

## Fort Mill Planning Department



# Development Activity Report April 2015

### Monthly & Year-to-Date Permit Summary (All Permits)

#### Monthly Permit Activity (All Permits) – April 2015 vs. April 2014

	April 2015	April 2014	Change (#)	Change (%)
Permits Issued	117	75	+42	+56.0%
Construction Value	\$26,064,852	\$14,479,220	+\$11,585,632	+80.0%
Permit Fees Collected*	\$155,075	\$78,618	+\$76,457	+97.3%

#### Year-to-Date Permit Activity (All Permits) – Jan-Apr 2015 vs. Jan-Apr 2014

	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	Change (#)	Change (%)
Permits Issued	413	240	+173	+72.1%
Construction Value	\$92,163,931	\$52,476,442	+\$39,687,489	+75.6%
Permit Fees Collected*	\$543,840	\$283,402	+\$260,438	+91.9%

### Monthly & Year-to-Date Permit Summary (Single-Family Residential Permits)

#### Monthly Permit Activity (Single-Family Residential) – April 2015 vs. April 2014

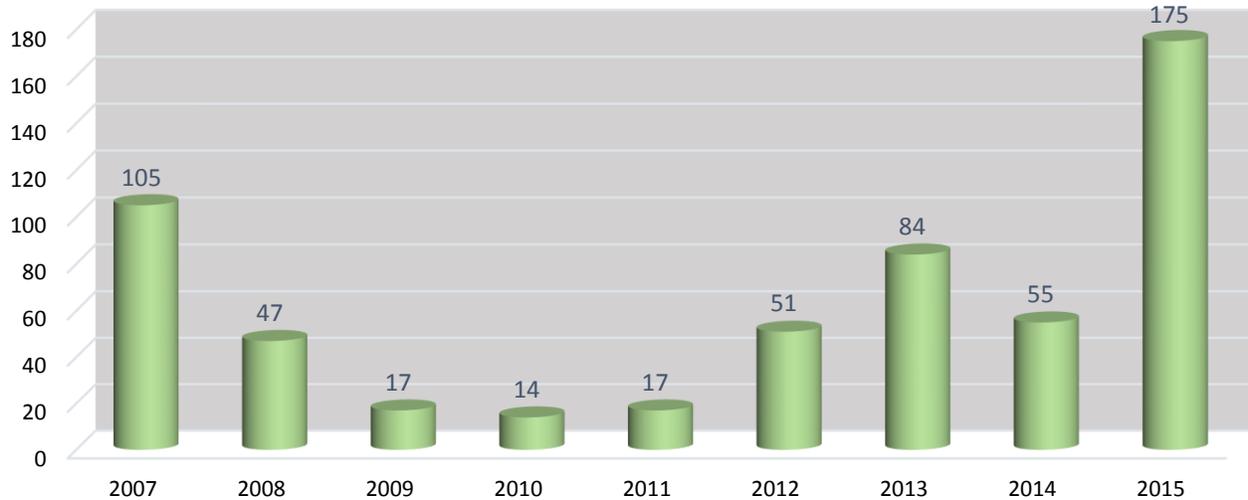
	April 2015	April 2014	Change (#)	Change (%)
Permits Issued	57	13	+44	+338.5%
Construction Value	\$21,901,402	\$6,242,646	+\$15,658,756	+250.8%
Avg. Permit Value	\$384,235	\$480,204	-\$95,969	-20.0%

#### Year-to-Date Permit Activity (Single-Family Residential) – Jan-Apr 2015 vs. Jan-Apr 2014

	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	Change (#)	Change (%)
Permits Issued	175	55	+120	+218.2%
Construction Value	\$64,498,483	\$24,365,781	+\$40,132,702	+164.7%
Avg. Permit Value	\$368,563	\$443,014	-\$74,451	-16.8%

\*Permit fee collections are non-audited values. Actual collections may increase or decrease following the town's annual audit.

