

MINUTES FOR THE WEEKLY MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON MONDAY,
OCTOBER 20, 2008 AT 4 PM IN THE WORKSESSION ROOM, BUILDING F, JAMES CITY
COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

PARTICIPANTS:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Fraley
James Nickols
Bill Porter
Mary Jones
Rick Krapf
George Billups
Chris Henderson
Tom Tingle
Mark Wenger
Julie Leverenz

NOT PRESENT:

Vaughn Poller

STAFF PRESENT:

Tammy Rosario
Allen Murphy
David German
Jody Puckett
Randy Hisle
Brian Elmore

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Jack Fraley called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He welcomed Mr. Rich Krapf to the Steering Committee. In calling attention to some housekeeping items, he proposed giving individuals 3 minutes and groups 5 minutes to address the Committee, as this would be in keeping with the established rules of Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings.

Mr. Chris Henderson asked if 5 minutes was enough time for groups to speak.

Mr. Tom Tingle responded that speaking times could be flexible provided a group notified the Committee ahead of time.

After additional discussion, Mr. Fraley said the 3 and 5 minute times will remain in effect, with flexibility given to groups that contact him in advance. He said he will discuss speaking arrangements and time allocation with staff.

Mr. Fraley discussed changing the Steering Committee venue to make the meetings less isolated from the public. He mentioned the previous 2003 Committee arrangement in Building C.

Ms. Tammy Rosario stated that staff had anticipated difficulties with the worksession room and had considerable discussion prior to the start of the Steering Committee. The main considerations were to have the Committee meetings televised live, quickly available for citizen viewing, and presented in a roundtable format.

Ms. Jody Puckett said the public can watch the meeting live in the Board Room, channel 48, or online. She said taping in the work session room allows rapid editing and replay. She said although Building C would allow greater public attendance within the same room, recording equipment would need to be transported and set up. She said it would require 13 to 15 staff hours to set-up and break-down equipment, and to edit and prepare tapes for airing. She said the biggest drawback of Building C is an inability to broadcast live. She also discussed the drawbacks of using the Board Room and other facilities. She said the work session room could be reconfigured to add more seats. The Steering

Committee discussed the pros and cons of moving the meeting venue, and voted to keep meeting in the Building F Worksession Room, with a reconfiguration.

Mr. Fraley encouraged Committee members to use the Steering Committee blog.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Fraley opened the public comment period.

There being no comments, Mr. Fraley closed the public comment period.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Henderson motioned adoption of the October 6th minutes, with a second from Ms. Jones. In a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved.

Mr. Henderson motioned adoption of the October 14th minutes, with a second from Ms. Jones. In a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved.

IV. DEMOGRAPHICS TECHNICAL REPORT REVIEW

Mr. David German presented the demographics technical report. He gave a Power Point presentation identifying past, current, and projected county demographics by age, sex, race, income, and education. He said demographics provide a springboard for other sections of the Comprehensive Plan, including, Population Needs, Economic Development, Public Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Environment, Transportation, Community Character, Housing, and Land Use. He said demographics data can lead to varied conclusions. He noted that models and data may be manipulated in many ways. He discussed the data sources used for the report, including the US Census, the Virginia Employment Commission, Weldon-Cooper Center for Public Service, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, and County Planning staff. He explained how past discrepancies in the population figures involving the institutional population (1990 Census) had been resolved, and how four new census tracts had been added to the County 2000 Census. He said all data found in the Technical Report can be independently researched. He said the County would reach the population threshold for the yearly American Community Survey (ACS) in the coming year.

Mr. Bill Porter asked how closely Weldon-Cooper figures followed staff population estimates.

Mr. German said as of December 2007, Weldon-Cooper and County staff numbers were within 1% of one another, even though Weldon-Cooper models are more sophisticated. He said James City population growth since 1980 rapidly outpaced the rest of Hampton Roads and Virginia. He noted that the current County population is 62,394. He described how the County's population is mainly driven by in-migration from other Hampton Roads localities, other states and even other countries.

Mr. Tingle asked about the unusually consistent growth rates in the past two decades.

Mr. German stated the Primary Service Area boundaries and a finite amount of developable land smoothed growth. He said outside factors such as regional growth, regional employment, and interest rates also play a role.

Mr. Henderson stated that County staff only had sufficient resources to process roughly 1,000 building permits a year.

Mr. Porter stated development was often limited by the pace of migration into the County.

Mr. German said future County development would likely center around currently less dense areas within the Primary Service Area (PSA), including Norge, Toano, Stonehouse, and just outside of and adjacent to the PSA.

Mr. Tingle asked if future development predictions were based on current County planning concepts.

