

MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
FORT MILL SOUTHERN BYPASS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
August 8, 2013
112 Confederate Street
7:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Chairman Tom Adams, Chris Wolfe, John Garver, Don Elliott, Chris Barton, Donna Sigman, James Traynor

Advisory Members Present: Joe Cronin, Paul Mitchell, Steve Allen

Others Present: Marty Taylor (Building Inspector)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Traynor made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2013, meeting as submitted by staff. Mr. Garver seconded the motion. Chairman Adams called for a vote, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. Corridor District Boundaries:** The consensus of the committee was to extend the western boundary of the corridor district from its current terminus at Fort Mill Parkway & Spratt Street to the I-77 interchange at Sutton Road. The committee also recommended including the new 5-lane section of U.S. 21 between Catawba River & Sutton Road in the corridor district. While much of this area is in the county, there are major development opportunities, which will most likely take place in the town limits. The committee agreed with the northeastern boundary at Tom Hall Street / Springfield Parkway.

In regards to the applicability of the overlay district to specific properties along the corridor, there was no consensus from committee. Four options were discussed: fixed distance from right-of-way or centerline; access to/from the bypass (direct or indirect); roadway frontage; and visibility from the bypass. The committee asked staff and the consultant to bring back recommendations at the next meeting. If using a standard distance, the committee recommended an exclusion or exemption for residential lots not directly accessible from the bypass. Because some portions of the corridor are in the county, the committee also recommended including a provision that the overlay district will automatically apply to all eligible unincorporated parcels upon annexation.

2. **Character Areas:** The committee agreed with the general boundaries of the four character areas (A-D) on the map prepared by Land Design. The committee recommended that the Sutton Road area (between I-77 and U.S. 21) and the U.S. 21 area (between the Catawba River and Sutton Road) should be designated as a Character Type A. The committee also agreed with the general development types and use mixes presented for the four character areas. The consensus of the committee was that sub-areas and/or sub-districts were not necessary.

3. **Visual Preferences & Development Standards:**

A. **Uses:** The committee agreed that the overlay language should focus more so on design elements and less on actual uses. A few specific uses were mentioned as possible exclusions from the overlay. These included:

- Pawn shops, title lenders, check cashing establishments
- Sexually oriented businesses
- Gaming facilities / bingo parlors
- Junkyards, salvage yards, auto wrecker service
- Cellular towers
- Mobile homes
- Industrial/manufacturing uses (in certain character areas)

B. **Building Setbacks:** There was no consensus on setbacks. There were discussions about requiring buildings to be located farther away from the ROW, as well as allowing them to be drawn closer to the street. The consensus was that the committee doesn't want them to be too close so as to look awkward, or too far away to limit pedestrian access, but we would like to see consistency along the corridor.

C. **Parking Locations:** There was a general preference for side and rear parking for commercial uses; however, the committee believed that front parking should be allowed in instances where heavy landscaping and buffers are installed to shield the visibility of parking areas.

D. **Parking Lot Screening:** Heavy landscaping and buffers should be required. See above.

E. **Parking Lot Landscaping:** The committee recommended reviewing the existing landscape ordinance to determine if existing requirements are sufficient for future growth along the corridor.

F. **Connections Between Parking Lots:** The committee stated a goal of reducing the number of driveways and access points along the corridor. Internal connections and/or stub outs should be required for locations where existing/future connectivity is likely.

G. **Driveways on Corridor:** The committee agreed that one of the major goals of the district should be to limit driveways and access points along the corridor in order to maintain the flow of traffic. SCDOT typically applies minimum separation guidelines

as required by the state. The committee stated that we should consider the feasibility of minimum distance requirements that are more restrictive than what SCDOT requires if it helps achieve this objective. Minimizing stoplights was also mentioned as a goal.

- H. Landscape & Streetscape Elements:** The committee recommended that street trees and landscaping should be included in the sidewalk/buffer area along the ROW. Lighting should be required, and consistent fixtures should be used along the corridor. Rest areas, benches and pocket parks should be encouraged along the corridor. Mr. Wolfe recommended Dave Lyle Boulevard in Rock Hill as a possible model.
- I. Building Height Restrictions:** The committee did not recommend any special limits on building height. Building height shall be consistent with underlying zoning requirements. We may want to consider having building height minimums, such as false second stories for commercial buildings, to ensure a proper and consistent scale along the corridor.
- J. Architectural Features & Façade Treatments:** The committee recommended that buildings should include enhanced architectural elements, such as variations in roof lines and front elevations, real or faux windows, particularly along walls visible from a ROW, decorative awnings, etc. The overlay should not require a specific type of roof styles. Areas facing a ROW should look like the front of a building, even if primary entrances will be located at the side or rear.
- K. Building Orientation:** The committee recommended that buildings should be typically oriented toward the street, with a pedestrian-friendly façade. Primary entrances will be from typical parking areas. Access from the ROW should be encouraged, where feasible, depending on the use. May want to require that the backs of residences not be allowed along the corridor; houses should face the bypass, or be screened by berms or landscaping/buffers.
- L. Mixture of Uses:** The committee recommended that a mixture of uses should be encouraged where feasible, and as envisioned within the character areas.
- M. Building Materials:** The committee had a strong preference for enhanced architectural materials, including brick, stone and stucco for commercial and multi-family buildings (full wrap). Hardi plank was also mentioned as an acceptable material. There was no discussion of material requirements for single family development.
- N. Signage & Monumentation:** The consensus of the committee was that signage should be consistent along the corridor. There was a preference for brick and stone monument style signs, with decorative elements and indirect lighting. Signs should be fairly uniform in size; however, accommodations may be made for larger, unified developments.
- O. Sidewalks:** The committee recommended that sidewalks should be required along both sides of the road. There was a preference for meandering sidewalks in landscaped areas

set back from the right-of-way. Sidewalks should be wider than a typical subdivision or state road, perhaps 8' – 10'. Sidewalks should also stub out to neighboring properties where future development is likely.

P. Screening & Separation of Uses: There was a great deal of discussion regarding new commercial and multi-family residential development along the corridor, and the impact of these types of development on existing neighborhoods (particularly noise, traffic, loss of trees and natural buffers, etc). The general consensus was that the overlay should allow for the types and densities envisioned in the current comprehensive plan; however, there were concerns about the impact of commercial and high density residential on existing neighborhoods. Ms. Sigman stated her opinion that commercial development should be required to have heavy natural buffers next to existing residential areas, and new residential development should be consistent with the density and scale of existing neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods, like Dominion Bridge and Sandy Point, include perimeter buffers around the subdivision, while others, such as Whitegrove, have homes that extend straight up to neighboring property lines.

Q. Parking Waivers & Shared Parking: The committee recommended allowing additional flexibility for parking requirements, especially when shared parking opportunities exist.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Mr. Cronin stated that the consultant had begun working on draft language for a possible overlay district. The comments received from the public meeting on July 11th, as well as the direction received from the committee during tonight's meeting, will be incorporated into the first version. It is anticipated that the meeting dates scheduled for August 22nd, September 5th and September 25th would need to be pushed back a couple weeks. Mr. Cronin stated that he would get with the consultant and send an email to committee members with proposed dates.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Cronin
Planning Director