



**PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION WITH
ACCOMACK-NORTHAMPTON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Cape Charles Civic Center
July 13, 2015**

At 6:00 p.m. in the Cape Charles Civic Center, Chairman Dennis McCoy, having established a quorum, called to order the Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Meeting with Ms. Elaine Meil, Executive Director of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC). In addition to Chairman McCoy, present were Commissioners Joan Natali, Sandra Salopek, Bill Stramm and Michael Strub. Commissioners Andy Buchholz and Dan Burke were not in attendance. Also present were Town Planner Larry DiRe, Town Manager Brent Manuel, and Town Clerk Libby Hume. There were no members of the public in attendance.

Dennis McCoy stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss the comments submitted by Councilman Bennett and proceeded to turn the meeting over to Ms. Elaine Meil of the A-NPDC.

Michael Strub expressed his concern that only one Council member submitted comments and whether the other members of Council were in agreement or not.

Councilwoman Natali stated that mostly, the Town Council supported the document. Councilmen Bennett and Wendell had the most comments and were asked to submit them in writing. The other Council members were also asked to submit any of their comments but Councilman Bennett was the only one who submitted anything.

Dennis McCoy stated that Michael Strub's comments were well taken but the Planning Commissioners served at the bequest of the Council in an advisory capacity.

The following was discussed:

Cover:

The only way to comply with the comments on the front cover was to do a complete rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan. The current review was a 5-year update and Ms. Meil did not recommend a complete rewrite of the plan until 10 years. Ms. Meil added that she would stress, in her presentation materials to the Council, the fact that this review was an update.

Page 7:

The Commissioners reviewed the 3 comments on this page as follows: i) Although the wastewater plant had been improved, the water plant had not. The language was changed to state that the town's water and wastewater treatment capacities met current requirements but would continue to be monitored regarding the impact of future growth; ii) The statement regarding building or acquiring a new municipal center was kept since this was still included on Council's Capital Improvement Projects as a long-term project; and iii) The language regarding expansion of public parking in the Commercial District was deleted.

Page 8:

Councilman Bennett had commented regarding the age of the foundational documents which were cited and included in the Appendix. Most of the documents were developed in 2006 and 2007. i) The Commissioners agreed to replace the Comprehensive Plan Public Workshop from September 2006 with information from the Public Input Meetings held in November and December 2014; ii) The Harbor Master Plan, which was updated in 2013, would be added; iii) The Active Living

Workshop document would be added; and iv) The other documents would be kept since they were the most recent versions and did not necessarily need to be updated.

Page 9 and 10:

Councilman Bennett commented regarding the negativity of a statement in § II.3 – Housing. After some discussion, the Commissioners agreed to delete the sentence. There was much discussion regarding the need for affordable housing and the high percentage of cost burdened households in the town vs. the county. Ms. Meil stated that she would use census data to help explain this language and would add a statement regarding the town wanting to be economically viable and that affordable or workforce housing was needed. An example would also be included to explain the definition of cost burdened. Joan Natali added that this could become a real concern if not addressed.

Page 11:

The Commissioners reviewed the comments on this page as follows: i) In regards to the former Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park (STIP) area, the language was revised to state that the town should encourage development of the area; ii) Reference to the Town Harbor having been designated a Virginia Clean Marina would be added in § II.5 – Natural Resources. It was noted that the Kings Creek Marina had also recently achieved this designation; and iii) There were a number of comments in § II.6 – Public Utilities. Language would be modified to state that the public utility systems needed to be maintained and monitored for future growth.

Page 12:

There were several comments regarding § II.7 – Community Facilities and Services and § II.8 - Transportation. i) Language regarding the expanded and new facilities was modified to add the Beach Club at Bay Creek and the other facilities (Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Courses, the Palace Theatre and Kings Creek Marina) were deleted. After much discussion regarding the Library, the language regarding the need to expand the library was kept since the Library, although better in the current location, was still in need of additional space; iii) The language regarding the Town Harbor was modified as recommended by Councilman Bennett; and iv) The language regarding public parking was modified to state that the parking had been improved but would continue to be monitored.

Page 13:

There were several comments regarding § II.9 – Land Use and Community Character. After much discussion, the language was left alone as the Commissioners felt that i) The railroad was still in operation and an economic resource for the future; ii) There were undeveloped parcels of land in town; iii) It was still desirable for future development to keep with the town's established character and natural setting; iv) The rural character of the development along Routes 184 and 642 should be protected; and v) The county's planning policies, regulations, zoning map amendments would have a significant effect upon the town's character and economic prosperity.

Page 15:

There was much discussion regarding Councilman Bennett's comments relating to the existing historic pattern of development in the Town, excluding the development in Bay Creek. The Commissioners noted that Bay Creek was in a Planned Unit Development (PUD) which had its own plan.

Page 16:

There was much discussion regarding the Accawmacke Plantation PUD and the suggestion to change it to Bay Creek. It was noted that a portion of the northern portion of the PUD had been sold but since it was still part of the Accawmacke Planation PUD, the name of the PUD would not be changed but language would be added stating that the PUD was more commonly known as Bay Creek and Kings Creek Marina. This would be changed in all areas where the PUD was referenced.

Page 17:

In § III.2.1.2 – Harbor Mixed Use (Harbor), the last sentence of the first paragraph was modified to include all modes of transportation. After much discussion regarding the language in the second paragraph, Ms. Meil stated that she would rework the language to show the intent of the use if the railroad land on the north side of the harbor were to become available in the future.

In § III.2.1.4 – Low Density Residential (Residential Estates), Councilman Bennett asked where in town were any parcels between 1 to 5 acres. Since the portion of the Keck property deeded to the town was approximately 16 or 17 acres and was currently zoned as Residential Estates, this language was kept.

