

CITY OF EDEN, N. C.

A special joint work session of the City Council with the Planning Board and the Land Development Plan Advisory Committee of the City of Eden was held on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, 308 East Stadium Drive. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor:	John E. Grogan
Mayor Pro Tem:	Wayne Tuggle, Sr. Christine H. Myott
Council Members:	Donna Turner Darryl Carter Bruce Nooe Jerry Epps C. H. Gover, Sr.
	(absent)
City Manager:	Brad Corcoran
City Clerk:	Kim J. Scott
Deputy City Clerk:	Sheralene Thompson
Director of Planning & Inspections:	Kelly Stultz
News Media:	John Barbour, <u>Eden Daily News</u>
Planning Board Chair:	Eric Barker
Members of the Planning Board:	
Members of the Land Development Plan Advisory Committee:	

MEETING CONVENED:

Mayor Grogan called the special meeting of the City Council to order and welcomed those in attendance. He then recognized the chairman of the Planning Board, Mr. Eric Barker and asked him to introduce his board members. Mr. Barker noted that all of the members of the Planning Board were also members of the Land Development Plan Advisory Committee. He then read the names of the members of the Land Development Plan Advisory Committee which included: Marianne Aiken, Eddie Barker, Eric Barker, Jim Burnette, Amanda Currin, Jerry Epps, Debbie Galloway, Angela Hampton, Carol Helms, Giles Hunnings, Katherine Mull, Pat Roland, Becky Shomali, and Linda Wyatt.

Mayor Grogan then turned the meeting over to Mrs. Kelly Stultz, the Director of Planning and Inspections, who introduced Mr. Paul Kron, Regional Planning Director, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments.

JOINT WORK SESSION – GOALS:

- Share Information – process, conclusions & recommendations
- Provide opportunity for discussion, questions and suggestions

Mr. Kron explained that the goals were two-fold. First of all he wanted to encapsulate all of the things they have been learning and thinking about and coming to some conclusions on and making recommendations about over the last

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eight to nine months into about half an hour. In order to do that they were going to present a power point presentation as well as a booklet.

He explained that the second half of the meeting was for responses and questions.

He stated that he wanted to start by asking them a question which was “what are the key issues that we really need to address?” He stated that he would like each of them, as City Council members, as they think about growth in their community over the last 15-20 years and then thinking about continued growth over the next 15-20 years, he asked what were some of the key issues that they would think that needed to be addressed.

Council Member Gover mentioned transportation and availability of land.

Council Member Tuggle mentioned zoning consistency. They needed to make sure of the stability of the neighborhoods, their integrity.

Council Member Turner mentioned the well planned joining of the three separate areas, unity.

Council Member Myott mentioned transportation as well and the importance of keeping big trucks out of residential areas.

Mayor Grogan noted growth in the urban areas for future annexation.

Council Member Gover stated that he wanted to clarify the transportation as a need for egress and ingress to available land.

Council Member Carter suggested that they needed to be able to manage the growth, certain types of zoning areas for different types of businesses.

PRESENTATION – PROCESS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

A copy of the draft land development plan is located in the office of the City Clerk.

Mr. Kron explained the purpose of the plan and noted that a lot of what they did was to take a lot of the information and put it into a set of maps.

- Quickly identify and share key land development issues
- Slide show
- Review analysis maps
- Review draft document
- Review growth strategy and future land use map
- Review use and implementation of the plan

He began the powerpoint presentation with the area demographics and explained that overview. He noted that Eden had a population of 15,679 and the land area

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was about 15 square miles which comes to somewhere around 1,000 people per square miles. He explained that they did a comparison of similar sized cities to gauge how the city was doing. He then pointed out the maps that were located in the back of the room and explained their significance. *(The maps are located in the Planning Department)*

He explained that they had been asking themselves three questions in different ways which were: what do we like right now, what were the things that we did not like and then what were the things that we did not have now but we would like to see in the future.

