

Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan Update
Public Workshop: A Vision for the Future of Cape Charles
Meeting Summary

September 19, 2006
Palace Theater

The goal of this project is to develop an affirmed vision for the next 20 years for the Town of Cape Charles that is based on the Goals and Objectives of the current draft Plan, and on general input from the public. The first public input workshop was held on September 19, 2006 from 7-9:30 p.m. and consisted of a series of presentations and exercises including a plenary session to affirm the overall vision for the future of Cape Charles and a mapping exercise to identify priority areas for preservation and community-building.

The major objectives of the meeting were to:

- Review the objectives, process and schedule of the study
- Review background data on the Town and its surroundings
- Review some emerging planning tools available for places like Cape Charles
- Work together to create a positive vision of the future of Cape Charles, focusing on land use and design issues

Facilitated Brainstorming

Participants were given note cards and asked to write down a word or phrase that described their vision for the future of Cape Charles. These responses were then shared in the large group. Below is a list of ideas that were generated from the exercise.

Note cards:

1. Small town – Hometown Environment/Feeling
2. Distinctively known as a quality residential neighborhood with a sound economy
3. “pedestrian oriented” (human scale, design, livability)
4. Tourist/Retirement town
5. Affordable
6. Keep commercial growth in town, not on 13 or town edge
7. Peaceful, quaint (historic), “wired” – wireless networks, public parks/murals/sculptures, people friendly, self-contained, affordable housing for low-income families, a sense of community, commercial on Mason Ave., youthful energy, vibrant
8. peaceful
9. Great and fun place to live and visit and visited by many (golf, sailing, boating, fishing, kayaking, motor bikes, boats to rent, train rides, parasailing, horseback riding, regattas once a week from May to August)
10. Authenticity, diverse community of neighbors
11. Comfortable – a pedestrian oriented, easy living residential community
12. family environment – a place where we can raise our children and take care of our aging parents
13. Family friendly
14. Year round vibrancy
15. Peaceful hometown
16. Inclusive
17. Uniform, quaint “bridge passes”
18. Sustainable – ecologically “sane”, economy not based solely on tourism (low wage, seasonal jobs)
19. Simple living close to cities, Back to true simple values, retaining beauty in simple living



Vision Ideas shared in large group:

1. A protected beach
2. Family friendly (walkable, pedestrian activity)
3. Protection of Single Family Areas
4. Self-sufficient village – walk to amenities
5. Culturally alive – arts, music
6. Affordable full-time living
7. Diverse community of neighbors
8. Safe + Drug-free community
9. Flexible to needs of changing population
10. Destination focus for tourism – weekend visitors
11. Commercial growth in town, not corridor
12. More eco-friendly (opportunities for recycling)
13. Historic compatibility of downtown
14. Tourism friendly
15. Historic value
16. casual living
17. quiet streets/residential character
18. Safe, self-sufficient – grocery store in town
19. Inclusive community
20. Peaceful, relaxed (low lighting at night)
21. Balanced tax base/sound economy
22. Alive – enliven the town
23. Pride of place
24. Simple living close to cities
25. Less Auto oriented – Pedestrian, bike, multi-modal friendly
26. Dark sky standards and beautification
27. Authenticity – not made up
28. Slow paced and above water
29. Interesting to live in
30. Sustainable – ecological development, diversified employment (not solely dependent on tourism)
31. Diversity of age groups
32. Comfortable living
33. Human scale design– pedestrian oriented
34. Balance tourism/retirement – successful merger of tourism and retirement market groups
35. Fun place to live and visit
36. Spotless
37. Recreational destination
38. Celebrate traditional values – festivals, old time celebrations and events
39. Consistent full-time population (less shrink and swell with seasons)
40. Hometown

Mapping Exercise:

Participants were then broken down into four groups to work with maps of the Town to identify issues of change and preservation in Cape Charles. Specifically they were asked to mark their “favorite places,” areas they felt should be improved or changed in the future, and



indicate their TOP priority for both preservation and change. Results from this exercise can be found on the attached maps, while the ideas presented in the large group are included below:

Group 1:

- preserve and improve entrance corridor
- Love the old school – preserve and revitalize
- Beaches – public access important
- STIP improve
- Love the harbor area, working railroad and access to it
- Expand library
- Preserve open space
- Improve park
- Improve old grocery store
- Love pier
- Litter problem
- Plant trees on Madison in open space
- Smelly pump stations
- Love Mason Ave, but improve keeping retail character

Group 2:

- Improve corridor (13 to 184) into town
- Like Marina area
- Improve views from street around Heritage Acres
- Railyard – improve visually
- Central Park – love, but improve
- Improve traffic at intersection of Fig and Randolph (i.e. roundabout)
- Improve “hump” as pedestrian/intermodal transportation
- Keep and improve Rosenwald school
- Harbor and STIP improve
- Improve south side of Mason Ave – consistent with historic character
- Improve pump station at pier
- BSC – improve viewline from water + town – aesthetic improvements
- Gravel harbor area – improve look and functional use
- Like beach and improve – more parking
- Improve coast guard housing
- Pillars end of Washington/old ferry improve
- 35 mph speed limit in town
- Ped/bike friendly greenway connecting Bay Creek and downtown – safe and legal
- Expand historic district to include more area

Group 3:

- Rotary into town for safety – get rid of 3 way stop
- Widen Randolph – scary for wheelchairs
- Like park
- Better use for school - housing, recreational center, cultural center, public and private use
- Ugly coast guard housing – Seabreeze should go
- Love beach – want volleyball or recreational space
- Pedestrian access to railroad
- Develop north of STIP into housing



- Protect view on 1st – especially from commercial development
- Gateway/Welcome entrance from 13/184 into town
- Harbor improvements – look like Mystic Seaport

Group 4:

- Want to keep ball fields as sports/recreational fields
- Beautify Bayshore Concrete
- STIP → Eastern Shore Community College, YMCA
- More beach walkovers
- Need to address Meatland and Heritage Acres
- Preserve Natural areas
- Improve Harbor/South Side of Mason
- Need grocery in town
- Create pedestrian only “Strawberry Plaza”
- Mixed use on both sides of harbor
- Preserve Rosenwald School
- More crossover on 184, better connectivity

Additional Comments:

County looking at bike trail around town – none of our comments addressed this
Limit access on 184 – no housing along road, not full of driveways

