



Chester County Council Comprehensive Plan Workshop

R. Carlisle Roddey Government Building
1476 J A Cochran Bypass | Chester, SC 29706
Monday, February 10, 2025 | 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Pete Wilson, Vice Chair Erin Mosley, Councilman Bobby Raines, Councilman Mike Vaughn (Virtual), Councilman Corey Guy, Councilman John Agee, County Administrator Brian Hester, County Attorney Nicole Workman, Clerk to Council Kristie Donaldson

Absent: Councilman William Killian

1. Call to Order

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

2. Best Practices for Running an Effective Meeting

Nicole Workman, County Attorney

Attorney Workman presented the roles and duties of the council chair, vice chair, and clerk to the council. She explained the importance of sticking to the agenda, especially during executive sessions, and outlined the different types of motions, including main motions, privileged motions, and subsidiary motions. Mrs. Workman also emphasized the need to maintain confidentiality during executive sessions and not repeat legal advice discussed in those sessions.

3. Presentation and Discussion of Public Input for 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Jeremy Ward, Planning and Development Director

Director Ward presented the key findings from the public input analysis. He highlighted that the majority of respondents expressed support for zoning, with a focus on safety, appearance, and managing growth. The public input showed that residents value the rural character and agricultural land in the county and are concerned about losing those aspects with new growth. Mr. Ward noted that the public input will help inform the comprehensive plan, particularly around growth management and aligning new development with the county's priorities.

4. Presentation and Discussion of Research Elements for 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Jeremy Ward, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Ward presented the research elements section of the comprehensive plan, which included demographic data, population projections, and comparisons to peer counties. He discussed the county's declining population in many towns, the aging population, and the declining birth rate. Mr. Ward also presented his own population projections, which showed potential for significant growth in the coming years, driven by in-migration, despite the census data projecting a decline. Councilman Agee stated that the data from the state revenue office projected a decline in Chester County's population to which Mr. Ward discussed the difference between the state estimates and a true population projection. Chairman Wilson asked for another table to be added stating where workers were coming from who lived outside of Chester County but worked here. Councilman Guy mentioned the importance of getting the school board involved and the need for education and new schools as part of the comprehensive plan.

5. Presentation and Discussion of Vision Statement and Values for 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Jeremy Ward, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Ward presented the following vision statement to council:

"In the face of change, Chester County will work tirelessly to improve while standing firm on our values. We treasure our rural heritage and agricultural producers and are committed to good stewardship of our land and environment. We desire economic strength and opportunity for all. We wish to cultivate, protect, and inspire beauty throughout our county, both natural and manmade. We require that new growth aligns with our values while not compromising our resources or public safety. We will hold our local ordinances and leaders to a high standard in the pursuit of these goals, seeking to promote liberty and fairness surpassed only by our love and devotion for this, our home.

Above all, we will work together – county, cities, towns, countryside, and individuals - to conserve what makes us unique and lift each other up where weak.

By the grace of God, we will demonstrate to the region and world a model of leadership, resiliency, and service as we work to improve and strengthen our county for all."

Vice-Chair Mosley recommended shifting around the order for a few of the values. Various council members discussed the importance of communicating and bringing to the table other relevant entities in the county, including the sewer district, water district, and school board officials.

6. Discussion of Subdivision Code Re-write Timeline

Brian Hester, County Administrator

Jeremy Ward, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Ward presented a proposed timeline and approach for the subdivision code rewrite, explaining that a full rewrite cannot be completed before the pause on development ends on March 31st. In the interim, Mr. Ward suggested separating the regulations for Planned Development (PD) districts from the general subdivision codes. Key elements of the proposal include changing verbiage to require that PD districts must include both residential and commercial/industrial uses. Additionally, subdivisions of different densities would be approved by-right on properly zoned land, eliminating the need for rezoning to a PD district. Mr. Ward stated he aims to have the zoning text amendments approved by March 17th, with workshops to follow in March. This would allow the new subdivision code to be in place by early May, before the comprehensive plan work resumes around March/April. The goal is to update the subdivision regulations to align with the priorities of the comprehensive plan, creating a clearer framework for managing the county's growth and development. Administrator Hester stated the goal is to have the updated subdivision ordinances in place by March 31st, when the current pause on growth expires, even if the comprehensive plan mapping is not fully completed. He suggested updating the current ordinance to require developer approvals from utility providers and the school district before development can be considered, to expedite the process.

7. Council Comments

8. Adjourn

Councilman Agee motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 6-0 to adjourn. 7:00pm.

Kristie Donaldson, Clerk to County Council