

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Lexington**  
**COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**JOINT MEETING**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**  
April 19, 2016

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Town Council and the Planning Commission held a joint meeting to discuss the Comprehensive Plan update on April 19, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Eli Mack Sr. Room located at Town Hall, 111 Maiden Lane, Lexington, South Carolina. The meeting was attended by: Mayor Steve MacDougall, Mayor Pro-Tem Hazel Livingston, Council Members Kathy Maness, Todd Shevchik, Todd Carnes and Ron Williams. Councilmember Ted Stambolitis was absent. It was also attended by Planning Commissioners: Chair Keith Frost, Vice-Chair Frank Berry, Commissioners John Bartlett, Roscoe Caughman, Jamie Fite, Lisa Gibson, Sammy Hendrix, and Jeannie Michaels. Commissioner Brian Amick was absent.

Staff members present were: Town Administrator Britt Poole, Assistant Town Administrator Stuart Ford, Planning, Building and Technology Director John Hanson, Assistant Municipal Clerk Karen Hanner, and Municipal Clerk Becky Hildebrand.

There was one (1) citizen present and no members of the news media were present.

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor MacDougall welcomed everyone to the joint meeting and called on everyone to introduce themselves.

Mayor MacDougall called the joint meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. He called on Chair Frost to explain the purpose of the meeting.

Chair Frost stated that the Planning Commission had been working with Mr. Hanson during the last year and a half to update the zoning maps in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan due to the Town's growth, which led to further discussions to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan even though it had only been a year and a half. He stated that recently there had been questions about the Town's growth to the north, the west and near Lake Murray. He referenced Exhibit #5 in the Comprehensive Plan which indicated growth areas in yellow (I-20 to Lake Murray, to Corley Mill Road, east, and Smith Pond Road, west). Chair Frost stated that they look at each project individually for commercial and residential. He added that with residential they see a lot of PR-2 developments with smaller lots with high density. He asked the group how they envisioned the Town to look moving forward 10 to 20 years. He added that the Planning Commissioners would like to get some direction from Council as to how they would like to plan the growth of Lexington to make sure they are on the same page before they start the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that it was understood that the Town of Lexington expects better planned growth than is currently handled by the County of Lexington in the unincorporated areas. Chair Frost stated that if the Town wants a certain character, it may require an update to the ordinance.

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Councilmember Shevchik stated that it was a great idea to meet with the Planning Commission and plan the future of the Town. He agreed Lexington has grown like crazy and they wanted to make sure that they do growth the right way.

Councilmember Maness stated that she was glad to attend this meeting and she enjoyed being the Council liaison to the Planning Commission. She apologized for being late but it was teacher contract time and her day-job required her to be there.

Commissioner Michaels stated that she was also glad to attend the joint meeting.

Mayor MacDougall called on Mr. Hanson to go through changes and definitions in the plan.

Mr. Hanson stated that all the members present probably recalled recent discussions regarding the annexation of the Prescott Glen subdivision. During those discussions it became apparent that the land use plan needed to be updated because Prescott Glen was not part of the plan. They were in the process of updating the maps when they determined that, along with the Planning Commission, they needed to update the entire plan. He stated that the Town is in between Census so a lot of the data had not been updated. Mr. Hanson stated that the primary item needed was to determine the estimated map lines.

Mayor MacDougall stated that the Town had been annexing properties on a monthly basis and getting into developments outside the Town which were built to County standards, of which the Town has no say. He wants the County to know the proposed boundaries so when a developer plans an area close to the Town, the County can refer the developer to the Town. He stated that there are a couple of ways that the Town went about to ensure how the Town looks in 25 years. He added that developments today should be built to the Town's standards so when they are annexed, the Town does not have to go back and try to get them in compliance, especially since they are already on the Town's water and sewer systems. He appreciated that the Council and Planning Commission were on the same page and there were only a few minor items to discuss such as setbacks, lot size, and how the Town gets there to make the Town protected.

