

To: Michael Poston, Jackson County
From: Chad Meadows, CodeWright
Date: 5-15-23
CC: Cara Isher-Witt, Angela Manning, recodifycashiers.com
RE: ReCodify Cashiers Task 3 (5.8.23- 5.12.23) – Trip Notes



MESSAGE

This is the trip notes summary from Task 3, Community Character, meetings conducted in Cashiers over the period from May 8 through May 12, 2023. It identifies the activities conducted over the period and summarizes some of the discussion. Detailed results from the community character public workshop conducted on May 9, 2023, and input collected from the table at the Green Market on May 10, 2023, are posted under separate cover on recodifycashiers.com.

Task 3 of the project is titled Community Character. The Community Character Task included the following seven activities:

1. Meeting #3 with the Cashiers Community Planning Council;
2. A presentation to the Cashiers Community Collaborative;
3. A public workshop on identifying community character;
4. A project information table at the Green Market;
5. A presentation to Develop Cashiers Responsibly;
6. A summary presentation on community character findings; and
7. A listening session at Buck's Coffee Café and eleven different office hours meetings.



Additional detail about the status of each of these seven activities is listed, in order, on the following pages of this report. A copy of the trip itinerary is included on the following page.




CodeWright



Trip Itinerary

The table below shows the general project itinerary for the Community Character trip.

| Trip 3 – Community Character | |
|--|---------------|
| Trip Itinerary | |
|  | |
| MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023 | |
| Cashiers CPC Meeting (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd) | 5-7P |
| TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023 | |
| County Staff Meeting (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd) | 9-10A |
| Cashiers Community Collaborative Presentation (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd) | 10:30A-12P |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Victor Lofquist (Engineer) (via telephone) | 2-3P |
| COMMUNITY CHARACTER PUBLIC WORKSHOP (Village Green Commons Hall) | 6-8P |
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023 | |
| Coffee at Buck's Coffee Café (6 Highway 107 S) – open discussion | 8-10A |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Mark Letson, BOCC Chair (Buck's Coffee Cafe) | 10-11:30A |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with C. Pendergrass & R. Walker (Village Green 160 Frank Allen Rd) | 11:30A-12:30P |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with L. Bissett (Village Green 160 Frank Allen Rd) | 1-2P |
| Green Market Table (Village Green) – open discussion | 2-5P |
| Develop Cashiers Responsibly Presentation (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd) | 3-5P |
| THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2023 | |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Bill Horton, C.C.C/D.C.R & Gary Wein (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd) | 10-11A |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Linda Stone (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd) | 11A-12P |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Michael Cox (Driving tour) | 12P-2P |
| Consulting Team (Internal Meeting) | 2-5P |
| COMMUNITY CHARACTER RESULTS PRESENTATION (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd) | 6-7:30P |
| FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2023 | |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Bill Horton, C.C.C/D.C.R (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd) | 9-9:30A |
| Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with C. Pendergrass (via telephone) | 9:30-10:00A |
| County Staff Meeting (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd) | 10-11A |
| Departure (from Cashiers) | 11:30A |





1. Meeting #3 with the Cashiers Community Planning Council

The third meeting of the Cashiers Community Planning Council on the ReCodify Cashiers project took place in the Cashiers Library on Monday, May 8, 2023. The following Council members were present:

- Glenn Ubertino (Chair)
- David Bond
- Dr. Homolka
- Daniel Fletcher

The presentation included a status update and a reminder of the main aspects of regulatory evolution discussed with the CPC during Meeting 2.

There were a series of slides summarizing the eight stakeholders meetings conducted on February 21 and 22, 2023. The slides identified the stakeholders and provided a quick overview of the summarized comments, organized into three categories: What's working (with the regulatory process), what's a problem, and what should we (the County) do about it. The full stakeholders input summary is available on the project webpage.

