

Appendix 4-A

Dale Community Preservation Plan

Purpose

The Dale Community Plan is designed to serve as a general guide for the development of the community. It addresses land use, recreational opportunities, traffic circulation and design. As a policy document, appended to the County's Comprehensive Plan, this plan is to be used to guide zoning, subdivision, facilities funding and design, and community development decisions made by government officials and agencies. The Dale Community Plan serves as a foundation and the structure upon which more detailed policies, standards and master plans may be developed.

Process

The solutions to the issues, which this plan analyzes, have emerged as a result of a continuing dialogue with a wide range of participants, which began a year ago. The goal and activities represent the creativity of Dale residents.

Listed below are the goals and actions derived from the many issues debated during the Dale Community Preservation planning process. The goals reflect what Dale residents believe will help to build the community. Through a series of public meetings Dale residents identified important issues to be addressed, each related primarily to the issue of growth and land use. The fundamental question was how to accommodate growth while maintaining the character of the community. Specifically the Dale community had concerns about and asked the CP committee to consider the following:

1. What mix of land uses and development densities are desirable?
2. What kinds of businesses are most appropriate and where should they be located?
3. How can we improve recreational opportunities?
4. How do we establish safe connections to activity areas such as the school and the store?
5. What is the potential for passive recreational facilities and improvements at Wimbee Landing Creek?

Based on the information gathered and detailed questions posed by the community, four key areas of concern emerged: land use, recreational opportunities, traffic circulation and design.

Goals and Actions

General Land Use Goals: Ensure that new development and redevelopment maintains and enhances the character of Dale.

- Provide access to local commercial services by developing a mixed used district along Keans Neck Road that encourages the integration of residential, commercial, civic and public uses.

- Permit commercial uses at a scale that maintains compatibility with residential uses; require new buildings to respect the character of the community.
- Maintain diversity in the type and the character of development and promote various opportunities in the type and the cost of housing.
- Prohibit Planned Communities on sites adjacent to Keans Neck Road.
- Develop an appropriate sign ordinance for the Dale area.
- Identify future needs and requirements for public facilities and lands.
- Pursue available funding sources at the State and the Federal levels to provide for public services and facilities.

Parks and Recreation Goals: Provide recreational opportunity through the use of a quality park system utilizing county, school district and private resources. Recreation facilities should be safe and of a high quality.

- Make a special effort to acquire additional parkland around the Dale Community Center Park to accommodate further facilities and passive recreation.
- Develop the Dale Greenway Plan in conjunction with the countywide greenway system.
- Investigate the development of passive recreational facilities at Wimbee Landing Creek.
- Provide public places and open spaces that complement the public realm and create identifiable focal points within the Mixed- use district.

Transportation and Traffic Circulation Goals: Provide a transportation system that effectively and safely accommodates pedestrians and motorists.

- Develop techniques that calm traffic speeds and reduce cut-through traffic along Keans Neck Road in order to improve pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety.
- Improve the design and location of bus stops by emphasizing pedestrian access and integrating transit stops into the surrounding neighborhood.
- Implement traffic calming measures, such as textured paving and chokers along Keans Neck Road and major intersections.
- Balance the needs of motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists with walking paths, narrow roadways to calm traffic, continuous bicycle routes, ample and accessible at-grade pedestrian crossings and landscaped parkways to separate pedestrians and traffic.
- Improve pedestrian connections to activity centers such as the school and the corner store by providing greenway connections from adjacent neighborhoods.
- Support commercial development, which is planned as a total concept to include access points, internal circulation, and parking, may be better coordinated.
- Separate sidewalks from the roadway by planting strips wide enough to support trees.

- Pave Wimbee Landing Creek Road (that portion west of Kim Lock Road) to serve as an alternate route for Keans Neck Road. The paving of Wimbee Landing Creek Road is to be of a higher priority than other roads in the Dale area.

Design Goals: A safe and aesthetically pleasing community through the orderly and efficient development of land

- Create a strong “sense of place”.
- Enhance entryways to the community.
- Implement a streetscape program that creates a visually attractive, safe and comfortable street and gives scale and definition to the public realm.
- Select medium sized trees, which provide canopy, shade and distinctive foliage or flower as the community theme tree.
- Provide public amenities such as planters, lighting, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, sheltered bus stops and information kiosks that are functional and aesthetically integrated into the streetscape for pedestrian comfort, convenience and safety.
- Provide public art for aesthetics and contemplation.
- Identify ways to build upon the history of the Dale area and identify sites for historic markers.