## Year-to-Date New Home Permits (Jan-Apr 2007-2015)



A total of 57 new single-family residential permits were issued during the month of April 2015, including 5 in the Forest at Fort Mill, 8 in Massey, 4 in the Preserve at River Chase, 6 in Springfield, 1 in Springview Meadows, 4 in Sutton Mill, and 29 in Waterside at the Catawba.

- **Forest at Fort Mill**
  - 181 Monterey Oaks Circle
  - 209 Monterey Oaks Circle
  - 234 Monterey Oaks Circle
  - 320 Monterey Oaks Circle
  - 600 Oak Forest Lane
- **Massey**
  - 1757 Felts Parkway
  - 1761 Felts Parkway
  - 1781 Felts Parkway
  - 1819 Felts Parkway
  - 1138 Kings Bottom Drive
  - 1142 Kings Bottom Drive
  - 1146 Kings Bottom Drive
  - 1343 Kings Bottom Drive
- **Preserve at River Chase**
  - 3025 Slaney Court
  - 3031 Slaney Court
  - 849 Tyne Drive
  - 879 Tyne Drive
- **Springfield**
  - 642 Bannerman Lane
  - 1260 Edbrooke Lane
  - 1284 Edbrooke Lane
  - 420 Kirkbride Court
- **Springview Meadows**
  - 1119 Crescent Moon Drive
- **Waterside at the Catawba**
  - 740 Bearcamp Way
  - 744 Bearcamp Way
  - 418 Brier Knob Drive
  - 421 Brier Knob Drive
  - 426 Brier Knob Drive
  - 1210 Clingman Drive
  - 1219 Clingman Drive
  - 1229 Clingman Drive
  - 1233 Clingman Drive
  - 1246 Clingman Drive
  - 1250 Clingman Drive
  - 1315 Corey Cabin Court
  - 1258 Hideaway Gulch Drive
  - 1270 Hideaway Gulch Drive
  - 1274 Hideaway Gulch Drive
  - 1302 Hideaway Gulch Drive
  - 949 Skywater Drive
  - 958 Skywater Drive
  - 964 Skywater Drive
  - 1435 Tomkins Knob Drive
  - 1438 Tomkins Knob Drive
  - 1451 Tomkins Knob Drive
  - 1466 Tomkins Knob Drive
  - 1467 Tomkins Knob Drive

- 425 Kirkbride Court
- 2168 Tatton Hall Road
- **Sutton Mill**
  - 1327 Misty Morning Court
  - 1334 Misty Morning Court
  - 1544 Spring Blossom Trail
  - 1549 Spring Blossom Trail
- 1474 Tomkins Knob Drive
- 1530 Whistlers Chase Court
- 1531 Whistlers Chase Court
- 1541 Whistlers Chase Court
- 1545 Whistlers Chase Court

## Monthly Permit Summary (Commercial)

The following commercial permits were issued during the month of April 2015:

- **Encite:** 481 Munn Road, Suite 325 (Office Upfit)
- **Clebourne House:** 138 Clebourne Street (Outdoor Shelter)
- **Fort Mill Square:** 100 Fort Mill Square (Demolition)
- **LPL Financial:** 1402 SC Highway 160 (Footing and Foundation)

## New Businesses

The following new business licenses were issued during the month of April 2015:

- **US-K Martial Arts:** 506 Mercantile Place, Suite 102 (Martial Arts)
- **Hobo's:** 213 Main Street (Restaurant)

## Project Updates

### Topping Out Ceremony Held for New Lash Group Corporate Office

On April 13<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Funderburk joined Lash Group CEO, Tracy Foster, and other dignitaries for a beam signing and topping out ceremony at the new Lash Group corporate headquarters in Kingsley. The 250,000 square foot building is expected to be completed in 2016.



### Masons Bend Groundbreaking Ceremony

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new Masons Bend project, located near Sutton Road and I-77. At build out, Masons Bend will have up to 1,000 residences, and up to 600,000 square feet of commercial development, on more than 500 acres.

### Fort Mill, Tega Cay and York County Councils Hold Joint Meeting

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, members of Fort Mill Town Council participated in the first ever joint meeting with Tega Cay City Council and York County Council. The three councils discussed a variety of topics, including transportation, recreation, fire service and regional planning.



