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Presentation to Cashiers Community Planning Council

5.8.23

# OVERVIEW

1

## Recap

Project status

2

## Stakeholder Interviews

Themes of note

3

## Policy Guidance Workshop

25 questions – what we learned

4

## Community Character

What is it? How do we protect it?

5

## Next Steps

What's to come





+/- 8 weeks

# PROJECT STATUS

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Cashiers CPC Meeting
- Webpage operational
- Stakeholder interviews complete
- 2 public forums completed
- Community character exploration



# REGULATORY EVOLUTION



- Telegraph clear community expectations via codified UDO language
- Identify preferred forms of development and make these the procedural path of least resistance
- One size does not fit all so include a flexible alternative to preferred development forms
- Move away from cumbersome and legally perilous quasi-judicial reviews
- Use a more defensible and less complex legislative review process like conditional zoning rather than special use permits



# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

1. Issues of Community Concern
2. Recent Development Proposals
3. Current Development Process
4. Cashier's Community Character
5. Goals for New Standards
6. Administration

INTERVIEW DATE	PARTICIPANTS
2.21.23 1P-2P	Gary Wein, Highland Cashiers Land Trust Nicole Hayler, Chattooga Conservancy Thomas Bates, Cashiers Resident
2.21.23 2P-3P	Owen Shultz, High Hampton Representative Brian Peterkins, High Hampton Representative Tim Green, Cashiers Property Owner Fritz Rybert, Property Owner - Peachtree Group
2.21.23 3P-4P	Ben Harris, Contractor / Cashiers Chamber of Commerce/ Thomas Taulbee, Jackson Co. Planning Board / Cashiers Chamber of Com. Sarah Jennings, Cashier Chamber of Commerce Representative
2.21.23 4P-5P	Paul Robshaw, Vision Cashiers Representative Mary Palmer Dargan, Develop Cashiers Responsibly / Landscape Architect Ashlie Mitchell, Village Green Representative
2.21.23 5P-6P	Mark Zachary, Cashiers Multi-Generational Property Owner
2.22.23 9A-10A	Ken Fernandez, Realtor, Old Cashiers Realty Ann Austin, McKee Properties / Cashiers Historical Society Kati Miller, Realtor, Caliber Fine Properties
2.22.23 10A-11A	Terry Allen, Engineer, Terry Allen Engineering Troy Lucas, Landscape Architect, Daniels Communities
2.22.23 11A-12P	Mike Benitez, Developer, Elevated Builders Sam Lupas, Developer, Landmark Realty Group Turner Insco, Developer / Property Owner Representative



## What's Working

- Relationships with county staff
- We cherish nature
- Greater sense of stewardship these days
- Community support for greenways and open spaces
- Community efforts to promote pedestrian circulation

## What's a Problem

- Development review process
- Utility capacity
- Traffic
- Stormwater management
- Water storage standards for fire protection
- Short term rentals
- Building articulation standards
- Remaining land has steep slopes/wetlands
- 'Vanilla' character

## What Should we Do

- Drop Quasi-judicial process
- 'Dark skies' regulations
- Manage water quality/quantity
- Focus on conservation
- Promote more mixed-use development & housing
- Keep commercial developments small in scale
- Architectural control
- Heavier reliance on landscaping
- Better controls on appearance
- Incentives for re-use of existing buildings
- Make the street grid more loose (less formal)







# POLICY GUIDANCE WORKSHOP









Cashiers, North Carolina

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report

February 20–25, 2022

# POLICY GUIDANCE

ADOPTED  
MARCH 19, 2019





# OBSERVATIONS

Recodify Cashiers Policy Guidance Workshop Summary Report  
5.2.23



## PART 2: POLICY GUIDANCE WORKSHOP

This part of the Report provides detail on the Policy Guidance Public Workshop, focusing primarily on the polling exercise conducted with participants. On February 21, 2023, the consulting team and County staff conducted a public workshop on the policy guidance in place for Cashiers. The workshop included a poll of workshop participants about their ideas related to land use regulation-related questions. These poll results are not tools of inference, and they are not representative of the full range of community opinion. Participants were reminded that the polling exercise was not intended to set policy or serve as a directive for how to draft new rules. Rather, the polling exercise was a chance to collect and discuss opinions about policy guidance and its ramifications.

