



Coweta County Board of Commissioners

Work Session/Called Meeting

22 E Broad Street
Newnan, GA 30263
www.coweta.ga.us

Shannon Zerangue
770.254.2601

Friday, February 26, 2021

9:00 AM

Commission Chambers

~ Minutes ~

COWETA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Bob Blackburn	District 3 - Chairman	Present	
Tim Lassetter	District 2 - Vice Chairman	Present	
Paul Poole	District 1	Present	
John Reidelbach	District 4	Present	
Al Smith	District 5	Absent	
Michael Fouts	County Administrator	Present	
Eddie Whitlock	Associate Administrator	Present	
Kelly Mickle	Assistant Administrator	Present	
Jerry Ann Conner	Assistant County Attorney	Present	
Fran Collins	Deputy County Clerk	Present	

The Honorable Board of Commissioners of Coweta County, Georgia met in a Called Meeting/Work Session on Friday, February 26, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Statement from the Chairman

Chairman Blackburn explained that the purpose of the Work Session is to plan for the future of Coweta County regarding a balance between smart growth and rural integrity, and to look at enhanced zoning around the cities of Newnan and Senoia. Lastly, he explained that planning for future actions may not cease annexations, but will hopefully curtail them.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH STAFF

1. 8063 Discuss Land Development Guidance System, Phase 2

Administrator Fouts explained that approximately two (2) years ago the Board heard a rezoning petition for a residential subdivision. The surrounding community reacted unfavorably and asked for a discussion regarding rural integrity. The Board heard those comments and asked staff to schedule several public open house meetings in which input was garnered. Subsequently, staff developed a parcel-based development tool to present to the Board. The result is the Land Disturbance Guidance System (LDGS). The first phase of the LDGS was adopted in March 2020. Since then there has been a desire by the Board to look at additional density around some of the service centers to address annexations and additional growth. The topic for discussion today is considered Phase 2 of the LDGS and is the next step in the proposed text amendment heard in December 2020 to continue to develop a plan for Coweta's future growth.

Community Development Director Jon Amason expressed appreciation to the Board for allowing staff the opportunity to discuss and plan for higher density using the Plan Development Project (PDP) framework. He explained that since December 2020, staff has continued to work on the PDP process, developing a solution compatible with higher density residential and higher density mixed-use developments around service areas of the county. Staff is requesting guidance from the Board on the

context it can utilize for those higher density developments and whether or not developers must be proactively responsible in mitigating impacts to transportation, school, and Fire and Sheriff's Departments services. He explained that according to growth data from the State of Georgia, Coweta County's population grew 22% over the last ten (10) years and an additional 43% in population growth is expected by 2050.

He briefly reviewed the ongoing Comprehensive Planning efforts including land use analysis to identify areas that may be developed under the high-density options, developing land use and open space ratios for open space and common areas to offset the visual impact of higher density, setting of minimum development and maximum thresholds, running models using data from land use analyses, drafting ordinances and open space ratios, checklists to determine if an application is acceptable before being brought to the Board, staff worksheets with numerical quantification of the project information for easy interpretation by the Board, and conducting public input in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan public outreach in January or March 2021.

In response to a question from Commissioner Reidelbach, Administrator Fouts explained that during the rezoning process, Community Development Staff sends the proposed petition out to various departments for review, including the Fire and Sheriff's Departments for comments on associated impacts. He explained that part of the issue is that those petitions are addressed as a single threaded issue and do not address the overall impact of multiple petitions.

Mr. Amason explained that the Comprehensive Plan has moved into developing the draft growth strategy map. Staff has devised three (3) areas, a rural conservation area which will align with the lowest tier of the LDGS Phase 1, a growth maintenance area which will allow areas to remain close to same density as they already are, and a growth priority area which encircles the cities of Newnan and Senoia. The growth strategy map will continue to change as input is garnered from the public, Comprehensive Plan meetings, and the Board.