## Annexations

There were no new annexations approved by Town Council during the month April 2015.

### *Year-to-Date Annexation Activity – Jan-Apr 2015 vs. Jan-Apr 2014*

	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	Change (#)	Change (%)
Total # Annexations	0	4	-4	-100.0%
Total # Acres Annexed	0.00	361.2	-361.2	-100.0%

## Rezoning

There were two rezoning ordinances approved by council during the month of March 2015:

- **Ordinance No. 2015-01**

An ordinance amending the Zoning Map of the Town of Fort Mill so as to change the zoning designation for York County Tax Map Numbers 020-04-04-005, 020-04-04-006, 020-04-05-001, 020-04-05-002, 020-04-05-003, 020-04-05-004, 020-04-05-005, and 020-04-05-006, containing approximately 4.7 +/- acres located at the intersection of North White Street and Skipper Street, from R-15 Residential to LC Local Commercial

- Applicant: Springland Inc.
- Location: York County Tax Map Numbers 020-04-04-005 & 020-04-04-006 (312 N White Street), and 020-04-05-001, 020-04-05-002, 020-04-05-003, 020-04-05-004, 020-04-05-005, & 020-04-05-006 (210 N White Street)
- Acreage: 4.7 +/- Acres
- Current Zoning: R-15 Residential
- Zoning Requested: LC Local Commercial
- Disposition: Approved second reading of ordinance to rezone parcels from R-15 to LC (7-0)
- Date Approved: April 13, 2015



- **Ordinance No. 2015-02**

An ordinance amending the Zoning Map of the Town of Fort Mill so as to change the zoning designation for York County Tax Map Number 020-04-24-016, containing approximately 0.34 +/- acre located at the intersection of Tom Hall Street and Springs Street, from UD Urban Development to LC Local Commercial

- Applicant: Hardee's Restaurants LLC
- Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-04-24-016 (101 Tom Hall Street)
- Acreage: 0.34 +/- Acres
- Current Zoning: UD Urban Development
- Zoning Requested: LC Local Commercial
- Disposition: Approved second reading of ordinance to rezone parcels from UD to LC (7-0)
- Date Approved: April 13, 2015



## Ordinances & Text Amendments

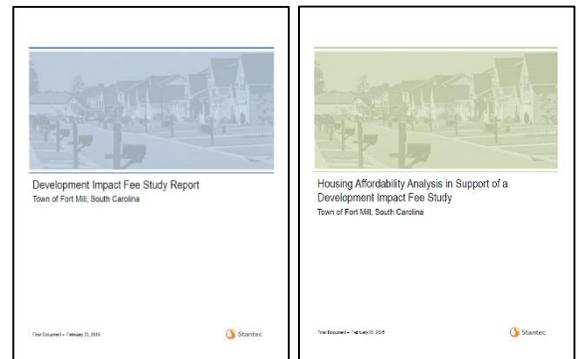
There was one text amendment approved by council during the month of April 2015:

- **Ordinance No. 2015-03**

An ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Fort Mill; Article II, Requirements by district; Section 8, LC Local Commercial District; so as to add bed and breakfast inns as an approved conditional use within the LC District

- Applicant: Text Amendment Requested by Fort Mill Town Staff
- Purpose: Amends the list of permitted uses within the LC Local Commercial district so as to allow bed and breakfast inns with following conditions: The use shall be located on a parcel at least two acres in size, or one acre in size if the property is also located within the Historic Preservation District; the bed and breakfast inn shall have ten or fewer guest rooms; meals may be served to registered guests only; no cooking facilities shall be permitted in individual guests rooms; the property owner or manager must reside on the property where the inn is located; only short term lodging will be provided, monthly rentals shall be prohibited, and no guest(s) may stay on the premises for a period exceeding thirty consecutive days; two parking spaces shall be provided for the operator, plus one space for each guest room as required, including handicap accessibility; all guest quarters and living facilities shall be located within the principal structure; and the use shall produce no alterations or changes in the character or exterior appearance of the principal building from that of a dwelling, except that one sign not exceeding forty square feet in size and eight feet in height may be installed.
- Disposition: Approved 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of zoning text amendment (7-0)
- Date Approved: April 13, 2015

During the meeting on April 27, 2015, council also adopted a resolution accepting the Development Impact Fee Study Report and Affordable Housing Analysis, which were prepared by Stantec. The resolution directed the Planning Commission to prepare and provide a recommendation on a draft impact fee ordinance and capital improvements plan for the following categories: fire protection, parks and recreation, municipal facilities and transportation. The Planning Commission's recommendations are due back to council within 120 days.