Mr. Poole wished to address several items. He stated that there had been many conversations about PR1 versus PR2 and it had become apparent that it may be helpful for PR2 to be subdivided. He added that PR2 covers so much and it can include some of the best, most expensive and more restricted neighborhoods, yet it can also include neighborhoods with higher density. Staff already uses names for those neighborhoods such as zero set back, but that may not translate well. Mr. Poole stated that they could come up with some dividing lines for the PR2 definition. He added that Barr Lake is a good example of a quality neighborhood and it is a PR2 neighborhood, but so is Waverly Place. Mr. Poole clarified that if they had subcategories in PR2 it would not allow anything not already allowed in PR2, but it would help the Planning Commissioners know what a developer plans to build. Commissioner Berry asked for examples. Mr. Poole explained that if PR2 had subcategories a neighborhood like Barr

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Lake may be category A, a cluster neighborhood may be category B, town homes may be category C, and zero lot lines may be category D, which just describes what is being requested. He added that another way to do it would be to create new zoning codes, but rezoning would be significant.

Mr. Hanson stated that the Planning Commission did not know the details of the last subdivision that was submitted and it was PR2 until it was presented at the Planning Commission meeting. He agreed that subcategories would help the Commissioners know if it is PR2 town homes or PR2 clusters.

Commissioner Hendrix stated that they had some work sessions where they discussed having PR3 so they would know the type of neighborhood beforehand. He stated that it should be qualified before the Planning Commission sees it. He added that a subcategory would also help the County understand the type of development that was being requested. He stated that the Town could not continue to take in neighborhoods that did not qualify as they have done in the past 5 to 10 years. Mr. Poole confirmed this is what he had referenced earlier to develop a new zoning category, but it would take approximately one year to complete and it would be a Herculean effort because you have to go to each neighborhood, notify each citizen and get it zoned correctly. He just wanted everyone to know up front what it would take to make a new zone.

Chair Frost stated that they had discussed both options and he did not think the subcategories of PR2 would get them where they need to be in terms of distinguishing so many options. He did not see any legal way they could define a Barr Lake versus a PR2 single family houses but not to a Barr Lake type standard. He added that the land north of Town is valuable, large lots, single family, like in Governors Grant, and the Town guided that development and there is no reason to not do the same thing in the area toward the high school. He added that PR1 would work in certain areas and certain development has been guided for safety and a quality of life issues. He stated that when you reduce lot size you have a lesser product because it has to sell for less from a financial functionality standpoint. He added that as leaders of the Town they owe it to the citizens to dictate how the Town will look 10 to 20 years from now.

Mr. Poole disagreed that you would get a lesser product. He compared it to Friarsgate in Irmo which was a PR1 and today some of those would be \$800,000 homes. Mr. Frost responded that he did not want to see a Friarsgate in Lexington. Mr. Poole stated that, even if you take out the Fair Housing Act, there is a morale requirement to provide affordable housing in that you want police officers to be able to buy in the area, and that may not be an option in a forced PR1 neighborhood. Commissioner Berry stated that the price point would be lower with 10 foot setbacks which would cut out more than 60% of the market because larger lot homes would run \$400,000 to \$500,000. He added that just the lot cost would be \$75,000 to \$100,000, not on the lake. He stated that typical neighborhoods today are like Vintners Wood. Councilmember Carnes confirmed the lots could be 1/6 of an acre.

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Commissioner Fite stated that she was more concerned about PR2 neighborhoods like Cherokee Village with driveways so short that homeowners have to park in the street which makes it an ugly neighborhood and hard to weave through the streets. She did not want more neighborhoods like that built by the County guidelines and then annexed into the Town. Mr. Poole agreed that the parking issue has merit, but if the subdivision does not enforce it then the Police Department cannot because it is not illegal to park on the street. He confirmed that the Town has different criteria such as garages, minimum number of parking spaces, etc. He added that “overflow” parking could also be made a requirement. Mr. Hanson confirmed that Cherokee Village was started in 2006 in the County and then it was annexed into the Town.

Chair Frost stated that it is not just about setbacks and lots, but it is also about quality of life issues because he did not want to have another citizen come before them and say that their father died because the ambulance could not get to the house. He added that there are standards available to provide for wider roads. Mr. Poole responded that they have been very successful since the Town got a professional Traffic Engineer, Randy Edwards, to help negotiate wider roads. He added that the Town used to have to rely on whoever did the traffic study, but now with an in-house engineer we have someone who can question a project, including the Crown neighborhood, where they have come back with wider roads. He added that with commercial property it has also helped to have an engineer and 10 to 15 decel lanes have happened since he came on board.

