

CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW DRAFT #6

DRAFT PLAN REVIEW FOR PLANNING COMMISSION
CONSIDERATION & POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATION

MAY 13, 2022 | 2:00 PM
HYBRID VIRTUAL/IN-PERSON MEETING



COMMENTS FROM JIM ELLISON

COMMENT

- In the orange box leading Chapter 2 on page 24 of the "Track Changes" draft, the third topic should include "2020" and read "2020 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS"
- Appendix A (and perhaps other elements that follow) are in larger font size than the main body of the text, and probably should not be.

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CHAPTER 2—INTRODUCTION: THE PLANNING PROCESS

Chapter 2 addresses these principal topics:

- AUTHORITY TO PLAN
- COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN HISTORY
- 2020 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

As described in *Chapter 1—Executive Summary & Vision*, the CDP is the principal document outlining

Update all Appendices so that the “Normal” body font is size 12 to mirror the font size in Chapters 1-8.

COMMENTS FROM JULIE DAVIS, NAN HUNTER & JIM ELLISON

COMMENT: Chapter 5 Housing Issues

New language has been added in Draft #6 to the discussion of the City's goals to provide more workforce housing in the its commercial areas. The new language, which is redlined in Draft #6 (p. 5-10), states: "The County is currently exploring a potential Ordinance to foster the increased provision of workforce housing within the unincorporated areas of Sussex County. The City's position on housing growth aligns with that of Sussex County."

Although we strongly support policies and strategies that would facilitate provision of affordable and workforce housing within the City, we don't believe that the new CDP should endorse, even implicitly, a pending County ordinance that has been neither finally adopted nor discussed by the Planning Commission and/or the Board of Commissioners.

Moreover, the ordinance that the County is apparently considering has been criticized as eliminating any public input concerning proposed projects in the County's unincorporated areas that would include workforce housing units in a letter to the Cape Gazette from no less than the executive director of a non-profit organization whose mission is to encourage State, County, and local municipalities to provide workforce and other forms of affordable housing. (See LTE from Russ Huxtable, vice president, Milford Housing Development Company, a private non-profit affordable developer, in the 5/3/22 edition of the Cape Gazette. <https://www.capegazette.com/article/publicinput-needed-affordable-housing-proposals/239122>.) We thus believe that this new language in Draft #6 is premature and should be deleted.

That said, we also believe that the Action Items in this Housing chapter should include explicit language encouraging the City and the surrounding community to address the workforce as well as affordable housing. We thus suggest revising the new Action Item on housing to read: "h) Consider coordination with other area beach towns and the County to identify and implement regional strategies for addressing affordable **and workforce** housing needs."

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The County is currently exploring a potential **Ordinance to foster the increased ways to increase the** provision of workforce housing within the unincorporated areas of Sussex County. ~~The City's position on housing growth aligns with that of Sussex County.~~

ACTION ITEM H

h) Consider coordination with other area beach towns and the County to identify and implement regional strategies for addressing affordable **and workforce** housing needs.

COMMENTS FROM JULIE DAVIS, NAN HUNTER & JIM ELLISON

COMMENT: Chapter 6 Transportation

Draft #6 does not address comments submitted by Barry Brandt, President of the Country Club Estates Board, and by Gary Klasik, who resides on Columbia Avenue. Both expressed concerns about the tentative and vague nature of the Action Item relating to traffic management issues: "h) Consider contracting with a traffic consultant to review current traffic patterns and recommend changes to implement a traffic management program that includes traffic calming infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle safety measures, and other components as appropriate."

Consistent with their comments, we suggest the Action Item be restated in stronger and more specific terms: **"h) Contract with a professional traffic engineering firm to conduct an in-depth analyses of traffic volumes, patterns, and speeds throughout the City, as well as parking strategies including shuttle studies, and to make recommendations regarding a traffic management program that also includes pedestrian and bicycle safety measures such as traffic calming measures on specific streets, particularly those (Columbia, Henlopen, and Bayard Avenues as well as State Road) that carry the largest volumes of traffic to and from the City, Henlopen Acres, North Shores, and the Gordons Pond Trail."**

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ACTION ITEM H

h) ~~Consider contracting~~ **Contract** with a **professional traffic engineering firm to conduct an in-depth analysis of traffic volumes, patterns, and speeds throughout the City, as well as parking strategies including shuttle studies, and to make recommendations regarding** ~~consultant to review current traffic patterns and recommend changes to implement~~ a traffic management program that **also** includes ~~traffic calming infrastructure,~~ pedestrian and bicycle safety measures **such as traffic calming measures on specific streets, particularly those that carry the largest volumes of traffic to and from the City, Henlopen Acres, North Shores, and the Gordons Pond Trail (e.g., Columbia, Henlopen, and Bayard Avenues; State Road),** ~~and other components as~~ **appropriate.**

COMMENTS FROM JULIE DAVIS, NAN HUNTER & JIM ELLISON

COMMENT: Chapter 7 Environment

We were pleased to hear a consensus expressed during the discussion at the Planning Commission's April 29 meeting about the need to better address possible code changes for impervious lot coverage. We were especially pleased to hear that DNREC feedback could be used to justify adding a goal and/or action item on this issue without having to send the plan back to the State. However, we are concerned that the only reference to impervious lot issues in Draft #6 is the following Action Item (p. 7-30): "r) Consider implementing recommendations from the Resilient Community Partnership Project."

The Resilient Community Partnership Project is not discussed in any detail in the text in Chapter 7, and it's doubtful that many readers of the new CDP are familiar with the Project or its provisions. Accordingly, we suggest that a summary description of this Project including its goals and recommendations be included in the text of Chapter 7, and that the related Action Item be revised along the following lines: "**r) Consider changes to the provisions of the City's zoning ordinance relating to floor area ratio and lot coverage to address the concerns and possible strategies raised by the Resilient Community Partnership Project regarding the stormwater runoff issues created by impervious surfaces.**"

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ACTION ITEM R

Retain the original language of this Action Item since not all recommendations found within the RCP project documentation are incorporated by the proposed language.

ACTION ITEM X (NEW)

x) Consider changes to the provisions of the City's zoning ordinance relating to floor area ratio and lot coverage to address the concerns and possible strategies raised by the Resilient Community Partnership Project regarding the stormwater runoff issues created by impervious surfaces.

OUTSTANDING COMMENTS FROM DRAFT #5: ONGOING COORDINATION WITH STAFF

Items below were given as comments during review of Draft #5. We are coordinating with City Staff to address and will incorporate into a future draft, which the Mayor & Commissioners will review and consider.

CHAPTER 3: NEIGHBORHOODS

Reviewing and updating as needed neighborhood maps and associated descriptions to reflect more accurate boundaries.

CHAPTER 6: WATER & SEWER INITIATIVES

Adding language for the Rehoboth Beach/Henlopen Acres water interconnect and East Lake Drive water interconnect projects, as well as the partial bidirectional connection of parts of west Rehoboth to sewer utilities.

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVES

Reviewing and updating as needed all projects and initiatives to reflect current status.