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**Transmittal of Planning Commission Action**

Date: October 25, 2016

Item: Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan

Prepared by: Lisa Cooper, Principal Planner

Date of Commission

Action: Public Hearing, September 13, 2016

Action taken by the Planning Commission for Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan, October 11, 2016

Commission’s

Recommendation: **Approval of Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan**

The adopted 2007 Franklin County Comprehensive Plan identifies Westlake as one of the two (2) unincorporated towns and Hales Ford as one of the seven (7) villages. In addition, Chapter 12/Future Land Use Policies of the County’s Comprehensive Plan states “development in villages or towns should be based on adopted community plans”. Furthermore, policies of the Plan suggest “to establish, identify, and plan the enhancement of key gateways and entry points to the towns and villages and to establish guidelines for landscaping, setback, and coordination of access so as to enhance the quality of these points”. In January of 2014, Gills Creek Supervisor, Bob Camicia, established a Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Advisory Committee to review the Westlake and Hales Ford areas and make recommendation for the future of this area. The Advisory Committee met monthly for two years and had discussions with subject-matter professionals, close dialogue with the business community, and numerous discussions with individuals and small groups. In addition the committee held three public community meetings over the two years. In March of 2016, the Advisory Committee presented a report to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors entitled “Charting a Path to 2030 and Beyond”. The Board of Supervisors directed the Planning Commission and staff to write a community plan for the Westlake – Hales Ford area and bring it back to the Board for adoption.

In January of 2016, the County was awarded a grant from the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIP) for professional planning consultant assistance to establish and support Urban Development Areas (UDAs). UDAs can cover a wide variety of community types, ranging from small town or village centers to suburban activity areas to urban downtowns. The consultant provides technical assistance in the form of direct on-call support, assisting the County in the following:

- plan for and designate at least one urban/village development area in their comprehensive plan,

- revise as appropriate applicable land uses ordinances (including appropriate zoning classifications and subdivision ordinances) to incorporate the principles of traditional neighborhood design, and
- assist with public participation processes, and other related tasks.

The Planning Commission has held several works sessions since March, 2016 and has been working with the consulting firm of Renaissance Planning and staff over the last couple of months to incorporate the work by the advisory committee report into the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan. As part of the Plan, the Westlake – Hales Ford planning boundary is being designated as a Designated Growth Area (DGA) to meet the requirements of Section 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia. This designation qualifies this area to potentially receive funding under SMART Scale (formerly State House Bill 2) legislation passed in 2014 as a qualified Urban Development Area (UDA).

Supervisor Camicia and Commissioner Colby hosted an open house on September 1<sup>st</sup> at the Westlake Library to have open dialogue about the proposed plan and allow citizen comments and dialogue to occur.

On September 8, 2016, Planning Commission held a public hearing at Trinity Ecumenical Parish to consider the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan. Renaissance Planning Group, staff, and numerous citizens spoke concerning the area plan. (Attached are comments from citizens' concerning the area plan.) Planning Commission made a motion to table their recommendation of the area plan until the October 11<sup>th</sup> regular scheduled meeting. Planning Commission felt it was important for staff to address numerous comments from the citizens before making a decision.

Below are several changes to the Plan after the Planning Commission Public Hearing:

- All Future Land Use Categories were addressed in the plan. Suburban Residential and Open/Civic Space were added.
- Revisions were made to the Future Land Use Map
- Wastewater and Water section was updated
- A Community Facilities section was added
- Revisions were made to Gateway section

Upon recommendation by the Planning Commission and adoption by the Board of Supervisors the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan will become an amendment to the Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

## **COMMISSION ACTION**

At the Planning Commission regular meeting on October 11, 2016, Commissioner Colby made a motion to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan to the Board of Supervisors. The Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan is recommended to become an amendment to

the County's Comprehensive Plan and designate the Westlake – Hales ford area as a Designated Growth Area (DGA). Commissioner McGhee seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Motion to Approve:

Ayes: McGhee, Doss, Law, Mitchell, Colby, Webb

Nays: None

Absent: Crawford

Abstain: None

The motion to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan was approved 6-0-1 (Crawford absent)

Attachments