

Minutes
Northampton County Planning Commission
Work Session
November 19, 2014

Those present were Chairman Dixon Leatherbury, Vice Chair Jacqueline Chatmon, Mark Freeze, Michael Ward, Kay Downing

Absent, Sylvia Stanley

Also in attendance was Peter Stith, Long Range Planner

A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order.

The agenda was reviewed and accepted as submitted.

Unfinished Business -- Part I Section 3 The Land Use Plan

2.3.1.1 Town Land Uses

- a. ~~Towns should be considered the most appropriate locations for most new residential and non-residential development.~~ The County will work cooperatively with the Towns to attract development that is compatible with the Towns and that contributes to their economic and community vitality.
- b. Towns should accommodate a full range of residential-unit types and densities. Residential-development densities depend on the Town's Comprehensive Plans and zoning regulations.
- c. The County should work cooperatively with the Towns and where appropriate the Joint Industrial Development Authority to identify locations for compatible new industrial and commercial business locations and/or the expansion of existing centers in the Towns.
- d. Local and regional shops and offices should be encouraged to ~~generally be~~ located in established downtown centers with residential uses integrated among these uses, including within the same buildings as live/work units.
- e. ~~With industrial uses, particular attention should be given to their impact on groundwater resources. Industrial users and systems that promote best practices and water conservation should be encouraged.~~

~~2.3.1.2 Town Design~~

- a. ~~The County will work cooperatively with the Towns to promote development that is compatible with the design and character of the existing Towns and to ensure that development adjacent to the Towns is compatible with and complementary to development within the corporate limits of the Town.~~

~~b. The County will share resources and work jointly with the Towns to encourage the renovation, reuse and adaptive use of existing structures. The County will also support Town efforts to encourage the preservation of historic structures within Town limits.~~

2.3.1.3 Town Community Facilities and Utilities

a. Towns are, or may in the future be, served by public sewer and water service provided by the County or by the towns, by mutual agreement. The County will work jointly with the Towns to evaluate the desirability and feasibility of upgrading or establishing central sewer and water facilities.

~~b. Transportation improvements within the Towns should be designed to tie into the existing street network serving the County and the Towns.~~

2.3.3 Commercial Areas

While the most appropriate locations for new commercial ~~employment~~ uses are primarily within and adjacent to Towns, existing commercial locations are mainly found up and down the County near Route 13. While it has been the County's policy to encourage infill and expansion of the established business districts in and adjacent to Towns, supporting existing businesses, wherever they are located, should be a priority for the County.

2.3.3.1 Commercial Area Land Uses

a. A mix of uses should be located in Commercial Areas, with commercial ~~employment~~ uses predominating. ~~Commercial areas should retain the scale, diversity and mix of uses that are characteristic of Northampton County businesses.~~

2.3.3.2 Commercial Areas Community Design

~~a. The design of Commercial Areas should be consistent with zoning regulations and follow the traditional architectural patterns and scale of the surrounding area.~~

~~b.a.~~ The County should encourage the renovation, reuse and adaptive use of existing structures.

2.3.3.3 Commercial Area Facilities and Utilities

a. Commercial Areas are ~~may not intended to~~ be served by existing or planned public sewer and water services ~~unless they are near a Town or planned sewer and water project.~~

~~b. Transportation improvements in Commercial Areas should be designed to tie into the existing street network serving the County.~~

2.3.4 Industrial Areas

~~Existing Industrial Areas are located primarily near the towns of Exmore, Nassawadox, Eastville and Cheriton. Industrial growth should be focused on the areas identified on the Future Land Use Map as Industrial Areas.~~

2.3.4.1 Industrial Area Land Uses

- ~~a. Light and moderate Industrial uses that are compatible with the County's rural and natural heritage are the most appropriate. uses in Industrial Areas.~~
- ~~b. Industrial Areas should retain the scale, diversity and character that are characteristic of Northampton County.~~
- ~~c. With industrial uses, particular attention should be given to their impact on groundwater resources. Industrial users and systems that promote best practices and water conservation should be encouraged.~~
- ~~d. Local shops and offices designed primarily to serve the needs of the industrial uses may be appropriate within the Industrial Areas.~~