There were around 20 or so participants present during the polling exercise. Participants were shown a slide with a land use-related question. Each question had a range of potential responses, and participants were asked to select the response from those shown on the screen that most closely corresponds with their opinion about the question. Participants were given input devices that allowed them to select one response from a range of different response options. The devices registered people's responses to each question and then presented the results of each question for further discussion. The total number of respondents to any single question is not known, and participants were not required to respond if they chose not to. At the same time no single participant could respond more than once to any particular question. The following pages include copies of each question, the range of available responses, and the resulting percentages of selected responses. Some interpretation or ramifications from the polling responses are provided, by slide, where appropriate.

The poll included a total of 25 questions, organized into nine topical areas based on recommendations set out in the Small Area Plan or the ULI Report. The nine topic areas are identified in the slide below:

### Recommendations for Discussion:

1. Residential development in the Village Core
2. Distinctions for Resident-serving vs Visitor-serving uses
3. Geographic boundaries
4. Vehicular Connectivity
5. Pedestrian Connectivity
6. Open Space
7. Site Design
8. Building Design
9. Redevelopment



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Page 7

- 4 units an acre was selected by most folks as an appropriate density
- Participants split on question of whether the core should have detached single-family homes
- Support for “middle” housing forms in village core
- Support for a maximum house size in the core

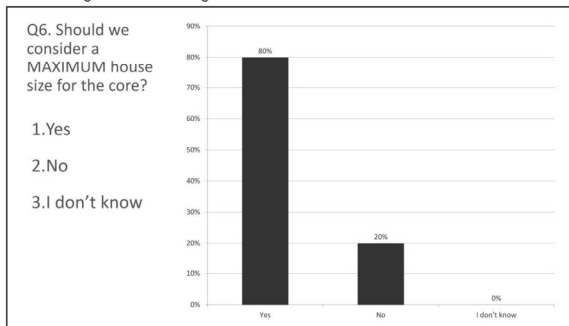


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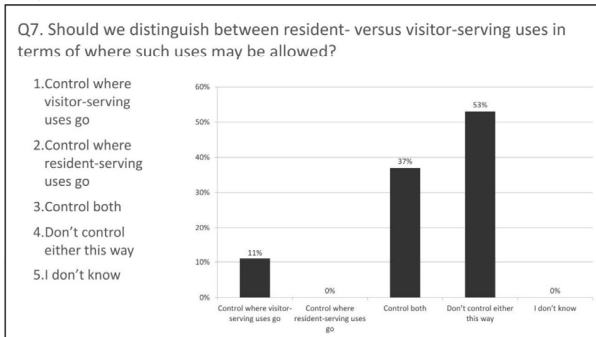
# OBSERVATIONS (con't)



Question 6 posed a question about scale of individual residential dwellings, or at least if residential scale should be regulated in the village core.



The next two questions dealt with resident-serving versus visitor-serving uses in Cashiers. Some examples from each type of use were provided. Generally speaking, these two questions were not as well explained as they needed to be, and the consensus among participants was question 7 was not that helpful.



- No need to focus on strict rules for tourism uses
- Expand the district boundary
- Require street connectivity and alleys in the village core
- Not much support for traffic calming
- Split opinions about trails vs sidewalks
- Pedestrian surfaces should be location-driven
- Retrofitting streets & sidewalks should be market & community driven

## OBSERVATIONS (con't)

- Most uses should provide open space (3% - 5%)
- Support for requiring commercial uses to provide gathering areas
- Parking requirements should be flexible
- Screen refuse/storage areas
- Mixed opinions on impervious surface rules
- Design standards should address colors and materials
- Architectural style should be addressed
- Slight support for treating redevelopment less strictly than new development





# COMMUNITY CHARACTER





# COMMUNITY CHARACTER TRIP ITINERARY

- 2 community presentations
- 1 workshop
- 2 open discussion meetings
- 2 sets of office hours
- 1 results presentation



<b>MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023</b>		
	Departure (from Durham)	10:30A
	Arrival (Hampton Inn 3245 US Hwy 64E Sapphire)	3:30P
	Cashiers CPC Meeting (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd)	5-7P
<b>TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023</b>		
	County Staff Meeting (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	9-10A
	Cashiers Community Collaborative Presentation (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd)	10:30A-12P
	Open Office Hours (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	1P-5:30P
	COMMUNITY CHARACTER PUBLIC WORKSHOP (Village Green Commons Hall (160 Frank Allen Rd))	6-8P
<b>WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023</b>		
	Coffee at Buck's Coffee Café (6 Highway 107 S) – open discussion	8-10A
	Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Mark Letson, BOCC Chair (Village Green 160 Frank Allen Rd)	10:30-11:30A
	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
<b>THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2023</b>		
	Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Mark Jones, BOCC Member (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	9-10A
	Office Hours Scheduled Meeting with Bill Horton, C.C.C/D.C.R (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	10-11A
	Open Office Hours (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	11A-1P
	County Staff Meeting (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	1P-2P
	Consulting Team (Internal Meeting)	2-5P
	COMMUNITY CHARACTER RESULTS PRESENTATION (Library 249 Frank Allen Rd)	6-7:30P
<b>FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2023</b>		
	Open Office Hours (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	9-11A
	County Staff Meeting (County Permitting Office 357 Frank Allen Rd)	11A-12P
	Departure (from Cashiers)	12:30P



