

## Minutes

### Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

May 10, 2012

This was a regular meeting of the Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held on Thursday, May 10, 2012, in the Main Conference Room located at 16404 Courthouse Road in Eastville, Virginia. Those present were Chairman Bill Parr, Vice-Chairman Bill Payne, David Long, Pat Coady, Peter Lawrence, Charles Bell, and Butch Bailey. Absent from the meeting were committee members Billy Moore and Dick Drury.

Also in attendance was Peter Stith, Northampton County Long Range Planner, Sandra Benson, Director of Planning and Zoning and Barbara Schwenk, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission.

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. and a quorum was established. The minutes from May 3, 2012 were reviewed and after a motion to approve by Peter Lawrence and a second by Charles Bell, the minutes passed unanimously.

Barbara Schwenk from the A-NPDC was the guest speaker and she began talking about the 5 year economic plan she is working on. She stated they are required to review and update the plan in order to be eligible for Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding. She said recent funding from the EDA has gone towards the workforce center at the Community College (1.1 million) and for the Broadband initiative (2.3 million). She said future funding may go towards a natural gas pipeline in Accomack County as far south as Onley and the Wallops Research Park. Mrs. Schwenk stated she is currently having meetings with private businesses in order to get information to update the plan. She said the PDC has no power and it is up to the Counties to implement the plan.

Bill Parr made a motion to give the A-NPDC Spencer Murray's handout for the economic plan. With a second from Mr. Lawrence, the motion passed unanimously.

Pat Coady made a motion that gives power to Mr. Parr to forward any pertinent documents to the PDC as he sees fit. David Long seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion continued about how Northampton County is tapping in to the PDC and Mrs. Schwenk indicated several projects and committees, like the Culls Housing Project and the Transportation Committee. Discussion continued about VDOT and access management and if there could be commercial growth on Rt. 13. Mrs. Schwenk said access management is the key. Mr. Parr stated several options the committee is looking into to generate money to pay for highway improvements like special tax districts.

The committee discussed a handout from Mrs. Schwenk that contained questions for the focus groups and the committee agreed to fill out the questions and submit to the PDC as comment for the economic plan. Discussion began about the County being connected with the PDC and if there is a disconnect between the two. Mrs. Schwenk stated the goals are relatively the same, it is when the Board chooses to or not to implement. Sandra Benson indicated there is little from the PDC that does not come to the Board for action or adoption. She indicated Mrs. Schwenk will be drafting the Transportation element of

the Comprehensive Plan. The committee asked how they should be working with the PDC. Mrs. Schwenk stated she could come to meetings more often. Mrs. Schwenk left the meeting around 10 am.

The committee began discussion on the draft vision. Mr. Parr commented that there has been a theme to preserve "traditional development patterns" and if this theme stays in the Vision, then past economic patterns will continue. He stated the County needs to break traditional development patterns. Mr. Coady indicated there is no mention of heavy commerce or industrial and he stated the County is not going to increase employment or the tax base with retail businesses in the villages and hamlets.

The committee discussed the need to express the economic crisis the County is in. Peter Lawrence stated if they address the Vision comments, they are validating the process and are not addressing the crisis. Mr. Coady suggested writing a preamble to go along with their comments. He said the Vision is a pleasant one, but does not address the issues. The committee also agreed to submit the Spencer Murray document.

Bill Payne asked about the process and Ms. Benson indicated the Planning Commission is meeting on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> and she will give the Commission comments from the Plan Review Stakeholders group as well as the CPAC. She stated the Planning Commission would then revise the Vision and a public meeting would be held to solicit more comment on the revised draft.

Mr. Parr went through his suggested changes to the draft Vision along with comments submitted by Bill Payne and Dick Drury. In paragraph 2 under Section 1.3.1 Mr. Parr suggested adding to the first sentence "with a diverse and growing tax base" after "vibrant economy". He also suggested adding in paragraph 4, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence after "economic opportunities", "growth of commercial tax base, job creation". Mr. Parr made a motion to delete the last paragraph on page 2 and with a second from Bill Payne the motion passed unanimously. He suggested inserting on page 3, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, "Utilize Rt. 13 as an economic engine".

There was discussion about public input and that the final draft will incorporate all comments received, not just from the workshops. Mr. Payne asked who decides and Ms. Benson said the Board makes the final decision, but the Planning Commission is the body charged by law to recommend a document. Mr. Payne suggested writing a one page document to sum up what the committee wants and he volunteered to craft it.

Mr. Coady made motion to rescind the previous motion about removing the last paragraph on page 2 and with a second from Mr. Bell, the motion passed unanimously.

The committee recommended changes to the first paragraph under Commercial and Economic Development to add "a growing commercial tax base that includes...research & development, technology-based, light industry.." after "centered on" in the first sentence. Mr. Lawrence also suggested adding another bullet under the same section to read "Ensure emergency medical care facility in southern Northampton County". The committee suggested adding to the first paragraph on page four "...and businesses" to the end of the last sentence. They also suggested adding "and boating facilities" to the last paragraph on page 4 under Recreation.

The committee began discussing the Survey and consultant. Ms. Benson indicated she was questioned by the Board and whether they were on schedule. She stated the process is about two weeks behind. She said the outline calls for public hearing draft at the end of August and she asked what the status of

the survey. She indicated the questions for the survey must be approved by the Board. Mr. Parr indicated the committee has been on a fact finding mission and that is coming to an end. The committee discussed getting the consultant down for a meeting within the next few weeks and this would be their next priority. The committee discussed their schedule and scheduled their next meeting for May 24<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Parr would work on getting the consultant down. The committee will not have a meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.