County Planner Jenny Runions briefly reviewed the PDP design process and Comprehensive Plan strategies behind the growth strategy map. First is the rural conservation area which contains the bulk of rural Coweta County, transportation is mostly two-lane roads, and has a very vocal group of residents that wish it to maintain its rural integrity. The strategy in this area is to conserve rural character by limiting new development in areas where it is not appropriate. Second is the growth maintenance area which over the past 20-30 years has experienced remarkable growth. Most of this growth has been around town centers and feels and looks suburban in character. The strategy in this area is to manage growth so that it does not outpace infrastructure. Lastly is the growth priority area which contains developed areas that could be redeveloped. The strategy within this area is to encourage some increased density near the town centers and where infrastructure is in place to handle the increase in traffic. She explained that the PDP process could provide developers with flexibility and innovation in design which could allow higher density through smaller lots, greater open space, common areas, common amenities and preservation areas, increased building height/floor area ratio, allow smaller residential structures than currently permitted, and create developments with more amenities and higher quality of design. She briefly highlighted the PDP application process including review and scoring by staff before the Board's final review and decision. She reviewed the proposed *Residential PDP (R-PDP)* and *Mixed-Use PDP (MU-PDP)* development types including options for location in a growth priority area, thresholds to be set during the planning process including distance to a major interchange, distance to a major employer, availability to sewer and water, and whether or not the project is located along an arterial corridor. The high-density PDP designations give staff the ability to

entertain flexible land development designs, give the Board the authority to require infrastructure improvements to help prevent existing residents from having to pay for new development, and help unincorporated properties to be able to develop while mitigating adverse impacts. In closing, she reviewed visual examples of traditional, suburban, and urban neighborhood designs and discussed scenarios of what could be implemented in units per acre and minimum lot size.

In response to a question from Commissioner Reidelbach, Administrator Fouts explained that the development on Poplar Road is being developed under regulations for *New Community (NC)* zoning, which is no longer an available zoning category.

Community Development Director Amason requested direction from the Board regarding specific thresholds and limitations on lot size in the growth priority areas.

Commissioner Poole expressed concerns with allowing seven (7) units/acre and existing problems with traffic in his district. He expressed support for mandating useful greenspace in developments, explained that the highest potential for growth is in his district, and stated that the smaller municipalities want to grow.

Commissioner Reidelbach expressed concerns with maintaining rural integrity in his district, with allowing seven (7) units/acre, with timing of lights on SR 34 from Sullivan Road to I-85 and explained that the Board may have to compromise.

Commissioner Lassetter reminded the Board that infrastructure improvements can be required in Development Agreements or zoning conditions, that if a portion of a property is not useable it is a developers or individuals decision whether or not to buy it, and last year the Board passed the most difficult zoning ever to try to enhance and maintain rural integrity (LDGS). Growth is coming and the County can't "shut the gate". It is up to the Board to decide where growth will be allowed, what density it will allow, and how to differentiate the highest, and next highest use from what is already allowed. He expressed appreciation to Mr. Rosenzweig and staff for their innovative and creative plans but explained that he does not want existing elderly citizens to pay for transportation improvements they may never get to enjoy. He further explained that it is up to the Board to do their best to proceed with a plan to help alleviate some of the transportation issues high density zoning could bring and expressed his support for the point system as developed by staff. It is key for the Board to decide how many units/acres is allowed and, in the end, provide staff with thresholds that the Board thinks are reasonable, encourages developers not to annex, and gives the Board better determination in transportation improvements.

Commissioner Reidelbach expressed support for 3-4 units/per acre but explained that only changes to existing state law can stop annexations.

Public Works Director Tod Handley pointed out that a traffic study for one development does not consider the cumulative effect of all developments in an area.

Administrator Fouts explained that even an urban growth boundary will not prevent high-density zoning from perpetuating over to the next parcel and that not all annexations will cease. There are multiple factors to consider, including making developers pay for transportation impacts. There are currently no dedicated funding sources to pay for transportation impacts from those higher density developments and no opportunity to mandate zoning conditions. He asked if the Board would want to align the Comprehensive Plan with the growth strategy as the tool that develops the next phase and utilize the PDP concept in terms of bringing forth projects to the Board instead of by right. The issue does not have to be resolved today, but staff needs some options to take to the public for their input, and then be presented to the Board after the Comprehensive Plan meetings have been completed. However, in order for staff to proceed with the PDP process, they need guidance from the Board regarding the number of lots per acre, minimum lot

size on the residential zoning, some basic criteria for the proposed mixed-use (distance from interstate, etc.) and what those potential densities can be. He pointed out that the *Residential Retirement Care Community (RRCC)* zoning district allows up to twelve (12) units/acre and may be utilized as a starting point for the mixed-use zoning discussion.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to allow 3.5 units per acre in the growth priority areas for the high-density *Residential PDP (R-PDP)* zoning district with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. Further, the lot is required to be adjacent to a municipality, and all transportation requirements shall be funded by the developer. In the high-density *Mixed-Use PDP (MU-PDP)* zoning district, the property must be located within a mile from an interchange and a major employer, and the location has to have public water and sewer availability.

