

Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Hickory Flat Area Plan // January 6, 2020

Today's Agenda

- Opening and Introductions
- Project Background & Role of the Advisory Committee
- Recap and Results from Public Meeting #2
- Next Steps & Public Meeting #3
- Open Discussion

Opening and Introductions

Introductions

- Share your name,
- If you're a Hickory Flat resident, employee or both,
- And if you were a previous participant

Meeting Protocol

- Presentations
 - All participants will be muted.
 - Any questions or comments can be submitted via Chat.
- Open Discussion
 - Please raise your (blue) hand by your name in the Participants window to be recognized.
 - Everyone should listen respectfully to each other.
 - Only one person should speak at the same time and the speaker should not be interrupted.

Project Background & Role of the Advisory Committee

Purpose of the Area Plan

Create a more in-depth plan for the Hickory Flat area that addresses issues identified in Comprehensive Plan Update

- Traffic Congestion
- Annexation
- Pedestrian and Bike Facilities
- Tree Protection
- Rural Character
- Public Services

“Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail.”

Set a detailed work program for County to help achieve desired community vision

Role of the Advisory Committee

- Contemplate how the community could be improved to better serve you and/or your organization
- Advise the project team on the goals and direction of the plan
- Engage the community and hear their ideas, concerns, etc.
- Spread word about the area plan and the process by encouraging participation

Project Update

- Public Engagement paused in spring 2020 after 2 advisory group meetings and 1 public meeting
- Planning Continued
 - Market study completed by Bleakly Advisory Group
 - Studied examples of virtual public engagement
 - Developed Case Studies
- Restart approved by BOC in early October
 - Hickory Flat is at a critical point
 - Additional rezoning's and development eliminate opportunities to create community vision
 - Market Study loses value over time

Virtual Meeting Information

- All meetings will be virtual
 - General Public
 - 3 week windows, 24/7
 - Advisory Committee
- Virtual format addresses:
 - Public health concerns
 - Offers greater flexibility to encourage more participation
 - Keeps the planning process moving forward in a timely manner