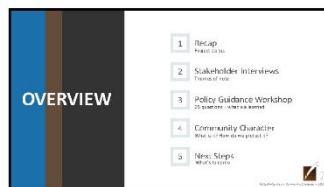
The presentation then overviewed the results of the Policy Guidance workshop conducted with the community on February 21, 2023. Approximately 25 participants participated in a series of polling questions about policy guidance in the Small Area Plan and related issues. The overview summarized the observations from the polling exercise. The full Policy Guidance Workshop Summary Report is available on the project webpage.

The presentation then clarified that the purpose of Trip 3 and the related activities is to better define Cashiers community character and describe how this issue will be addressed in the recodified standards in Section 9.3 of the County's UDO. The presentation defined community character generally, described the features community character is often based upon, introduced the notion of macro- and micro-level community character, and the standards typically thought of to affect each of the two different scales. This portion of the presentation ended with a list of the six basic areas of community character to be addressed by the revised code and the constituent parts of each.

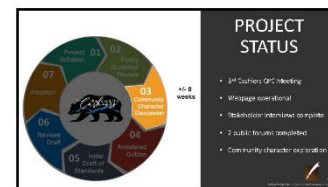
Copies of the slides are shown below and are also included on the project website.



1



2



3





2. Presentation to the Cashiers Community Collaborative

In the morning of Tuesday, May 9, 2023, County staff and the consulting team conducted a presentation on the ReCodify Cashiers project with members of the Cashiers Community Collaborative in the Library. The presentation included an overview of the project team, work program, schedule, project goals, and the work completed to date. The presentation then summarized the structure of Jackson County UDO Section 9.3, the Cashiers Commercial District standards, and the zoned district map for the Cashiers area.

Next, the presentation explored three fundamental questions:

1. **How does the ReCodify Cashiers project differ from prior planning efforts?**
2. **What might change in the County's development regulations as a part of ReCodify Cashiers?**
3. **How will these changes make the future better for Cashiers?**

The presentation also addressed a fourth question: What is unlikely to change in the current development regulations?

The main difference between ReCodify Cashiers and other recent projects like the Small Area Plan is that ReCodify Cashiers will result in the creation of **new law**, not advisory guidance.

Some of the current development regulations that **might change** as part of ReCodify Cashiers include the following:

- Revision of VC/GC into 3 new zoning districts
- Inclusion of a 4th new conditional zoning district option
- Potential revisions to current zoning district boundaries
- More clarity on allowable residential uses and standards
- Procedural revisions: Reduced reliance on SUP, CZ district procedure, increased administrative review
- Codification of community character terms and images as review criteria
- Revisions to building and site design standards (based on new community character criteria)
- Potential identification of preferred forms of development subject to an easier review path
- Inclusion of more purpose and intent statements throughout the standards
- Inclusion of new private common open space requirements for most forms of development
- New requirements addressing private road and pedestrian system circulation (+ potential FIL)
- Inclusion of additional illustrations, particularly with respect to building and site design requirements
- Overhaul of signage rules (based on input and to remove content-based standards)
- Enhance 'dark sky' exterior lighting (need to consider enforcement)
- Potential inclusion of sustainable development incentives





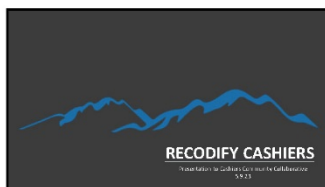
Some of the ways the changes proposed as a part of ReCodify Cashiers will make the **future better for the community** includes the following:

- More legally-defensible development standards
- More transparent process for large project review
- Increased opportunity for negotiation on larger projects
- More of a policy role for CPC (a focus on the regulations, rather than how they are applied)
- Less debate about what is or is not consistent with community character
- More open space
- More housing options
- Better transportation network connections

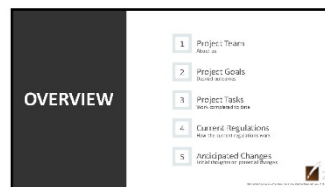
The fourth question, what is **not likely to change** as a result of the ReCodify Cashiers effort, includes the following:

- Wastewater and potable water will remain primary impediments to development
- The County's inability to own or maintain streets
- Traffic problems on State roads are likely to continue
- Development standards in areas far from the current zoned district boundary will not change as a result of this project
- State rules for sedimentation and erosion control will remain in place
- Current countywide rules for steep slopes

Copies of the slides are shown below and are also included on the project website.