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is “the distinctive identity of a particular place that results from the interaction of many factors—built form, landscape, history, people and their activities.”

—New Zealand Ministry for the Environment



## How Do You Define Community Character?

Adapting the Environmental Impact Statement Process to Snoqualmie, Washington

By Gary Pivo

Urban planners face growing concern over threats to community character. People use terms like rural, neighborhood, village and urban character to describe something they value and are asking planners to evaluate development's impacts upon it.

Many planners are unsure of what people mean by character or how to do character impact assessment. They understand environmental, social and fiscal impact analysis but are unsure that they can adapt these procedures to the issue of community character. The following case tells how the environmental impact assessment process was adapted to evaluate the character impacts of a master planned community on a small rural village near Seattle, Washington.

### A Growing Concern

With each passing decade, planners add another issue to their list of responsibilities. The 1960s saw the inclusion of social equality, the 1970s added the environment, the 1980s added traffic and the 1990s may add community character. Newspaper articles, public opinion surveys and public policies have begun to reflect the character issue. For example, a recent *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* article on a proposed super regional mall in Auburn, Washington, discussed how the downtown Auburn master plan was designed to give the area more "hometown character" and reported that one issue involved balancing the potential tax base against "a change in the city's character."<sup>1</sup>

On the east coast, Shelburne, Vermont, conducted a community survey during a town plan update. Out of 37 possible community objectives, people ranked "preserve small town character" first and "preserve rural character" third.<sup>2</sup>

Many public policies also refer to community character. For example:

*Small Town*

"The rural element [of local comprehensive plans] shall permit land uses that are compatible with the rural character of such lands..." (1990 Growth Management Act, Section 7(5), Washington State)

"The character and integrity of existing neighborhoods will be preserved..." (City of Hayward, California, General Policies Plan, Policy IV-20, 1986)

Thus through discussions on land use issues, community surveys and public policies, people are voicing their concern over the maintenance of community character.

### The Meaning of Character

What do people mean by character? The *Lexicon Webster Dictionary* defines it as "a distinctive trait, quality or attribute," something's "essential quality or nature," and "reputation." But, what attributes produce the essential quality of a place?

Sociology and urban design have dealt the most with this question and each has a different perspective on the answer. Sociologists naturally focus on social characteristics. According to Roland Warren, various criteria, "thought to characterize communities include a specific population living within a specific geographic area, amongst whom there are present shared institutions and values and significant social interaction."<sup>3</sup> The emphasis is on people, their institutions and their interrelationships.

Urban designers are more inclusive and emphasize the natural, visual and cultural characteristics. According to Harry Gamham, "Each and every place has some measure of unique

Gary Pivo teaches in the Department of Urban Design and Planning at the University of Washington and directs the university's Green Management Clearinghouse, 418 Gould Hall, D-406, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, 98195. Pivo was hired as a consultant to devise a character assessment for the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, when the Snoqualmie Ridge development was announced.

November-December, 1992

## Community Character is Often Based on:

- Socio-cultural characteristics
  - People (attitudes, governance, demographics)
  - History
- Physical characteristics
  - Location
  - Size (small town, village)
  - Appearance (beauty, design)
- Economic characteristics
  - Types of occupations
  - Relative wealth
  - Land value
- Landmarks
  - Unique places and features



**THIS IS  
OUR  
FOCUS**



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Types of occupations  
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Unique places and features



Community character results from a blend of regulatory and non-regulatory aspects

Regulations can and do influence community character, but they are thought of as subordinate to the non-regulatory aspects

The degree to which regulations influence community character depends on scale

Macro – community wide

Micro – individual development sites

Regulations have fairly little impact on macro-scale issues, but do significantly impact the micro-scale

