

**Name of Group:** Environment

**Meeting Date:** February 24, 2022

**Meeting Time:** 6PM

**Meeting Location:** Zoom

**Members Present:** Carl Kolosna, Leigha Larkins, Ariana Vaida, Tobin Freid, Summer Alston, Celeste Burns, Nate Baker, Bonita Green, Laura Stroud

### **Welcome, Group Agreements,**

- Go through Community Agreements

### **Info and Updates from Staff**

- We have committed to beginning community-wide engagement on these policies in April. Given that we need them translated, which will take 2-3 weeks, and given the volume of them, we will need to freeze these policies in place by the end of March so we have enough time to package them up. As a reminder, there will be multiple opportunities to review and give feedback on the policies: at least one more meeting with this group in March, then the engagement phase in spring, a review with you all after the spring engagement phase, likely another engagement phase focused on looking at the entire plan in the fall, and then the formal adoption process for the plan

### **Policy Discussion**

- Go through Policies together and discuss
  - Group members read through the draft policies on their own and added their individual notes
  - This is a “dump” of things we’ve discussed over the last few months. Items repeat. Will repeated items be trimmed down and only appear once or should they show up in multiple places on purpose?
    - We’re not sure yet – there could be benefits to “signal boost” a topic multiple time to show how important it is
    - If we do repeat, we might want to think about repeating it in the same way
    - We want to be able to reference very specific policies from the Comp Plan when we go before boards and commissions
    - Should duplicated items be “brought to the top” to show how important they are?
    - Is it possible to put a repeated/priority item in context for each area without changing the language of the item?
    - Vague vs. Focused policy – sometimes there’s a benefit to keeping things more general because it isn’t as prescriptive and can work for the length of the plan
    - We should claim action verbs as to not water down the intensity of the policy

- Some policies may work for both the public and private sector and we should call that out
- Current adopted plans should be considered the minimum and we want to leave space to go beyond what is required in current adopted plans
- From a community-level perspective: is there space for community in these policies? Sometimes “we live where we are.” How can we make sure that everyone is covered, considered, and involved in environmental protection?
- Could we call out a requirement for developers to use specific trees that are better at filtering air particulates?
- Why 70% of people in the Urban tier within 10 minute walk to open space rather than 100%?
  - At the time the Roadmap was developed, the STAR Community Roadmap had just been created. Those numbers were considered best practices at that time.
  - Possibly based on the spatial distribution of housing
  - 70% is a minimum, once we get there it doesn’t mean we can stop
- We’re lacking in food and farmland policy, including forestry. There’s good stuff in the UDO addressing this.
- We need to continue to examine the action verbs we use – is “encourage” going to be strong enough?
- Should we create a key as part of the opening language that explains what we mean when we say “encourage” or “promote” to denote that a policy may be limited by current state or federal regulation?
- Should we refer to specific technology even if they are based on current technology that may become obsolete (LED, solar, etc.)?
- Prioritization? How to simplify these down for engagement?

### **Close Out**

- Staff will send follow-up notes to this group for review before posting publicly to the EngageDurham site.
- In March we need to talk about development in floodplains
  - How can we get the sewer lines out of the low-lying floodplain areas?
  - How can we make this more bite-sized for community engagement?