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## **VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**7:00PM MAY 14, 2008**  
**WWW.WESLEYCHAPELNC.COM**

The Master Plan Committee of the Village of Wesley Chapel, North Carolina met at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, 120 Potter Road South, Wesley Chapel, North Carolina, with Chairman Mangano presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Mangano, Ashleigh Mock, Elisa Gregorich, Elaine Rosoff, Dick Raby, Brenda Cherry

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike de Julien

OTHERS PRESENT: Justin Krieg, Sandra Grzemski, Mayor Tracey Clinton, Rick Croffut, Brad Horvath, Andy Mock, Philip Holleran

VISITORS: Mark Dibagio, Carol Mullis, Becky Plyler, Chuck Adams, Gayla Adams, Ray Davis, Pat Stitt, Horace Deese, Jim Harter, Julie Brown, Wanda Crater

TIME CONVENED: Chris Mangano called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. A quorum was present.

### 1. WELCOME

Chris Mangano welcomed the attendees to the final presentation of the Master Plan Committee. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their foresight to form the committee and their support throughout the process. He also thanked the committee members and stakeholders for their hard work on the Master Plan. Chris Mangano advised that notepads and pens are available to take notes or write down questions for after the presentation.

This all started in the summer of 2006 when Mayor Clinton sought to form several committees in the Village. The Master Plan Committee met in October 2006 for their first meeting and discussed what issues Wesley Chapel faces in a fast growing area. Chris Mangano thanked Justin Krieg for his pivotal role of introducing the Master Plan Committee to the professors of the Town Planning class at the UNC Charlotte. The Master Plan Committee reviewed the Mineral Springs and the Indian Trail Master Plan projects. The group decided what was important to include in Wesley Chapel's Master Plan. A written survey was administered with an astonishing rate of return, then the visual survey. Several conflicting views became apparent quickly. Feedback sessions, a field trip to surrounding communities and several analyses took place. Now tonight, the final 2030 Vision Master Plan report will be presented. Hard copies are available to the Council, Committee members and stakeholders; soft copies are available for all others and a master hard copy will be

## APPROVED

kept at the town hall. Chris Mangano thanked the UNC Charlotte Planning class, including Professor Chilton and Walters and several key graduate students.

Chris Mangano mentioned the 5 R's borrowed from Mike de Julien which include

- ❖ requirements (what we want to see in this community),
- ❖ retrofit (we are already a community in process),
- ❖ recommendations (the final report based on surveys and analysis),
- ❖ reading (we want you to go home and read the full final report), and
- ❖ responding (get involved, asked questions).

## 2. MASTER PLAN SUMMARY PRESENTATION

Sandra Grzemeski introduced herself as the project manager and said that she was very excited to see a community take such an active interest in planning. According to Village projections, the population is expected to double by 2030. How do you respond to the growth? The survey showed a strong desire to preserve rural character and the strong preference for 1-acre zoning, which actually conflict.

Sandra Grzemeski advised that Philip Hollern, who is here to respond to questions, did a land capacity analysis to study this conflict. While keeping the overall gross zoning density of one home per acre in new "rural" development, there is a better way of designing subdivisions that preserves environmental heritage and better protects water quality. Three maps were shown to demonstrate the conflict. With a mix of development types and lot sizes, 1,710 acres could be preserved as open space when compared to the same amount of growth administered by universal 1-home per acre zoning rules.

The next issue presented was traffic congestion. A considerable part of this congestion is caused by disconnected subdivisions that force everybody to use a few local roads for every trip and because a large majority of citizens commute. The only ways to minimize congestion are to disperse traffic by increasing connectivity to provide more choices of routes and provide better facilities for walking and cycling as alternatives to driving.

Sandra Grzemeski explained the housing and the Village center conflicts. The survey conveyed that many people prefer large homes on 1-acre lots, but over 60% want there to be a range of house prices for different stages of life and over 60% want a range of housing styles, densities and designs. 53% of respondents don't want new commercial development but 69% approve of commercial development that mixes retail with offices and housing 63% of respondents think identifying a town center is important.

The final issue was the planning and zoning. The current zoning and subdivision regulations are not well suited to managing future growth or navigating the various

## APPROVED

contradictions in community attitudes. A serious rewriting of all regulations should take place as a matter of urgency.

Due to these conflicts, they created the recommendations for Wesley Chapel's Master Plan that included objectives, main strategies, transportation, urban design and village character and planning and zoning. Objectives of the Master Plan included resolving some of the contradictions from the surveys, capitalize on the best planning, design and environmental practices elsewhere in the USA, pay attention to regional demographic and development trends, create a framework for future growth as property owners exercise their property rights, balance these rights with long-term community goals and sustainable environmental design to promote clean water and air. Main strategies include setting high standards for future design of low-density residential development, keeping a strong accent on landscape conservation in the design of new developments in outlying areas to maintain a rural atmosphere and create a true "heart of the community" by developing, over time, an upgraded Village Center on the model of the traditional American small town with a variety of housing, offices and shops.