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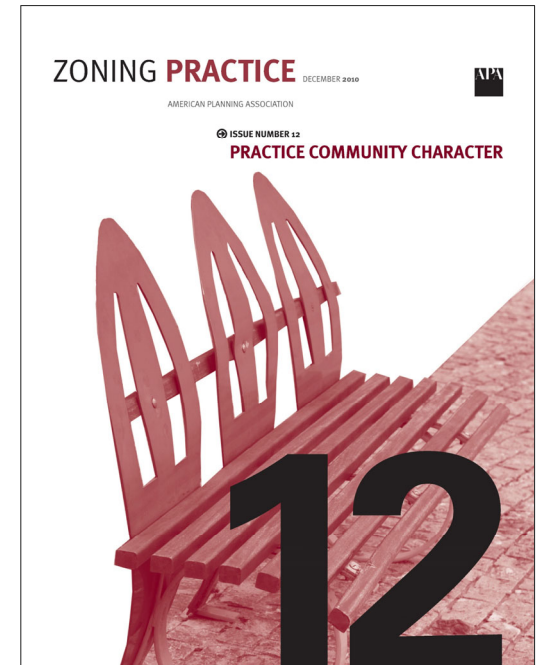
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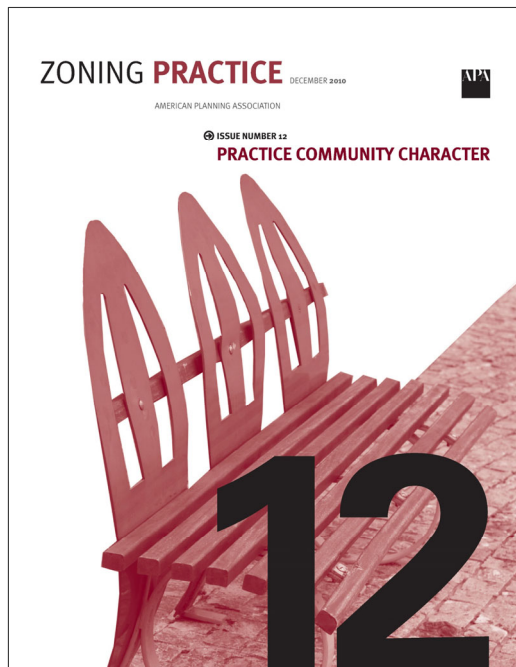


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## Macro level influences on Community Character:

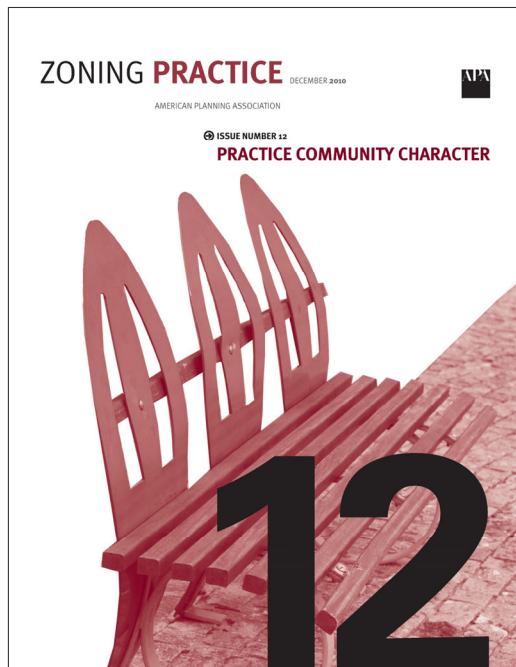
- Geography
- Climate
- Soil chemistry
- Flora
- Culture
- History





## Macro-level Community Character Features that can be influenced by Regulations:

- Sense of enclosure
- Views to the horizon
- Visibility of structures from public realm
- Presence/absence of plants
- Level of reliance on natural drainage



## Regulations that can affect Community Character at the Micro-Scale:

- Lot size and width, side yard setbacks
- Front yard depth
- Building separation distances
- Amount of landscaping, “green mass”
- On- or off-street parking
- Off-street parking location front/side/rear
- Percentage of open space
- Signage