County Planner Runions reviewed the next steps in the process, including coordination with the Comprehensive Plan, garnering input from the public at open house meetings and from surveys regarding the growth strategy map, Comprehensive Plan, and Comprehensive Transportation Plan, gathering input from a Land Use Workshop (March 30, 2021), collating data, utilizing thresholds provided by the Board, and presenting information to the Board for their review and consideration at a future meeting.

Commissioner Lassetter explained that staff can send information to the Board for review as the process proceeds so that issues can be resolved as quickly as possible.

Administrator Fouts returned to the discussion regarding transportation impacts and reminded the Board that the Impact Fee Ordinance had been eliminated. He explained that if the Board should be interested in reinstating the Impact Fee Ordinance, a consultant would need to be engaged.

In response to a question from Commissioner Reidelbach, Administrator Fouts explained that upon completion of a study, methodology and law will guide staff. He reminded the Board that under the current *Rural Conservation (RC)* zoning, the developer does not have to come before Board, and asked that the Board allow staff to look at impacts for zoning under the current *Rural Conservation (RC)* zoning district.

Assistant County Attorney Jerry Ann Conner explained that an impact fee as described will have to be reviewed under the guidelines provided in State Law.

RESULT: ACCOMPLISHED
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2. 8082 Discuss Capital Needs Assessment

Administrator Fouts explained that staff began a Capital Needs Assessment project in 2013 to identify space utilization in the County's facilities. Department Directors and Elected Officials went through the process internally, and the documents they submitted formed the basis of the project. In 2020 staff requested updated information. Administration staff with assistance from Public Works Director Tod Handley and Facilities Director Mike Johnson have reviewed the data received and have projected the following facility needs for the next 0-5 years:

- Administrator Fouts explained that the current airport terminal (FBO) at the Newnan-Coweta County Airport was built in the 1960s. Over the years, it has had some cosmetic upgrades and has been maintained as best as possible. Following installation of an Instrument Landing System (ILS), the required horizontal and vertical setbacks (Primary Service Area) from the runway were affected. These changes resulted in the FBO being in violation of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety guidelines. As funding becomes available, the Airport would like for

this issue to be resolved. In 2020, Airport engineering firm Lead Edge Design and Principal Architect Joseph Gardner began a needs assessment for the Airport Authority, which is nearing completion. Challenges have been identified in meeting the new requirements and existing topography on the current side (west) of the runway. A proposal is forthcoming to the Airport Authority for the potential construction of a new FBO on the east side of the runway. Along with a new FBO, some infrastructure improvements will be necessary to allow the airfield to accommodate additional corporate traffic. The projected cost of the new FBO and infrastructure improvements is approximately \$15,000,000 for both and is subject to change based upon the different scenarios being considered. The Airport Authority will consider the future direction of the airfield and will make their final recommendation to the Board of Commissioners at a future meeting. The scope of the project will be based on projected revenue from additional rental facilities, fuel sales, and real/personal property.

- Administrator Fouts explained that the Animal Services building at the Correctional Institute (CI) has been operating for a number of years with a few improvements for intakes and adoptions. Population growth is outpacing the facility. The facility also handles animals from the City of Newnan through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). Staff is proposing construction of a new facility or locating a building in a commercial area to house an adoption center which could be funded through public/private partnership with intakes remaining at the Animal Services building at the CI.
- Administrator Fouts explained that the Justice Center Complex and juvenile facility were built in 2006 and have expanded with courtrooms being finished and some interior space being repurposed. The majority of which is still functional. The judicial support agencies, including Accountability Courts, Adult Probation, and Superior Court and State Court Public Defenders are located in separate buildings and need to be adjacent to the Justice Center. Staff needs to explore potential real estate options in the area for construction of a facility to support them in one combined effort with proximity to the Justice Center to support foot traffic.

Associate Administrator Whitlock explained that planning for the Justice Center began in 1999, it was constructed in 2006, and was designed to accommodate needs through 2025. The Superior Court and State Court areas have expanded to include vacant courtrooms. Staff is currently working to make modifications to agency space in State Court to facilitate Probation Services, and both courtrooms in Magistrate Court are fully operational. There is a spare courtroom in the juvenile building that has not been built out at this time. Functionality should last easily through 2025 with the need of additional courtrooms in the future.

