

Minutes

Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

June 7, 2012

This was a regular meeting of the Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) held on Thursday, June 7, 2012, in the Main Conference Room located at 16404 Courthouse Road in Eastville, Virginia. Those present were Chairman Bill Parr, Vice-Chairman Bill Payne, Pat Coady, Peter Lawrence, Butch Bailey and Charles Bell. Absent from the meeting were committee members Billy Moore, Dick Drury, and David Long.

Also in attendance were Peter Stith, Northampton County Long Range Planner, Sandra Benson, Director of Planning and Zoning and Ava Wise.

The meeting was called to order at 9:18 a.m. and a quorum was established. After a motion from Pat Coady and a second from Bill Payne, the minutes from May 24, 2012 were reviewed and approved with a unanimous vote.

There was brief discussion about the survey before they called the consultant. Joe Goode, consultant from American Strategies was called for the scheduled conference call. He began the discussion about the survey and after reviewing the questions submitted by the committee members said there are technical issues to watch out for as far as wording and phrasing for the survey questions. He said there are two trends he sees with the questions 1.) What are people's priorities as far as the economy, jobs, environment, etc and 2.) Do people agree with the statements in the Vision.

Mr. Parr said his take is to find out if people agree with what is in the draft Vision. He proceeded to give Mr. Goode some background on the area and how with the large amount of natural resources, there has been and continues to be a conservation oriented thought process. He said there is a need for revenue and opportunity to improve the quality of life for people in the County.

Mr. Goode indicated the survey would start with mood questions to get information out of people on how they feel about issues in the County. He said there would also be questions set up as priorities and people would rank them between 1-10. Mr. Parr talked about Rt. 13 and the sense that it was a dangerous highway and if was over developed, there would be the need for an interstate on the seaside. He said the committee needs to find out how people feel about development on the highway. Discussion continued about commercial development on the highway and traditional development patterns.

Mrs. Wise talked about shifting the dialogue from no-growth to a dialogue that is about creating jobs and increasing revenue. She talked about the need to pose the questions in a language of the constituency. Mr. Coady talked about the large amount of protected land in the County and how the economic peak was in the 1930s and how Northampton has been on a decline since then.

Discussion continued about the tourism industry and how there is a need for more things for tourists to do and places to spend money. The committee continued to discuss the format and content of the

survey with Mr. Goode and he indicated he had enough information to get a draft survey together and would provide it to the committee by June 13th. The call ended at approximately 10:25 am.

After the conference discussion continued about the survey process and whether or not the Board should be able to comment or change any of the survey questions. Bill Parr made a motion to send a message to the county administrator that the committee objects to review of the survey by the Board. Bill Payne seconded the motion and the committee discussed this matter further. After discussion Mr. Parr withdrew his motion and Bill Payne made a motion: Based on the recommendation by the professional pollster, in order to preserve the scientific integrity of the survey, it should not be put out for critique prior to polling. Charles Bell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Bill Payne indicated he would get information for the quarterly report by this afternoon.

The committee began discussing the draft Vision and the recent public meeting. Sandra Benson said if the committee wished to comment, those comments would need to be submitted no later than June 14th. Peter Lawrence stressed the need for an introduction to the comp plan and that the Planning Commission take a look at the current plan and see if it worked or not. After discussion about the Vision the meeting was adjourned at 11:13 am.