1



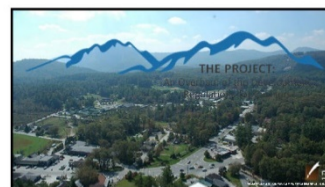
2



3



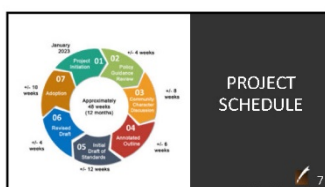
4



5



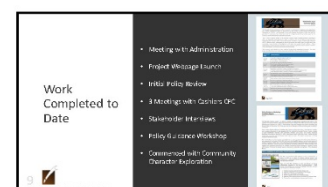
6



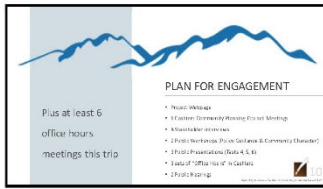
7



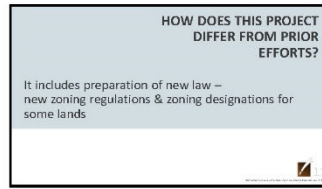
8



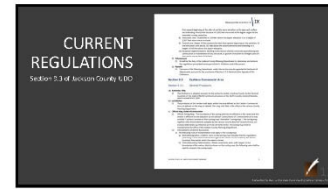
9



10



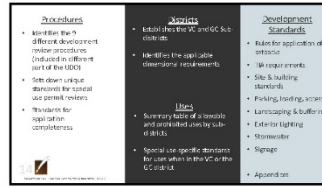
11



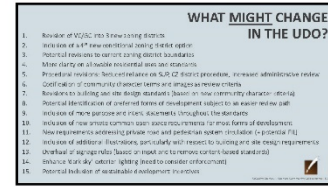
12



13



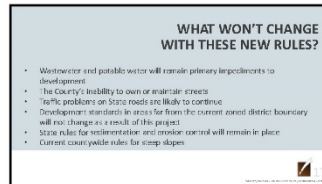
14



15



16



17



18

3. Public Workshop on Identifying Community Character

Approximately 30 participants attended the Community Character public workshop conducted on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, from 6:00 to 7:30PM in the Commons Hall of the Village Green. The purpose for the workshop was to collect input from the community on the kinds of locations, developments, and words that are or are not consistent with the Cashiers community character.

Participants were divided up among four tables of eight persons each. The workshop started with a quick overview of community character and how the information on community character will be used as review criteria for new development applications in the revised development regulations. Each table then selected a table leader and spent the next hour or so working together on each of the three exercises.





ReCodify Cashiers

Task 3 Community Character Trip Notes

RECODIFY CASHIERS - COMMUNITY CHARACTER WORKSHOP 5-9-23
Exercise 2: Community Character Consistency
 Please examine each image. Place a 1, 2, or 3 on the line beneath the image.
 1 means the feature, building, or use depicted is inconsistent with your idea of Cashiers community character.
 2 means the feature, building, or use depicted is somewhat consistent with your idea of Cashiers community character.
 3 means the feature, building, or use depicted is very consistent with your idea of community character.
 Leave the line blank if you are not sure.
 Try not to assign a number value based on the quality of the image, or personal feelings. Objectively, is the image consistent with your idea of community character? How consistent? 1, 2, or 3?

Sheet 8: Building Size

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Image 1 2 / | Image 2 2 3 | Image 3 2 3 | Image 4 2 3 1 |
| Image 5 1 3 | Image 6 2 3 | Image 7 2 | Image 8 1 3 |

Exercise 3 involved selection of key words and phrases that participants felt wither reflected the Cashiers community character or didn't. There was also an opportunity for each table to provide additional words or phrases if they had suggestions. The results of Exercise 3 are included later in this trip notes summary. Copies of the selected terms from each of the four tables are included in the community character workshop 'raw data' document on the project webpage.

