

September 12, 2022
Statesboro GA

Steering Committee Meeting 1

The Bulloch County Comprehensive Plan Amendment Steering Committee met at 10:00am in the Community Room of the North Main Annex. Chairman Thompson welcomed committee members and thanked each member for their participation while outlining the responsibility of the committee.

The following committee members were present: Roy Thompson, Curt Deal, Jeanne Anne Marsh, Charles Chandler, Will Groover, Wade McElveen, Benjy Thompson, Charles Wilson. Anthony Simmons, committee member, was absent. The following staff was present: County Manager Tom Couch, Assistant County Manager Cindy Steinmann, County Attorney Jeff Akins, and Planning and Development Director James Pope.

County Manager Tom Couch initiated discussion for the need and purposes of the steering committee which centered on three main points. The development and announcement of a Hyundai automobile plant locating in north Bryan County, year over year growth of the Savannah Port, and a positive trend of growth for Bulloch County over the previous 4 decades. Mr. Couch displayed a presentation outlining the anticipated growth impact from the Hyundai plant. Details included: a likely population growth of 5,000 additional people over regular Bulloch County growth by 2030; additional workforce housing needs in southeast Bulloch will be approximately 2,000; and the need to balance growth areas where infrastructure can support higher density populations by directing development into a growth/character area over time. Mr. Couch further explained the planned community infrastructure improvements and growth potential of a water district located along Interstate 16 and US Highway 80. Improvements include: four municipal water wells to be located in south Bulloch County; two wells will be owned by Bulloch County and two wells will be owned by Bryan County; sanitary sewer service capacity between 250,000 – 500,000 GPD will be provided to Bulloch County by Bryan County and will be connected along US Hwy 80, Bulloch County will be responsible for developing its sewer system/service lines; phase one funding of the water and sewer system will be determined over several months as grant applications are reviewed and awarded, grant/loan funding will impact the extent of the phase 1 build out.

Mr. Couch concluded his presentation with information about a zoning moratorium which has been in place since August and is authorized until February 2023. He stated that time and task management will be crucial for staff and the steering committee to ensure necessary ordinances are amended and presented to the committee. Some ordinances will be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Board of Commissioners, as legislative body, will be required to adopt all ordinance changes and plan amendments. Mr. Couch and Mr. Pope presented the committee with tentative schedule of dates for the process beginning with a September 12th steering committee meeting. Mr. Pope asked if the meeting dates and times were acceptable to the steering committee. A consensus on meeting dates and times was reached by the committee.

Mr. Pope presented details of the process of amending a comprehensive plan's future development map. He stated that the comprehensive plan for Bulloch County was adopted by the

Board of Commissioners in 2019. Each community in Georgia, whether a county or city, is required to review/ update its comprehensive plan every five years. If a community chooses, it may amend the plan in between update years. Mr. Pope explained that the steering committee's purpose is to serve as community conduits and represent their professional/elected interest when discussing possible changes to the future development map or other items presented to the committee. He asked that each member take the information presented in committee meetings and discuss with interested groups within the public and report back to the committee any concerns, questions, or support for changes as proposed. The comprehensive plan amendment will involve multiple public opportunities for comment including an initial public hearing September 19th and a final public hearing in January prior to the adoption of a plan amendment. Other ordinance or plan changes will have public comment times at the time of adoption or if subject to zoning procedures law, the ordinance change would be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the Board of Commissioners. If additional public comment opportunities are needed, staff will determine the best course of action.

Mr. Couch and Mr. Pope opened the meeting for questions by the committee members. Mr. Groover stated a concern regarding the four water wells to be placed in southeast Bulloch and questioned the impact the wells may have on agriculture irrigation wells. Mr. Couch and Mr. Benjy Thompson each responded stating those impacts should be reviewed through the permitting process with the State of Georgia but as of now there is no concern of the water impacts based on water planning models of the coastal region.

After some additional discussion and highlighting of ordinance/development issues experienced by committee members, the meeting was adjourned.