Mayor MacDougall stated that Council is also looking at cost participation again and trying to make it advantageous to do the right things to annex into the Town. He hoped it would get us closer to what the Town wants to see. Chair Frost agreed that it can help, and it would provide incentive and opportunity, but it also goes well in certain areas because developers are not going to volunteer to do extra things. He added that it could be applied to certain areas. Mayor MacDougall agreed that residents deserve affordable housing, and we should be able to provide it. He added that the reason is to make all neighborhoods blend in and the Town could be more creative with PR2 and come up with more ideas because we need to have homes that people can afford. He stated that we have 21,000 people that live in the Town, but 136,000 people may be served by the Police Department on a daily basis.

Councilmember Williams asked the Planning Commissioners if their primary push-back to subdividing PR2 was roads. He added that it may help if category B equals one width road and category B is another road width, etc. He thought it would be unfair to a developer to ask him to go back and make the roads wider. Commissioner Berry stated that Cherokee Village has homes closer to the road, but the big problem is garages are used for storage and not for cars. He stated that there could be a requirement to allow room for two cars in the driveway. Mr. Poole agreed that they should count parking spaces and not the garage. He added that is something they could require very easily. Commissioner Berry stated that wider roads are not just the asphalt; it also means more infrastructure costs for storm water, sewer crossings, etc.

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Commissioner Hendrix stated that they would need to know the different qualifications of the sub-categories of PR2 because they want to know what they are receiving. He added that if the developer submitted a PR2-A and it has “x” qualifications, then the Planning Commission would know ahead of time how it will look. He agreed that some neighborhoods are jammed with cars on the street, particularly at night, and/or a boat in the driveway. He did not know how Cherokee Village would look in ten years.

Commissioner Michaels asked if they could come up with a blanket width for streets and require all developments to be the same and would it be cost effective. Mr. Poole stated that it cost approximately 20% more to make a road five feet wider. He added that it increases the amount of impervious surface also. If you have \$1M project, 20% is \$200,000 that has to be split between the homes. Commissioner Berry stated that they are looking at two developments now and they could go back and ask them the cost to widen the roads by five feet. He added that if you bump the road width, you bump the cost of the real estate which narrows your market. Commissioner Hendrix stated that is another reason to have qualifications in each category.

Mr. Poole stated that he had a conversation with Mr. Mungo and he agreed it was a good idea to do a trip study like the County. He added that the County bases road classification on a true traffic count and trip study. The number indicates the road classification. The impact is the developer gets the trip study done by looking it up in a book and if it reaches a certain point, then they have to have wider streets. He added that some neighborhoods may only need the 25 foot standard, but a larger neighborhood may require more. Chair Frost stated it would be a density problem. Mr. Poole responded that it may not because Saluda River Club has all types of density in their subdivision and probably high trip count, but the area is so large with large lots in the back and some that are more than cluster homes, so it also depends on the acreage being developed. He did not think it was a direct relation to density.

Chair Frost stated that we want affordable housing, but how do we want the Town to look and where to place certain developments. He added that you may not want to put affordable housing out near the lake because of property values. Commissioner Berry stated that the cost of the property will dictate the development because the higher the property value, the more density to offset the cost.

Commissioner Bartlett stated that reclassifying PR2 is a good idea and we have some good tools and rules to stop these things. No one does PR1 anymore, so they could be reclassified PR1 and PR2 to what we need with certain setbacks, etc. He added that they need to know if there is any support from Council as to where they want to place certain developments. He stated that a developer can still come in with small lots and small setbacks and we can tell them where it can go. He stated that the development that they will review tomorrow has 200 homes with one exit and minimal road width and it does not make sense. He questioned the Town’s liability if a car was hit while parked on a sidewalk.

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Mayor MacDougall responded that he and Council do support what the Planning Commission is doing and if we need to reclassify zoning; then Staff will look into it to make sure they have a clear picture of what they want to see now and in the future. He did not think it would take much for Staff to do that for Planning and the developers because we don't want to turn anyone away which would make it easier for everyone. He stated that Council wants to develop the Town respectfully and responsively and make those lines clearer for the Planning Commission. Mayor MacDougall reminded everyone that the market right now is good, but it may not always be that way. He added that Staff could assist to come up with better lines and they will continue to work toward that goal.

Chair Frost agreed that he did not want to turn anyone away either. He did sense a change toward development with this Council than in years past when we did a development whenever someone showed up with a dollar and he did not get that feeling from this Council. He added that we do want to make Lexington a better place with smart planning and work through that with Staff and bring it back to Council.