After completion of the three exercises, the table leader from each table stood and talked about one or two thoughts or conclusions from the participants of each table.

The following paragraphs summarize the points about community character from each table leader.

RECODIFY CASHIERS - COMMUNITY CHARACTER WORKSHOP 5-9-23
Exercise 3: Describing Community Character
 Please examine the following random words or phrases. These words are often used as the basis for definitions of community character. Please circle the ones that you think apply to Cashiers and cross out the ones that you think don't apply to Cashiers. You can take a poll of your table if there is disagreement about a particular word and record the votes for or against. There is space on the second sheet for you to write any additional terms or phrases that you think should be included in our list.

Sheet 1 Terms

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ARTIFICIAL | COMMUNITY FOR RESIDENTS | ECLECTIC | GREAT VIEWS |
| ATTRACTIVE | CONFUSING | SORT OF EXCLUSIVE | HARD TO WALK AROUND |
| BUSY SOME TIMES OF YEAR | CROWDED It is in Summer | EXPENSIVE NO AFFORDABLE HOUSING | HOME |
| CHARMING | DEEPLY-ROOTED HERITAGE | FABRICATED | LOST |
| COLORLESS | DISCONNECTED | FULL SERVICE | MEDIOCRE |
| COMMERCIAL CHARACTER | EASY TO NAVIGATE But not in Summer = traffic | GLAMOROUS | MEETS DAILY NEEDS |



Table 1 – “Blue Table”

- Desire for Cashiers to continue to look like Cashiers (they know it is going to develop and grow) but they want the ability to say “no” and applicants that do not want to be consistent with the community should look to other areas to develop.
- The building designs they like are some of the shopping centers (but not all the shopping centers).

Table 2 – “Purple Table”

- Consensus that if buildings are well maintained with a natural façade (general aesthetic that Cashiers wants), it would not necessarily worry about the size of the buildings.
- They looked at the difference between Slabtown property and the Silver Creek building. They were drawn to Silver Creek even though it is a much larger building, it has more natural finishes like the cedar sake in darker colors seems to be more appropriate.
- They would rather have small buildings within the village core, not necessarily large buildings and maybe separate them into smaller cottages or smaller structures with more connectivity.
- Another takeaway is the building scores exercise some were lower due to the appearance of their signage. They felt a consistency of signage could make a huge difference amongst our community.

Table 3 – “Red Table”

- What hit home was the words that they added – some good terms were organic in terms of the look and character of the buildings they wanted it to blend with nature and use earth tone colors.
- The plateau is a very unique area; we need to save the trees, ridgelines, watersheds (conservation).
- Would not want a lot of big box stores (they crossed out Ingles) as they would want it to be more with natural earth tones. However, places like Wendy’s did a great job of keeping with the community character in terms of appearance.
- Be consistent with the local nature and beautiful plateau.

Table 4 – “Yellow Table”

- The group all looked around each other when working on the exercise for the rating the buildings when they knew it was a “3”. They knew what they wanted, and what they did not want.
- They discussed structures they liked, but would prefer more green around these structures and less parking lots in the village core.





4. Project Information Table at the Green Market

County staff and the consulting team prepared and staffed a public information table for interested persons coming to the Green Market at the Village Green on Wednesday, May 10, from 2P to 5P. The purpose was to provide an easy opportunity to learn about the project, ask questions, and submit individual thoughts about which buildings or sites are consistent with community character. A total of 18 people stopped by the table to ask questions about the project, complete the building image ranking and community character terms exercises (these were the same tools as those used during the community character workshop on Tuesday, May 9). This information will be combined with the data collected during the public workshop, and copies of the ranked images and terms provided by green market participants are included in the Green Market Table 'raw data' document on the project webpage.