## New Subdivisions

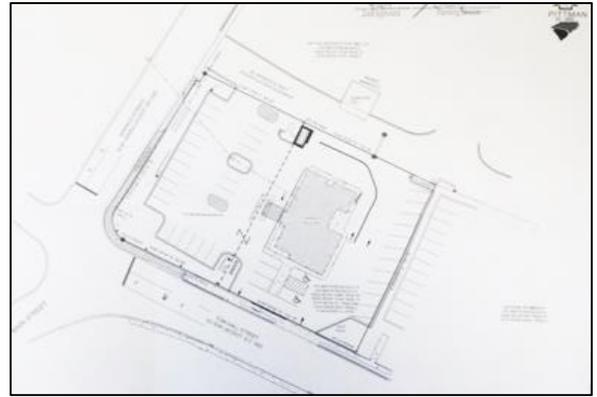
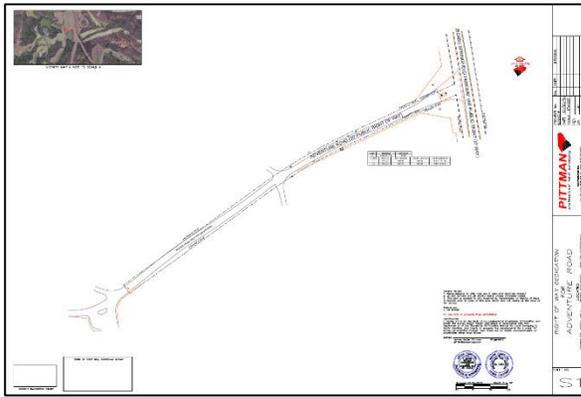
There were 3 new subdivision plats approved for recording during the month of April 2015:

- **Final Plat: Adventure Road**

- Applicant: Leroy Springs & Co.
- Location: ASC Greenway
- Zoning Designation: MXU Mixed Use
- Buildable Lots: 0 (Road Only)
- Disposition: Approved by Planning Commission on February 24, 2015; signed by staff on April 15, 2015

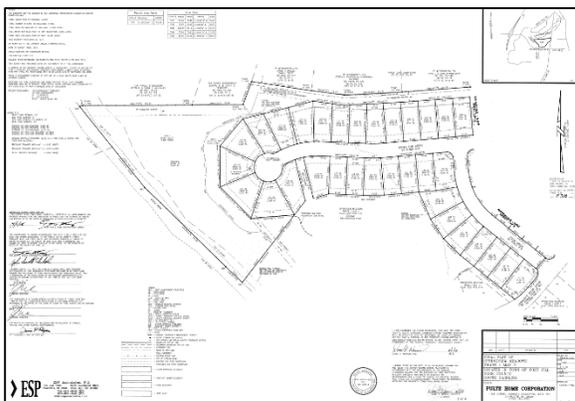
- **Final Plat: Hardee's Recombination**

- Applicant: Hardees Restaurants, LLC
- Location: 101 Tom Hall Street
- Acreage: 0.34 +/- Acres
- Zoning Designation: UD Urban Dev.
- Buildable Lots: 1
- Disposition: Approved by town staff on April 16, 2015



• **Final Plat: Springview Meadows, Phase 2**

- Applicant: Pulte Home Corporation
- Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-21-01-314
- Acreage: 20.578 +/- Acres
- Zoning Designation: R-5 Residential
- Buildable Lots: 55
- Disposition: Approved by Planning Commission on March 24, 2015. Plat signed and released by staff on April 13, 2015, upon receipt of the required bond.



