

Cashiers Area Community Planning Council

Special Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2023
5:00 p.m.
Albert Carlton Community Library, Community Room

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
Daniel Fletcher		X	Sonia Morales		X	Dr. Douglas Homolka		X
David Bond	X		Carole Stork	X		Judy Zachary	X	
Glenn Ubertino	X							

Staff Present

Michael Poston- Planning Director
John Jeleniewski- Senior Planner
Anna Harkins- Planner I
Allison Kelley- Administrative Assistant III

Others Present

Chad Meadows, CodeWright

Call to Order

Chairman Glenn Ubertino called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. and a quorum was present.

Additions to/Approval of the Agenda

David Bond made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Carole Stork seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

New Business

a) Presentation Cashiers ordinance recodification process: Chad Meadows, CodeWright

Mr. Poston stated this process is a culmination of three years of work through both the Cashiers Small Area Plan and ULI Study processes that identified areas that we need to look at as a community with our zoning regulations when it comes to land development. The commissioners this current fiscal year allocated funding to allow this process to occur and allow us to go out and hire consultants to do this work. Mr. Poston stated they went through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, and the Cashiers Planning Council chair and vice chair were part of the selection committee and they helped guide the decision making process of what would fit the Cashiers community. The selection committee picked CodeWright Planners, Chad Meadows has been writing codes and in North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina for the past 20 years, and has been a planner for 30 years. In addition, he stated he does experience that we would look for such as working with a variety of communities of different sizes and needs.

Mr. Meadows stated the project team included himself as the project lead and two sub consultants, Angie Manning who would be assisting with the with the code drafting effort and Cara Isher-Witt who would be assisting with graphics and mapping. Mr. Meadows stated he was the founder and principal of CodeWright Planners and offices are

located in Durham, North Carolina. In addition, he is a North Carolina native, was born in High Point and grew up in Greensboro, and has been a planner since 1992. His first job was working in Guilford County, and then he went to graduate school in Oregon, had an opportunity to work in Oregon, Florida Keys and Philadelphia, and ended up coming back to North Carolina in 2001. Mr. Meadows stated he started code drafting in 2003, and has been doing coding for about 20 years. In addition, he serves as the chair of the Durham Board of Adjustment and understands what it is like to deal with a frustrating development. He is also the Legislative Chair of the American Planning Association (APANC) for urban planners in North Carolina, which he has to keep up with the General Assembly and all of the rules and regulations that pertain to land development that all local governments in the state have to deal with and have to follow. Cashiers would be the 26th development code that he has drafted over the course of his career. Mr. Meadows gave additional information on team member Angie Manning that she was the Land Use Administrator for Onslow County, NC for 20 years, operated a house building firm with her husband for eight years and has 26 years of planning experience. Team member Cara Isher-Witt has two master's degrees one in Planning and the other in Public Administration, and is a CodeWright strategic partner for 8 years and is a Sylva native.

The project is a new Zoning Code for Cashiers, it is part of Jackson County's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) section 9.3 Cashiers Commercial Area. The project goals are as follows:

- Implement the Cashiers Small Area Plan/ ULI Report Recommendation
- Protect Community Character
- Foster Sustainable Development
- Ensure the new Standards are Fair and Predictable
- Ensure the new Standards are Legally Defensible
- Ensure the new Standards are Practical to Administer

Mr. Meadows stated both the Cashiers Small Area Plan and the ULI Report are the policy foundation, and they are going to convert those policy guidance documents into a set of zoning regulations that we will apply to development activities within the boundary of the Cashiers zoning jurisdiction. During this process, they will be identifying Cashiers community character to assess new development proposals if they are consistent with the character of Cashiers. Fostering sustainable development, it is mentioned in the policy guidance about a vibrant village, supporting tourism, but also protecting your environmental resources. Cashiers area wants to be kind to the land, making sure that what type of development does happen here is sustainable from a resource allocation standpoint and that it promotes and protects the things that the community hold dear. In addition, we want to ensure that the new standards are fair and predictable, and we want to take the time to make sure that everybody understands what the rules say, and that they are able to predict how those rules are going to be applied to their proposed development. Mr. Meadows stated we want to ensure that standards are legally defensible as the rules have to be followed, and we need to be sure that whatever we prepare will stand up to judicial scrutiny should someone choose to bring suit against the County. The final goal is to ensure that the new standards are practical to administer, Cashiers is a vital part of Jackson County, there are finite resources, and resource limitations that have to be reckoned with and a framework of rules need to be easy to enforce. In addition, he stated there might be other project goals that are out there, such as encouraging or accommodating or allowing for more workforce housing, and they would need to discuss that further throughout the process.

The Cashiers Small Area Plan goals and objectives for future development of the Cashiers area are as follows:

1. Be true to place by honoring the history, heritage, and authenticity of Cashiers' Village character.
2. Create a year-round vibrant Village.
3. Promote and enhance the area's natural resources.
4. Improve physical and social connectivity.
5. Strengthen collaboration between governmental, non-profit, and civic organizations.

The ULI Panel's Recommendations are as follows:

1. Create a long-term conservation plan for the Cashiers area that identifies critical natural areas, steep slopes, green spaces, and scenic views that should be permanently protected.
2. Build a robust network of pathways, trails, and sidewalks to facilitate and improve walkability within the village core.
3. Work aggressively with state and county government to accelerate construction of critical infrastructure, including broadband, water and sewer, and a roundabout at the crossroads to reduce congestion and improve mobility throughout the village.
4. Create an organization focused on bringing in more diverse housing (both for sale and rental) to address critical workforce housing needs.
5. Work proactively with major landowners to ensure that development proposals respect local values and community character in scale, design, and architecture.

