



Roanoke County 200 Plan: 2021 Community Meeting Summary

Bonsack/Vinton

Meeting: Charles R. Hill Community Center - Thursday, September 30, 2021

Attendee Count: 42

Staff present:

Planning	Long Range	Transportation	Zoning	Economic Dev.
Philip Thompson Cecelia Monnin	Bailey Howard-DuBois Alex Jones	Megan Cronise Isaac Henry Will Crawford	Becky James	Marshall Stanley
				Engineering David Henderson

Land Use

Meeting Exercise: Comment about land use or development.

1. Where are current issues with land uses?
2. Where are there zoning enforcement issues?
3. What types of development are desired?
4. Where should new development go?
5. Where should redevelopment happen?

Meeting Exercise Comments:

- Minimize non-taxable land use.
- Restrict the number of tobacco stores that are taking good real estate.
- Secure tenants and incentivize the Vinton Business Center.
- Consider an indoor dog park/center.
- Need gathering places so you do not have to go downtown (Roanoke).
- Nice sit-down restaurants are needed in the Bonsack area.
- Would like to see patio home types of living situations on the Route 460 corridor.
- Would like assisted living facilities on this side of the County.
- Desire responsible development in opportunity areas like the Route 460 corridor, while also being respectful of residents.
- Roanoke County should adopt a building maintenance code to assist Vinton in improving housing stock.
- Consistency is needed between the County and Town of Vinton on sign regulations for businesses.
- Would like more entertainment/restaurants like Dave & Busters, Macados and Twin Creeks.
- Would like an office supply store in the Vinton area.
- Would like to see higher density and mixed use development in the Town of Vinton.

Community Facilities

Meeting Exercise: Tell us about the facilities that you use.

Leave a suggestion or comment about issues or needs for community facilities.



Meeting Exercise Comments:

- Excited to hear that a new Bonsack Fire Station is being planned for the Route 460 corridor and expect the new facility to improve response times and overall service.
- Add pickleball courts to the community, specifically near Bonsack. Citizens questioned if there was space to install pickleball courts at Bonsack Elementary School, Stonebridge Park, and nearby Hollins Park. A citizen later commented that there are public pickleball courts at Bonsack Baptist Church and they are eager to advertise this to the public.
- Citizens overall feel safe in the community, but would like to see faster response times from the police department and more patrolling in East County other than Route 460/Challenger Avenue.
- The greenway being planned in Vinyard Park will be very popular and residents are excited to hear that it is one step closer to becoming a reality. Overall everyone seemed excited to learn more about the 2018 Roanoke Valley Greenways Plan.
- Upgrades to Stonebridge Park are needed as it is really showing its age. The park would really benefit from the softball field and picnic shelter being cleaned up and a new playground being constructed.
- More paved walking trail connections to the school campuses are wanted to promote walking to school more, specifically at Bonsack Elementary School. Citizens questioned whether a pedestrian path could be constructed on the backside of Bonsack Elementary School where a dirt "cow path" already exists.
- Would like to see more Roanoke County recycling drop off location options, specifically closer to Bonsack and the Mount Pleasant ends of the community. Would also like to see the William Byrd Middle School location expanded as it is always full. Citizens questioned why the recycling drop-off locations are not better marked with instructions and a phone number to call when the bins are full and overflowing.
- Smaller parks and facilities should be advertised more online to educate the citizens what each park and/or facility has to offer depending on the season. Citizens complimented great marketing and attendance at Explore Park, but would like to see the same for other park options.
- Expand Western Virginia Water Authority water lines into the community more. Those who do get service sometimes have issues with service.
- Need better access to the Blue Ridge Parkway (including from Hardy Road) and would like to see it open more. Many citizens mentioned the constant closures and confusion of how to get to Explore Park when the road is closed.
- Do not want cell phone towers within the community like the one that was proposed for Stonebridge Park. Understand that cell phone service is needed, but questioned why future towers could not be installed on top of existing buildings or towers or within industrial land as long as they are not blocking important viewsheds.
- Consider a stormwater utility fee.



General Comments:

- Would like to see more mountain biking options and recommend expanding the Explore Park facility.
- A BMX pump track would be popular at Explore Park and unique to the region.
- Citizens support the Explore Park Adventure Plan and would like to see the park continue to grow, thrive, and bring tourism into the area.

Transportation

Meeting Exercise: What are the transportation needs in this area?

Leave a comment about: Road safety issues, Pedestrian, bicycle and/or transit needs.

Meeting Exercise Comments:

Route 24 (Washington Avenue)

- Washington Avenue going into Spring Grove Drive, west of William Byrd schools is heavily congested and a dangerous intersection.
- Washington Avenue: convert from 4 lanes to 2 with center turn lane and bike lanes.

Route 460 (Challenger Avenue)

- Trucks entering Lowe's think it is a route to I-81. Possibly move signage further East down Challenger Avenue.
- Connect Carson Road to Bonsack Road, then connect Bonsack Road to Cloverdale Road to bypass Route 460.
- Add Bike lanes along Route 460.
- Want traffic signal at Bonsack Road and Route 460 or at least signage alerting drivers "caution incoming traffic".
- Provide dedicated sidewalk on either side of Route 460.

