

"Sometimes it seems as if [council] walks up to the cliff, then walks back away, then walks back up, then walks back away. One of these days they're going to walk up to that cliff and jump off. – But what [direction] they decide, we don't know yet." – Town PC Chair David Gushee on development decisions



County Planning Commissioner Harry Krum, right, was adamant that if it's going to be a town-like neighborhood with central utilities, it should be a part of the town. Krum's fellow county commissioner Tory Failmezger, paper in hand, ponders this thought as County Building Official Dave Beahm listens.

the Happy Creek area largely owned by FRLP – 750 acres in the town and county, with another 70 acres owned by Millennium Lotus – was a logical candidate for Urban Development Area designation. – "If there was a joint agreement on annexation of that area, we could focus growth

there," Woods said.

County staff pointed out that approximately 900 undeveloped, unplatted acres in that area on both sides of Happy Creek Road could likely accommodate the next 20 years of growth in the community, even were the housing market to rebound and the

historical county top-end, 3-percent growth rate revisited.

"This points to why we need ongoing dialogue," Town Planning Commission Chairman David Gushee stated. Gushee revisited past statements on the town planners' dilemma in dealing with the FRLP proposal, which is illegal by current town zoning codes for the area. – "It was beyond our competence to solve. We sent it to the town council, who has control of the money and the means to work toward a solution with the developer, and I understand they are.

"Sometimes it seems as if [council] walks up to the cliff, then walks back, then walks back up, then walks back away. One of these days they're going to walk up to that cliff and jump off. – But [which direction] they decide to jump, we don't know yet," Gushee concluded with a metaphorical flourish that no one could top.

However, before Gushee suggested adjournment after stating that all the base factual aspects the meeting had been designed to cover had been exhausted, his fellow town commissioner Sandra Charles seemed to express the hope of all present. Charles called the discussion "exciting" and expressed the hope a joint planning consensus could be achieved that could direct the town and county's elected boards on exactly which way they should finally jump off that decision-making cliff.

For one thing is sure – in 20 years this community will not look like it does today. At issue is will it feature a cookie-cutter pattern of one acre or larger

lots, with individual wells sucking an already troubled groundwater shed dry; or will it feature a clustered "new urbanism" design aimed at localizing the life of

those new communities in an essentially self-supporting, central utility, business and recreationally supplied community?

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