

PlanET Housing Working Group Meeting #2

Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Cansler YMCA, Community Room, 2 pm – 4 pm

KEY FINDINGS

The meeting of 25 participants was called to order by Chairperson Gary Drinnen, Habitat for Humanity of Loudon County, followed by self-introductions. The group was briefed by Mark Donaldson, Metropolitan Planning Commission, on PlanET progress to date, including public and stakeholder input, the Livability Report Card, and leadership dialogue priorities.

Regional Drivers

Facilitator Ann Coulter presented a summary of the eight broad drivers of regional trends and change as described in the Livability Report Card. The drivers affect all types of regional dynamics but depending on the topic area of each working group, some drivers have more impact than others. Working group attendees discussed how various drivers impact housing and neighborhoods across the region. They indicated that two additional factors, the overall economy, and political factors, are important drivers of housing trends and decisions. Attendees then rated each driver based on its level of impact on the region's housing and neighborhoods. The higher the point value, the more important the driver is to housing trends. Drivers as rated are listed below from most to least important.

- Few Transportation Options (65)
- Dispersed Development Pattern & Separation of Land Use Types (57)
- Low Educational Attainment, Low Wages and Limited Job Advancement Opportunities (57)
- Economy (52)
- Food, Activity & Lifestyle (43)
- Demographic Shifts (41)
- Rising Energy Costs (40)
- Location Decisions (38)
- Political Factors (23)
- Loss of Agricultural Land (18)

Vision Themes Summary

Attendees considered comments collected at recent Forum 2 public meetings about a regional vision for the future. For housing and neighborhoods, these vision themes are categorized as:

- More housing options that protect the distinct character of urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods
- More integrated walkable communities in which people can choose to live
- More affordable housing

The following points were discussed:

- The vision should also include that of an overall healthy and stable housing market.
- Fairness and equity should be part of the regional vision for housing and neighborhoods, particularly as they impact housing choice.

- Affordable housing should be thought of in a very broad sense, not just in terms of government entity guidelines.

Attendees were encouraged to continue to seek public input over the summer about the long range vision for the region.