The Cashiers Small Area Plan has been adopted and the ULI Report has been completed so both documents would be the guiding policy documents for the ordinance rewrite and if there are areas that need to be supplemented, then they would have to share that with the elected officials. In addition, he stated there are some recommendations that are above and beyond the scope of what they are able to accomplish, such as working with state agencies and that is a tough lift no matter when and where you are.

Project Tasks

1. Project Initiation (January 2023)
2. Policy Guidance Review (4 weeks +/-)
 - The consultant team would be back to spend time with the Cashiers Planning Council, community, and county staff to discuss the policy guidance (Cashiers Small Area Plan, ULI Report) and how are they going to implement.
3. Community Character Discussion (8 weeks +/-)
 - The consultant team will have a workshop regarding identifying Cashiers Community Character.
4. Annotated Outline (6 weeks +/-)
 - The consultant team would provide the blueprint for the new development regulations based on the policy guidance and how they interpret and understand the Cashiers Community Character. They would have a discussion about what is within the document, and make sure everyone is comfortable with what is in it.
5. Initial Draft of Standards (12 weeks +/-)
6. Revised Draft of Standards (4 weeks +/-)
7. Adoption Process (10 weeks +/-)
 - All ordinances for any local government in North Carolina have to go through this required process. They will need to hold a public hearing

with the Cashiers Planning Council, Jackson County Planning Board, and the Jackson County Board of Commissioners.

The project schedule would take approximately 48 weeks, which is 12 months. Mr. Meadows stated they are on Task 1: Project Initiation, and today they had a project introduction with staff, met with the County Manager Don Adams and tried to understand his concerns, understand the political landscape. They discussed the project name and webpage ideas, and decided on Recodify Cashiers and the project webpage (www.recodifycashiers.com) would be launched soon. The website will include details about the project background, frequently asked questions, a place to submit questions to the consultant and county staff, copies of documentation that the consultants have prepared including presentations summary notes trip notes that would be updated throughout the project.

In addition, they are in the process of identifying the stakeholders, which are people who understand Cashiers, the development process, actively engaged in development related activity, or are involved with some kind of agency or organization. At the next meeting they would be reaching out to meet with those stakeholders, and tonight's discussion is the overview with the Cashiers Planning Council.

Engagement

- Project Webpage
- 6 Cashiers Community Planning Council Meetings
- 8 Stakeholder interviews
- 2 Public Workshops (Policy Guidance & Community Character)
- 3 Public Presentations (Tasks 4, 5, 6)
- 3 sets of "Office Hours" in Cashiers
- 2 Public Hearings

The following is the tentative Office Hours schedule where the consulting team members would be on site in Cashiers and available for meetings:

TRIP DAY	TIME BLOCK	ACTIVITY (description)	LOCATION
1	Evening (5-7p)	Meeting with Cashiers Community Planning Council	Cashiers
	Morning (9-12p)	Status Meetings with County Staff (meetings with County officials)	Sylva
	Lunch (12-1:30P)	Lunch Meeting (this is an open meeting with stakeholders, interest groups, elected officials, or others; scheduled prior to visit)	As determined
2	Afternoon (1:30-5p)	Office Hours (members of the consulting team are available for scheduled meetings with individuals or to make presentations)	Cashiers (County staff to secure venue)
	Evening (6-8p)	Public Workshop or Presentation (this is a public open house conducted as a workshop or presentation focused on the particular task's deliverable)	
3	All day (9-3p)	Follow Up (Opportunity for follow-up meetings, discussions, site work, or small group presentations, as needed)	As determined

Mr. Meadows asked the following discussion questions to the Council:

- What I want most from this project is _____

Mr. Ubertino stated a code that lives up what they have set out to do, such as protecting the environment, the character of Cashiers, and its completeness in nature. In addition, he thinks it is important to have more illustrations or photos in the ordinance.

Mr. Bond stated he has been involved over the years with trying to implement the Cashiers Small Area Plan and make it as law, and it seemed very complicated and burdensome going through section by section. He hopes this project they would come up with a whole schematic for the way that reads, and it is simplest so that people can understand.

Ms. Zachary stated she believed it was important to have a clear code that developers can have a clear understanding of what we will accept.

- What I don't want to happen is _____

Mr. Ubertino stated he believes it needs to be a clear outcome so that the developers that want to develop here and do it successfully, and to keep it simple.

Ms. Stork stated she does not want it to become a long drawn out process that kind of loses the impact that it could have.

Mr. Bond stated he did not want to see or lose the luster of what Cashiers is. In addition, he thinks that we have an opportunity to hopefully present that through the willing people of the community that get involved with this process. He hopes that they would come out with something that would enhance our community, and not have to be in a situation that puts the Council in a touch position again when reviewing developments.

Ms. Zachary stated it is important to define what Cashiers is, and the community wants responsible development that preserves our trees and waterways in a respectful fashion that creates that homeostasis of preserving that rustic small town feeling. In addition, she stated vibrant does not necessarily have to mean we have everything here, as many people are content driving to Brevard or other places because they like to quiet serenity that our community provides. It is important to be inclusive and appreciated that there would be several stakeholders that the consultant would meet with at this part of the process, however other people in the community want to come forward and be part of that process. Respecting our heritage and history, and just keeping that small footprint, because the reason we love Cashiers is that it is a small quaint rustic community.


The next Task 2: Policy Guidance Review they would meet with the Cashiers Planning Council, have 8 stakeholder interviews, office hours, a policy guidance public workshop, and a photographic survey of the Cashiers area. Until the project website is up and running the community should email the planning department staff to get in touch with the consultant team.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, David Bond made a motion to adjourn. Carole Stork seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Allison Kelley
Administrative Assistant


Glenn Ubertino
Cashiers Planning Council Chairman