**Planning Commission Meeting Summary**

The Planning Commission (PC) held its regular meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2015, to review the following requests(s):

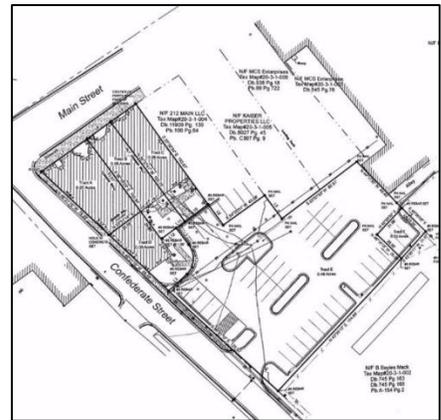
• **Sketch Plan: Kimbrell Property**

- Applicant: Ryland Homes
- Location: York County Tax Map Numbers 020-11-01-195, 020-11-01-196, & 020-11-01-197 (N Dobys Bridge Road & Kimbrell Road)
- Acreage: 28.97 +/- Acres
- Zoning Designation: R-5 Residential
- Request: Applicant requested approval of a sketch plan for a new 100-lot subdivision near the intersection of N Dobys Bridge Road and Kimbrell Road.
- Disposition: PC voted to defer the request, and asked the applicant to consult with staff on a variance to save at least one of the significant live oak trees proposed for removal. (6-0)



- **Subdivision Plat: 202, 204 & 206 Main Street**

- Applicant: Downtown Partners
- Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-03-01-003 (202, 204 & 206 Main Street)
- Acreage: 0.75 +/- acre
- Zoning Designation: LC Local Commercial / Historic Preservation District
- Request: Applicant requested approval of a subdivision plat to divide a 0.75 acre parcel into six separate parcels ranging in size from 1,139.21 square feet to 21,045.75 square feet. A subdivision variance would be required due to two proposed nonconformities for "Lot F."
- Disposition: PC voted to defer the requested and asked the applicant to be present at the next regularly scheduled meeting. (6-0)



- **Rezoning Request: Fort Mill Housing Authority**

- Applicant: Housing Authority of Fort Mill
- Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-04-35-081 (Bozeman Drive)
- Acreage: 2.03 +/- Acres
- Current Zoning: TC Transitional Commercial
- Zoning Requested: RT-12 Residential
- Request: Applicant requested a rezoning of the property from TC to RT-12. The intended use for the property was described as affordable garden-style walk-up housing units.
- Disposition: PC expressed concern about the permitted density within the R-12 district, and asked the applicant to discuss alternate zoning designations with town staff. PC voted to defer the request. (6-0)



- **Rezoning Request: 1462 & 1466 N Dobys Bridge Road**

- Applicant: The Crossing Ministries
- Location: York County Tax Map Numbers 020-11-01-110 & 020-11-01-111 (1462 & 1466 N Dobys Bridge Road)
- Acreage: 7.6 +/- Acres
- Current Zoning: R-15 Residential
- Zoning Requested: HC Highway Commercial
- Request: Applicant requested a rezoning of the property from R-15 to HC. The property was under contract for sale and development as a multi-unit storage facility.
- Disposition: PC expressed concern about recommending in favor of a commercial zoning designation in a predominantly residential area. PC voted to defer the request. (6-0)



- **Rezoning Request: River Crossing Senior Apartments**

- Applicant: TCP Southeast #45
- Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-20-01-016 (River Crossing Drive and Sutton Road)
- Acreage: 14.4 +/- Acres
- Current Zoning: HC Highway Commercial

- Zoning Requested: UD Urban Development
- Request: Applicant requested a rezoning of the property from HC to UD. The intended use for the property was described as an age-restricted apartment community with 255 multi-family units.
- Disposition: PC expressed concern about the zoning designation of UD, and asked the applicant to review a possible MXU Mixed Use designation. The PC voted to defer the request. (6-0)



## Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting Summary

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) met on Monday, April 20, 2015, to review the following requests:

- **Variance Request: 411 Sidney Johnson Street**
  - Applicant: Joe & Kristina Dillon
  - Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-01-08-001 (411 Sidney Johnson Street)
  - Zoning Designation: R-10 Residential
  - Request: Applicant requested a variance from the zoning ordinance to allow a reduction of the 10' side yard setback requirement for a principal structure.
  - Disposition: This request was withdrawn at the request of the applicant.
  
