

Town of Marshville
Town Council Strategic Planning Retreat
Thursday, February 24, 2011 at 8:30 a.m.
Marshville Community Center – 118 E. Union St.

Present: Mayor Frank Deese, Mayor Pro-Tem Margaret Bivens, CM Ned Beachum, CM Matthew Jefferson, TM Radford Thomas, Clerk/FO Tonya Johnson, and Facilitator David Long.

An informal time of gathering with coffee and snacks began at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Mayor Deese, who welcomed everyone and also gave the invocation. All gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Deese made some opening remarks. TM Radford Thomas also made some opening remarks, and presented to council a brief overview of departmental key facts and trends. TM Radford Thomas introduced the retreat facilitator, Mr. David Long.

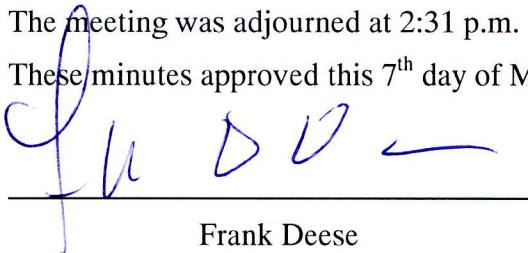
David Long introduced himself and gave a brief biography. He stated that he has thirty plus years experience in serving local governments across North Carolina. David began the retreat session with an exercise in which council members were asked what they would do to improve Marshville for the benefit of the citizens and businesses if they were King/Queen of Marshville. Many thoughts and ideas resulted from this exercise. There was also a discussion of Marshville's strengths and weaknesses. Council members also participated in a brainstorming process to identify the most important issues/needs/opportunities for the Town of Marshville to be addressed within the next one to three years, and forward. As a result of this brainstorming process council members, guided by David Long, began to prioritize items that they, as a unified group, felt were important to the success of Marshville. David Long then led the group in how to develop an action plan or strategy for accomplishing the top priorities.

David Long informed council and attending staff that he would prepare a written summary of the retreat session (see attachments).

At the conclusion of the meeting Mayor Deese and TM Radford Thomas thanked David. Everyone commented that they enjoyed the planning retreat. The consensus of the council was to take what we've learned and put it into action.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

These minutes approved this 7th day of March, 2011.



Frank Deese

Mayor

Attest: 

Tonya Johnson

Town Clerk

**A brief recess may be called every 45-60 minutes, as desired by Council.*

Town *of*
MARSHVILLE
North Carolina

2011
Town Council
Planning Retreat
February 24, 2011

Summary Report

February 28, 2011

DAVID LONG CONSULTING

*Strategic Planning and Organizational Development
for North Carolina's Local Governments*

3034 Lake Forest Drive
Greensboro, NC 27408
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DLONGWORK@EARTHLINK.NET

February 28, 2011

Franklin Deese, Mayor
Radford Thomas, Town Manager
Town of Marshville
201 West Main Street
Marshville, NC 28103

Dear Mayor Deese and Mr. Thomas:

I have enjoyed very much working with the Town of Marshville in planning and conducting the Town's 2011 Planning Retreat. Thanks very much for your advice and guidance in preparing for the retreat. My impression was that the session was very constructive and successful—everyone certainly seemed to be fully engaged in the discussion!

Please extend my sincere gratitude to the members of both Town Council and staff for their cooperation, assistance, enthusiasm and skills in making sure that everything operated smoothly—it is sincerely appreciated!

I hope the Town Council and staff will find the attached report to be accurate and satisfactory in all respects. If there are any deficiencies or needs for revision, please let me know as soon as possible so these can be addressed.

Thanks very much! I have enjoyed working with the Town of Marshville and if called upon, would look forward to continuing our work together in any way possible.

Sincerely,

David Long AICP/MPA
Consultant/Facilitator

Town of MARSHVILLE
2011
Planning Retreat
Town Council and Staff
February 24, 2011

Summary Report
February 28, 2011

1.0- INTRODUCTION

The Town of Marshville conducted its 2011 Planning Retreat on February 24, 2011 at the Marshville Community Center. The retreat focused on the Town Council with the support of the manager and key staff. Attending and participating from Council were Mayor Franklin Deese, Mayor Pro-Tem Margaret Bivens and Council Members Ned Beachum and Matthew Jefferson. One Council member was unable to attend and one seat is currently vacant.