# COMMUNITY CHARACTER FOCUS AREAS

## Land Use

- Permitted
- Prohibited
- Conditional

## Lotting Patterns

- Lot Size
- Lot Width
- Setbacks
- Impervious cover

## Street Design

- Width
- Spacing
- Paving/Surface
- Pedestrian Network



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER FOCUS AREAS

## Open Space

- Amount
- Arrangement
- Function
- Ownership

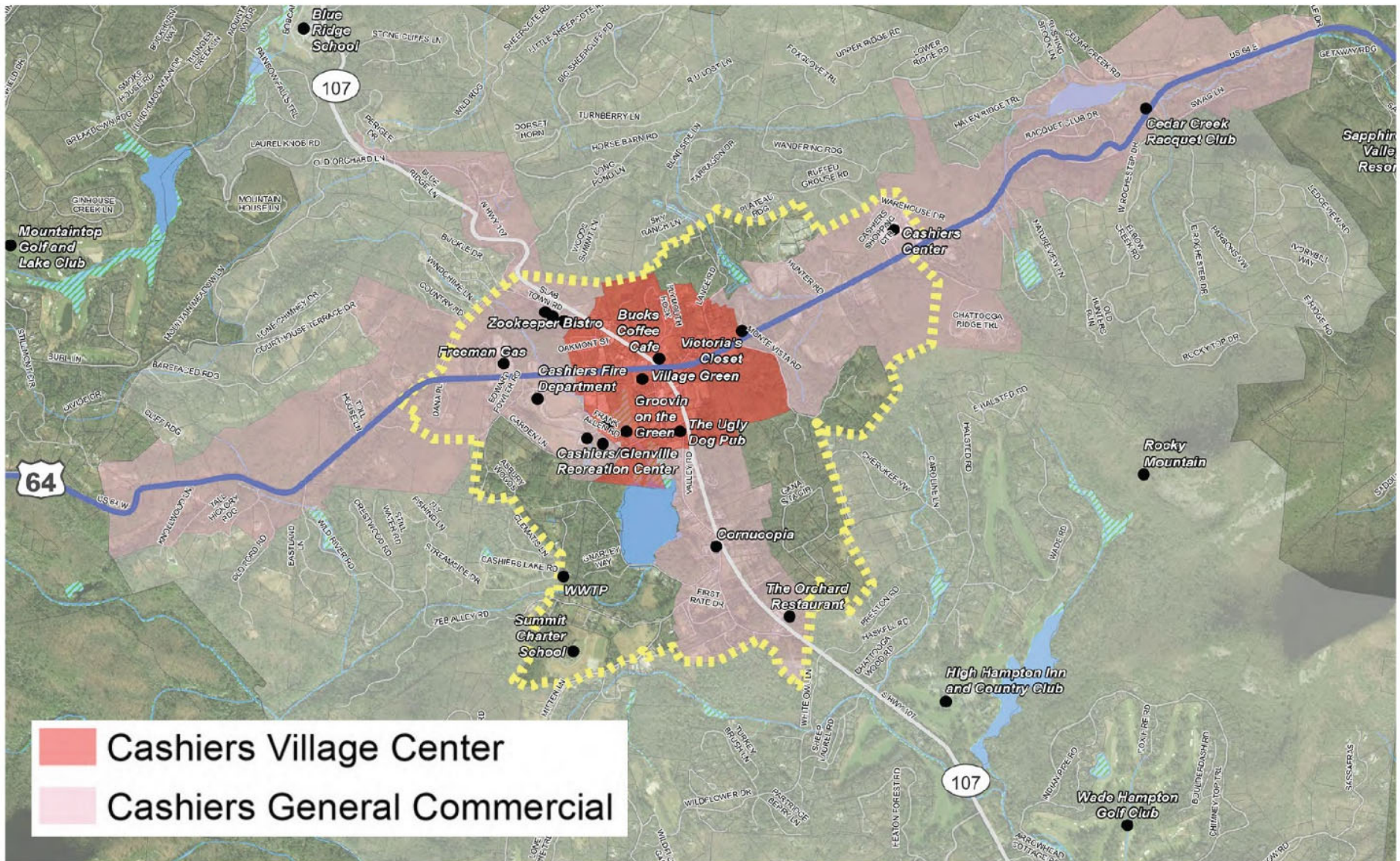


## Buildings

- Size/mass
- Density
- Spacing
- Placement Uniformity
- Orientation
- Height
- Façade Appearance

## Site Features

- Parking  
Placement, % of Site, Surface
- Landscaping  
Degree of Obscurity
- Signage  
Size, height, illumination



## NEXT STEPS...

- **Community Character Workshop**  
Tuesday @ 6P Village Green
- **Coffee Talk**  
Wednesday @ 8A Bucks
- **Share Your Thoughts**  
Wednesday 2-5 @ Green Market
- **Community Character Defined Presentation**  
Thursday @ 6P Library