In addition to the building rankings and terms exercises, the notes below summarize observations and thoughts from participants coming to the Green Market:

Green Market Notes

- The activities at the table ranged in popularity. The “character words” activity was the most popular amongst the visitors to the table. The map activity was the least popular and seemed to be a little overwhelming to visitors to the table, with many responding to the activity with comments like “Well I think everything is Cashiers.” and “I wouldn’t even know where to start.”
- We had several people say they specifically came to the Green Market to visit our table and give input.
- There was some confusion about what the table was for, with some people thinking that we were developers. Others asked how this process and outcome was different than the Small Area Plan and ULI Study.
- Several visitors mentioned the importance of tree protection and tree conservation.
- Lots of comments and concerns about traffic within the village core.
- Large development projects were something that were mentioned a lot in conversation, mostly with opposition and concern. The recent community meeting about a large development was brought up often, and the opposition that people had.
- Overall there was not much conversation about “Cashiers Community Character”, most visitors wanted to express their concerns about traffic and large development.





5. Presentation to Develop Cashiers Responsibly

On Wednesday, May 10, 2023, from 3P to 5p the consulting team, and County staff conducted a meeting with representatives from Develop Cashiers Responsibly at the Library to explain the project and detail some of the preliminary findings and potential recommendations, such as:

- Shifting away from the quasi-judicial special use permit process towards a conditional rezoning process for review of the largest new projects;
- Changes to the VC and GC sub-district designations in favor of a more use-based approach (mixed-use in the core, commercial on lots bounding State Roads like 64 and 107, and residential for other areas);
- A wider range of mixed-use and residential housing options;
- Greater pedestrian connectivity; and
- The possibility of including new standards for private common open space for all forms of development in the Cashiers zoned district), and to answer questions.

One question that arose was the possibility of the inclusion of new mandatory tree protection standards in the updated provisions for Cashiers. County legal staff have taken the position that mandatory tree protection standards are outside the scope of the County's authority given the lack of special authorization to do so from the General Assembly. This is a common stance among other counties in North Carolina. It is possible for the BOCC to propose a condition requiring an applicant to preserve existing vegetation as part of the discussion associated with a conditional rezoning application; but the applicant must accept and agree to this condition for it to be binding. One potential aspect of the new regulations is the creation of a mandatory open space set-aside. It would be possible to include portions of mature upland vegetation to be set aside as private common open space meeting requirements for "passive" recreation based upon the priorities for preservation listed in the new development standards. In addition, the landscaping standards could be further revised to provide even greater credit for the retention of existing trees as part of meeting required landscaping buffer standards.

Another question that arose is the potential for establishment of new Cashier's-specific steep slope rules. These newly proposed rules would override the current county-wide steep slope standards. After careful consideration, the consulting team recommends that the County's current steep slope provisions continue to be applied uniformly across the County (including within the Cashiers zoned district). The County's steep slope rules are county-wide, and changing them in specific areas would create a patchwork of differing slope standards that could result in errors, additional staff workload, and potential due process claims by landowners resulting from non-uniform application of the standards within adjacent geographic locations. These outcomes would be contrary to good planning policy. Further, changes to the current county-wide steep slope need to be advertised and considered by residents throughout the County, not just as part of changes to a specific area.

Following discussion about potential changes to the process including the shift from a special use permit process decided by the Cashiers Community Planning Council ("CPC") to a conditional zoning process decided by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) with input from the CPC and Planning Board, the consulting team made the point that this change would also likely result in a higher number of new applications being decided administratively by





County staff. The logistics of having all or substantially all new development applications being decided by the BOCC as a conditional zoning would be impossible and would result in overly-long wait times for applicants.

A question arose as to how the community would be informed of or participate in development application reviews that were decided administratively by County staff. This is an important question to consider. While more applications would be decided administratively under the changes being contemplated, the purpose for ReCodify Cashiers is to clarify and enumerate the development rules that are embraced by the community. If the rules in the Cashiers code are clear and are supported by the community when adopted, and an applicant then follows the rules in the code, then the application is consistent with the community's stated desires and there is no need for further discussion or debate of the application's merits. The purpose for development standards generally is to go on record with respect to what kinds of uses and site configurations are desired by the community. Some might argue that it is inappropriate to have debate over applications that meet the codified standards.