He referred to some key issues that were discussed during the Eden Visioning Meeting held in October of 2006 *(page 85)* which included: (Rank #1) Historic Preservation, Restoration and Reuse; (Rank #2) Downtown Redevelopment and Revitalization; (Rank #3-#4) Parks, Recreation and Greenway System Development ranked along with Community Appearance; (Rank #5) River Corridor Protection, Access and Use; (Rank #6-#7) Community Unity ranked along with Economic Diversity; (Rank #8-#10) Growth Management ranked along with Pedestrian Friendliness and Economic Development.

He asked them to take a quick look at their table of contents. He noted that the Overview *(page 1)* was an opportunity for them to take a quick look at their history. It sets the context historically and also talks a little bit about the purpose of the plan.

He noted that the second section was all of the Existing Conditions *(page 7)* that he had just run through. He then pointed out a small section on Community Values *(page 85)* that ends with a Mission Statement *(page 87)* and a Vision Statement *(page 88)*.

The next portion was the Land Development Goals and Policies *(page 89)* that they hoped they would use a set of tools as they make their decisions and then a short chapter on Implementation *(page 113)*.

Mr. Kron explained that he would be running through each of them quickly. The general conclusion was that there was an adequate amount of vacant land both within the city limits as well as the extra territorial jurisdiction and also a lot of opportunities for revitalizing and reusing some of the historic resources and other vacant land within existing neighborhoods, called infield development.

He noted that the committee felt like that it would be important to encourage as much growth as possible to occur within city limits and ETJ where they have already made big investments so they were really using those investments as efficiently as they can.

He also noted that it was very evident that this city was committed to doing well planned quality growth that enhances the quality of life that protects all these

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different resources that they have and also really cherishes the kind of unique character that Eden has as a set of three different mill villages that were unified to some degree. That was a really important selling point for who they were and they should be proud of that and use it to their advantage as they move forward into the future.

Mr. Kron then offered the different recommendations and began by reading the mission statement that would “adopt a plan to help guide land development decisions that will build our City’s heritage, diversity our local economy, fit our community’s small-town character, preserve our cherished natural, cultural, and historic resources, enhance our quality of life, and be consistent with our ability to provide adequate public services and infrastructure.”

He then asked them to close their eyes and imagine themselves about twenty years from now and that this statement being placed in the local newspaper by the Mayor as a result of this plan being implemented over last fifteen or so years. As they closed their eyes, he read the Vision for the City of Eden in 2025. “Eden has experienced a moderately high rate of growth over the past 20 years. Our City’s commitment to well-planned, quality land development has enabled us to manage this growth wisely, striking a balance between the good of the community and private property rights. Since the adoption of our plan in 2007, new land development in and around Eden has been built to fit our community’s character and heritage, and helped to attract a diversity of jobs and tax base. New growth has been carefully designed to preserve our cherished natural, cultural, and historic resources, and to coincide with our ability to provide adequate public services and infrastructure. The right quantity, location, and quality of new land development has enhanced our environment and transformed Eden into a “Quality of life Mecca” for the region.

Recognized as a model for other historic small towns, Eden has one of the best and most utilized greenway trail systems in the nation. The City’s award winning pedestrian and electric transit systems provide a strong sense of unity throughout the community – linking each of Eden’s four unique downtown area with surrounding neighborhoods, parks and key activity centers. The careful reclamation and creative reuse of historic buildings throughout our City has provided a wide range of new opportunities for people of all ages and income levels to live, work, shop and be entertained. Once a struggling mill town, our community is showing every sign of living up to its namesake – the Garden of Eden.

Known for its beautiful rivers and rich history, Eden has proudly preserved and built on its unique natural and cultural heritage over the past two decades to become a key tourism destination. Our vibrant, lively downtown areas and safe, high quality neighborhoods have also enticed many of our young people and visitors to stay and make Eden their home.