Page 18:

The language which was typed in all capital letters would be corrected in all locations.

Page 19:

In § III.3.5 – Main Street Mixed Use District, there was some discussion regarding the duplication of language and Ms. Meil suggested keeping the language in both places.

The Commissioners opted to keep the punctuation as currently shown in § III.4.1 – Parks & Open Space.

Page 20:

In § III.4.4 – Historic Town Entrance Corridor Overlay District (The District), the reference to the Annexation Agreement would be corrected to show 1991 vs. 1998. Language regarding the Northampton County Zoning Ordinance in the second paragraph was modified to state that the county was currently drafting a new zoning ordinance.

Page 21:

The comments regarding the table on this page were discussed earlier in the meeting and the previously decided changes would be made to the text on this page as well.

Page 22:

There were a number of comments regarding the sections on this page. The classification of Near Term was modified to state within the next 3 years to match language in § III.6.1 – Future Land Use Recommendations – Near Term.

§ III.6.1 – Language was added to the end of the opening sentence to state that the recommendations were targeted for implementation within the next 1 to 3 years or as an opportunity presented itself. Ms. Meil would bring back her recommended language regarding the Environmentally Restricted Layer after further discussion with Larry DiRe. Language regarding the Winter Quarter was modified to delete the statement regarding the property not being suitable for housing since the housing units had been demolished by the Coast Guard. The last 2 bullet points were combined.

§ III.6.2 – Future Land Use Recommendations – Intermediate Term or Tactical – examples of improved protection alternatives for the Port of Cape Charles would be added such as the breakwater, wave attenuators, floating docks, etc.

Page 22 & 23:

§ III.6.3 – Future Land Use Recommendations – Long Term or Strategic – i) the misspelling in the opening paragraph would be corrected; ii) The Commissioners agreed that the railroad was still an important economic resource; iii) The third sentence regarding Bayshore Concrete Products would be moved to a more suitable section, possibly under § III.B – Economic Vitality.

Page 25:

§ III-A – Quality and Diverse Neighborhoods: Ms. Neil stated that this entire section could possibly be reworked as it did not flow correctly.

In § III-A.2 – Background, Councilman Bennett commented regarding the lack of anything between the years of 1911 and the 1970s. There was some discussion regarding this issue and the Commissioners felt that since the Sea Cottage addition was developed in 1911, there was no other development within the town until Brown & Root purchased the acreage surrounding the town in the late 1970s which was annexed into the town in 1991.

Page 26:

The Commissioners felt that the language in § III-A.4 – Characteristics, High Standards needed to be kept stating that all property needed to be maintained at a high standard ... keeping the property clean, healthy and litter-free.

Page 27:

§ III-A.5 – Planned Framework – the language in the last bullet regarding the Accawmacke Plantation PUD was kept since the PUD did include flexible residential and commercial uses.

Page 29:

In Table 4, Description, the language under “Enhance Protection of the Port of Cape Charles” was left alone since the desire was to reduce wave action, reduce coastal erosion, and increase safe harborage.

Page 30:

In Table 5, Description, the language regarding the harbor as an existing green focal point was left alone as well as the bullet regarding the pursuit of public acquisition of under-developed waterfront lands.

Page 32:

In Table 9, language was added regarding establishing a future connection between Mason Avenue and the harbor per Councilman Bennett’s recommendation.

Page 33:

In Table 10, the language regarding the designing of the roads to maintain the existing grid was kept and language was added regarding the connection of Mason Avenue with the harbor.

Page 35:

After some discussion the following was agreed upon: i) Language regarding the town’s beach being the finest public beach on the Chesapeake Bay was kept; ii) Tourism Zone and HUB Zone were added under Tax Incentive Opportunities; and iii) Modern wastewater treatment facilities was changed to state of the art wastewater treatment facilities.

Page 36:

In § III-B.5 – Key Goals, Strategies and Policies, changes were made as recommended by Councilman Bennett except that the language regarding designation of land for future growth was kept.

In § III-B.5.1 – Goal: Designate Land for Future Growth, under Strategy, the last bullet was modified to state “Consider the use of infrastructure to encourage future growth.”

Page 37:

In § III-B.5.3 – Goal: Facilitate Business Start-Up, Expansions and Relocations, under Strategy, the second bullet was revised to state that the promotion of the dredging of the Harbor to 35 feet was to support economic development in the Harbor District.

Page 38:

Councilman Bennett noted duplication of language in §§ III-B.5.4 – Goal: Attract Tourists, Vacation and Second Homeowners, and III-B.5.5 – Goal: Attract Retirees. After some discussion the Commissioners agreed to keep the language in both sections but modified the language in § III-B.5.4 for seasonal service sector jobs, and in § III-B.5.5 for year-round service sector jobs.

Page 39:

There was much discussion regarding § III-B.5.6 – Goal: Create a Web Portal to Attract Tourists, Vacationers and Retirees and to Disseminate Information. The section heading was changed to “Create an Economic Development/Tourism Committee to Enhance the Community and to Attract Tourists, Vacationers and Retirees.” Under Goal, the language stating that the tourism web portal would be a subset of the main town web site was deleted.

At this point, Dennis McCoy suggested adjourning the meeting for the night due to the time. The Commission granted Ms. Meil the authority to address the remaining comments for review at the August meeting.

Michael Strub stated that he would be out of town for the September Planning Commission which was currently scheduled for September 1st and asked whether the Commissioners would consider changing the date to September 8th. Bill Stramm had a conflict with September 8th. After further discussion, the Commissioners agreed to keep the date of September 1st.

Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Michael Strub, to adjourn the Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Dennis McCoy

Town Clerk