Commissioner Bartlett stated that they may put some hardships on builders, but they believe that Lexington is where people want to be. He agreed that setting standards would be the guidance they need to make that happen so Lexington doesn't end up with neighborhoods that only had the minimal standards. Commissioner Bartlett stated that there is a move away from patio homes to larger homes on smaller lots such as 64 acres with 200 homes. He agreed there is a place for those, but in a different zone, maybe not PR1 or PR2.

Councilmember Shevchik agreed that better standards would help such as two entrances, wider roads and keep the standards for everyone. He added that it would eliminate the recent problems they have been seeing and it would be better for everyone in the long run. He stated that Council is on board with better standards even though they did not want to scare people away. He added that if developers want to build in Gaston, then that is a different kind of product.

Councilmember Carnes asked if they have examples of roads with minimal requirements that are not working, and you can't form a PR3 without a long process; then what is the legal way to subdivide a PR2 and hold people to that. He stated that people could be approved one road width and then find they should have a different standard. Mr. Poole stated that if the standard was set as a requirement it would be part of the site plan and once they are approved they are the law. The only way to change it is to come back for another approval or a variance. He confirmed it would require a modification to the Zoning Ordinance and would add another category. He added that if you form a new zoning code such as PR3, it would require rezoning so if someone's home burned down they could build it back. Each neighborhood would have to be reviewed. Councilmember Carnes clarified that the difference between PR1 and PR2 is PR1's lot size is 1/6<sup>th</sup> of an acre and PR2 does not have a minimum lot size. He added that the setbacks are different for the front and side. Councilmember Carnes also wished to address affordable housing. He stated that you could buy a home in his

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neighborhood for \$150,000 and is that affordable housing? He did not think it should just be placed on new homes. He thought the roadway issue would be the easiest to resolve and the lot size issue should be addressed. He stated that tonight it is everyone's opinion but they did need to have a comprehensive conversation to form a unified voice. He stated it would be a great idea to take the Comprehensive Plan and determine what they will demand moving forward in particular areas, but to put it in writing in order to tell the developers. Councilmember Carnes stated that citizens want that too especially when they are using Hospitality Tax for traffic and crazy things with the School Board to build enough schools because infrastructure is taxed to the max. He understood that in some areas it may cost more but he did not think it would stifle growth.

Commissioner Hendrix agreed that it would not stifle growth and yet some citizens come to meetings to say they don't want any more businesses or growth here, but that is not growing the Town. He added that people come to Lexington for the schools and we now have 30 schools in the district and more are moving here.

Commissioner Bartlett stated that the Comprehensive Plan calls for mixed use retail and multiple type homes like Saluda River Club, but they are not seeing that type development. Mr. Poole stated that they have been having some conversations to develop those type subdivisions and we will probably see some, but it will be limited. He added that if density is a concern you will not get that type of development because in the back you may have \$800,000 homes and in the front you will have hyper-density which is not allowed in Town. He stated that the Corley Mill corridor is about the only place that type of development will work. Commissioner Fite stated that in Saluda River Club, even the homes in the hyper-dense area are \$200,000 and up. Commissioner Berry stated that a Saluda River Club would not work next to a Summer Lake. He added that Summer Lake started out that way, but they had to revamp the plan to make smaller lots with all pricing. Councilmember Carnes stated that we are more suburban, because people with a \$500,000 house want to live in a neighborhood with other \$500,000 homes. He did not think the mixed use developments would work here because wherever you put one, it kills traffic just like in Tega Cay and on Corley Mill Road. He did not think it would sell on Highway 378. Mr. Poole stated that it works because of their size and it meets the State's 28 acre rule for a development agreement and it opens the options to get some of the traffic issues resolved by the developer paying for it or adding a TIF district. He added that the Town does have a different perspective now and with development agreements corrections could be forced.

Chair Frost stated that high density in some areas works, but traffic on Old Cherokee backs up now for five miles so it is not safe to place a lot of high density developments. He stated a master plan would help address problem areas and planning the appropriate place for development. He added that on an economic scale, it is different to ask a developer to fix a 2 lane road for a \$75,000 investment. He stated that it is time to take a look at the map and draw some circles in areas proposed for PR2 A, B, or C as stipulated.