Recap & Results

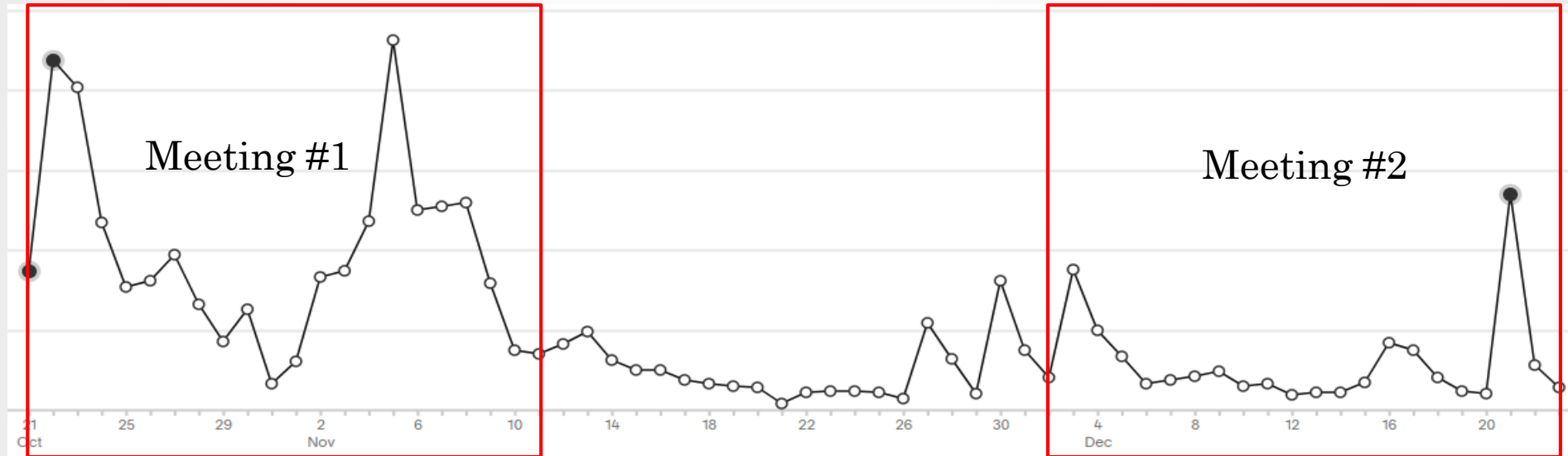
Public Meeting #2

Meeting #2 Recap

- 4 video presentations and a Community Preference Survey
- Still some public viewpoints that we need to better understand
 - We had statements “for” and “against” sidewalks.
 - How we interpret this: sidewalks, trails should be in sensible locations that link obvious destinations.
 - Hearing “no new parks,” but also “preserve land.”
 - Does this mean no new “active” parks but “passive, undeveloped greenspace” is OK?
 - Does the term “mixed use” in Hickory Flat mean a small-scale, gathering space in a central location, composed of “mom-and-pop” shops, small offices and higher end restaurants?
 - Not necessarily uses stacked upon one another and not featuring residential?
 - Can architectural standards create the cohesion and local character preservation that the public desires?

Participation Numbers

- Total Visits to the Website



- No increase in “unique visitors,” so **no new participants**

..But..

- 57 activity responses; up from 37 responses at the 1st Virtual Meeting
- 162 presentation comments across 4 videos; an increase from the 1st Virtual Meeting

Intro Presentation

- Total Responses: 58
- Are you surprised by the results of the mapping exercise?
 - 44 NO, 2 YES, 12 Unanswered
- How do you feel about the results of the "Describe 2020" word exercise?
 - Average response: "Agree"
- How do you feel about the results of the "Envision 2040" word exercise?
 - Average response: "Agree"
- Comments
 - Fix the traffic problem
 - Limit fast food chains
 - Land preservation
 - Protect land owner investments;
 - Some people's retirement plan
 - Senior living with transportation
 - ADA facilitation
 - Maintaining small town quality of life; not becoming Roswell or Alpharetta
 - Protect and promote horse farms; equestrian character
 - Create cohesion from one development to another.
 - Increase walkability and connections.

Transportation Presentation

- **Total Responses: 48**
- “Does this presentation answer your questions about transportation improvements in Hickory Flat?”
 - **33 YES, 5 NO, 10 Unanswered**
- “If additional sidewalks were available where you live, you would walk more to restaurants, schools, parks and work?”
 - **Average response: “Agree”**
- **Comments**
 - Sidewalks/Pathways
 - Not needed in all areas; only in the central areas
 - Connect points of interest; network
 - Safe routes for kids to walk/bike to schools, parks
 - Separated from vehicle lanes
 - Locations suggested:
 - [Batesville Road](#)
 - [Lower Birmingham Road](#)
 - [Stringer Road](#)
 - Roads and Traffic
 - Keeping traffic as low as possible through targeted improvements
 - Urgency for improvements
 - Roundabouts at certain intersections
 - Expansion of transit options
 - New roads should feature trees and landscaping
 - Locations suggested for traffic study/improvements
 - [Univeter Road](#)
 - [Batesville Rd](#)
 - [Stringer Rd at Route 140](#)
 - [Sugar Pike Rd](#)
 - [140 between Hickory Rd and East Cherokee Rd.](#)

Public Facilities Presentation

- Total Responses: 23
- Comments
 - Parks
 - Better basketball opportunities
 - Adequate maintenance and upkeep of parks
 - Further improvement of local parks, including more trails
 - No new parks needed
 - Schools
 - Appropriate for the area.
 - Protect quality of schools by ensuring they do not reach over capacity
 - Other
 - County and Holly Springs come to an agreement to implement long-term plans
 - Support for library expansion
 - Support for a community building/center
 - Rural architecture standards for future buildings instead of corporate/suburban styles

Market Study Presentation

- Total Responses: 33
- “This market study presentation covers all of my questions about Hickory Flat”
 - Average response: “Agree”
- Comments
 - Sensible, controlled development
 - Lower density residential development
 - Maintain small town community character and natural characteristics;
 - not Alpharetta or Woodstock
 - Greenspace preservation
 - No market for, no public desire for:
 - big-box stores
 - industrial uses
 - apartments
 - Market and public desire for:
 - higher-end restaurants
 - retail
 - small-scale office.

