improvements to many student rentals.
- Support for more murals in downtown.
- There are not enough attractions in downtown generally, and for young families (people of 25-40 years of age) in particular.
- There is a need for more gathering spaces and areas for outdoor dining – both along sidewalks and in gathering areas.
- It would help to have a paved location for the farmer's market – grass can be a problem for demarcating vendor spaces.
- The Town needs more gathering areas for people in the downtown.
- Notes a trend of recent development around the downtown that includes large buildings on small lots with inadequate parking.
- There is a desire to encourage land use patterns and forms of development that help promote health and healthy lifestyles.
- Support for directing growth to the Town's core.



5. Parking – in Downtown / University Area

- University students who maintain an out-of-state permanent residence know they do not have to pay parking tickets – this is a big problem.
- Maximum parking space time limits of more than 2 hours are a problem during the school year.
- There is a lack of parking downtown, and the one-hour limit is a problem because the amount of time is insufficient to allow people to eat and also browse or shop.
- Parking tickets to out-of-state drivers are not getting paid, and are a waste of enforcement resources.

6. Lands Outside Downtown

- Rural landscapes and trails are a positive feature of the ETJ, and should be protected. Trails should be extended.
- Supports the idea of greenway dedication and construction. Greenways should be required in all future development in the ETJ.
- The City of Burlington controls all the water and sewer in Elon.

7. Economy

- Summer brings more Town residents to downtown businesses.
- It would be good for the Town to adopt clear policies for the ability to close some streets during public events like the farmer's market.
- Businesses in the downtown need to be able to survive without university customers
- The local economy faces big challenges when the students are gone (for summer or Christmas break). Those restaurants that have survived have done so due to support from the people who live in Burlington.
- Elon is too far from the interstate, and does not have a transportation network that is suitable for traditional industrial development. There is a very limited ability for the Town to accommodate typical industrial land uses.

8. Agriculture

- The addition of farmland compatibility standards would likely be welcomed by farmers in Alamance County.
- Desire to preserve agriculture, but at the same time, does not want to hinder farmer's property rights. Farmers often treat their land as their retirement.
- There are a few larger farm properties in or near the Town's ETJ – Ernest Koury (sp?) – 80-100 acres; and Cable farm property.
- Alamance County operates a purchase of development rights program and is preparing to add an additional \$50,000 to \$100,000-per-year program. The program is used to purchase the development rights applicable to farm land and then to extinguish the



development rights on the land as a means of helping ensure the land remains in agricultural production.

- PDR funding mix: 50% North Carolina, 25% Alamance County; 25% the farmer.
- The County traditionally receives 12 applications per year and is typically able to fund 2 of the 12 per year. Jeff Wilkins, a local veterinarian, is an example of a farmer who has sold development rights.
- Brad Moore, the Director of Alamance County Soil and Water operates the PDR program.
- Support for agritourism and specialty crops, though specialty crops don't contribute that much to a farmer's cash flow. Jane Eisly (sp?) is the agritourism expert in North Alamance County.

9. Transportation Network

- There needs to be more and wider sidewalks in Downtown.
- There needs to be better crosswalk infrastructure around downtown, including areas around the farmer's market.
- More pedestrian access across University Drive is needed.
- Requirements call for "sidewalks to nowhere".
- We need more sidewalks within ½ mile of downtown.
- The surfacing/paving needs to be improved on Walker and Gerringer Roads. There is a need for a traffic signal at Ridgedell and Walker Roads.
- Roadways should have bike lanes.
- There needs to be sidewalk extension around the new elementary school to enable students to walk/bike to school. Sidewalks need to be included from Powerline Road to the end of Walker Road.
- Wants connected streets, not "stubs." Forest Creek and Spanish Oaks are listed as examples of stubs.
- There is very little connection (either via streets, sidewalks, or trails) between the downtown and the area to the north of the University Drive. The road separates these two halves of the community.
- If Elon wants to be pro-family and pro-walking, then better sidewalk infrastructure is needed. The Town needs to connect its existing sidewalk segments.

10. Student Housing

- Support for more dense student housing in areas around the University.
- The University could buy the land with houses currently being used as student rentals.
- For the most part, student housing clusters around the University.
- The University is seeking ways of accommodating all student housing on the campus. People in Town are not too concerned about the possibility of the University requiring all students to live on campus.