- Administrator Fouts explained that Probate Judge Carrie Markham has expressed interest in expanding into space currently utilized by the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB). In conjunction with the new tourism group, staff needs explore where to house the CVB.
- Administrator Fouts explained that the Development Authority is currently renting space in Newnan at the old Wadsworth Auditorium because their former space is being utilized by the Recreation Department and Events Services. Their desire is to find a permanent office space, and they are looking around the downtown area because it shows well in terms of potential visitors to the area.
- Administrator Fouts explained that the Fire Rescue Department is facing challenges with EMS and its demand on the Department. Chief Wilson and staff have communicated the need for an EMS facility to be located within the city limits of Newnan so that medic units are not pulled from different stations during the day, reducing wear and tear on staff and increasing response times. In 2020 during the pandemic, a unit was temporarily housed in one of Newnan's stations, but they are

not set up to handle ambulances and there are supervisory challenges with housing two agencies. Likely, an existing facility would be utilized as a dayroom with staff returning to a station at night to bunk.

- Administrator Fouts explained that Fire Station # 10 in Senoia does not have a ladder truck and the City of Senoia recently approved construction of four (4) story buildings. Fire Station # 5 on Smokey Road serves its purpose, but it is an older facility that may be co-located at a public safety training facility in the future, and in the long-term station # 12 would need to be relocated.
- Administrator Fouts explained that a Public Safety Training facility is needed for 911/Fire/Sheriff Departments. Currently, the Fire Department utilizes the City of Newnan's facility on Greison Trail. Newnan has approved preliminary plans to renovate that facility. Long term, staff does not believe that facility can accommodate the County's needs. Staff is looking at a site near the landfill for a multi-phase project.
- Administrator Fouts explained that the Environmental Management Division of Public Works operates a compactor site program for a number of years. Existing sites have small buildings that need external and internal work. In addition, several of the sites are inadequate based on current usage and are difficult to keep clean. If the Board wishes to maintain the program, direction is needed as to any significant changes the Board would like to see. Or, staff can revisit the program and try to relocate the sites in a more central location in the County.
- Administrator Fouts explained that the most pressing need today is the Jail Expansion project for the Sheriff's Office. Luckily the number of inmates decreased in 2020 because of the pandemic, but the biggest issue is segregation of inmates and addressing the mental/behavioral health aspects.

Administrator Fouts further explained that the previous Sheriff requested a Patrol Expansion project to be included at the facility. At the time, it was a \$750,000 SPLOST funded expansion. The cost of materials and labor has increased since that time to approximately \$1.2 to \$1.3 million for construction. Partial funding is available, but the Board would have to decide how to fund the balance of the project. Sheriff Wood has asked for staff to push this project forward for consideration.

- Lastly, Administrator Fouts explained that over the years many renovations have taken place at the Administration Building. Two predominate needs that impact the facility are Election and Registration and the Tag and Tax Offices for the Tax Commissioner.
 - Election and Registration needs additional space for new equipment mandated by the State. They are currently utilizing approximately 8,000 sq. ft. of space at the Administration building and the former Building Inspection facility. This space isn't conducive to efficient operations and a more compact space is needed. From an operations perspective, frequent testing of machines requires them to be unloaded from the carts and rolled out of the space they are housed in and restricts what needs to be done.
 - Growth in the County is directly related to more cars and tags. Tax Commissioner Robi Brook has requested that staff look at a satellite location for operations. In addition, Ms. Brook is looking to install a tag renewal kiosk in a local Kroger location.
 - In relation to these two issues, Administrator Fouts explained that the County's primary operations are located west of I-85 but most of the population density is located on the east side of I-85. There is an opportunity to establish an annex on the east side of I-85 to house most of these functions in an efficient manner.

- The next phase would be to look at challenges facing administrative functions in the Administration Building. Providing new space at another location for Election and Registration and Tag and Tax functions will give staff an opportunity to look at future use of the Administration Building for expansion. The most immediate need is to demolish the old Transportation and Engineering building. The City of Newnan has an ongoing project across the street (formerly Caldwell tanks) and is currently performing master planning of the site. This will allow staff some time to determine future use of this block in conjunction with their plans.

Commissioner Poole expressed appreciation to all those that volunteered during the recent election.

Administrator Fouts reiterated that this is just a projection for the next 0-5 years and staff will begin to address projected costs and funding sources for these projects.

RESULT:	ACCOMPLISHED
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ADJOURNMENT