



**COLUMBIA CITY/WHITLEY COUNTY  
JOINT PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

Whitley County Government Center  
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To: County Plan Commission  
From: Nathan Bilger, Executive Director  
Re: Revisions to Comprehensive Plan draft

July 14, 2021

Following the June 10<sup>th</sup> special meeting, the Form Whitley Comprehensive Plan was revised to incorporate comments received. The revised document was distributed by email to the Commission and interested parties on June 25<sup>th</sup> so as to allow ample time for review prior to the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

For your convenience though, below is a summary of the revisions made:

- Typographical corrections
  - Page iv, corrected spelling of “Ronda”
  - Page 14, “3,860 acres” changed to “30,758 acres”
  - Page 30, corrected spelling of “judgment”
- Minor text changes
  - Page iii, “This document updates the previous...” changed to “This document updates and replaces the previous...”
  - Page 16, added Dekalb County Airport and Kendallville Municipal Airport to the list
  - Page 32, “reasonable regard (as described in Indiana Code)” changed to “reasonable regard (as used in Indiana Code)”
  - Page 35, changed 1.11 from program to policy
  - Page 83, “volunteer group” changed to “A group of appointed residents and elected officials”
- Major text change
  - Page vi, revised this page from the 2011 Plan that explains the state statute mandate to create and adopt a Comprehensive Plan as a prerequisite to any zoning ordinance
- Map changes
  - Changed small “dots” of *Town Enhancement* commercial in Gateway Park area to *Employment Center* commercial/industrial
  - Changed a block of *Town Enhancement* commercial northeast of Little Cedar Lake to *Mixed Rural*

Additionally, the following comments were discussed among consultant, staff, and Steering Committee, but no changes to the document are proposed to be made. Explanation follows each comment:

- The application of *Mixed Rural* to the Sheets farm property near Loon Lake and the application of *Traditional Neighborhood* to the Mancino property in Collins
  - Both of these properties have land uses that are not incongruous with the indicated character types, although they are not necessarily primary uses of the types.
- This Comprehensive Plan ignores public health by not addressing health effects of CAFOs
  - This Plan is not a public health document. So, while the Plan is mandated to promote public health in its recommendations, it does not make recommendations on every public health concern.
- The February 2 draft character map was largely a *Traditional Rural* character unlike the current proposal
  - Due to a communication error, that draft map had inverted colors for *Traditional* and *Conventional*.
- Avoid locating solar installations on “prime” agricultural land
  - There was little public input about preference for locations of solar facilities in the Plan. Specific location requirements of solar facilities should be considered as part of writing regulations.

- The “zoning” classes [we assume this refers to Character types] are arbitrarily named
  - The names of the character types were chosen to describe the majority of the areas to which they are applied. However, in a few situations the names could be cryptic.
- Normalization of a substantial number of comments about and from Jefferson Township
  - In the 2011 Plan process, a theoretically statistically valid sample was attempted to solicit input. However, in this update process, feedback on the existing Plan and new items were sought from many sources, not simply a sample population. Because it was not designed to be statistically validated, the consultants used their expertise and experience to balance the volume and substance of comments received.
- Why are municipalities excluded from the character map?
  - Municipalities have their own zoning codes and comprehensive plans, so their incorporated areas were excluded. However, their extraterritorial jurisdiction areas were included in this map in the unlikely event that a municipality rescinds its ETJ authority.
- Question about discouraging 1- and 2-lot plats in the *Conventional Rural* character
  - There was much public feedback about protecting rural character, and ongoing small lot splits could degrade that. So those small plats would be discouraged, or minimized, but not necessarily prohibited. Defining a balance between too few and too many new small subdivisions could be done during code writing.

Looking forward to discussing this more with you on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Thank you.