

**Town of Gordonsville
Community Meeting Results
November 3, 2011 – Town Hall**

Approximately 22 business owners and citizens attended this community meeting, along with all five members of the Planning Commission, four members of Council (including the Mayor), and the Town Manager. The following input was provided for the Town's comprehensive plan update (the focus of this meeting was for the business community to provide input).

The items identified are town-wide and are not specific to any neighborhood.

Strengths

- The Town is unique
- The train coming through Town is valuable
- Many of the businesses in town are world-class (restaurants, shops, etc.)
- Much is offered to the urbane traveler, such as natural beauty, shopping, etc.
- Attractive to small families: excellent education system, parks, things to do, good walking community
- Friendly community
- Lovely little town
- Location convenient to Washington, DC; Richmond, Charlottesville
- Good traffic that brings a lot of visitors to Town
- Significant private investment in Town
- Town looks pretty
- Small population keeps Town Charming
- Affordable housing and properties
- History of the Town
- Feeling safe – low crime – police department is always on target
- Don't really need to travel out of Town to get groceries, go to library
- Have a very unique pharmacy/butcher shop
- Town is on the Wine Trail
- Town offers a true Virginia experience
- Town has something that is lacking in other localities

Weaknesses

- Not enough parking downtown
- No place for bus tours to stop or park
- Some areas of town are not pedestrian friendly
- Not meeting the retail needs of Town residents
- Mid-retail/services have left Town (cleaners, Laundromat, dollar store, shoe repair, etc.)
- Cost of public water may be cost-prohibitive
- Not much in town for children to do (recreation, movies, etc.)
- No Town recycling program

Opportunities

- Bring in more diverse dining opportunities
- Bring in a Laundromat/cleaners
- Have a Town festival 4 times a year
- Have more cultural events (artists, etc., “fruitcake toss” in January)
- Develop a farmer’s market
- Create/enhance the Town’s identity through events
- Town is located in an equestrian area—need to take advantage of it
- More parades/festivals
- Create a business alliance to enhance business opportunities and create a business development master plan
- Town has communities in Albemarle, Louisa and Orange
- Community garden/art center
- Fitness center and classes
- Community center/recreation center
- Needs to fill vacant stores (adaptive reuse)
- Develop school credit program for volunteers
- Get the train to stop in Town again

Threats

- Losing the post office
- Losing Perrigo or other businesses
- The safety of the train overpass
- Development that does not support Town initiatives/goals
- Route 29 bypass
- Trucks downtown
- Lack of rescue squad station in Town
- Potential loss of old tree growth

Goals, objectives and strategies identified by the participants:

Housing

- Work with property owners to clean up abandoned properties and to keep properties nice in general
- Promote creation of singles/couples housing, such as above-retail housing
- Promote the creation of affordable housing and explore the use of tax credits as incentives for development of affordable housing
- Promote the town as a great place to live for those who work at the new Martha Jefferson Hospital, etc.
- Promote housing development/infill within Town

Recreation and Open Space

- Develop a walking/kink trail in town and link neighborhoods
- Promote the development of a community center that provides programs for all age groups

- Develop a community garden where residents may grow and harvest their own fruits, vegetables and flowers
- Partner with churches in town for community event space (Boys & Girls club, etc.)
- Partner with the Police Department or the volunteer fire company to develop a mentoring/recreational activities program for community youth
- Develop a career mentoring program for youth to demonstrate what future job opportunities could be
- Develop Verling Park as a venue for cultural events

Beautification

- Develop a tree-replacement program (using street trees—not ornamentals) to maintain/establish the tree canopy in Town
- Put arm-posts on street lights for hanging flower baskets
- Encourage the placement of more window flower boxes
- More decoration of Main Street
- Maintain attractive rear-view of buildings on Main Street
- Institute a "Beautiful Gordonsville" contest
- Mural painting under the train bridge

Public Facilities – Capital Improvement Projects

- Develop an independent Town water source
- Develop additional public restrooms (comfort stations) in Town
- Develop a sidewalk maintenance/construction plan

Historical

- Promote the African-American history in Town
- Provide/develop an architectural record of the structures in Town
- Restore the freight depot and rebuild the passenger depot
- Put historic markers or plaques on historic buildings in the Historic Overlay District
- Consider the adaptive reuse of the switching station along the railroad

Boundary Adjustment (land use)

- Consider the pursuit of adjusting the boundary of the Town

Public Safety

- Pursue rescue squad location in Town
- Make public safety a priority

Economic Development

- Increase visitor opportunities (promote the Town)
- Tourism, tourism, tourism
- Encourage development of a Bed & Breakfast within Town
- Develop a country club or golf course in Town
- Get Amtrak to stop in Town on weekends

- New economic development should be compatible with existing businesses – not in competition
- Develop a plan of incentives for business attraction
- Work to fill vacant industrial/commercial buildings
- Promote the history of the Town as an economic development tool
- Develop a good relationship with the Orange County Tourism department to promote the Town through advertisements, etc.
- Work with the Journey Through Hallowed Ground initiative to promote the Town as a gateway to the Journey
- Promote the Town tagline “a Town at the Crossroads of History” on internet search engines and work to get the Town’s website better linked through various search engines

Transportation

- Continue to promote/expand usage of TOOT

Environment

- Encourage development of a recycling program within the Town