

I am adding my voice to those supporting Marsh Smith for Southern Pines Town Council and Chris Smithson for Mayor. These candidates are our best hope for ensuring that the Town of Southern Pines implements the wishes of its citizens, as expressed through the Comprehensive Long Range Plan.

The Town officially adopted the CLP in 2010, and the State requires that once a plan is adopted, regulations be implemented to support it. Thus the CLP is our governing document for land use issues. As a member of Southern Pines Planning Board, the first question I must consider before voting on an issue is whether the request is consistent with the adopted Land Use Plan. So, I am upset when I hear that current Council members and Candidates are stating that the CLP is “just a guide” or making public statements that suggest they would not implement policies put forth in the CLP.

Our CLP recognizes the “presence, function and overall appearance of Horse Country farms” as some of the “essential character features of Southern Pines”. It includes policies designed to preserve and protect Horse Country. Specifically, the CLP requires the Town to “Discourage public investment in new utilities infrastructure through Horse Country” and “Collaborate with NCDOT, Moore County, Fort Bragg and others on transportation strategies promoting preservation of Horse Country”. As citizens, we deserve elected officials who will implement these policies.

Now that Horse Country is being threatened by the US 1 bypass, only Marsh Smith and Chris Smithson have stated that they will work to make NCDOT consider alternatives to a US1 bypass – consistent with the CLP policies. We can trust them to implement the wishes of the citizens.

Marsh Smith and Chris Smithson have my vote on November 8.

Joan Strawson