

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of March 30, 2022**

**Members Present:** Mike Liskey, Scott Terndrup, Rochelle Dornatt, Vito Gentile, Jon Bennett, Laura Bennett, Joe Bayless, Jacob Bowman, Lemuel Hancock, Tyler Hinkle

**Members Absent:** Brad Swank, Jessica MacDonald, Todd Steiner

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:08 by Chairman Vito Gentile.

**Guests/Presentation:** Chairman Gentile welcomed Masters students from UVA, Department of Urban & Environmental Planning, School of Architecture. They made a presentation of case studies they have done on the economic and environmental impacts of rails-to-trails projects, including the Vennbahn trail in Europe which connects Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg. Overall, they said the studies have shown significant benefits to the communities from the trails for economic, health, transportation and recreational purposes. For the most part, opposition came from private landowners concerned about traffic adjacent to their properties. Generally, these objections were dealt with one-on-one with individual owners to mitigate impacts. The class is following the developments of the proposed Shenandoah trail project and will be making their recommendations to the committee overseeing the project.

**Agenda Business:** At 5:35 the meeting returned to regular order. The agenda was approved by acclamation. Rochelle made a motion to accept the minutes of February 23, 2022; Jon seconded. The motion was approved by voice.

**Reports:** Scott reported on his meeting with Sup. Tim Taylor. Sup. Taylor has chosen Sara Mauck to replace the late John Adamson for the open District 6 seat on the CAC. Scot also reported that VDOT announced a meeting regarding the interchange on Rt. 55 near the industrial park in Strasburg...proposing that there would be no left turn. The change is related to the build-out of Corridor H.

Laura reported that she, Joe and Rochelle met with a rep (Scott Procter) of Sheriff Carter's office, Melody Sheppard, and Abbey Walters of Prentiss Realty to discuss the issues in Chapter 7 of the Comp Plan (county services and facilities). The information they received included:

The sheriff's office is mainly concerned with trying to consolidate county buildings/resources it must protect, e.g. the sheriff's office, the magistrate's office and the dispatch center. The new sheriff's office was built with consolidation in mind but actually co-locating these services has been stalled. Similarly, the 2 court systems were supposed to be adjacent to each other but still remain many blocks apart. The other main take-away from the conversation was that of recruitment and retention of deputies. It costs \$30,000 to train a deputy but once they are in service for a while they leave for other jurisdictions that have higher salaries. This creates understaffing and leads to high overtime pay. This matter needs to be addressed for long term safety and budget planning for the county. Finally, Martin's Law necessitates new training to deal with citizens having mental health issues (as opposed to criminal activity).

The Superintendent of schools said the school board is beginning a review of its long-term plan which will be for 30 years. It deals mainly with capital improvements. She welcomes suggestions for program improvement via the Comp Plan. She is hoping to reimagine how schools are oriented; no more “set-n-get” heavy classroom learning where students are fed a curriculum. Instead, she hopes to see more interactive classroom instruction. She has big ideas for Triplett Tech and sees HVAC, solar, and cyber security programs as potential offerings there, as well as expanding the trade school physically either on site or elsewhere.

The meeting with Abbey Walters confirmed what has generally been observed: that new housing stock is being sold to families with children (generating a need for enhanced school and other county services). Those moving in typically – but not all – work remotely and move here for cheaper cost of living and more outdoor recreational opportunities. She said the big deficit in Shenandoah housing stock is that there are no real apartment rental options for young people getting started after high school or college. Those young persons move away reducing the workforce availability in the county. The same is true of condos; there are no condo developments in the county; that limits what a young couple or recent college grad could buy as a “starter” property and build a life here.

**Report to the Board of Supervisors.** Tyler asked for input on the draft report to the county supervisors. Members seemed fine with its content.

**Mock Community Collaboration Session.** Tyler and Lemuel led the members through a set-up of a tent with tables containing the items that will be used at public events to get citizen input for the comp plan. Members walked through and made minor suggestions and asked questions. Tyler provided a list of events the tent would be at and asked for volunteers to help man the tent.

**Walking Tours.** Tyler presented a comprehensive list of proposed areas and dates for walking tours in the community. There was a discussion about how to get from place to place in some jurisdictions that would be too far to walk. It was suggested that we use ShenGo, if possible for transport. The “audience” for these walking tours would be CAC members, possibly local official(s), and the public who would be notified via newspaper announcement or who could join in on the spot. In the case of a number of small towns it might be possible to combine visits to several in one day.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

The next meeting is on April 27, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Rochelle Dornatt