David Long, a consultant based in Greensboro with thirty-seven years experience in serving local governments throughout North Carolina served as facilitator and prepared this summary report. The consultant's bio is included as Attachment 1.

The summary report includes brief narratives describing selected elements of the retreat agenda and activities. (Additional elements may be included later as they become available from key staff.)

The consultant conferred with the Town Manager in advance of the retreat to plan the session and to develop the agenda. The retreat agenda is included as Attachment 2. This summary parallels the sequence of retreat agenda items.

2.0- KING/QUEEN EXERCISE

As a prelude to the retreat, Town Council members were contacted and asked to consider the following hypothetical question and be prepared to discuss it at the retreat.

If you were King/Queen of Marshville, what would you do or direct to be done that would improve Marshville for the benefit of the citizens and/or the businesses of the Town? Assume that there are adequate revenues to carry out your edicts!

THEMES /THOUGHTS/OBSERVATIONS/CONCLUSIONS EMERGING FROM KING/QUEEN
EXERCISE AS VOICED BY COUNCIL

Transcripts of flip chart sheets follow listed in the order generated as voiced by individuals rather than by group priority order:

- Facelift of downtown buildings
 - Get tenants in buildings
 - High rent is an obstacle
 - Recover sense of pride in buildings
- Bulldoze and level properties on US 74 and prepare for commercial use
 - Prepare it so it can be shaped at once rather than in bits and pieces
 - Redevelop downtown
 - Don't be held back by history
- Make downtown a destination; achieve warm cozy feeling
- Industrial areas; recruit
- Nice residential areas appropriate to incomes and demographics
- Quaint commercial downtown
- Revitalize Marshville with historic look and appeal
 - Keep unique small town atmosphere
 - Make attractive
 - Strengthen tourism
 - Retail
 - Restaurants on street
 - Inviting
- Cleanup of US 74 corridor
 - Beautiful row houses
 - Provide housing if housing is demolished
- Infrastructure has to be improved greatly; water/sewer
- Town will have to be proactive with cityscaping
 - Urban areas conducive to walking'
 - Urban parks
 - Fountains/features, etc. to stimulate positive growth
 - Start with town square and work outward
- Retirement village
- Crosswalks, etc.
- Lake Stegall; make it into a nice destination
- Preserve rather than demolish
- Clean Richardson Creek
- Have our own water and wastewater treatment facilities

3.0 - DISCUSSION OF TOWN'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The retreat participants engaged in a free form discussion of the Town's strengths and weaknesses. The results follow:

RESPONSES FROM COUNCIL AND STAFF WHEN ASKED 'WHAT ARE MARSHVILLE'S PRIMARY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?'

Transcripts of flip chart sheets follow listed in the order generated as voiced by individuals rather than by group priority order:

Strengths

- Good location for economic development
 - US 74
- Plenty of consumers
- Town services; get a lot of value for the dollar
- People/citizens/good people
- Town staff
- History/identity

Weaknesses

- 'Flushability' (as related to wastewater)
- Need to bring big business
- Lack of identity or brand
- Apathy is rampant
- Don't have control over property; absentee owners
- Marshville does not have what consumers want
- Parking
- Code enforcement
- Public relations; don't promote
 - Refresh website
 - Insert promotional message with water bills
- Appearance
- Housing; trailers not needed

Both Strengths and Weaknesses/Neither Strengths Nor Weaknesses

- Adjust our small town thinking
 - Think bigger,
 - Both Council and citizens
- Council must serve as leaders
- Opportunity for Town Council to set positive example; spark interest
- Implement policies

4.0 - STRUCTURED BRAINSTORMING

The retreat participants were engaged in structured brainstorming process. The purpose of the process was to engage the Council and staff in developing a consensus-based prioritization of goals for the near-term.

The focus question for the session was:

What are the most important issues/needs/opportunities for the Town of Marshville to address over the next 1-3 years to continue to move forward?

The process allows for maximum individual creativity and respects the individual's right to voice opinions in an unpressured manner, while gradually building consensus and arriving at common ground among the group, specifically a set of priorities that is 'owned' in a unified manner by the Council. The structured process is a proven and tested method that consistently delivers results and very positive reviews from participants.

Many key pieces of information were generated for the session and a series of Excel spreadsheets were developed summarizing this information. This information is contained in Attachments 3.1 through 3.3.

The facilitator interacted one-on-one with each participant until all ideas had been voiced and recorded on flip chart sheets. The participants voiced a total of 23 responses. Participants then prioritized these 23 items individually and privately using a system in which a) their top seven priorities were selected and b) these top seven were further refined by assigning seven points to the highest item, six to the next highest and so forth until the seventh item then received one point.