It is true that the community should be informed about applications that have been submitted and applications that have been decided administratively. One method used in many other local governments is the preparation and publication of a monthly development activity report by County staff that identifies the applications that have been submitted, those in the process of review, and those that have been decided over the course of the preceding month. This kind of monthly reporting would enable interested parties in the community to "keep track" of proposed applications. It is important to remember that the submittal of an application, its review, and the decision process are exercises of the government under the State and federal Constitutions. These Constitutions are intended to protect and balance the right of due process for all involved – applicants and adjacent landowners. Persons who meet the legal test of being aggrieved by a decision have the standing (or right) to appeal an administrative decision, and that appeal is properly made to the appellate body – which, in this case, is the Cashiers Community Planning Council.

Preparation of such a monthly report would be an extra service not provided now, so in many ways, this kind of change would create more awareness about development applications than exists today. It does not change the rules of standing, but it does help ensure an informed constituency. Anticipated changes to the County's permitting software in the near future will help automate application reporting so as to ensure accurate reporting and reducing long-term administrative costs to the County.

The consulting team and County staff do expect that potential changes to the proposed Cashiers regulations will help address conservation, environmental protection, and the continued maintenance of community character. The potential changes to the process will address some of the challenges associated with the special use permit process, and will also create a greater reliance on clearly codified and objective design and aesthetic standards. Other suggested revisions or policy changes, such as the monthly development report, will actually provide more information to the community than is made available today.





6. Community Character Findings Presentation

On Thursday, May 11 at 6:00 pm the consulting team presented the findings-to-date with respect to community character identification. The purpose for exploring community character is to create a definition of community character, a series of clear, objective statements that describe the Cashiers community character, and a set of precedent images that clarify the types of buildings, architecture, and site features that are and are not consistent with the Cashiers community character. Together, these aspects would be integrated into the revised development regulations for Cashiers and used as review criteria for new development applications. The purpose for Trip 3 was to explore the definition of community character and better discern public opinion with regard to architecture, aesthetics, site features, and infrastructure.

The findings presentation overviewed the objectives for describing community character and then overviewed the results from each of the three community workshop exercises conducted on Tuesday May 9, 2023. The presentation did not include the results from the Green Market participant submittals, though that information is collated into the final community character documents on the project webpage.

The results from Exercise 1 yielded 5 locations selected by each of the four tables as areas **consistent** with the community character. These areas include:

1. Bucks Coffee;
2. 107 S. Corridor (numerous buildings and developments were included by the various tables, so the consulting team chose to just select the first 1,000 feet of the 107 corridor south of the main intersection with Highway 64);
3. Village Green;
4. Farmers Market; and
5. Wells Hotel.

Exercise 1 also asked participants to identify areas that are not consistent with the Cashiers community character. The top five locations (identified based on frequency of identification across the four tables) found to be **inconsistent** with community character include:

1. Concrete Plant;
2. Ingles;
3. Wilson Electric;
4. The Spinx Stations; and
5. The Tiny Homes models of Highway 64 west.

Inclusion as an inconsistent location could be based upon use type, appearance, or site features.

Exercise 2 was the building ranking exercise where tables of participants were asked, as a group, to rank buildings, uses, and site features as very consistent with existing community character (a "3"), or not consistent with existing community character (a "1"). The following ten buildings, uses, or site features were identified as **consistent** with community character by all four tables:





- Rustics-Shopping Center
- Old Cashiers Village-Commercial Building;
- Wells Hotel-Commercial Building;
- Bucks Coffee-Commercial Building;
- Cornucopia-Commercial Building;
- Fiddlehead Designs-Commercial Building;
- Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce-Institutional Building;
- Farmers Market-Institutional Building;
- Village Green-Institutional Building; and
- Creekside Directory Sign-Signage.

The following five buildings, uses, or site features were identified by all four tables as being the **least consistent** with the community character:

- Ingles-Shopping Center
- Slabtown-Residential Uses;
- Bazar Barn-Industrial Building;
- Dirtworks-Industrial Use
- The billboard on the south side of Highway 64 east and the Spinx signs.

Additional detail as to why these particular buildings, sites, or site features were or were not consistent with community character will be described in the final community character analysis document.

