

Town of Cape Charles Planning Commission

July 28, 2014

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Establish quorum.
2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance
3. Emergency Services

Text Addition

The following language has already been approved in previous Commission edits for Section III-D.5 Public Services and Programs. The factual items have been added.

Hospital and urgent care facilities are provided across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel at a distance of 39 miles. Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital is relocating from Nassawadox to the Onley/Onancock area in Accomack County at a distance of 18 miles. However, non-emergency medical services are available in Town from Riverside Cape Charles Medical Center, and Bayview Community Medical Center, part of the Eastern Shore Rural Health System, on Business Route 13 near Cheriton, three miles from Town. The Cape Charles Police Department officers have training in CPR, using a defibrillator, and basic first aid. The officers are often the first to respond to calls within Town and they use their first aid training to assist residents and visitors, when possible, until paramedics arrive. The Town is committed to expanding health care options, therefore, the Town plans include:

- Continued first aid training of Cape Charles Police Officers
- Work with Northampton County, and other partners to provide an emergency department significantly closer to the Town
- Pursuit of every opportunity to increase medical and emergency services in the vicinity of the Town

Approval is requested.

4. Parking Reform

Staff has provided language in two sections to be incorporated into the update that addresses Mason and Bay Avenue street improvements.

Text Addition

Add the following section and language to Section III-C Transportation and Utilities where x will become the correct number designation.

"Section III-C.x Street Improvements

The Town has identified Mason Avenue and Bay Avenue for future street improvements. These improvements should be designed to 1) promote safety, 2) increase parking, 3) improve bicycle, pedestrian and disabled person access, and 4) create an attractive and desirable environment for residents and visitors. Identified Mason Avenue street improvements include conversion of parallel parking to reverse angle parking, bicycle lane(s), reduction in lane width to calm traffic, provision of accessible parking, and aesthetic improvements that promote pedestrian safety. Bay Avenue is a priority for street improvements and should be evaluated after a study of the Mason Avenue improvements can be completed."

Approval is requested.

5. Great Place to Raise a Family

Staff has incorporated the guidance from the Commission and the text is provided below.

Text Addition

Add the following Section III-B.5.7 Goal: Attract Families with Children

"Section III-B.5.7 Goal: Attract Families with Children

The Town offers a unique and safe environment to raise children. The parent friendly amenities include a coffee house, restaurants, a fitness center, many places of worship, and numerous community focused organizations where parents can quickly become part of the community. The child friendly amenities include a public beach, shaded quiet streets, a central park, a library, a theatre, a youth centric garden, and a playground. There are also numerous special events and festivals such as Tall Ships at Cape Charles and the Blessing of the Fleet. A private school is also located in Town and Cape Charles is a great place for a home office with excellent broadband access. Less than an hour away, the amenities of the Hampton Roads area are available. The former High School is in the process of being renovated into apartments. Housing is available in most price ranges.

Strategy

- Pursue job creation opportunities that capitalize on the existing Broadband Network Loop to provide additional year-round jobs.

- Market the Town to attract technology-savvy young families.
- Pursue the creation of a Chesapeake Bay Bolide Impact Museum in Town.”

Approval is requested.

6. Water

At the last work session, the Commission commented on water quality within Town and requested the ground water resources section(s) be brought back for further review on this matter. The sections are presented below.

II.6 Public Utilities

Similarly, the area’s ground water resources must also be protected. The Town’s public utility systems have allowed for denser development in Cape Charles than in the rest of Northampton County. As discussed in the Natural Conditions chapter of Appendix I: 2007 Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan Draft Existing Conditions, private wells and septic systems in and around Cape Charles can threaten the Town’s water supply. The Town has a policy of prohibiting new private deep wells and septic systems. The Town also encourages Northampton County to adhere to its policy of concentrating denser development within incorporated towns. This will help prevent dense development served by private well and septic systems from occurring in neighboring rural areas. The Town’s public utility systems must be maintained and expanded to ensure that current and future needs are met. Recent upgrades and repairs to the water system are indicative of the Town’s continuing effort to provide for these needs. Major capital expenditures will be required for the construction of new facilities. Grants, connection charges and developer funding will help finance the process.

III-C.5 Water, Wastewater and Storm Water

The Town has constructed a new Water Treatment Plant which has met and exceeded the projected growth targets and also met State and Federal Guidelines. ~~The Town is in the engineering phase of a Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) expansion and replacement. This process will expand the systems to carry the Town through the projected growth to 2040. The WWTP project is required to meet the projected growth but also to meet State and Federal guidelines by 2011.~~

Cape Charles provides its citizens with clean water and with the addition of its two new wells will have a capacity of 500,000 gallons per day of production. Additional wells and filtering equipment at the same site will carry production to over 1 million gallons per day when needed.