Berkley Road/Ruddell Road (Town of Vinton)

- Berkley Road/Ruddell Road intersection is blind. Dangerous with hairpin turn and topography change. Cars will bottom out, trailers cannot make the hairpin turn, people using as cut through.
- Berkley Bottom curve needs improvements. Site distance is bad, cannot see cars coming up the hill.

Carson Road

- Very narrow bridge over creek on Carson Road. Two cars cannot pass at the same time.
- People speed on Carson Road, particularly going north. Sometimes they run off road at Carson Road and Derby Drive. Delineator signs at curb would help.

Daladier Drive

- Daladier Drive needs pavement maintenance.



Feather Road

- Look at speed limit on Feather Road, straighten blind curve or clear trees around curve.

Finney Drive

- Mark lanes on Finney Drive at Hardy Road/Finney Drive intersection. It is wide enough for two lanes turning onto Hardy Road from Finney Drive.

Greenways/Trails/Bicycle Lanes

- Additional trailhead parking is needed on north side of Read Mountain.
- Bike lanes anywhere and everywhere we can accommodate.
- Small parking area on end of Wolf Creek Greenway on east side of Blue Ridge Parkway – explore using that [area] for Wolf Creek Greenway access.
- Desire for more greenways, especially in Vinyard Park.

Hardy Road

- Sidewalk along Hardy Road needed to get access to Wolf Creek Greenway.
- Extend bike lane and sidewalk on Hardy Road from Town limit to Roanoke County east corporate limit.

Huntridge Road

- Huntridge Road - eastbound on Route 460 into Huntridge Road gets congested from right on red light at Lowe's and Cloverdale Road.

Mountain View Road

- The Town of Vinton is going to rebuild Mountain View Road and add bike lanes and possibly sidewalks. Will mimic County alignment as closely as possible.

West Ruritan Road

- West Ruritan Road needs pedestrian accommodations.

General Comments:

- Expand Valley Metro in East County.
- Explore Safe Routes to Schools Program for Elementary Schools (W.E. Cundiff, Herman L. Horn) and other schools (William Byrd Middle & High Schools) to connect neighborhoods to schools and Wolf Creek Greenway.

Protection and Preservation

Meeting Exercise: Comment about natural and cultural resources.

Tell us what this map is missing? What's valuable to you and why? What is impacted or needs improvement?



Meeting Exercise Comments:

- Several citizens commented that we should preserve the existing green areas as natural spaces.
- There is interest in a future Read Mountain Greenway/City of Roanoke connection.
- Several people stated that they value the Read Mountain Preserve.
- The Wolf Creek tributary north of the Blue Ridge Parkway and east of Falling Creek Road is eroded by frequent washes coming down the mountain. This portion of the stream has experienced regular, bad flooding.
- The streambank restoration projects that have been completed are valued by the community.
- Viewsheds from the Blue Ridge Parkway should be protected.
- The Stewart Knob Trail needs better signage. It is too hard to identify the trailhead.
- Residents value the Wolf Creek Greenway.

Other Comments

- Town of Vinton (TOV) residents commented that they want to better understand the implications of this plan for TOV residents. What is the relationship between planning for the Bonsack/Vinton CPA and recommendations in the TOV Comprehensive Plan?

Staff Observations

Land Use

- Some attendees asked for more entertainment/recreation/nightlife elements to be added to the area, as well as requesting that some dilapidated structures either be kept up to code, have a stricter code so structures do not reach that state of dilapidation, or redevelop the properties.
- One individual mentioned that a business in Vinton has to follow different signage requirements compared to a business in the County, so some businesses have neighbors across the County/Town line that can have larger, more distinguishable signage.
- Participants wanted to see coordination of regulations and restrictions between the Town of Vinton and the Bonsack/Vinton area. Greater consistency could be helpful for businesses and developers, as well as communicating with the public.

Community Facilities

- Citizens seemed to be excited for the variety of major Roanoke County projects including the new Bonsack Fire Station, potential greenway expansions, and the Explore Park Adventure Plan.
- There were concerns over recycling drop-off issues, police response times, and cell phone towers potentially being built in the community.
- Citizens would like to see more unique recreation options (i.e. pickleball courts, playgrounds, paved walking trails) at some of the smaller parks and biking facilities expanded at nearby Explore Park.



- Citizens did not believe that maintenance of community stormwater ponds should be the responsibility of the homeowners but maintained by a public entity.
- The County needs recycling and needs to minimize waste going to the landfill.
- Stream restorations are a good program and citizens like the projects that have been constructed in Vinyard and Goode Park.

Transportation

- Attendees were eager to learn about transportation projects on Route 460.
- One attendee felt that widening Route 460 would be absolutely necessary in the future and another insisted that a traffic signal be installed at Route 460 and Bonsack Road.
- Many people were concerned about traffic at the Route 460/West Ruritan Road intersection, with Chick-fil-A and the LewisGale ER that is being constructed, and were thus especially interested in the project planned for the Route 460/West Ruritan Road intersection.
- A few attendees were unaware of the CORTAN program. Nine CORTAN surveys were completed during the meeting.
- A strong theme was the need for more pedestrian and bike accommodations in the area.

Miscellaneous

- Some citizens asked if there would be information that was specific to just the Town of Vinton, and were disgruntled when told that most of the information was grouped together.

Summary Approved: PGT