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Commissioner Bartlett stated that Lexington sells itself and Saluda River Club was built as something else. He added that they could get backed in a corner if they don't plan now. People will buy an \$800,000 home if it is planned and marketed right.

Chair Frost stated that he understands the way property is marketed and it is difficult to build on larger lots because of the price point, but he thought the market would correct itself in the future. Commissioner Berry stated that the market may correct but people are going to want a more traditional lot size going forward, not larger lots. He added that realtors will agree that people don't want a lot of property to maintain. He estimated the average lot size to be 60 feet wide by 125-130 feet or ¼ acre. Commissioner Fite stated that in Larkin Woods the lots are so small with a 3,000 square foot home; you cannot fit a trampoline in the backyard. She thought a larger setback would work for additional cars more than a wider street. Commissioner Berry stated that homes in that neighborhood were set back 25 feet with a standard road width. He added if you shorten the setback, you need a wider road. He stated that even if you park in a standard parking space of 9 x 18, the larger cars will hang over especially if you set a house back 12 ½ feet from the right-of-way, you can barely put one car in the space. He added that you can typically get four cars in the drive way with a two car garage. Mr. Poole stated that we stop with the parking requirement at three bedrooms, but it would be easy to carry that forward and require more parking for a four or five bedroom home. He added that it means the Town would not dictate the size of the lot, but if you are building a five bedroom home, you will need more parking.

Mr. Hanson stated that what they have seen in the past 5 years is PR2's in Dove Chase (100 homes), Village Green (156 homes) and Barr Lake (400 homes) and the only difference, as a general statement, is the side yard setback. Most of the lots have a 20 foot setback and they do not have to have a 20 foot front yard setback to have a PR2, but they have to have 30 feet to be a PR1, but they are also providing a 20 foot backyard setback and are only required to have a 10 foot backyard setback in PR1. They could shift the house to give the space to park the cars, but what disqualifies them for PR1 is the 5 foot side yard setback. He added that they need to find a good mix to give the neighborhood a better feel. He recommended that they come up with some of these small tweaks to see what they get before they do a full blown rezoning.

Commissioner Berry stated that Lexington County has a minimum front setback of 10 feet and that's what happens in some of the subdivisions. He added that as a developer they choose not to do that and use a 25 foot setback. He stated that most people live in a neighborhood with a 25 foot setback and it usually allows enough space to park cars and if not, it should be enforced by the HOA. Commissioner Bartlett stated they should set standards so that does not happen primarily for safety reasons. Chair Frost disagreed and stated that he can barely get out of his neighborhood without flipping the mirrors in due to cars parked on both sides and they have room for four cars. He did not know how an HOA could control parking in the road because they cannot control a visitor. Mr. Poole stated that he has seen some very effective HOA's and the ticket should be written to the homeowner, not the visitor. He added that it depends on the

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HOA. He gave Berkshire as a very effective HOA because the citizens demand it. Mr. Poole stated that he asked the Police Chief who tells him that police and EMS are not having a problem getting to areas in Town and there were no reports of it. Mr. Poole stated that in 10 years the only incident he remembers was with a bus driver that could not turn around in a cul-de-sac and the homeowners were issued a ticket. Mayor MacDougall added that the Town would hear from the trash contractor if getting to certain roads was a problem.

Commissioner Michaels stated that in new high density 200 home developments, it could take 2 to 3 years for it to build out and form an HOA. She asked Council what is their vision of where the Town wants to go. She stated that they get people who want to develop in pockets that are not in Town and they need to know if that is somewhere the Council wants to develop.

Chair Frost referred everyone to a map in their package and asked the Mayor to explain. Mayor MacDougall stated that the map (Exhibit 5) shows from Longs Pond to the high school, across Charter Oak to Highway 378 and all the way down Highway 6 to the dam, down Corley Mill Road, and down Old Chapin is for future growth which is currently stymied by a water and sewer issue. He added that the map is what the Council envisions for the Town's planned growth, including this side of I-20. He stated that borders are temporary lines, but the map shows the future growth plan.

Councilmember Carnes stated that he looks at the municipality and why it has grown where it is and what is the rationale. He looks at the County Ordinances that are detrimental to what they want to do so everywhere they can bring in the Town's ordinances into place; we should so houses are not 10 feet off the road. He stated that based on the Town's infrastructure, 20 years from now they want houses 20 feet off the road, not 10. He added that the Town is pressed to do this, not because of financial reasons or land hungry, but to try and control some of the crazy growth.