Mr. German stated predictions assume all current regulations and policies remain the same. He said Zoning Districts could be redeveloped to allow higher densities. He said James City was the fastest growing locality on the Peninsula, yet still has one of the lower population densities. He said James City's median age, 41, is higher and increasing more rapidly than that of Virginia or the nation.

Mr. Rich Krapf asked for the rationale of using median age versus an average age.

Mr. German stated he had not commonly seen statistical age averages or modes. He noted that the County's average age was likely substantially older than 41.

Mr. Porter stated the County's older age demographic would be very significant in the formulation of the Comprehensive Plan. He said the tradeoffs of focusing on youth or seniors must be discussed.

Mr. George Billups asked about youth out-migration from James City County, and about how well the County was able to retain youths graduating from area high schools or colleges.

Mr. German said that he did not have these numbers readily at hand, but that Mr. Jason Purse might be able to talk briefly about this in his "Population Needs" section presentation.

Ms. Mary Jones said several large developments cater to older populations, if not through age restrictions, then through pricing and aesthetics.

Mr. Henderson commented that County in-migration is driven by people relocating on the Peninsula, William and Mary graduates, and people who vacationed here.

Mr. Porter stated a number of youth leaving the County return at a later date.

Mr. Billups stated military migration was a factor as well.

Mr. German discussed County population projections through 2030.

Mr. Mark Wenger asked about past Weldon-Cooper population estimates.

Mr. German stated the estimates had a good track record. He said their numbers were typically accurate to within 2%-5% over/under. He said there was an up-and-coming school age population bubble in James City.

Getting back to 2030 projections, Mr. German said the percentage of County residents 45 and older could double between 1970 and 2030 to 50%. He again said projections depend on current trends. He noted that the County was becoming increasingly female. He said the County's non-white population percentage had decreased since 1970, and was expected to stabilize at around 17%.

Mr. Tingle asked about underlying causes of the minority decrease.

Mr. German stated there was an unknown, uncounted Hispanic population in the County. He said that housing prices might be a factor in the declining numbers of minority residents but that no hard data had been located on the underlying causes.

Resuming his presentation, Mr. German said James City residents had higher education levels than surrounding localities, with 40%-45% of citizens holding a college degree. He said high household wealth and William and Mary may be factors in the higher education levels.

Mr. Tingle said the higher education levels meant fewer residents had the technical or high school only degrees that often attract employers at the lower-spectrum of the labor market.

Mr. Fraley stated well-paying jobs could attract a workforce from outside the area.

Mr. German stated County household income was significantly higher than in Virginia and the nation overall, and keeps trending higher. He explained staff population numbers were based on County residential certificates of occupancy. He discussed the modeling behind some of the data sets used for population projections. He said at some point, the County's growth will be halted by build-out, which is currently projected to happen around 2030. He said population growth figures vary widely among different data-collecting agencies. He explained why staff used an average of two different 2030 population models, one linear and one exponential. He said average County household size, 2.47, was declining over time, in line with state and national trends.

Ms. Rosario stated the average of the exponential growth and linear growth projection models were accurate on previous Comprehensive Plans.

Mr. Fraley said William and Mary was sponsoring a forum on the County's aging population.

Mr. Billups asked how staff determined its age groups for the report.

Mr. German said the groupings came out of the U.S. Census. He said one of the challenges of preparing the report was the rates at which different demographics measures were updated. He said some data has not been updated since the 2000 Census, while other data is as recent as 2008. He noted that 2006 was the common year that most data was updated to. He discussed the datasheets in the technical report that informed the charts.

Mr. Henderson discussed the age at which couples have children. He said the schools collected that data and perhaps it could be used for the Comprehensive Plan. He also discussed aging populations preferring smaller homes and apartments

Ms. Rosario add that the American household has been shifting away from traditional married couples with children households to more non-traditional households square footage per household increases over time. She also stated that the overall size (square footage) of houses has increased over time.

Mr. Tingle stated seniors downgrading to smaller houses affects neighborhood density.

V. OTHER ITEMS

Ms. Rosario distributed new calendars and requested that the November 10th meeting be cancelled due to scheduling conflicts with key individuals associated with Economic Climate. She proposed Economic Climate would be discussed on the 17th and 24th. She said Environment will also be discussed on November 24th. After some discussion, the Steering Committee decided to cancel the November 10th meeting and hold longer meetings on November 17th and 24th from 3:00-6:00pm.

Members discussed various scheduling conflicts.

Mr. Tingle noted that his conflict on the second Monday of the month was a bank board meeting, and his request for a schedule adjustment had been one of necessity not convenience.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Julie Leverenz motioned for adjournment, with a second from Ms. Jones.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.

Jack Fraley, Chairman