

Minutes

Northampton County Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

July 1, 2014

Those members present were Dixon Leatherbury, Jacqueline Chatmon, Mark Freeze, Sylvia Stanley, Michael Ward and Martina Coker.

Also present was Peter Stith, Long Range Planner and Nyoka Hall, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to order and a quorum was established.

The motion was reviewed and a motion to accept it as presented made by Commissioner Coker, with a second from Commissioner Stanley. The motion carried with all in favor.

There were no matters from the public.

The Minutes of April 1, 16, and 23, 2014 were tabled for review and revision at the request of Commissioner Coker.

Elaine Meil and David Annis of The Accomack Northampton Regional Housing Authority provided a presentation regarding their current projects. Ms. Meil began with the William Hughes apartments that were a part of Delmarva Rural Ministries, who recently filed for bankruptcy. ANPDC has recently obtained the property and are working to renovate the structure to remedy the deferred maintenance issues. Another project that is in the works is for an accurate count of homes remaining without indoor plumbing in Northampton County. The census showed an increase of homes without plumbing from the original number of 200 to 400. There were some suspicions about the figure which brought about the recount.

David Annis answered questions from the Commissioners regarding low income and affordable housing issues. Mr. Annis informed the Commission that there were about 27 acres remaining at the site of the Williams Hughes Apartments. The south and east areas are low lying while the northern portion is better suited for development. He added that public sewer would create a better opportunity to expand beyond the existing 34 units. It was stated that if expansion was pursued, funding would come from a 514 program which comes from rental assistance and low income tax credits and equity partners would be needed if tax credits are involved. The partners are needed to enable the buying and selling of credits. There are income restrictions in place that require individuals to earn fifty percent of the area median income to be eligible to rent. An example of this would be a family of four; they could not exceed \$26,000 per year. He noted additionally that there are approximately 25 families that have been wait listed for housing. Ms. Meil addressed the need for housing for individuals exceeding the eligibility requirements. She referenced the SPARK program which allows individuals to rent units at the market rate. These rates will of course be paid completely by the individual and will be higher as they are at the market rate. Attempts are made to reduce the amount of rent to a more reasonable rate; but it has to remain at a sufficient amount to enable the debt to be serviced.

Ms. Meil addressed questions concerning the indoor plumbing fund, stating the program still existed, but had been greatly limited to the number of homes that could be serviced. When the program initially

began they could service a total of six homes per year between Accomac and Northampton County, and now they can only service one home per year, with the possibility to squeeze in a second due to the low amount of funds available. She added that there are still a large amount of pit privies still in existence and the organization is working to obtain funding and resources to remedy the issue. She also addressed the issue of homelessness and the count. She stated that homelessness is not addressed very well and does not take in account the number of people that sleep in cars and abandoned structures. There are potentially hundreds of homeless on the Shore including those moving from place to place without a stable a home. The organization does the best they can to assist displaced people primarily by partnering with other organizations to obtain accommodations for those in need. As there were no further questions, the Chairman thanked Ms. Meil and Mr. Annis for their presentation and addressing their questions.

Unfinished Business

The Commission resumed the review of the Comprehensive Plan Part I Section 4 Housing Plan and the following changes were made:

4.1 Introduction

The availability and suitability of adequate housing options also contributes to the vitality of any locality. In that vein, it is incumbent upon County management to ensure that local initiatives, policies and codes promote a balance of housing that is not only suitable and desirable, but affordable for all segments of the population.

4.2 Assets

With approximately ~~5,000~~ ~~7,000~~ ~~vacant~~ ~~undeveloped~~ building lots in the County, there is opportunity to provide a range of housing types for all income levels.

4.3 Issues

- There are approximately ~~5,000~~ ~~7,000~~ undeveloped building lots within the County.

4.5 Housing Stock and Demographics

4.5.1 Subsidized and Very Low-Income Housing

4.5.2 Affordable Housing

On February 14, 2014 there were 15 properties for rent in Northampton County, ranging from a \$500 1 bedroom/ and 1 bath apartment to a 3 bedroom/ and 3 bath house with for an average rental cost of \$920 per month both excluding utilities. for rent alone.

The median value of owner-occupied housing in Northampton County is around \$172,700 according to the 2008-2012 ACS. The average local property assessment for improved land is estimated to be \$127,000 and the average sale price in 2012 was \$82,355. This is the direct result of more foreclosures, short sales, county tax sales and distress sales in a faltering economy. Based on this data, it may be very difficult for the local worker whose median income is \$31,980 to qualify for financing. While many variables affect one's ability to qualify for a mortgage loan, there appear to be few ownership opportunities available to a household earning the most recent median family income estimate. However, due to the many foreclosures, short sales, and tax sales some single family housing may be available to purchase for moderate to middle income earners who qualify.

The following changes were made to paragraph 2 in section **4.5.3 Availability of other Housing Options:**

There are about ~~5,000~~ ~~7,000~~ undeveloped vacant lots, with the number for sale at any given time being about equal to the number of housing units for sale. Multi-family units are allowed only in a limited number of zoning districts, usually in areas close to towns, and currently require a Special Use Permit.