Chair Frost asked for an explanation of the price point on residential. Councilmember Williams responded that at Settlers Point they have paid \$250,000 in taxes since 2006 for the entire neighborhood over the entire 10 years period. Mr. Poole stated that the Town needs to rework that figure, because it is probably higher, because it used to be a taxable value of about \$260,000 to \$275,000 for the Town to pay for direct cost which includes garbage, street lights, etc. to break even. He agreed it is not about the money because the Town would be better with less neighborhoods, but the neighborhoods lead to places and set the tone for the Town. He gave the example of going out to Barr Lake, citizens will say they live in the Town of Lexington because that is the perception. He added that the Town has the same problem during elections because people think they should be able to vote in the Town election, yet they live in Gilbert.

Commissioner Hendrix asked what would it take with the break point on the neighborhood they are looking at tomorrow when you have to include police and fire. Mr. Poole stated that from a Planning Commission standpoint, they should not be concerned with that because it is a bigger picture which involves the number of officers

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per 1,000 people and we are well over the number required. He added that this year's budget includes two officers for the first time in a while, but the next budget they would like to plan for more road officers due to the growth and they will look at zones to do that planning because they want to maintain good response times.

Chair Frost stated that since they started some of this discussion he was glad to know that Council understands that houses do not pay for themselves. Mr. Poole responded that they do in some ways because commercial developers use "rooftops" as a measure as well as household incomes and work force development. He stated that Fresh Market was coming to Lexington because of these measures. He added that it has to do with population and education. Commissioner Berry remembered when Target was first looking at Lexington and at first they did not think there were enough rooftops, so they were brought back to sit and watch traffic at 4:00 p.m. and that's when they decided for Lexington instead of US 1 where the apartments are now. He agreed that rooftops drive development. Councilmember Carnes agreed and stated that one person will be excited on one side to have a Fresh Market, but on the other side they have great trepidation about what they will do to traffic on Highway 378. He was not sure himself if it would hurt us from a traffic standpoint, even though he knows growth cannot be stopped. He added that as government officials they need to find out what the market wants and ask for 15% more and that takes political will because if you only give the market what it wants, we might as well not be here. He added that we should always look at 10 to 20 years from now and always have that tension on the market because the market is only concerned about profits.

Commissioner Berry explained that the Planning Commission has pushed for connectivity between commercial properties, not to push something on the builders, but because it makes sense. Commissioner Hendrix stated that when Planning changes the rules, Council catches the blunt of it unless there are teeth in it. He asked Council for their support in the proposed zoning changes. It was the consensus of the Mayor and Councilmembers that were present; the Planning Commission had their support. Councilmember Carnes agreed and restated that tension of 15%+ or more should be on the market and determine high density areas and areas to protect to make Lexington more beautiful.

Commissioner Bartlett explained the location of the proposed development which they would review tomorrow. He stated that it is on Highway 378 just past Kaminer Drive. He added that it is planned to have 200 homes on 64 acres with an estimated 2 ½ people per home which equals 2,010 trips onto Highway 378 through one exit. He did not think that was the best plan. Chair Frost added that out of the 2,010 trips how many will be turning left. Mr. Hanson stated what would you do if the development was one mile further down the road and they are still going to be turning left. He added that it meets all the County requirements and developers tell him the only benefit of coming into the Town is the reduced tap fee. He stated that it goes back to pushing for 15% more in that if they are going to spend the extra savings on Town requirements, they can go 3 miles down the road for less, and then Council can decide if they are going to serve them water and sewer. Mr. Hanson stated that he deals with developers every day and you probably can't push them too far. Mr. Poole stated that the competition area is

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not Saluda or Gilbert, its two parcels down the road which is not in Town. He added that the requirements have to be presented in a certain way because they may spend \$75,000 to meet our requirements, but they probably won't spend \$600,000.