- **Variance Request: 201 E Gregg Street**
  - Applicant: Tina Grayson
  - Location: York County Tax Map Number 020-04-29-009 (201 E Gregg Street)
  - Zoning Designation: R-10 Residential
  - Request: Applicant requested a variance from the zoning ordinance to allow a reduction of the 5' side yard setback requirement for an accessory structure (carport).
  - Disposition: BOZA approved a variance reducing the side yard setback from 5' to 2' to allow for the installation of a carport. (6-0)

## Historic Review Board Meeting Summary

The Historic Review Board (HRB) did not meet during the month of April due to a lack of items for consideration.

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Town Council Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fort Mill Town Hall</li> <li>○ Mon. May 11, 2015</li> <li>○ 7:00 PM</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>● <b>RFATS Policy Committee Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manchester Meadows</li> <li>○ Fri. May 15, 2015</li> <li>○ 12:00 PM</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Historic Review Board Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fort Mill Town Hall</li> <li>○ Tues. May 12, 2015</li> <li>○ 4:30 PM</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>● <b>Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fort Mill Town Hall</li> <li>○ Mon. May 18, 2015</li> <li>○ 6:00 PM</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- **Town Council Meeting**
  - Fort Mill Town Hall
  - Mon. May 25, 2015
  - 7:00 AM

- **Planning Commission Meeting**
  - Fort Mill Town Hall
  - Tue. May 26, 2015
  - 7:00 PM

All meetings are open to the public. Please visit [www.fortmillsc.gov](http://www.fortmillsc.gov) for meeting updates and agendas.

## Did you know?

### National Planning Conference

The American Planning Association’s (APA) National Planning Conference took place April 18<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup> in Seattle, WA. Along with Brenda Kelley of Hartsville, SC, Fort Mill Planning Director Joe Cronin was one of two National Conference Scholarship winners from the South Carolina Chapter of APA, and had an opportunity to attend the conference on behalf of the town. A summary of his experience was published in the spring edition of SCAPA’s *Palmetto Planner*.

### Reflections of an APA National Conference Scholarship Winner

Joe Cronin, Town of Fort Mill

As published in *The Palmetto Planner* (Vol 35, Issue II, Spring 2015)

I arrived in Seattle, WA, for the APA National Conference on Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>. After a five-hour long cross-country flight, my body told me it was midnight, but the clock said it was only 9:00 pm. This was the start of my adventure in the Pacific Time Zone.

On Saturday morning I awoke at 4:15 am. Unable to fall back asleep – I was literally Sleepless in Seattle – I decided to download and explore the APA conference app on my iPhone. Using the app, I was able to research the more than 400 available sessions and activities. I was also able to build a customized itinerary, which was very convenient for the duration of the conference. Later that morning, I made the half-mile walk from my hotel to the conference venue, the Washington State Convention Center. It had been a while since I had stayed in a large city, and I had forgotten how much I enjoyed having so many establishments and attractions within walking distance. Spending five days in Seattle without a car, I knew I would be doing a lot of walking.

I attended three sessions on Saturday. The first was called “Deep Dive: The Future of Zoning” a nearly three-hour long session dedicated to discussing national trends in the areas of zoning and development. As the Planning Director for the Town of Fort Mill, this session was probably the one I was most looking forward to. In January of this year, the town initiated a comprehensive re-write of our zoning and development ordinances, the first such update in nearly 25 years. One of the items that stuck out from this session was a comparison between traditional zoning codes and a camera. Both were popularized in the early 1900’s, yet while the camera shrunk in size, became more affordable, was later digitized, and can now be found on just about every cell phone, we are essentially using the same zoning tools and concepts that were established nearly a century ago. There were several takeaways from this session. First was the idea that we, as planners,



have a tendency to make our codes overly complex. Instead, our codes should be simple, flexible, and focus on the things we truly want to regulate. In addition, zoning should be viewed as a means to an end; our desired outcome should not be a better zoning ordinance, but a better city. The other sessions I attended on Saturday, “Effectively Translating Master Plans into Zoning” and “How to Grow Without Going Broke,” were both relevant topics for a rapidly growing community like Fort Mill.



