



Roanoke County 200 Plan: 2021 Community Meeting Summary

Back Creek

Meeting: Back Creek Elementary School - Thursday, October 28, 2021

Attendee Count: 17

Staff present:

Planning	Long Range	Transportation	Zoning	GSPRT
Philip Thompson	Bailey Howard-DuBois Alex Jones Cecile Newcomb	Megan Cronise Brian Epperley	Becky James Alyssa Dunbar	George Assaid

Land Use

Meeting Exercise: Place post-it note comments on the map.

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:

- Keep the character of the area the same as it is now.
- Like the convenience of living about a 7-minute drive to retail areas.
- Like living in the area; it is rural, but convenient to commercial areas.
- Several residents inquired about the future of the Poage Farm. They want to know if the School Board plans to sell it. They are concerned about it being sold to a developer, and what that might mean. If the School Board does not plan to sell it they would like to know if there are any plans for the property.
- If the Poage Farm is sold, it should not be densely developed. Would like to see some small-scale community retail there.
- Develop the Poage Farm into a park with renovated farm buildings.
- Keep the future land use map designations as they are. The Village Center and Suburban Village areas on the map would be good for Mom & Pop, small-scale businesses.
- Do not allow high-density residential development in Back Creek Community Planning Area.
- Concern about future development on Old Mill Road.

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:



- More unique indoor and outdoor PRT recreation amenities are needed in southern Roanoke County, similar to the amenities at Green Ridge Recreation Center and Explore Park. Renovate and/or expand Brambleton Center.
- Requests were made for aquatic options on this side of Roanoke County, similar to the Green Ridge Recreation Center's Splash Valley Water Park and indoor pools. Citizens want to see the Brambleton Center remain open.
- More recycling drop-off locations are needed closer to the Back Creek and Bent Mountain communities. The locations should be larger and better maintained than the existing facilities near the Brambleton Center and Tanglewood Cox Communications building. There is frustration that the existing Roanoke County recycling bins are often full.
- Connect Happy Hollow Gardens and Poor Mountain Preserve via hiking trails or bike trails.
- Overall, more small commercial development (mom and pop shops) along Route 221 is desired, with connections to Back Creek Elementary School and other public amenities.
- Add overlooks near or at Happy Hollow Gardens or Poor Mountain Preserve.
- Improve and expand the Back Creek Elementary School track. It is very heavily used.
- More flexibility and availability for the public to rent out and use community facility spaces at Back Creek Fire & Rescue Station and Back Creek Elementary School is needed. Improve the Roanoke County website to reserve spaces.
- More on-road and off-road bike lanes/trails are needed in and around Back Creek and all of Roanoke County.

General Comments:

- Any new private or public development should reflect the "natural" characteristics of the community; it should not be too modern.
- More places to eat or buy food are needed in the area. Could the public schools partner with private community gardens?

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 221

- Lower the Route 221 speed limit to 45 MPH until the top of Bent Mountain.
- Would like guardrail placed in front of 7180 Bent Mountain Road since four cars have ended up in the front yard (look at the houses with banks [on this side of the road]).
- On Route 221 between Mt. Chestnut Road and Twelve O'Clock Knob Road the ditches are too close to the edge of the road and create hazards for drivers.
- Continue to maintain ditches along Route 221.



- Consider left turn lanes at Route 221 and Poage Valley Road, Poage Valley Road Extension, Old Mill Road (eastern entrance) and at Back Creek Elementary.
- Route 221 bridges over Back Creek need to be swept due to gravel building up.
- Would like vehicles on Route 221 in the left turn lane to turn onto Cotton Hill Road to not drive slowly in the left lane.
- Worried about bicycles riding on Route 221.
- Would like bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along Route 221 to the Cave Spring Corners area.
- Would like bicycle lanes on Route 221 from Cave Spring Corners to Back Creek Elementary.

Twelve O'Clock Knob Road

- On Twelve O'Clock Knob Road just east of Lost Mountain Road a paving patch over a culvert has settled and has created a dip in the pavement.
- Continue to maintain ditches along Twelve O'Clock Knob Road.

Protection and Preservation

Meeting Exercise: Leave a comment about natural and cultural resources on the map.
Tell us what this map is missing? What's valuable to you and why? What is impacted or needs improvement?

Meeting Exercise Comments:

- Several attendees stated that they deeply value the rural character of Back Creek. They enjoy the area's isolation and natural landscape. We should protect and preserve the natural landscape of Back Creek.
- Ensure the protection of Poor Mountain Natural Preserve.
- Encourage more land preservation in the area, especially in Blue Ridge Parkway viewsheds.
- Protect views from the Blue Ridge Parkway, especially at overlooks. Tree clearing at the roadside is needed to restore overgrown views.
- The County should consider development standards which address the replanting of native trees and landscaping, especially in residential subdivisions, when trees are removed.
- Property owners and residents need support for stream clean-ups after flood events. Clarification and education about which agency is responsible when natural debris is blocking the waterway is needed.
- Protect the Back Creek stream from development impacts.
- Support a new survey of potentially eligible historic sites for the National Register.

Staff Observations

Land Use

- Residents of Back Creek appreciate living in the country with the convenience of a short drive to suburban amenities. Residents love the character of the Back



Creek community and rural landscape. They are concerned about the future of the Poage Farm. Some residents would like to see small-scale, local retail nodes along Route 221 in keeping with the Future Land Use Map, while others want to see the area remain as it is.

Community Facilities

- Citizens in the Back Creek community planning area want more indoor and outdoor recreation options in southern Roanoke County, similar to those found at Green Ridge Recreation Center and Explore Park. There is a large demand for better and more recycling options in Back Creek.
- Overall, Back Creek citizens are satisfied with the community facilities and services in the area, but would like to see more options and financial support that other parts of Roanoke County have received in recent years to create a greater sense of community. Citizens would like to see more public and private investment along Route 221, creating places to gather/socialize both indoors and outdoors.

Transportation

- Bicycles were a topic of discussion at the Back Creek meeting. Several attendees are concerned about cyclists riding on Route 221, particularly in the curvy areas where cars can come up quickly behind slower cyclists. There was also a desire from a few residents for bicycle accommodations along or in the vicinity of Route 221 to the Cave Spring Corners area, where bicycle lanes are striped. The (future) Back Creek Greenway was also an item of interest.
- Most attendees were not aware of the CORTRAN program. One younger woman took an information sheet to pass on to a family friend who is eligible and one gentleman completed a survey.

Protection and Preservation

- Attendees were concerned about preservation of the landscape of Back Creek and wanted to encourage higher development standards to protect natural spaces. Viewsheds were a common interest, especially from the Blue Ridge Parkway. There is a strong sense of connection to the area's history and early settlers in this area; protection and recognition of historic resources was mentioned by several attendees.

Summary Approved: PGT