Eden’s Land Development Plan has helped our City become a more livable and

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walkable community. New neighborhoods located most closely to downtown areas and designated activity centers have a more compact development pattern, and include a wider mix of housing types to accommodate the growing diversity of our community's resident and to maximize the efficient use of public services. Each new neighborhood includes green space and supports the City's growing network of greenway trails in conservation corridors along streams and rivers. Both new and old neighborhoods throughout Eden are linked to one another, and to other parts of the City through a network of roads, bike paths, sidewalks, and greenways. Excellent public infrastructure and services are provided at a reasonable cost. Residents enjoy access to a variety of public parks, greenways and open spaces, a more pedestrian friendly environment with greater access to a variety of convenient businesses, services and jobs, and a deep sense of pride in their community. As our City has grown, a stronger sense of community has been built – Eden has become an even better place to live, work, play and visit.”

He asked them what they thought of this as a vision statement for the future.

Council Member Tuggle commented that it was always nice to have a guide.

He added that they could also use it as a touchstone to see if they were moving in the right direction.

Mr. Kron then referred to page 89 and noted that there was a whole set of real broad themes that they identified. The four broad things that they came up with were: (1) Growth Management and then a whole set of policies that go along with that including downtown revitalization, what should they do along major roads, industrial uses, new residential uses in neighborhoods, and attractive, affordable, quality housing. The second (2) was Planning Coordination, just kind of coordinating their planning activities with surrounding jurisdictions, the county, economic development, tourism development and a host of other groups of folks who you should make sure you were touching base with.

Third (3) would be Community Appearance, and paying close attention to how they look. What would the buildings look like, what would the parking lot look like, would there be street trees or sidewalks. So this would be looking at the community character. He then moved to (4) Quality of Life, such as air and water quality, noise and light and vibration pollution, open space, downtown areas and natural and cultural, historic resources.

He also added (5) Public Services and Facilities where they look at all the different things that make up an urban landscape and the services that were needed.

Mr. Kron then moved to Community Building Principals (*page 94*). This kind of gets back to the notion that it was not just a colored “blob” on the map anymore, but there were some specific things they could kind of use as principals to guide some of their decision making processes.

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The first principal (1) is to move away from the “Strip Development” to what they call “Activity Centers” where buildings were closer to the street, parking to the side and the rear, a really nice generous sidewalk that would provide space for sidewalk cafes or coffee shops, or include things in ordinances that would allow a shop or architectural studio on the first floor with offices or living areas on the second or third floor.

The second principal (2) is to make sure that whenever possible you avoid “pods” where the only way that somebody living in this particular cul-de-sac or “pod” can visit their friend or go somewhere else in town, is to go out onto the main road, which causes so much of their congestion. If there is anyway they can avoid this and move towards a “Network of Roads” so that no matter where you are within that network, you have multiple ways of getting from point A to point B.

Right along with that principal, instead of doing the typical, conventional thing of having each type of use segregated, which is what the traditional zoning has often done, is that we instead move toward a mixture of uses model. (3) Move from “Separation of Uses” toward “Mixed Use Development”. This was kind of the way they used to build communities before World War II. So they are trying to make it friendlier for pedestrians and easier for people to get around.

The fourth principal was (4) Move from “Conventional Development” to “Cluster Development”. This is to move away from the suburban sprawl, the notion of spreading out across the landscape in a low density pattern, and instead start considering the option of an open space development.

Then they came up with what was known as the (4.3) “Growth Management Strategy” (page 98). The different areas were: Primary Growth Area, Economic Development Areas, Adjacent Developed Areas, Secondary Growth Areas, Future Growth Areas, Rural Areas, and Conservation Corridors.

After going over the Growth Strategy Map with them, Mr. Kron moved over to page 101 the Future Land Use Categories (4.4) where they have the types and characteristics, locations and patterns and relationships. He stated that the key point here was that they all understand that the decisions that they all make as elected officials were not going to match up perfectly with the future land use map, but it was a guideline to help them make those decisions and, hopefully, they would be moving in the same general direction over time with the understanding that this would need to be updated as well. He noted that these were the categories for the more specific land use map. *Council Member Gover left the meeting at this time.*

Under the Future Land Use Categories he covered the following: Neighborhood Centers, Town Centers, Commercial Centers, Employment Centers, Traditional Neighborhoods, Suburban Residential, Rural Residential, Rural, Parks Greenways and Open Spaces, Conservation Corridor Overlays, and Historic Overlays.