The Dale Community Plan provides a goal and policy framework for guiding community development, promoting high-quality public facilities. Nevertheless, the Plan should not be viewed as a static document. It is meant to be reviewed, debated, and modified as necessary to account for changing conditions and community values.

Implementation

The time and effort spent in producing this Plan is worth nothing without implementation. It is implementation and agreement on methods of implementation that will bring the Plan to life and initiate an evolution of activity that will move the Dale community toward the fulfillment of its goals. This section outlines the activities that must be pursued to carry out the Plan.

Preparation and adoption of the Plan is a beginning step in its implementation. Its basic purpose is to provide a guide for specific action. The Implementation Plan identifies techniques, strategies, and methods for carrying out the recommendations contained in the Dale Community Plan. The major implementation processes described include the Dale Community Preservation Land Development Standards, the County’s Capital Improvement program, the annual review and update process, general plan update and specific implementation program.

Dale Community Preservation Land Development Standards: The Dale Community Preservation Land Development Standards is a regulatory tool used to define districts within the Community Preservation area for the purpose of controlling and guiding land use and development. These standards are the primary instrument for implementing land use policies. The County's review and adoption of the land development standards are important first steps in plan implementation.

Capital Improvements Program: Another tool for implementing the plan is the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which establishes schedules and priorities for all public improvement projects within a five-year period. The County first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years, including transportation and community facility projects. Then all projects are reviewed, priorities are assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified.

The CIP typically schedules the implementation of a range of specific projects related to the Comprehensive Plan and Community Plans, particularly the restoration and upgrading of existing utilities and infrastructure facilities. Construction of public facilities and infrastructure is an important link between the development of Dale and the implementation of the Dale Community Plan. Based on an annual review, the CIP shall be reexamined for consistency with the goals and actions of this Plan. The CIP shall also be revised to include projects identified within the Dale Community Plan. In this way, the CIP serves as a financial planning document as well as a physical-planning document. It permits the construction of improvements identified in the Dale Community Plan.

The five-year CIP shall be used to enable the implementation of the Dale Community Plan policies in a manner that is consistent with the goals and actions identified. The CIP can also be used to implement growth strategies in the Dale Community Plan by locating and programming public facilities and infrastructure for lands within the approved Dale Community Preservation area. Finally, by stipulating the desired community projects and improvements, the Dale Community Plan provides the guide for desirable public facilities and services.

Annual Review: The county administrator shall submit an annual report to Beaufort County Council on the status of the Plan and the progress of its application. By going through this process, it is possible to regularly reexamine the plan's premises and evaluate progress made on its implementation. Implementation actions may need to be modified as additional information is received. The county's administration department along with the lead departments identified in Table I is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Dale Community Plan.

The annual review process provides an opportunity to update and refine the policies expressed in the Dale Community Plan and to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation strategies and programs incorporated therein. This process is the vehicle by which the county, private property owners, developers, community groups or individual citizens request changes to the goals and actions of the Dale Community Plan. The review and amendment process includes citizen participation, through community meetings to familiarize Dale residents with the amendment proposals and at formal public hearings before the Planning Commission and County Council.

General Plan Update: The Dale Community Plan reflects a ten-year planning period. This period allows for the systematic implementation of desired projects, land use patterns, and installation of required public improvements. To provide for flexibility and responsiveness to change, the Plan also should be comprehensively reviewed and revised, if appropriate, at four-year intervals. This periodic update enables the Plan always to maintain at least a 10-year time frame.

The update of the Plan is not synonymous with a total revision. Once adopted, the Plan establishes a basic policy framework that must be followed over time. The purpose of reviewing the Plan at intervals is to allow it to adjust to changing conditions, the availability of more recent planning data, and shifts in community values. When revisions to the Plan are proposed, Dale residents and property owners should be invited to participate in the formulation of the changes.

Implementation Actions

- I. **Identify Grants:** Ensure that new development and redevelopment maintains and enhances the character of Dale.

Federal and State grants-in-aid are available to assist with land use planning facility improvements and other services and improvements. Coordinating grant proposals with the Plan directives is a positive step toward accomplishing the Plan's goals. Most grants require matching funds for the receiving municipality. The County's contribution may be met by in-kind contributions from various departments and also through departmental budgets. Additional sources for funding are:

- A. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): The Community Development Block Grant Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development and provides assistance for programs and projects directly aimed at the type of projects identified in the Dale Community Plan. The Community Development Block Grant funding is allocated on an annual basis and can be used for a variety of projects contemplated in The Dale Community Plan.
- B. Beaufort County Transportation Committee(C Funds): This funding source is generated from gasoline sales tax funds appropriated to the county from the state and administered by the Beaufort County Transportation Committee. Permitted projects include road paving, sidewalks, curb improvements, walking paths, bus shelters and road signage. Projects other than road paving projects require a "special project application" which is accepted each three years.
- C. The Beaufort County Tree Fund: Funds generated from projects where the Development Review Team determines that the required replacement of trees is not feasible or not desirable, such reductions are subject to a general forestation fee. The funds collected through this forestation fee may be used by the County to plant trees and other landscaping in highway medians, along roads, and general landscaping such as those identified in the Dale Community Plan.
- D. The Land Preservation Board: This advisory board was established to protect rural and critical lands through the Purchase of Development Rights, voluntary programs and other mechanisms. The Board is mandated to establish criteria and ranking system to rank land parcels, which are approved by County Council. Beaufort County currently levies and

designates 2 mills in ad valorem taxes in order to acquire land for conservation, farmland protection and open space preservation. The County Council is considering a proposition to authorize the County to issue 40 million dollars in general obligation bonds to acquire lands for preservation and retire the bond debt.

- II. **Prioritize Projects and Add to CIP:** Table I summarizes the implementation actions recommended in The Dale Community Plan. In addition, the projects are prioritized, a responsible department is assigned and the timing for implementation of the specific action is noted.
- III. **Schedule Implementation:** The implementation of the Dale Community Plan will be monitored. Some items are expected to be completed quickly. For others, especially those items that need additional funding, it may be harder to schedule a firm completion date. Nevertheless, the status of every item proposed in the Plan will be tracked. A check date, if not a completion date, will be set for each item. This tracking chart will be updated regularly, as more information becomes available and as the status of each project changes. An update report is scheduled for the Fall of 2001 to summarize the overall implementation status of the plan's recommendations.
- IV. **Commitment and Support:** Thus, while the Dale Community Plan provides the framework for community development, the everyday action of the County shapes the community. The manner in which the Plan is implemented is the real test of the County's commitment to the goals, objectives, and policies.

By adopting the Plan, the County Council will demonstrate the County's commitment to the implementation of the Plan. However, every action item listed in this plan will require separate and specific implementation. Adoption of the Plan does not begin the implementation of any item. The implementation will require specific actions by the Dale community, the County and other agencies. The Plan will be supported and implemented by:

- **County Boards, Commissions and Staff:** The numerous boards and commissions of the County will look to The Dale Community Plan when they need guidance about the neighborhood. The Planning Commission will already know if a proposed zoning change in the Dale CP area is appropriate and supported by the residents and businesses of the community. Additionally, County staff will use the Plan as a guidance document for review of projects and programs.
- **County Department Budgets:** Each year every County department puts together a budget that states the department's priorities for the coming year. By bringing the strengths and desires of the community to the attention of County departments, the Dale Community Plan will help them prioritize those projects that help safeguard the community's assets while addressing its needs. Allocating dollars to certain programs and activities inevitably results in setting policy priorities, which are critical to the implementation of the Dale Community Plan. The budget instructions to department heads shall require that proposed expenditures include reference to items in the Plan that will be implemented with the funds.

- Capital Improvement Projects: There are many projects in the communities that require major capital expenditure. In these instances, the guidance provided by the plan will be critical to guarantee the project will proceed in a fashion that keeps in mind the overall long term interests of the community.
- Other Agencies and Organizations: Other agencies and organizations outside County government will play an essential role in the implementation of the Plan. As these agencies look for public input, the Dale Community Plan will be available as a clearly articulated vision of the direction the community desires to go.
- Community Monitoring of Implementation: The Community Planning Process has established a healthy dialogue among local residents concerning the future of the community. A number of citizens have thus far been involved in planning discussions. Dale has always been characterized by active citizen involvement, and this should continue to be standard policy. The planning process will affect everyone in the community, and everyone should contribute to planning decisions. The Dale Community Plan Implementation Tracking Chart (Appendix A, included in the back pocket) provides a way to easily check the status of the implementation of the plan. For each action proposed in the plan, the chart lists the contact, the estimated cost, the current status and comments. This chart will be updated by the Dale CP group, as the status of the projects change and as new information is available.

Conclusion

The purpose of planning is implementation. The Dale Community Plan identifies the overall development needs in Dale, the tasks involved in addressing them, the various parties who should perform these tasks, and the level of participation sought from these parties. The Dale community group should continue to advocate for themselves, their community and the plan. The ultimate success of the Dale Community Plan will be determined, in large part by the collective efforts of this group, along with Beaufort County Council, the county administrator, the planning department, and concerned citizens in general.