- Attachment 3.1 lists the 23 items in the order originally generated.
- Attachment 3.2 lists the 23 items sorted by the Council's priorities listed in descending order by points received. The top items follow:

- 18 3 Infrastructure
- 12 20 Develop/enhance comprehensive land use plan
- 10 10 Improve PR and flow of information to citizenry
- 9 12 Renovate old buildings such as Stegall Milling into historic sites/landmarks to preserve identity of town, such as a cotton center
- 7 6 Overall master plan for future use and development
- 7 21 Increase tax base

Attachment 3.3 lists the 23 items sorted by **themes** in descending order of aggregate points assigned by the group. The themes were developed by the facilitator and items assigned to each theme several days following the session. The themes are intended simply as a method to better grasp the results, and in no way to supersede or challenge any decision-making processes in place.

It is a conceptual tool, not an end product--unscientific and imperfect but hopefully a helpful piece of information in charting a course forward. It is also somewhat subjective on the part of the facilitator although the general intent was to follow as closely as possible the themes identified by the Council and staff during the retreat. Others might observe completely different themes and/or assignment of items to themes and are encouraged to do so. The themes can be thought of as a tool for achieving a division of labor, for example, if multi-disciplinary task forces were to be established, each might address a priority theme.

The themes and aggregate points of each follow:

• Economic Development/Tax Base/Development/Redevelopment	38
• Land Use/Planning/Zoning/	30
• Infrastructure/Public Facilities/Public Services	28
• PR/Communications/Message/Involvement/Identity	16

There is nothing sacrosanct or binding about the themes and the points attributed to each. At best, the rankings provide a *rough* idea of the relative weight of each theme. Much more insightful analysis by those closest to the issues (Council, staff, residents, etc.) is required to convert these rankings into a meaningful basis for action.

5.0 - IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF BROAD STRATEGIC LONG-RANGE THEMES BY GROUP

The facilitator developed the themes identified in the previous section in the days *following* the retreat. At the retreat, the Council confirmed the following as broad priorities. The prioritization process was very informal and not rigidly hierarchical

MAJOR PRIORITIES AS VOICED BY COUNCIL

1. Infrastructure
2. Comprehensive land use plan/redevelopment plans/zoning
3. Public relations/communications flow/marketing/branding/buy-in of citizens
4. Clean-up/facelift

6.0 – PRELIMINARY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION PLANNING

The last stage of the retreat focused on preliminary strategy development and action planning, that is, *how* to achieve the priorities outlined throughout the day. The process is *preliminary* because it represents a 'first stab' and attempts simply to illustrate an approach that can be used. In reality, much more extensive planning will need to be undertaken to fully and effectively implement the top priorities.

This process roughly parallels the top three priorities established in section 5.0 of this report. Due to time constraints, the fourth item was not addressed.

Action Plan #1

Issue: Infrastructure

Actions:

- Sewer lines
- Sewer capacity and treatment (*a pressing priority*)
- Cityscape
- Organizational arrangements
- Water capacity/tanks
- *Other tbd*

Action Plan #2

Issue: Comprehensive land use plan/redevelopment/zoning

Actions:

- Update and revisit land use plan; make it *comprehensive*
 - Move beyond basics to include design guidelines, etc.
- Pedestrian plan
- Transportation plan
- Greenfield plan
- *Other tbd*

Action Plan #3

Issue: Public Relations/Communications/Flow of Information/Marketing/Branding/Buy-In of Citizens

Actions:

- Website upgrade
- Explain Council priorities to public; get buy-in
- Press releases
- Water bills
- Develop unified Council talking points/elevator speech
- *Other tbd*

As time in the day was winding down, David asked the Council if they would like to select one overriding priority among those contained in the listings above for the purpose of illustrating the development of a more detailed ‘nuts and bolts’ action plan. Council selected “*Explain Council priorities to public; get buy-in.*” The detailed action plan follows:

Action:	Explain Council priorities to public and get buy-in
Specifically:	Develop a unified message; elevator speech; make unanimous among Council
Specifically:	Develop a bulleted list of talking points, to be implemented as follows>>

Who Is Involved	Town Council, Manager, staff, citizens' focus groups, David Long
Who Takes Lead:	Manager
Resources Needed:	Time, commitment, consensus
Obstacles:	<i>tbd</i>
Allies:	<i>tbd</i>
Target Date:	March 31, 2011

ATTACHMENT 1

DAVID LONG CONSULTING

3034 Lake Forest Dr. Greensboro, NC 27408
336.972.5216-preferred 336.545.5717-optional
dlongwork@earthlink.net

DAVID LONG has worked as a professional planner and facilitator, primarily within the State of North Carolina since 1974. He has led numerous retreats and goal-setting sessions for local governments, advisory boards, grassroots organizations, non-profit organizations, etc.