On Sunday, I was once again up before sunrise, though this time it was closer to 5:00 am. My Sunday itinerary was jam packed with a total of five sessions. The first session I attended was called “Economic Development and the Value of Place,” which focused on the influence that a community’s quality-of-life and available housing stock have on economic development efforts. The next session, “Leaving Behind 1950’s Housing Codes,” was a surprisingly interesting discussion about changing demographics and housing trends. In this session, we heard from Eli Spevak, a developer of affordable, community-oriented housing in Portland, OR, about new concepts such as micro-housing, accessory dwelling units, and

cottage clusters. Next, I attended a standing-room only session called “Planning Retail that Can Really Happen,” where we heard from a number of developers and site selection specialists who stressed the importance of a strong customer base, favorable demographics, and a thorough market analysis. In short, a community cannot force, or even incentivize, retail into a place where it won’t succeed in the long term. I then attended a session called “Sustaining Community Character through Collaborative Planning.” This session reviewed an award-winning effort between Newton County, GA, and each of its municipalities, to develop a county-wide master plan in response to development pressures from an ever-expanding Atlanta metro region. Given the growth pressures we see from Charlotte, this session illustrated how Fort Mill planners and elected officials can work more closely with our neighbors in Tega Cay, Rock Hill and York and Lancaster Counties to develop a common vision for future growth in our area. The last session I attended on Sunday was “Talking About Density in Public.” This session included an interactive discussion about how to frame the benefits of density, particularly in relation to transportation options and economic development. On Sunday night, I went to dinner with a couple colleagues, Diane Dil, a fellow Planner with York County, and Robby Moody, Senior Planner with the Catawba Regional COG in Rock Hill. Though we have been working together for years, this was the first time we had ever gotten together outside of work. The fact that it was Restaurant Week in Seattle was an added bonus.

Monday was another busy day in Seattle. This time I made it to almost 6:00 am; I was slowly adjusting! The day started with a great session called “Creating a New Community Business Model,” which focused on how three Washington communities – Kitsap County, Bothell, and Spokane – utilized proactive planning measures to promote infill development and revitalize their downtown areas. A session moderated by representatives from AARP called “Measuring Great Neighborhoods for All Ages,” introduced a new tool called the “Livability Index.” The Index was the AARP’s first effort to comprehensively evaluate and rank communities across the country based on factors that are important to senior citizens, such as access to health care, community engagement, economic opportunities, housing, quality neighborhoods, transportation options, and the environment. A session called “Tactics for Rebuilding Downtown Districts” explored a variety of redevelopment efforts in Portland, OR, Denver, CO, and San Francisco, CA. The last session of the day, “TOD Goes Suburban,” provided examples of how rapidly growing suburban communities around Dallas-Fort Worth,

TX, Denver, CO, and Hartford, CT, planned for, funded, and implemented a variety of transit-oriented development projects in an effort to promote transportation alternatives.

Following the last conference session on Monday night, I attended a reception hosted by Stantec, the consulting firm which had completed Fort Mill's development impact fee study earlier this year. There, I met and had a great conversation with a fellow planner from Loudon County, VA. Afterwards, I walked over to a reception for conference attendees from the southeastern states of Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. At this reception, I met folks from all four states, including Carol Coleman, Deputy Planning Director for Horry County, SC (who I had never met before) and a young graduate student from Florida State University named Cassidy Mutnansky, who is currently serving as a Community Planning Intern with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Following the reception, I made my way down to the Public Market with Steve Allen, Planning Manager with York County. After some searching, we ended up stumbling upon a restaurant with no sign, only a pink door. When Steve told the hostess that they should put a sign out front, she shot back "Ya think? We've been here 34 years!" Unbeknownst to us, the restaurant was a Seattle landmark, aptly named "The Pink Door."