Andy Mock explained the transportation recommendations. Two keys to reducing congestion in Wesley Chapel include improving connectivity and creating alternative routes through and around the Village by a new "parkway" system using existing roads. Connectivity can be improved by creating a more effective web of local routes, increasing connectivity in new subdivisions and increasing linkages for pedestrians / cyclists through existing subdivisions by inserting and retrofitting greenways and pedestrian paths. An important element of the proposed transportation strategy is the parkway, an upgraded box of streets around the Village, which can disperse local and through traffic away from the main intersection of Weddington and Waxhaw/Indian Trail Roads. This will allow this intersection at the heart of the community to remain compatible with pedestrian scale and safety.

Sandra Grzemski then explained their recommendations regarding urban design and the Village center. They recommend creating a greater intensity of use to make the Village Center a real social, economic and cultural focus for the community. The large tracts behind the existing commercial areas can be developed with mixed-uses at a small town scale. Housing of various types and small scale offices and live/work units sit close by the stores in walkable neighborhoods. These developments include two new connecting Avenues as part of the transportation plan and built by the developers. The rural character can be achieved in the outer Village with low-density, single family residential. Different types of residential layout with higher design standards can be used to pay attention to the preservation of existing landscapes and rural character. The primary recommendation is the conservation subdivisions where density is equivalent to 1 dwelling per acre, but the compact arrangements leave about 50% of the site as permanently preserved open

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space. Lower density options for niche markets include large-lot ranchette subdivisions and very low density farmhouse clusters.

Sandra Grzemeski advised that Wesley Chapel's current regulations do not give the Village the proper tools to manage new development in ways that match community priorities. The master plan recommends a major, urgent overhaul of the zoning and subdivision regulations using form-based codes. They are used by several NC communities; such codes provide much more responsive tools to manage development. Form-based codes focus first on the form and character of the development, and second on the appropriate uses.

Next steps include consideration of the full master plan by the Village council. The two most urgent suggestions are to create a conservation subdivision ordinance to cover all outlying land in the Village at a gross density of 1 dwelling per acre that requires the permanent dedication of preserved open space and to create a Village Center Overlay Zone for properties around the intersection of Weddington and Waxhaw/Indian Trail Roads that allows a mix of uses and residential types / lot sizes and provides high design standards.

### 3. QUESTIONS

Wanda Crater wanted a definition of undevelopable land. Philip Hollern responded that undevelopable is any subdivision, any land that is currently in use by civic organizations, or land within 100 feet of flood plain. Wanda Crater then asked about funding for the parkway. Andy Mock advised that many of these roads are through open areas, so as developers are improving this land, the Village would require them to do make the road improvements as well. Also, when the county or state comes to the Village regarding road improvements, the Village will be prepared to request specific improvements. The group discussed different funding options for transportation. Andy Mock further explained that having a transportation plan in place will impede incompatible development to happen on particular roads. The group discussed the impact on property taxes. Chris Mangano responded that the charge to the community, as council forms committees, is to implement this plan. Dick Raby responded that a good blend of commercial and light industrial should be used to grow revenue; it should not be all residentially developed or we will have too much consumption and not enough revenue to develop this plan. Philip Hollern discussed the idea of light industrial and where it would work in Wesley Chapel. The group discussed how the Village is working with the county, as they just presented a master plan recently. Mayor Clinton said that the Village is trying to work with the county and that the towns should be involved up front and not after the fact. The towns will be meeting with the county committee next Tuesday. The public is invited to this meeting, which is 5pm, May 20 at Weddington High School's Media Center. This will be an interactive meeting to harmonize master plans from the towns into Union County. Chuck

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Adams asked how the population increase was determined. Sandra Grzemeski responded the Village provided that number; Justin Krieg advised that population projections for Union County were used (linc.org). Chuck Adams asked if we can stipulate how many people move into Wesley Chapel. The group discussed the pros and cons of this strategy. Wanda Crater asked about the term retrofit. Chris Mangano advised that some residents have lived here all their lives, the Village has been in existence since 1998, and for instance his subdivision was built in 2005. He now realizes that his subdivision is one of the connectivity issues, with one way in and one way out. This problem can not be fixed, which is why he used the word retrofit.

Mayor Tracey Clinton expressed a great appreciation to everyone involved in the Master Plan process and that it is a plan taking into account the wants of the current residents. The plan will now be vetted in the community, communication and education regarding the plan needs to occur. Committees will be formed in order to adopt for instance a transportation plan, a greenway plan and so forth. Perhaps one of Wesley Chapel's newsletters could be dedicated to summarizing the master plan. Brad Horvath mentioned that the next few months will be very involved to refine and implement the plan.

#### 4. OTHER BUSINESS

#### 5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Brenda Cherry and seconded by Elisa Gregorich.  
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ashleigh Mock

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Chris Mangano