Commissioner Hendrix asked what is the Town's relationship with the County, as far as how their planning affects the Town, because it is key for them to know an area is close to being annexed into the Town. Mr. Poole responded that Staff to Staff, we have a good relationship that was built during the past 15 years and Town Staff works with them now and they have a good idea if any area is contiguous or may soon be contiguous. Mr. Poole stated that now the County will tell a developer that they need to talk to the Town. He added that it was not always that way and developers used to play the Town against the County, but he did not think it was that way anymore. He stated that building that relationship is the best thing the Town has done and the County makes money on residential anyway, but the Town does not. He added that the bigger picture is zoning in the County and the Town has been in conversations with the County regarding overlay districts. We have had some successes with the County improving their Sign Ordinance to be more in line with the Town's, but the County has a completely different perspective on zoning than a municipality because it affects a larger geographic area. Mr. Poole stated that we will never see the County's zoning ordinance match the Town's so the hope is to be successful with overlay districts in certain areas to encourage development. He added that the Town deals with SCDOT on roads, but we work with the County traffic issues. He confirmed that the Town is working with SCDOT regarding a turn lane on Highway 378 near the Ford dealership.

Chair Frost stated that once our Comprehensive Plan is updated, he would hope it could be presented to the County to show them the Town's vision and continue to work on overlay districts. He did not want the Town in the position to have to bow to the developer who threatens to go two parcels down the road (outside Town) to build what they want, then he would hope that Council would not provide water and sewer services. Mr. Poole did not think that had happened very often. Commissioner Hendrix stated that developers have come to the Planning Commission on many occasions and told them they could build it like they want in the County.

Commissioner Bartlett stated that a map, like in Exhibit 5, would be a great tool for the Council, Planning Commission and the County to use for the next 15 years to show where the lines may be in the future. Mayor MacDougall agreed that was the driving factor to have the Comprehensive Plan updated so they could go back to the County and discuss an overlay district. He felt confident that they would get an overlay district and hopefully before November.

Councilmember Carnes asked if anyone could envision a day when 150 homes are going in and the County tells the developer that they are only 3 parcels from the Town, so they will have to comply with the Town ordinances. Mr. Poole responded, yes, that would be possible with an overlay district. He added the sign ordinance is now closer to ours and much better than it was a few years ago. He stated that with zoning, it may not match ours, but it could be closer on several issues, such as setbacks. He added that

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it is possible they could agree to a 20 foot setback or green space requirements in neighborhoods.

Commissioner Bartlett stated that some of the small changes could be made now. Chair Frost agreed, but wished to add that there would need to be additional work to refine the area in yellow as shown on the map on Exhibit 5. Mr. Poole's recommendation to the Planning Commission was to approve the Comprehensive Plan immediately as it was presented tonight and then make amendments as changes are confirmed. He added that would not impact the conversation with the County.

Mayor MacDougall confirmed that everyone was on the same page to request that Staff move forward to redefining PR2 into subcategories in order to provide the Planning Commission and developers a clearer path on which way to handle development. Councilmember Williams confirmed that Staff would then review the PR2 request from a developer prior to submitting it to the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Maness asked the Planning Commission their thoughts about the development that they will discuss at their meeting in the morning. Chair Frost stated that he preferred to discuss it at their work session at 7:30 a.m., prior to their meeting in the morning.

Mr. Poole wished to state in closing that several of the Planning Commissioners had served for many years and they would remember when there was a divisive relationship between the Commissioners and Council. He really appreciates Council's view on the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission's view on Council's role because both are extremely important. He thought this meeting was a great opportunity to explore that at a high level and he is very proud of their efforts to come together and get away from the bad place of many years ago. He added that they had very substantive conversation tonight and that did not happen before and you cannot plan without those conversations.

Commissioner Berry stated that as a developer in three counties, by far, Lexington County and the Town are the easiest to deal with on developments. He stated that some counties zone each parcel different so at zoning hearings people show up from every corner to deny approval. He added that Lexington does zoning by street which makes it much easier. Commissioner Bartlett agreed and stated that the same is true for commercial developers from across the state.

Chair Frost stated that he has been on the Planning Commission for 14 years and he appreciated the Mayor and Council for having the meeting tonight, listening, and providing feedback because it is the first time they have sat down together to form a plan to move the Town forward.

Mayor MacDougall thanked the Planning Commissioners for their service to the Town. He added that Council supports them in what they are doing and if something comes up,

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they will certainly sit down and talk about it so as not to destroy what they have accomplished tonight.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further comments or questions, Mayor MacDougall declared the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky P. Hildebrand, CMC  
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED:

Steve MacDougall  
Mayor

*FOIA COMPLIANCE – Public notification of this meeting was published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Lexington requirements.*