



Walton County Planning and Development Services

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Date: April 17, 2018
Prepared by: Kristen Shell, AICP
Subject: Meeting Minutes – 331 Economic Development Corridor Plan Meeting

Meeting Details:

Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018
Time: 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM
Location: Freeport Community Center

Meeting Summary:

Introduction of Project, and individuals present (see meeting sign in sheet).

Through a grant from the Department of Economic Opportunity, Walton County is conducting an Economic Development Study of the 331 Corridor. Due to the grant restrictions the timeline is very tight and must be complete by June 1. Walton County is partnering with Matrix Design Group, Inc. to complete the study.

Discussion of the main components of the Plan / project overview as follows:

- 1) Corridor Preservation – discussion of current FDOT access management requirement for the corridor. Staff will be researching these requirements and posting on the project website. Also discussed the need for additional standards during the development review process such as driveway separation, the need to provide for interconnection or shared access, as well as potential for internal service roads in larger developments etc.
- 2) Economic Development – discussion of fast track permitting and aesthetic considerations from Owl's Head south. Included in fast track permitting discussion was ways to potentially expedite the Future Land Use Map amendment process. Discussed the current County project to create zoning and the consolidation of categories on the proposed Future Land Use Map.
- 3) Land use - activity centers and basis for activity centers being the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Area modified to remove Egin Air Force Base property and conservation lands. Also discussed potential expansion of the TIF area and Activity Center South per the map that was distributed to meeting attendees.

Discussion of Comp Plan amendment process and content. It is anticipated that the required Plan amendment will include the U.S. 331 Economic Development Corridor Plan by reference into the Comprehensive Plan. This will create a tasking of staff towards implementation of the Plan. Additional public meetings will be required to further amend the Land Development Code and potentially the

Comprehensive Plan. The website was also introduced as a source of project information and important meeting dates and times. www.walton331corridor.com

Participants asked the following questions and responses where provided:

Bill Fletcher – Could expedited permitting be a model for the rest of the County. Response was potentially, though no plans are currently being proposed to implement any changes to the current review process anywhere else in the County.

Larry Jones, County Administrator, reiterated the importance of preserving capacity and mobility along the corridor.

Bob Campbell asked if Eglin had any interest in limiting density or population specifically related to the areas just south of DeFuniak Springs. A response was provided by Jack Kiger, Eglin Air Force Base Community Planner that basically there were no density limitations within the current Special Area Plan and that they would most likely have no issue with the Activity Center South as this was out of range of operations. Staff agreed to post the JLUS and SAP on the project website and described ongoing coordination with base staff.

Walton County Economic Development Alliance Director, Bill Imfield discussed sewer prioritization within the Triumph and Restore projects and Cliff Knauer with Dewberry provided an overview of the City of Freeports current grant applications and plans.

Local land owner and developers Albert Paris discussed demand and cited lack of sewer and delays/uncertainty of planning review process as major barriers to development along the corridor.

Kristen Shell discussed potential of aesthetic considerations for Owls Head south as economic development consideration.

County Commissioner Cecelia Jones indicated that sewer for the corridor was a top priority for the County and also indicated support for adequate planning staff in order to eliminate some of the delays.

Boots McCormick, Freeport City Councilman provided information regarding high volume of permitting seen by the City recently indicative of high demand for growth in the area.



SIGN IN SHEET - 4/17/2018

U.S. 331 Economic Development Corridor Plan Public Meeting / Work Group

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