The following changes were made to paragraph 1 in section **4.5.4 Senior and Retiree Housing**

The population of those 50 years of age and older has increased an average of 14% since the 2000 census (Table 3.1, Part II Sect. 3) as compared to an increase of 4.19% for Virginia and 28.8% for the U.S

4.7 Housing Organizations & Programs

The A-NRHA, Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority (A-NRHA),

The ESVA Housing Alliance, Eastern Shore of Virginia Housing Alliance,

A.I.C.C. and N.I.C.C., Accomack and the Northampton Interfaith Crisis Council, is a United Way Partner. Its mission is to help families residing in Accomack and Northampton Counties who are in a genuine crisis, and are unable to get adequate help from other existing organizations

New Road Community Development Group of Exmore, Inc. (NRCDG)

In 1998, the construction of the sewer and water system began and later building constructions was started. The New Road Village has 16 income restricted apartments with 1, 2 ~~or~~ and 3 bedrooms. ~~Income restricted. The 3 bedroom units have 1 ½ baths.~~ The outside entrances have front and back porches and ~~There is a community room,~~ washer and dryer in each unit. The neighborhood also has a community center. ~~The 3 bedroom units have 1 ½ baths.~~

AP’s Freedom Apartments

AP’s Freedom Apartments participates in the Disabled or Elderly (~~PRAC 202/811~~) housing program. Interested individuals may apply for HUD Section 8 and Low Income Housing. AP’s Freedom Apartment is a 15 unit assisted living property located on Occohannock Neck Road in Exmore, Virginia. The rent estimate for a 1 bedroom unit is \$655.00. The AP’s Freedom Apartments rent is approximately 21% more than the average fair market rent in the Exmore local area. Most tenants pay on average an additional \$112 out of pocket to live in a 1 bedroom unit under a typical HUD Section 8 program. This program is geared for low-and moderate-income families living in rural areas. This type of housing is an ideal choice for the elderly or disabled. The units have various amenities such as handrails and emergency call buttons and wheelchair accessibility. Managers of the complexes arrange for services including transportation, grocery and pharmaceutical delivery, health screenings, and entertainment. A small portion of Section 515 housing offer congregate facilities. To qualify for Section 515 housing, applicants must be a least 62 years old, handicapped or disabled, or have a very low to moderate income.

4.8 Goals and Implementation Strategies

GOAL 4.1: Eliminate Blight <u>and</u> & Depressed Neighborhoods			
<u>4.1.3 Establish a Community Housing Committee to study the status of neighborhoods and develop lists of neighborhoods for revitalization.</u>	<u>BOS</u>	<u>Citizens</u>	<u>Ongoing</u>
<u>4.1.10 Work to ensure future state funding for the indoor plumbing replacement fund</u>	<u>BOS, staff, A-NRHA</u>	<u>Citizens</u>	<u>Ongoing</u>

GOAL 4.2: Promote a range of housing types.			
	Responsible Agencies	Stakeholders	Timeframe
Implementation Strategies			
4.2.2 Allow <u>multi-family housing by-right</u> in designated residential districts around towns and villages.	BOS, PC, Staff, Towns	Citizens, Developers, Towns	1 year
4.2.5 Provide centralized water treatment and sewer services in neighborhoods of greater than 100 homes.	BOS, Towns, PSA, JIDA	Citizens, Towns, Businesses	1-5 years
4.2.8 <u>Coordinate with VDOT roads that need to be upgraded for the purpose of providing low income housing.</u>	BOS, VDOT, A-NRHA	Citizens	1-5 years
4.2. <u>Support the expansion of the William Hughes Apartments.</u>	BOS	Citizens	1-2 years

Part I Section 6 Community Facilities & Services

The Commission amended the text beginning with lines 71 thru 78 and lines 94 thru 95 of **6.3 Community Facility and Services Issues** as follows:

- Health care indicators show overall poor health status of Northampton County residents and it must be improved relative to other Virginia Counties.
- There is a need for recreational opportunities for County residents of all ages.
- High speed Broadband at adequate capacity needs to be made available for a large portion of the County. is not widely available at high speed and at adequate capacity for a large portion of the County.
- Litter and blight is a concern among citizens and needs to be addressed through local ordinances.

Line #221-223 were amended as follows:

Medical advances in treatments for strokes and myocardial ~~inf~~-infarction ~~sections~~ necessitate prompt treatment for those conditions to improve the chance of survival.

Lines 281-284 were amended as follows:

~~To assist in enhancing the performance of all County schools, the school system has partnered with Edison Learning, and educational solution provider. The partnership is expected to foster improvement in the areas of leadership, pedagogy and curriculum, assessment for learning, learning environment and student/family support.~~

6.6 Goals and Implementation Strategies

GOAL 6.1: Support a diverse range of arts and culture to all citizens. Will be made available to all citizens.

	Responsible Agencies	Stakeholders	Timeframe
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Mr. Stith informed the Commission that the stormwater regulations were in place and although the County had opted out, we would still be responsible for any land disturbance that involved 2500 square feet to 1 acre.

The Commission consented to adopt Section 5 of the Environment, Natural Resources and Open Space Plan as presented.

Communications

Mr. Stith informed the Commission that The Board of Supervisors recognized the importance of the overlay memo that was sent from Katie to Dora Sullivan of Cape Charles, but the goal of the Planning Commission at this time is to complete the Comprehensive Plan review. The Board has also reviewed the AFD addition requests and approved Church Neck and Jacobus, but denied Happy Union.

With no further items to address on the agenda, Chairman Leatherbury requested a motion to recess. Commissioner Ward motioned to recess until the July 16th, 2014 at 7pm for the work session, a second was made by Commissioner Chatmon. The motion carried with all in favor.