Community Preference Survey

- Participants view images to make a quick determination on whether or not what was shown is suitable for Hickory Flat.
- Allows us to better understand what we heard mentioned previously by the public, regarding the specific types of buildings, activities and land uses.
 - Example:
 - Expressed desire for walking options.
 - We now understand that a trail in Hickory Flat should be **wide and paved**, in a minimally developed **natural setting**, have items such as **benches and trash receptacles** but not large structures or clearing.
 - 7 Sections
 - Trails, Residential, Etc.

Top Trail Images

- Asphalt or natural surface
- 10'+ width
- Minimal clearing or development
- Many mature trees and shade
- Benches, trash cans, etc. only
- Curvilinear



Top Residential Images

- Large, Single Family Homes
- Subdivisions and Rural/Agriculture Residential
- Sidewalks
- Open fields and grassed lawns
- Scattered trees
- Garages hidden
- Fencing



Top Restaurant Images

- Sit-down dining, casual or fine
- Natural Materials: Wood, Stone, Brick
- Landscaping
- Outdoor seating
- Windows



Top Office Images

- Traditional styles
 - Somewhat residential
- Natural Materials: Wood, Stone, Brick
- Small scale: 1-2 Stories
- Parking close by and OK close to building
- Less emphasis on landscaping
- Pitched roofs and overhangs
- Windows



Top Commercial Images



- Natural Materials: Wood, Stone, Brick
- No garish colors
- “Main Street” rhythm of small, differing store fronts
- No long, flat facades
- Landscaping
- Outdoor seating and gatherings spaces
- 2 story maximum
- Parking close by, but not up against buildings



Top Public Space Images

- Passive Uses
- Trees and landscape beds
- Architecture
 - Gazebo, fountain, shade structure
- Paved pathways
- Lighting
- Seating and picnic tables



Top Sidewalk Images

- 4'+ width
- Separated from roadways by 5-10'
- Hard surface: concrete or asphalt
- Protected
- Multi-use
- Trees and turf between sidewalk and curb
- Lamp posts
- Landscape planters



Have we summarized all of these images properly?

Next Steps & Public Meeting #3

Vision Statement

- The Hickory Flat Community is:
 - *Deeply rooted in its history of rural and natural open space.*
 - *Connected through strong social networks that enhance the family-friendly, village feel.*
 - *Centered on great local institutions, such as schools, recreation, the library, churches and the fire station.*
 - *Growing in a managed way that preserves the unique elements of the community, while bringing desired amenities and infrastructure improvements.*

Is this on target?

Challenges

- Well publicized and many people visited the site but relatively low participation
 - Facebook, 175 person contact list, news outlets, website
 - Still at,
 - **2.5k individual visitors**
 - **<100 people participating**
- Still some participants seem focused on “greater area” and not on the study area
 - Planning is not focused on “rural” areas outside “suburbanizing” study area

Next Steps

- Public Meeting #3 (January 13 – February 3)
 - Introduction
 - Results of the Community Preference Survey
 - Bleakly Advisory Group – Market Study Presentation #3
 - Future Land Use Charrette
 - Website and Small Groups on Zoom
- Publicity
 - Facebook posts, press releases, website postings, email list

Any other ideas?

Open Discussion

- How can we generate more participation, not just publicity?
- Are we understanding the public correctly?
 - Sidewalks, mixed use, restaurants, offices?
- Is there anything more we need to add to the information we've compiled?

- Share your thoughts!