Exercise 3 included the words and terms that were or were not descriptive of the Cashiers community character. The following words were selected as **consistent** with community character by all four tables:

- Community for residents
- Great Views
- Attractive
- Expensive
- Home
- Deeply Rooted Heritage
- Place for visitors
- Respectful of nature
- Place for kids
- Resort
- Natural setting
- Quiet
- Small town
- Village
- Plateau
- Small buildings
- Unique

The words listed below were considered by all four tables as **not consistent** with community character:

- Artificial
- Busy
- Fabricated
- Lost
- Colorless
- Full Service
- Mediocre
- Commercial Character
- Glamping
- Uninviting
- Uniform
- Pass-through on way to elsewhere
- Ugly

Copies of the slides from the results presentation are listed on the following pages:



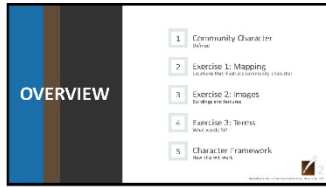


ReCodify Cashiers

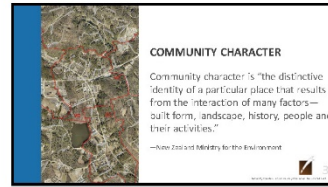
Task 3 Community Character Trip Notes



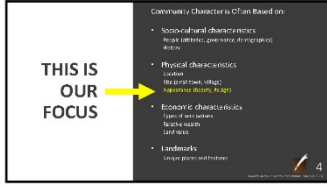
1



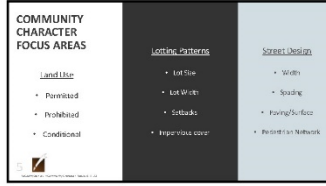
2



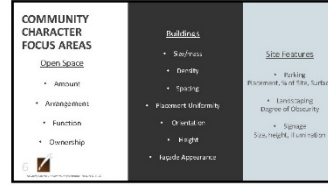
3



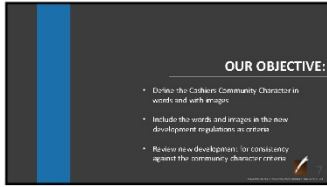
4



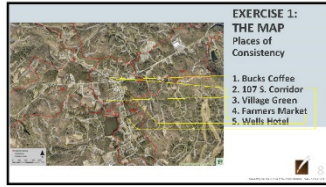
5



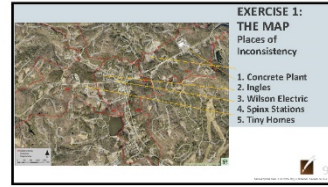
6



7



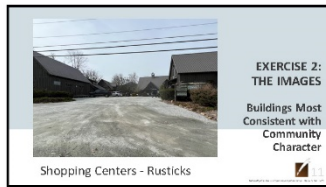
8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



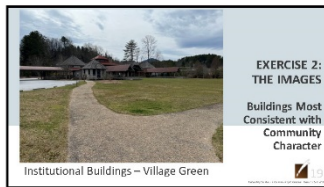
16



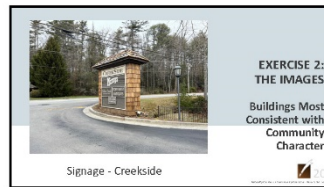
17



18



19



20



21



22



23



24



25

EXERCISE 3: The Words

Work with your table to select the words that best describe current community character

| ADJECTIVE | COMMUNITY CHARACTER | ADJECTIVE | ADJECTIVE | ADJECTIVE | ADJECTIVE |
|------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| ATTRACTIVE | CONVULSED | LEGACY | WELL-THOUGHT-OUT | | |
| EXPENSIVE | DISORDERLY | UNIFORM | | | |
| HOMEY | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |
| UNIFORM | UNDESIRABLE | UNIFORM | | | |

