

## 2040 Plan Steering Committee Meeting #5

---

- **Meeting Information**

Date: → Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Time: → 6:00 – 8:00 PM  
Location: → Virtual Meeting

**Virtual Meeting Information**

Members of the public may view the meeting at <https://facebook.com/ToH2040>.

## Agenda

- **Roll Call / Chairman's Remarks**
  - **Attendees**
    - Kim Aichele
    - Tim Bender
    - Ross Boner
    - Randy Brawley
    - John Carbonell
    - John Forehand
    - Erin Gillespie
    - Scott Harrington
    - Kristen Ingram
    - Dan Murphy
    - Eric Rowell
    - Kaitlyn Sisson
    - George Solomon
  - **Staff / Consultants**
    - Dave Hill, Town of Huntersville Planning Department
    - Jack Simoneau, Town of Huntersville Planning Department
    - Brian Richards, Town of Huntersville Planning Department
    - Tracy Barron, Town of Huntersville Planning Department

- **Jake Petrosky, Stewart (Consultant)**
- **Allison Evans, Stewart (Consultant)**
- **Jay Mcleod, Stewart (Consultant)**
- **Jonathan Whitehurst, Kimley-Horn (Consultant)**
- **Chairman John Carbonell provided opening remarks.**
  - Thank you to Tracy Barron for coordinating the meeting.
  - Reminder to take the plan framework survey.
  - The current status of project public engagement was summarized, which includes a total of 4,432 public interactions so far. This is 79% of the goal of 5,610 interactions, or 10% of the Town's population.
  - Online Community Meeting Update (3,900 views of facebook post)
- **Approval of Meeting Summaries**
  - The meeting summaries from Steering Committee Meetings 3 and 4 were approved and adopted by unanimous votes.
    - April Meeting Summary: Motion to approve by Erin G., Second by Dan M. Approved.
    - May Meeting Summary: Motion to approve by Erin G, Second by Dan M. Approved
- **Public Comments**
  - Jake Palillo, local business owner, made a 10-minute presentation that addressed land uses around Highway 73, future demand for different housing options, and street standards for private developments. Talking points included:
    - Importance of the 2040 plan in setting policy direction
    - Need to plan for tomorrow and the future.
    - Need to understand who we are planning for. Baby Boomers make up 80 million people, Millennials make up 72 million.
    - These demographics tend to want a certain lifestyle and smaller houses.
    - NC 73 is a major east/west connector that connects 6 cities and I-77, I-85, I-485.
    - Comparison of Huntersville planning area to South Charlotte
    - Town should reconsider requirement that buildings front a public street and needs to consider maintenance implications of public streets
    - 20' planting strips are needed on major roads, buildings could be farther back
    - Multi-use paths are preferable to sidewalks in some cases
    - Landscape standards are needed (i.e. foundation plantings), lighting, etc.
    - Senior housing facility proposed was not recommended by planning board. They said they loved the project, but that it did not fit the policies in the current comprehensive plan

- The full presentation can be viewed as part of the meeting video on Facebook.
- **Presentation (Jake Petrosky)**
  - **Schedule & Public Engagement**
    - The next Steering Committee meeting will include a public listening session.
    - Survey #3 on the Draft Framework Plan will launch.
  - **Vision and Goals**
    - In vision, consider changing 'safety' to 'protection'.
    - Steering Committee would like transportation goal to mention connecting neighborhoods to each other and to key destinations. Zoning Ordinance contains language about connectivity already.
    - Measurable objectives are desired in plan to accompany goals and measure progress
    - What are the "transportation options" we are drawing from? For this plan, we are referencing the "How would you like to travel?" question from survey #1: automobiles, biking and walking and some transit.
    - Discussion of Online Comment Form results
    - Covid might significantly affect schools and models are going to change.
    - Suggestion that next survey might include more questions on land use preferences.
    - Suggestion on being careful about wording of encouraging vs. limiting growth or land uses. Limiting growth can impact affordability of housing. There are tradeoffs with policies that need to be clearly articulated.
    - Question about how to define affordable housing. If it is mentioned we need to define it.
  - **Discussion on Draft Recommendation & Outstanding Questions**
    - Transportation
      - Jonathan Whitehurst from Kimley Horn presented draft transportation recommendations. Highlights included:
        - Transportation themes from input:
          - Connected: Improve connectivity throughout the study area
          - Safe: Improve safety for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists
          - Multi-modal: Make it easier to get to bus stops and more comfortable when at the bus stops; Make transit better with buses and trains
          - Proactive: Ensure the transportation network keeps up with growth and development
        - Draft Transportation recommendations include:

- Character Area Descriptions tied to land uses, including parking, street pattern, right-of-way widths, bike/ped features.
- Discussion of corridors and nodes, including design considerations for key projects
- Policies and programs
  - Draft transit recommendations were also presented including express bus routes, local priority transit corridors and premium transit options.
  - Premium transit options discussed included proposed BRT (Bus Rapid Transit), proposed BRT Stations, the proposed Red Line (a commuter rail line) and proposed Red Line Stations.
- Transit / Red Line Discussion
  - Loop around Huntersville needed as opposed to just N-S, E-W connections.
  - Could activity centers be connected by transit?
  - Red Line or premium transit is not essential to have walkability.
  - Need to discuss more public transit options - rail vs bus.
  - If we are investing in activity centers, we need to get people there not just via automobile.
  - Tier 1 and 2 bus network is an opportunity to improve livability
  - 42% of Survey Respondents (as of 6/24) supported planning for commuter rail even though the railroad would have to change its policies and it may only be a long term option.
  - Eric Rowell commented on Red Line
    - No evidence that NS will give up use of current tracks.
    - North Meck has been paying transit tax and subsidizing rail lines
    - Plan was from the 90s.
    - Support is without context. People don't have a concept of the cost, ridership levels, etc. # of trips per day, etc.
    - Not helpful to devote time to red line without additional information supporting it as a viable project
    - Motion suggested: All references to the redline be removed from 2040 Plan. Recommend that planning staff de-emphasize rail-based TOD in future plans.
  - Committee decided that discussion of the red line will continue at next Committee meeting
- Highway 73 Land Use Discussion
  - Recent rezoning presented as example of development pressure on the eastern and western edges of NC 73 through Huntersville

- Development proposal was for a 320 unit congregate care – independent living facility for seniors
  - 35.8 Acre site located mostly in the Low Intensity area of the adopted Land Use Plan (corner of property in High Intensity area)
  - Planned widening of NC 73 is scheduled to begin in FY 2023
  - Previously approved developments in the area we about 1.5 DUA
- The process will include revisiting older small area plans, including those around Highway 73.
- NC 73 Corridor Plan anticipated a 4 lane rural boulevard to serve the Transitional Residential district that was capped at 1.5 Dwelling Units per acre. The plan also called for no new driveways on this segment of NC 73.
- SC Discussion:
  - Huntersville funnels all its traffic to one roadway. (I-77) We need to expand the network.
  - Neither Planning Board or Town Board is bound by the 2030 Plan and can approve development even if inconsistent with the plan, but they would have to explain rational.
  - Town Board has discretion for approval or denial.
  - LU Recs in 2040 plan need to consider corridors that connect activity centers. Need more intentional study of NC 73, Statesville Road and NC 115.
  - Development intensity could radiate off of NC 73.
  - Need question related to options and implications on next survey.
- **Next Steps**
  - The next Steering Committee meeting will be July 22<sup>nd</sup> and have a listening / public comment component to the meeting.