Cape Charles provides a wastewater treatment facility now capable of treating 250,000 gallons per day. This plant is being replaced to surpass the State quality requirements of the effluent. Future additions to this plant could increase its capacities of future growth. ~~Active collaboration with Bay Creek Resort & Club to achieve the provision of essential public utilities.~~ The Town should collaborate with Bay Creek Resort & Club to accept treated effluent into their retention ponds.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia relies on a “sole source” aquifer which means that the aquifer from which we draw all the drinking water recharges from one source – the rain. Historically the towns on the Shore were settled near the waters’ edge to take advantage of water transportation. However, water distribution in the aquifer is such that the deepest, most plentiful water is near the middle of the peninsula which is also the best area for recharge. The edge area of the peninsula, where the towns are located and where future county development will take place, doesn’t recharge as fast. Current and future projects are necessary to protect the existing groundwater stocks, the Chesapeake Bay and its resources.

Guidance is requested.

7. Town Facilities

As requested, material has been brought for consideration of the seven gateway lots (Fig Street lots) and 201 Mason Avenue. Materials are attached.

- a. Staff recommends the Commission consider adding language to the Comprehensive Plan to guide the future land use of the seven gateway lots and also recommends the Commission consider whether or not a roundabout is still desired by the Town at the intersection of Fig Street and Randolph Avenue.

Guidance is requested.

- b. Staff recommends the Commission consider adding language to the Comprehensive Plan to guide the future use of 201 Mason Avenue and also the future use of the vacant lots behind 201 Mason Avenue on Randolph Avenue.

Guidance is requested.

8. Port Research

Staff has developed a strategy bullet for the Comprehensive Plan that would allow the Town to investigate whether or not the harbor could be used to ship additional freight.

Text Revision

III-B.5.3 Goal: Facilitate Business Start-Up, Expansions and Relocations

Despite the attractiveness of Cape Charles’s location in a regional context, the Town must aggressively seek out partnerships with existing businesses, educational institutions, telecommunications providers, regional economic development groups, among others and pursue economic development opportunities, capitalizing to the extent possible on existing strengths.

The Town has the potential to grow over the coming years and the hospitality industry, including conference and convention center facilities, should be part of that growth. This industry brings

visitors to Cape Charles and requires a cadre of well-trained workers to support that growth. These visitors will require restaurants and other businesses to support them and the demand for quality support staff will be strong. Living accommodations within a reasonable distance are needed, making the Town Edge important in future land development.

While the Town continues its focus on conducting business in a friendly, efficient and effective manner, it should also continue to emphasize an “easy to do business with” attitude in dealings with both businesses and citizens alike.

Strategy:

- Capitalize on the existing and planned maritime industry cluster
- Pursue a partnership with the U.S. Maritime Administration to conduct a study to determine markets for the Cape Charles Harbor.
- Attract new and / or additional major maritime, high technology, hospitality and small conference center business uses to Cape Charles
- Foster small business development and home-based businesses
- Promote tax incentives such as:
 - Enterprise Zone
 - Free (Foreign) Trade Zone
 - Town Commercial Rehabilitation
 - Northampton County Commercial and Residential Rehabilitation
 - Assessment / Tax Freeze
 - Technology Zone
 - Tourism Zone
 - Historical Tax Credits
- Partner with educational institutions and appropriate organizations to research training and economic development opportunities
- Promote Cape Charles Harbor as an ideal port of call

Approval is requested.

9. Tourism – Addition of Vacation Housing Counts & Attract Families Language

- a. Staff has developed two items for approval. These address previous Commission comments to include the total number of seasonal housing in the Town and add family friendly language to the tourism section of the plan.

III-B.5.4 Goal: Attract Tourists, Vacation and Second Homeowners

Cape Charles has been successful in attracting these types of individuals. The 2010 Census found there were 290 seasonal, recreational or occasional housing units within the Town. Vacation and second homeowners typically find Cape Charles after passing through on Route 13, visiting friends or vacationing. Cape Charles is a unique environment and has great appeal for a certain demographics and many of these people have medium to high income levels so attracting each of these categories brings a number of service sectors jobs to this community.

Strategy:

- Work with the Eastern Shore of VA Tourism Commission to enhance and promote Cape Charles as the major tourist destination at the southern end of the Eastern Shore
- Ensure adequate gateway signage and billboard signage
- Ensure adequate dissemination of information in both hard copy and through the internet of all Cape Charles facilities for tourists, vacationers, families, and retirees
- Develop and promote a Cape Charles image
- Develop marketing plans focused on tourism, vacation and second homeowners and retirees

Approval is requested.

b. Southern Tip Bicycle Trail

Materials are attached. A study has been funded to determine the feasibility of extending the Southern Tip Bicycle Trail to the area around the Town of Cape Charles. Staff recommends the Commission consider adding language to guide the study on whether or not to connect to the Town and any preferences the Town has regarding the trail.

