

# ROCKFISH VALLEY AREA PLAN

## Meeting Summary – June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Open House

6:30pm – 8:30pm at Rockfish Valley Community Center

Estimated Number of Public Attendees: 125

### **Meeting Format:**

---

- “Open House” meeting format was intended to encourage interaction with staff, and was comprised of stations for Transportation, Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community plan topics.
- Project team members provided brief presentations on an introduction to the Area Plan (Tim Padalino – Nelson County) and a summary of preliminary survey results and overview of data used for analysis in each plan topic (Nick Morrison – TJPDC). The same presentation was given twice: once at 6:45 and again at 7:45.

### **Public Comments Regarding Meeting Format:**

---

- Some attendees thought there would be an interactive question and answer activity between members of the audience and project team presenters directly after each presentation. This was not done, in favor of having Q&A activities happen at each of the five stations. This was intended to be a more two-way conversational approach, and to provide for a more streamlined public meeting. Some attendees said it would have been beneficial to have a formalized question and answer portion so everyone could hear each other’s questions.

### **General Comments and Discussion:**

---

- As expected, many attendees questioned why the Atlantic Coast Pipeline was not included in the presentation or in the analysis.
- The recently announced Dollar General store in Nellysford was another topic of concern for many in attendance.
- Questions were raised about how to increase survey participation from a more diverse group of Nelson County residents to potentially provide a broader representation of local perspectives.
- Attendees provided overwhelmingly positive responses to the maps and data presented at each of the five plan topic stations.
- Attendees provided positive feedback on the interactive mapping activity, which allowed attendees to identify which plan topics they prioritize, to make comments on specific locations in the study area, and to show where they live.
- Comments received at the plan topic stations:
  - Truck traffic is a concern
  - Speed limit in Nellysford
  - Trucks have difficulty making the turn at the intersection of Route 6 and 151
  - Try to get traffic counts in winter months to capture winter sports tourists
  - Concern with safety at Mill Lane and 151 intersection
  - Issues at Exit 118 (Interstate 64) could affect the levels of truck traffic on 151
  - What is the real economic viability of farming and agriculture?
  - Look at how soil quality maps were calculated and create more specific data
  - Include Ag Forestal Districts on the maps
  - Business employment data set may have some inaccuracies

## **Summary of Comment Card Submissions:**

---

- **Transportation:**
  - Rte. 6 and 151 intersection needs a traffic circle
  - We don't have a traffic problem – it is a safety issue
  - I would love to see some public transportation options available
  - We need a turn lane from 151 onto 250 (I know this is in Albemarle, but it is nonetheless needed)
  - Need signage and architectural guidelines and approval
  - Transportation, there is no public bus service... Everyone here has to have/own a car!
  
- **Economy:**
  - I was surprised and disappointed that local job growth is not a priority to folks. That being said, no big box jobs needed! We like it local!
  - Nellysford has only family owned small businesses – not national chains. Keep it that way, it fits. NO Dollar General needed!
  - We must not over-do the development. If we allow chain corporations like McDonalds, Dollar General, or CVS, we will lose our rural, unique character that we all enjoy and benefit from socially and economically.
  - Prefer no Dollar General but [instead] a business that enhances the community to draw dollars from within and without.
  - Utility availability: Nelson Cable's Fiber Line needs to be added – Rte. 6/151, up 664 and side roads, Wintergreen Resort
  
- **Agriculture:**
  - Area has low median wages, but potentially vast opportunity for high-profit small scale agricultural enterprises
  - New corporate farming programs and support should be discussed
  - It would be useful to rank the crops in order from most to least % of agricultural zones and assign \$ values to standard units of each type. This agricultural presentation tells nothing about what crops are grown in Nelson County. Isn't the purpose of land use to tell which of these crops have a high median or low \$ values, and what percentages of Nelson agricultural land can be used?
  - Suggest collection data on the economic impact of agro-tourism. Specifically, suggest collection data on the economic impact of agro-tourism and the contribution of vineyards and breweries to Nelson's economy. It seems this category is lumped into more general ones which makes identifying agribusiness more difficult. Perhaps should comment with economy
  - Better management of flat lands directly along Rockfish and other waterways for runoff. But not to the exclusion of homeowners in Stoney Creek and other higher density areas that also contribute their share of fertilizer and lawn care runoff pollutants.
  - ACP sediment pollution will hurt agricultural livelihoods.
  
- **Community:**
  - Are there plans for public water and sewer development to support growth?
  - The 151 corridor remains unmarred by large corporate chains – and that is part of the area's charm, appeal, and cultural identity. Let's keep it that way!
  - Add the archaeological site at the intersection of 151 and Glenthorne Loop. There are two small mill sites and sluiceways dating from the 19th century – both highly important

- 2/3 or more people here this evening were past retirement age. If we are able to keep them in this community, services are necessary. In-home services, health and home care, transportation needs, safety, and help getting to appointments, etc.
- I would like to see the area of “Downtown Nellysford” having zoning covenant that allows it to become a lovely little downtown that is a tourist destination for the 151 travelers. A roundabout could help.

▪ Natural Resources:

- Horizon Village has 2 DCR-recognized wetlands not on this map—Randy Witting
- All Ag-Forestal Districts should be identified on conservation maps
- The rural nature of Nelson County and environment are the primary tourist attractions. Do all possible to preserve them.
- What is the impact of a conservation easement? Vis-à-vis a utility easement i.e. a pipeline?
- The trail system around the Rockfish Valley Nature Center [Spruce Creek Park – Rockfish Valley Foundation] is also wonderful community resource for families and birders and walkers. Appreciation for the generosity in making these trails available to the public!
- The Piney River Bike Trail [Virginia Blue Ridge Rail Trail] is a fabulous recreation resource in the southern end of the County. This resource is for people of all fitness levels, but especially families and those who are not accomplished athletes. More resources like this in the Rockfish Valley would be amazing.
- Groundwater supply concerns: carrying capacity... i.e. AB/INBEW an example of upstate NY with Nestle over pumping
- Planning and Zoning can create ordinances for preservation of our night sky... elimination of light pollution!