From 1986 to 2004, he served with the NC Department of Commerce as the primary liaison between state and local governments in a nineteen county area of the Piedmont region of North Carolina, with responsibility for delivering planning services to over 150 communities in the fields of community planning, public management, and economic development.

He is exceptionally well versed in interacting with and understanding the needs of local government and non-profit officials and managers.

In 2004, David initiated a private consulting practice and continues to serve the needs of public and non-profit organizations as well as private organizations. Recognizing the competitive realities of the global economy, he has committed much of his time and energy to assisting communities in making a successful transition to the new economy.

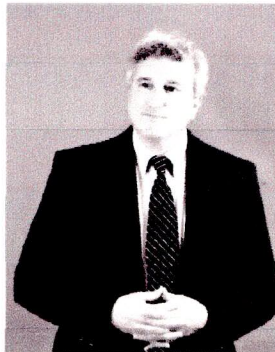
David has assisted numerous communities in developing successful strategic plans, and has served on the adjunct faculty of the University of North

Carolina at Greensboro, where he taught a popular course in strategic planning. He is a 2004 recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, awarded by the Governor for lifetime service to the State of North Carolina.

David's recent work has focused on consensus building, growth management, economic development, tourism development, public input and strategic planning. He organized along with colleagues Carol Rhea and Jeff Michael a very successful regional tourism initiative, the Yadkin/Pee Dee Lakes Project, that was built on principles of grassroots public participation, has assisted in establishing several local and regional tourism organizations, and advised the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. David was also instrumental in the early 1980s in laying some of the foundations for the highly successful revitalization of the City of Asheville and the mountain region of North Carolina.

David has been a professional planner since 1974. He holds a BA in Geography from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a Masters in Public Affairs (MPA) from Western Carolina University, and is a full member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Please see client list next page.



Illustrative List of Clients Served: Retreats, Strategic Plans, Goal-Setting

Advantage West
Archdale-Trinity Chamber of Commerce
Asheboro-Randolph Chamber of Commerce
Bethania, Town of
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
Central Carolina Education Consortium
Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
Chapel Hill, Town of
Chatham County
Chinqua-Penn
Clemmons, Village of
Dan River Basin Association
Danbury, Town of
Davidson County
Davidson County Schools
Davie Chamber of Commerce
Davie County
Deerfield Beach FL, City of
Downtown Mocksville
Downtown Salisbury
Graham County
Historic Salisbury
Kernersville, Town of
Lewisville, Town of
Lexington, City of
Lexington Tourism Authority
Mebane, Town of
Montgomery County EDC

Moore County Planning Department
Morrisville, Town of
Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Arts Council
North Carolina Department of Commerce
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
North Wilkesboro, Town of
Northwest Piedmont Council of
Governments
Piedmont Land Conservancy
Piedmont Triad Partnership
Randolph County
Rockingham County
Rockingham County Chamber(s) of
Commerce
Rockingham County EDC
Rockingham County United Way
Spencer, Town of
Stanly County Chamber of Commerce
Stokes County EDC
Stokesdale, Town of
Surry Arts Council
Surry County
Surry County Board(s) of Education
Wilkes County Chamber of Commerce
Yadkin/Pee Dee Lakes Project
Yadkin County Schools
Yadkin County
Yanceyville, Town of