Tuesday was the final day of the conference. The day started with an interactive seminar called "Placemaking in Small Towns." I was seated at a table with a diverse group of planners from Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, Oregon, Texas, Wisconsin and Wyoming, each of whom shared stories about their respective communities. In this session, I met Patrick Howard, the Planning Director for the city of San Angelo, TX. Patrick was a native of Berkeley County, SC, and a graduate of Clemson University, but I didn't hold that against him. In fact, we have communicated several times via email since returning from the conference. The second session I attended was called "Trends in Regional and State Planning," which focused on coordination at the state, regional, county and municipal level. Later that morning, I attended what, in my opinion, was the most beneficial session of the entire conference. This session, called "Fixing the PUD Problem," explored how three Colorado cities – Denver, Centennial and Lakewood – amended their zoning ordinances to create more by-right flexibility, and ultimately, reduced or eliminated the need for complex, time-consuming, and administratively challenging PUD's. The final session of the conference featured a closing keynote address

from author Stewart Brand. The presentation, entitled "Natural Infrastructure and Formerly Extinct Wildlife," explored topics such as bio-engineering and the "de-extinction" of species such as the passenger pigeon and the woolly mammoth. I wasn't quite sure how it applied to planning, but I suppose it is interesting to know that the technology may exist to bring these species back from extinction.



After the last conference session on Tuesday afternoon, I had a little free time and decided to venture out and explore the city. It was really the first chance I had to do so during daylight hours. I went back to the Public Market, visited the original Starbucks, and got my first view of Puget Sound. I walked through some mixed use residential neighborhoods near the waterfront, and visited the Space Needle for the very first time. Never one to pass up an opportunity to watch a sporting event, I also made my way down to Safeco Field on Tuesday night to watch the Seattle Mariners take on the Houston Astros. Despite the city's reputation, this was the only day it rained while I was in Seattle. Thankfully, the stadium had a retractable roof.

Seattle is a city with more than 650,000 residents, yet one of the things I found most surprising while walking around the city was the absence of traffic congestion in the downtown area. But the planner in me noticed more than a dozen different transportation options serving the Seattle region, including: private passenger vehicles, car-share, taxis, Uber, bicycles, bike-share, wide sidewalks for pedestrians, light rail, monorail, streetcars, ferries, a heavily used bus system, and of course, an airport. For a low-density suburban community such as Fort Mill, much can be learned about moving people efficiently from a city like Seattle.

On Wednesday morning I awoke only five minutes before my alarm was set to go off. It took five days, but I was finally accustomed to Pacific Time! Sadly, my celebration was short lived. After a quick ride on the light rail back to the airport, I boarded my plane and made the five-hour flight back to Charlotte.



In closing, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to SCAPA, as well as my employer, the Town of Fort Mill, for providing me with this tremendous opportunity. The APA Conference in Seattle was my first National Planning Conference, and I learned and experienced more than I ever could have imagined. I learned a great deal, not only from the conference sessions I attended, but also from the people I met, and the experiences I had while exploring the city. I returned to Fort Mill with new ideas and a renewed commitment to making my community a better, and more sustainable, place in which to live, work, learn and play. I look forward to hitting the ground running... just as soon as I readjust to East Coast Time.

## Contact Us

The Fort Mill Planning Department enforces the town's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other land development codes; provides staff support to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and Historic Review Board; and handles long-term planning and growth related issues for the Town. Please feel free to contact our office if you need assistance with the following:

- Annexations
- Rezoning

- New residential and commercial construction
- Starting a new business or home occupation
- Accessory uses, such as fences, pools, decks, sheds, etc.
- Sign permits
- Subdivisions and recombinations
- Historic/architectural review
- Interpretation of zoning ordinances
- Zoning confirmation
- Town maps and planning documents
- General land use and development questions

*Joe Cronin*

Planning Director

Town of Fort Mill

Phone: (803) 547-2116

Fax: (803) 547-2126

Email: [jcronin@fortmillsc.gov](mailto:jcronin@fortmillsc.gov)

[Click here to visit the Planning Department Website](#)