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He then referred them to the map located on page 111 and explained the future land use plans. On page 121 he noted more detailed description of the future land use categories along with the intent and some appropriate uses and suggestions.

The last section entitled "Implementation" which included 5.1 "Using the Plan", 5.2 "Monitoring the Plan" and 5.3 "Action Recommendations".

Mr. Kron then noted the upcoming meetings which included the Community Meeting on the *(June) 26th*, then they would refine the draft plan and hopefully this summer by *(July or August July 24 – Advisory Committee/Planning Board Approval)* they can bring it back in its final form in hopes of a public hearing and then looking at proposals *(August – City Council/Public Hearing/Consider Adoption)*.

BREAK

FACILITATED DISCUSSION:

WRAP UP AND HOUSEKEEPING:

- Impressions? Questions? Comments?
- Next Steps:
 - June 26 – Final Community Meeting
 - July 24 – Advisory Committee/Planning Board Approval
 - August – City Council/Public Hearing/Consider Adoption

Mr. Kron asked what were some of the things that they saw and heard tonight.

Council Member Tuggle stated that he really liked the idea of having a plan out there. Council Member Epps added that he believed that it was a vision that they could all reach.

He then asked what interested or surprised them in some ways.

Council Member Myott stated that she liked the idea of living green spaces and undeveloped land and Council Member Epps added that he liked looking at the "now" and the "future". Council Member Carter stated that it was a good overview.

Mr. Eric Barker commented that he was excited about what appeared to be the genuine interest of the City Council and another, unidentified member, commented that she was surprised, as a member of the Planning Board Member, that when they started this first activity, the things that they were asked to do 6 to 8 months ago, the City Council now has raised the very same issues, so they have joint concerns. So that was a good plus.

Mr. Kron asked if there was something particularly significant about this plan.

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Council Member Tuggle stated that he really loved the strategy maps and Mayor Grogan added that it was a road map for the next 20 years. Council Member Tuggle also added that it was really nice to have something to refer to, if somebody asked a question.

Council Member Myott mentioned that it gives them a guide to go by.

Mr. Kron stated that in addition to this being a guide for them as Council Members and Planning Board members, he would hope it would also be a guide for their staff, their citizens and developers. The other thing that may be helpful was that it may give their regulatory tools more flexibility and do a little bit more horse trading when someone comes in and they have a pretty good picture, but it was not the whole picture, you would be able to help them fill in the rest of the picture. Then you can start to massage proposals as they come in to better fit your vision of what you want.

He asked them what some of the things they really liked or did not like about this proposed plan.

Mayor Grogan stated that he liked the maps and Council Member Epps stated that he liked expanding the ETJ.

Mr. Kron pointed out that he failed to mention the last chapter on page 113. He stated that this was the part that they talked about, it was for the whole community. They also have a set of "action recommendations" in three broad categories. The three categories were of fairly specific actions for them to consider maybe at budget time.

Mr. Eric Barker stated that one thing that was helpful to people in particular was a lot of demographic information comparing Eden with similar sized cities.

Mr. Eddie Barker added that it simplified reducing the zones down to ten as there were twenty-two (22) now.

Council Member Myott stated that she liked the grouping, like living and working in the same area instead of strip malls.

Council Member Tuggle added that it was nice to have it updated, a lot of good ideas in the book.

Mr. Kron asked if this was a plan that they would support.

Council Member Epps replied that he would support it as it was aggressive for the future.

Council Member Turner stated that it meets the needs of citizens but attracts

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people outside as well. Mayor Grogan added that it speaks extremely well.

This concluded the presentation by Mr. Kron.

Consideration of Request to Change the City's Charter:

A motion was made by Council Member Epps seconded by Council Member Tuggle to change the city's charter. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion. This motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Council Member Tuggle seconded by Council Member Carter to adjourn. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion. This motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim J. Scott
City Clerk

ATTEST:

John E. Grogan
Mayor