26

- EXERCISE 3: The Words**
- Words that best describe current community character
- Community for residents
 - Great views
 - Attractive
 - Expensive
 - Home
 - Deeply rooted heritage
 - Place for visitors
 - Respectful of nature
 - Place for kids
 - Resort
 - Neutral setting
 - Quiet
 - Small town
 - Village
 - Placeau
 - Small buildings
 - Unique

27

- EXERCISE 3: The Words**
- Words that are inconsistent with community character
- Artificial
 - Busy
 - Fabricated
 - Loss
 - Colorless
 - Full Service
 - Mediocre
 - Commercial Character
 - Glamping
 - Uninviting
 - Uniform
 - Pass-through on way to elsewhere
 - Ugly

28

Green Market Input

We have not had enough time to process that data

29

- NEXT STEPS...**
- Collate all the data
 - Incorporate historical precedent (Barbery, Taylor house, others)
 - Add refinements from tonight
 - Recognize opportunities
 - Prepare the framework statements describing community character
- EXAMPLE FRAMEWORK STATEMENTS:**
Residential buildings and landscaping in residential areas should maintain uniform landscaping orientation to the street, or setback of one acre, within the appropriate zone.

30

7. Listening Session at Bucks Coffee + 11 Office Hours Meetings

A listening session was conducted at Buck’s Coffee Café for anyone who wished to participate on Wednesday May 10th from 8A until 10:30. Approximately eight persons approached the table with questions or comments over the course of the morning. Discussions ranged from community character “Mountain Mayberry” to the composition of the community – a hybrid mix of full time and part time residents, with Cashiers being thought of primarily as a residential community with a secondary function as a tourism area. There was additional discussion about the kinds of application materials that should be submitted, as well as questions about keeping the community informed if more applications were to be decided administratively. Other comments included the potential for conditional rezoning applications to show how higher residential densities could be accommodated in light of available resource capacity. Comments also included the idea that the new standards, or zoning map, should “pre-identify” the areas in the community where larger or more intense commercial or mixed-use developments should be accommodated, based on existing lot patterns, infrastructure capacity, or anticipated impacts to the community.



Eleven different office hours sessions were conducted over the course of Trip 3 with a wide variety of different interested parties and viewpoints, including:

- Engineers preparing development applications;
- Developers;
- Elected officials;
- Representatives from community groups (like DCR);
- Residents (including so-called “local-local” residents);
- Scientists; and
- Governmental employees who live or work within the Cashiers zoned district.

Some office hours participants suggested that it should be the Cashiers Community Planning Council (CPC), not the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) that reviews and decides conditional rezoning applications (this is permissible under the NC General Statutes, provided special authority to do this is granted to the County by the General Assembly). There was also a desire expressed to allow the CPC to review and decide subdivision applications in Cashiers instead of County staff or the Planning Commission, or that CPC should be the body designated to hear appeals to subdivision application decisions.

Comments included statements about the difficulty of developing in the area given the resource constraints (wastewater, potable water, stormwater management, traffic, and the lack of pedestrian access). Many lamented that the systems in place today worked 40 years ago, but no longer operate today, and that continued growth pressure continues to place even greater burdens on these systems.

Concerns were expressed about inequity for large swathes of the community who can not afford housing in Cashiers despite working there. Many expressed concern over the burdens of commuting into Cashiers to work in light of traffic congestion, particularly over the summer months. There were comments about the need to ensure that workers (including temporary or seasonal workers) have the ability to safely walk around Cashiers to meet their daily needs and that inclusion of sidewalks along the major roadways was a necessity, not a luxury or an aspect of the tourism economy.

There were detailed discussions about the area’s hydrology and its relative importance to ecological function, development costs, and public safety. Protection of rare and endangered flora and fauna is important, as is protection of viewsheds, but the key aspect to address is hydrology – potable water quality, stormwater pollution impacts, and stormwater runoff quantity as a matter of continued public safety.

As part of the debriefing between County staff and the consulting team, the decision was made to return to Cashiers “sooner rather than later” with the written community character analysis for inclusion in the new development regulations and the annotated outline of the proposed changes. This would be a shorter and more focused visit hopefully occurring in mid-June, 2023.

END OF REPORT