ATTACHMENT 3.1

Marshville Town Council 2/24/11	
<i>What do you see as the most important issues/needs/opportunities for the Town to address over the next 1-3 years to continue to move the Town forward?</i>	
Item	Item
#	Listed by Item #
1	Improve the downtown area; facelift; make storefronts presentable; make people want to start a business
2	Public and private partnerships for development
3	Infrastructure
4	Plan for our older growing population; senior citizens
5	Committee to bring department store to Marshville
6	Overall master plan for future use and development
7	Annexation study of necessary areas
8	Shopping center; not to take away from downtown
9	Clean up highway corridor
10	Improve PR and flow of information to citizenry
11	Maintain/improve percentage of tax base as it pertains to residential versus business
12	Renovate old buildings such as Stegall Milling into historic sites/landmarks to preserve identity of town, such as a cotton center
13	A long-range plan/agreements for what makes money in town; water/sewer; maybe natural gas
14	Develop a theme/identity for Marshville
15	Plan for younger generation; recreation/trails/green space/parks and recreation
16	Pay attention to zoning so housing will be the way we want it in Marshville
17	Be more open to citizens and their needs; involve them in political process; be aware of public's needs
18	Annexation of new areas on US 74
19	Code enforcement
20	Develop/enhance comprehensive land use plan
21	Increase tax base
22	Build a state of the art recreation facility
23	Find funding to aid in economic development so it's not a burden to citizens

ATTACHMENT 3.2

Marshville Town Council 2/24/11					
<i>What do you see as the most important issues/needs/opportunities for the Town to address over the next 1-3 years to continue to move the Town forward?</i>					
Total Points	Item #	Item	Individual points		
		<i>Listed by Points in Descending Order</i>			
18	3	Infrastructure	4	7	7
12	20	Develop/enhance comprehensive land use plan	6	6	
10	10	Improve PR and flow of information to citizenry	1	5	4
9	12	Renovate old buildings such as Stegall Milling into historic sites/landmarks to preserve identity of town, such as a cotton center	7	2	
7	6	Overall master plan for future use and development	7		
7	21	Increase tax base	3	4	
6	1	Improve the downtown area; facelift; make storefronts presentable; make people want to start a	6		
6	2	Public and private partnerships for development	6		
6	14	Develop a theme/identity for Marshville	1	5	
6	19	Code enforcement	4	2	
5	5	Committee to bring department store to Marshville	5		
5	11	Maintain/improve percentage of tax base as it pertains to residential versus business	5		
4	22	Build a state of the art recreation facility	3	1	
3	13	A long-range plan/agreements for what makes money in town; water/sewer; maybe natural gas	3		
3	15	Plan for younger generation; recreation/trails/green space/parks and recreation	3		
2	16	Pay attention to zoning so housing will be the way we want it in Marshville	2		
2	18	Annexation of new areas on US 74	2		
1	9	Clean up highway corridor	1		
0	4	Plan for our older growing population; senior citizens			
0	7	Annexation study of necessary areas			
0	8	Shopping center; not to take away from downtown			
0	17	Be more open to citizens and their needs; involve them in political process; be aware of public's needs			
0	23	Find funding to aid in economic development so it's not a burden to citizens			
112					
28					
4					

ATTACHMENT 3.3

Marshville Town Council 2/24/11		
What do you see as the most important issues/needs/opportunities for the Town to address over the next 1-3 years to continue to move the Town forward?		
Total Points	Item #	Item
Listed by Themes and Aggregate Points in Descending Order		
Economic Development/Tax Base/Development/Redevelopment		
9	12	Renovate old buildings such as Stegall Milling into historic sites/landmarks to preserve identity of town, such as a cotton center
7	21	Increase tax base
6	1	Improve the downtown area; facelift; make storefronts presentable; make people want to start a business
6	2	Public and private partnerships for development
5	5	Committee to bring department store to Marshville
5	11	Maintain/improve percentage of tax base as it pertains to residential versus business
0	8	Shopping center; not to take away from downtown
0	23	Find funding to aid in economic development so it's not a burden to citizens
38		
Land Use/Planning/Zoning		
12	20	Develop/enhance comprehensive land use plan
7	6	Overall master plan for future use and development
6	19	Code enforcement
2	16	Pay attention to zoning so housing will be the way we want it in Marshville
2	18	Annexation of new areas on US 74
1	9	Clean up highway corridor
0	7	Annexation study of necessary areas
30		
Infrastructure/Public Facilities/Public Services		
18	3	Infrastructure
4	22	Build a state of the art recreation facility
3	13	A long-range plan/agreements for what makes money in town; water/sewer; maybe natural gas
3	15	Plan for younger generation; recreation/trails/green space/parks and recreation
0	4	Plan for our older growing population; senior citizens
28		
PR/Communications/Message/Involvement/Identity		
10	10	Improve PR and flow of information to citizenry
6	14	Develop a theme/identity for Marshville
0	17	Be more open to citizens and their needs; involve them in political process; be aware of public's needs
16		
112		
28		
4		