

BURNINGTOWN COMMUNITY

02/15/10

20-25 attendees

Derek Roland
Jack Morgan
Bobby Kuppers

Citizens of Burningtown community were both inquisitive and skeptical with regards to the comprehensive plan. Citizens of this community wanted to be assured the comprehensive plan was not an avenue the government was using to take peoples freedom to use their property away. The citizens did not want the county to accept aid from any outside interests groups such as the WNC Alliance with regards to the comprehensive plan. The citizens of Burningtown Community are for planning, but scared of how the plan is to be implemented.

One citizen felt the plan should only address issues involving transportation. The citizen felt that areas such as healthcare, childcare and housing should not be included in the plan. The citizen commented that areas such as childcare have been regulated out of business by government on the state and federal levels. In Macon County, there needs to be less regulation in areas such as these, which deal with an individual's private life. The comprehensive plan should focus strictly on Transportation, as it runs concurrently with the DOT's Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

People want the freedom to use their property as they see fit. One particular citizen was concerned that if Cowee Community wanted to remain a farming community, this would hinder someone from building development in that community. Roland informed the citizen that this was not the case. The Plan would focus on ways to help individual land owners that want to continue farming to be able to do that. Discussion on this topic continued on to address ways to promote farmland. One citizen commented that we should waive all permits regarding farmland.

Preserving our rural heritage while also getting jobs to the area, Kuppers felt at some point would come into direct conflict with each other. One citizen felt that privatized property rights are what got us to where we are today. The rights of the individual to manage and plan on their own property have worked in the past; citizens do not want this to change. The government does not need to have a say in land use. The deeper that government gets into land use the more people felt that they are being "choked to death".

Kuppers encouraged citizens not to shun this process in fear of things that will come out of it at the other end. "We need to go ahead and let the sub-committees do their work". If some of it will not work, we don't have to accept it. One citizen felt the lack of surveys +/- 1% was not a good basis to formulate a plan on. This citizen suggested the planning board should find some way to get more people involved in this process.

People want the government to start listening to the people. In the past the local government has failed to do this. Citizens felt this could be a contributing factor in the lack of surveys. If government does not start listening people will continue not to participate in planning efforts. One citizen, as the meeting closed, summarized the way citizens in Burningtown Community felt. The majority of people in Burningtown community were in favor of planning, yet scared of implementation. The citizens wanted no more rules and regulations on them at this time, and even suggest that current rules and regulations be relaxed.