Guidance is requested.

10. Affordable Housing

Materials that provide statistical and case studies are attached. Since cost burdened households are such a large percentage of the Town's households (41%), staff recommends the Commission consider formulating an affordable housing strategy and determine the best mechanism(s) to address this challenge.

Guidance is requested.

11. Year Round Jobs Statistics

Materials are attached. **Discussion is requested.**

12. Other Matters

13. Schedule Next Meeting (August 25, 2014) & Adjournment



Town of Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan Update

Staff Briefing #3

July 28, 2014

Historic Entrance

201 Mason Avenue

Feasibility Study – Southern Tip Bicycle Trail

Affordable Housing

Economic Characteristics

Historic Entrance/Gateway

Historic Entrance/Gateway Planning



- * The Town has purchased seven contiguous lots, pictured left, that are adjacent to the historic entrance into town. The property is used for a welcome sign, plantings and open space.
- * The current comprehensive plan calls for consideration of a traffic roundabout at the intersection of Randolph and Fig.
- * However, at the March 20, 2014 Town Council meeting the properties were purchased with deletion of the roundabout language in the acquisition resolution.
- * Staff recommends the Commission consider the area and its future land use(s). Possible deletion of the traffic roundabout language should also be considered.

201 Mason Avenue

201 Mason Avenue Background



- * The Town authorized the purchase of 201 Mason Avenue (formerly used as a Bank of America) at the July 19, 2012 Special meeting of Town Council.
- * The building is approximately 6,600 square feet and has three stories.
- * The upper stories of the building are not fully used. The third floor is configured for office space.

Long Term Planning of the Space



- * The initial use was relocation of the Library. However, the Town Council indicated this is an interim step for the Library. Construction of a potential extension of the building was also briefly discussed.
- * The third floor is not used by the Library and municipal office space was suggested as a possible use.
- * Discussion of provision for an alley was also mentioned.
- * Additional property on Randolph is also part of the purchase. In the past, these lots were discussed as potential parking lots for the downtown area.
- * Staff recommends the Commission consider whether guidance should be included in the Comprehensive Plan regarding future use of 201 Mason Avenue.

Southern Tip Bicycle Trail Connection to Cape Charles

Southern Tip Hike & Bike Trail



The Eastern Shore of Virginia Wildlife Refuge owns and maintains the Southern Tip Hike & Bike Trail. This trail is 2.6 miles long and runs along a former railroad bed. It currently ends at Cedar Grove Drive but the railroad bed continues north where it ends close to the Town of Cape Charles.

Southern Tip Bicycle Trail

- * The Existing Plan does not mention connecting to the Southern Tip Bicycle Trail (Phase I construction is completed and Phase II Engineering Drawings are almost complete).
- * Does the Commission want to recommend connecting to the trail?
- * If a connection is desired, does the Commission want to offer any guidance regarding location or other details?

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing Definition

- * According to U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD), families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are cost burdened.
- * HUD considers all housing costs as part of the 30% of income, including utilities.
- * According to the 2010 Census, the median household income in Cape Charles was \$29,904 (+/- 10,742).

Cape Charles, Selected 2010 Census Statistics

- * The median monthly cost of houses with a mortgage was \$1,663 (+/-725).
- * The median monthly cost of housing without a mortgage was \$580 (+/-98).
- * The median monthly cost of rental units was \$632 (+/-279).
- * 61% of houses with a mortgage were cost burdened (paying more than 30% of household income on housing).
- * 30% of houses without a mortgage were cost burdened.
- * 34% of rental units were cost burdened.

Taken together, 41% of Cape Charles households are cost burdened.

Provincetown, MA Case Study

- * The plan was developed by a volunteer task force following a Housing Summit in September 2006, in which residents brainstormed ideas for increasing the supply of housing affordable to year-round residents. Affordability is compromised by the loss of rental housing stock to seasonal residents, the high cost of home ownership, and limited year-round job prospects.
- * The target population was year round residents making under 120% of area median income.

Selected Strategies:

Identification of privately- and publicly-owned sites and buildings appropriate for the development of affordable housing.

Encouragement of the use of accessory dwelling units by easing affordability restrictions and simplifying regulatory processes by giving the Building Commissioner special permit granting authority for applications that meet a set of clear requirements.

Expansion of a full property tax exemption for year-round rentals affordable to households earning 60 percent of the area median income (AMI), to include a partial exemption for year-round rentals affordable to households earning 80 percent of the AMI.

Extension of an existing growth management bylaw requiring inclusion of a minimum of 33 percent affordable units in any new housing development, to include commercial properties undergoing conversion to residential units.

Creation of an affordable housing trust fund capitalized with a 1.5 percent transfer fee on the sale of all property and/or room occupancy taxes collected on weekly rentals.

Building support for affordable housing initiatives through the establishment of a roundtable of regional partners and initiation of a regular communications with other community groups.

Financing Sources Identified:

1.5 percent transfer fee on sale of all property (proposed)

Room occupancy taxes from weekly rentals (proposed)

Existing state programs, including earmark request from the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership

Existing federal programs

Philanthropic donations

Fairfax, Virginia Case Study

- * This plan update was issued in September 2005, and prepared by the Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee, which was appointed by the County's Board of Supervisors in August 2004. This phase of the plan focuses primarily on the preservation of existing affordable units. Many of the recommendations focus on refining existing programs.
- * The target was preserving existing affordable housing stock.

Selected Strategies:

Offer a tool box of incentives for the preservation of affordable housing, including regulatory flexibility, and form-based zoning options and overlay districts to facilitate design approvals.

Preserve long-term affordability by offering incentives to owners of existing Affordable Dwelling Units (ADU) to record a new covenant and extend the control period of the unit to 30 years and/or restart the control period upon sale to a new owner, and revise the ADU ordinance to extend the control period to 30 years for new ADUs.

Create a dedicated funding source for the preservation of affordable housing by setting aside one penny of the real estate tax, and train developers in how to access funds.

Assist in the preservation of affordable rental units in condominium conversions, by providing mortgage, closing cost, and down payment assistance for tenants who purchase their units, or allowing purchase of units by the housing authority for resale to non-profits, for rental as affordable units.

Create an advocacy and public education campaign to work with other agencies and promote the need for affordable and workforce housing, and resources to fund the Committee's recommendations

Create an affordable housing "SWAT" team to prevent the loss of at-risk homes.

Consider restructuring the State Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), and increase use of the Federal LIHTC, to emphasize preservation.

Study the use of accessory dwelling units as a way of expanding the affordable housing stock while preserving neighborhood character.

Financing Sources Identified:

Affordable housing trust fund, capitalized by one penny of the real estate tax (proposed)

Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority resources

Federal and State Low Income Housing Tax Credit

Virginia Community Development Bank, initially capitalized with state appropriations (proposed)

Staff Summary & Recommendation

- * The existing plan has language to promote accessory dwelling use for the purpose of affordable housing.
- * Strategies to address affordability for households with a mortgage would impact the largest number of households with unaffordable housing.
- * The second largest number of cost burdened households are renters.
- * Since cost burdened households are such a large percentage of the Town's households (41%), staff recommends the Commission consider formulating an affordable housing strategy and determine the best mechanism to address this challenge.

Economic Characteristics

Cape Charles, Selected 2010 Census Statistics

- * 59.7% of the Town's population (over the age of 16) were in the labor force either employed (55.4%) or unemployed (4.3%).
- * The median earnings for workers was \$25,172.

- * Top three industries for employment.
 1. Educational services, and health care and social assistance (21% labor force)
 2. Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (18%)
 3. Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (12%)

Estimated Balance Sheet Of Households

IRS 2011 Zip Code 23310 Data, 2012 Consumer Expenditures (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Household Revenues (2011 IRS Tax Returns)

Adj. Gross Income	\$62,328,000
Excess EITC	\$ 608,000

Largest Sources

1. Salaries and Wages (\$39,161,000)
2. Pensions/Annuities (\$8,329,000)
3. Social Security (\$3,251,000)
4. Ind. Retire. Distrib. (\$2,947,000)

Household Expenditures (BLS 2012)

\$59,086,000

Largest Expenditures

1. Housing (\$19,518,000)
2. Transportation (\$10,173,000)
3. Food (\$ 7,507,000)
4. Personal Insurance & Pensions (\$ 6,455,000)

Potential Town Strategies to Strengthen the Town's Overall Household Balance Sheet

Strategies to Increase Households Revenues

- * Seek ten additional average salary and wage jobs for ten unemployed persons. (Estimated Benefit \$350,000)
- * Work with local businesses to increase net business revenue by 1% (Estimated Benefit \$290,000)
- * Convert five second homeowner households with a pension into year round residents. (Estimated benefit \$202,000 minus the revenue already spent within Town)
- * Attract five tech-savvy households that work from home. (Estimated benefit \$198,000)
- * Educate town residents, eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, on filing for the credit. Five individuals file and receive the refundable credit (Net Benefit \$11,000)

Strategies to Decrease Household Expenditures Spent Outside of Town and Increase Household Expenditures in Town

- * Reduce the cost of household utilities & fuels in Town by 1%. (Estimated Reduction \$17,000)