2.3.4.2 Industrial Area Community Design

- ~~a. The design of Industrial Areas should be consistent with current zoning and follow the traditional architectural patterns and scale. Industrial uses buildings should be shielded from surrounding areas by vegetative buffers.~~

2.3.4.3 Industrial Facilities and Utilities

- ~~a. Industrial Areas may be served by public sewer and water service provided by the County or by the Towns, by mutual agreement.~~
- ~~b. Transportation improvements within the Industrial Areas should be designed to tie into the existing street network serving the County and the Towns.~~

2.2.4 Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Planned Unit Developments are developments characterized by unified site design for a variety of housing types and densities, clustering of buildings, common open space, and a mix of building types and land uses in which project planning and density calculation are performed for the entire development rather than on an individual lot basis.

Planned unit developments are intended to provide for variety and flexibility in design necessary to implement the varied goals as set forth in the comprehensive plan. Through a planned unit development

district approach, the regulations of this division are intended to accomplish the purposes of zoning and other applicable regulations to the same extent as regulations of conventional districts.

It is intended that planned unit development districts be established along major corridors ~~or and in~~ growth areas ~~as designated in the comprehensive plan~~. Planned district master plans should demonstrate a unified development with an interconnected system of internal roads, sidewalks, and paths as well as manage access points along existing roads in order to maximize safety and the efficiency of existing roads.

Benefits of a planned development include less infrastructure costs, more efficient provision of public safety services, less environmental impact, and through the provision of affordable housing achieve significant economic and social integration.

Bayview is the only PUD currently recognized on the Future Land Use Map.

2.4 Road Corridors

Specific roadway improvements, including the installation of bike paths where appropriate, and general transportation policies will also be addressed elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan document. The following policies are for the County's primary road corridors as they relate to land-use and community-design issues.

2.4.1 U. S. Route 13 Corridor

U. S. Route 13 is the County's primary road corridor, both for regional and ~~national through traffic and~~ ~~for~~ local traffic through the County and the Eastern Shore. In general, the County will encourage the continued improvement of the Route 13 corridor for the purposes of maintaining human safety and managing traffic capacity as appropriate. ~~In particular, the functional capacity to carry through traffic around existing towns should be maintained by locating development along the business portions of Route 13 in the Towns, and away from the bypass portions.~~

- a. The County should ~~further~~ protect the functional capacity of U. S. Route 13 by appropriately managing traffic flow and ~~limiting strip~~ commercial development.
- b. The County should continue to review and implement, as appropriate, the recommendations in the U. S. Route 13 Corridor Study and the Rt. 13/Wallops Island Access Management Study.
- c. New development in the U. S. Route 13 corridor should have enhancements along the road frontage, including setbacks, and landscaping with primarily native vegetation.
- d. Proliferation of billboards should be discouraged.

2.4.2 Seaside, Bayside, and Stone Road Corridors

Seaside and Bayside Roads are the primary rural road corridors through the agricultural areas and Villages of the County. They are relatively undeveloped outside the limited number of historic village areas, and maintain a scenic rural character. Stone Road is the primary ~~and heavily traveled~~ entranceway into the Town of Cape Charles.

a. These road corridors are important to the scenic quality and the historic heritage of the County. In general, future road improvements and signage should minimize impacts to the historic and scenic character of the road corridors, ~~as well as sensitive environmental areas alongside the right-of-ways.~~

b. ~~The County should encourage the installation of bike lanes on these corridors.~~

~~2.5 Land Use & Community Design Implementation Recommendations~~

~~Most of the policies included in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan can be implemented immediately without further study or action. The following implementation recommendations provide a series of "next steps" to be undertaken by the County to strengthen the Comprehensive Plan and to assure that it is implemented through related regulatory documents and the development process. The timing and priority for actions on these next steps will be established by the Board of Supervisors.~~

2.5.3 Livable Communities

In 2011, the County adopted the Eastern Shore Healthy Communities "Livable Communities" concept for inclusion in this Plan. The concept encourages development in ~~current~~ towns ~~and villages~~ saving the rural landscape for farming and forestry. This reduces sprawl, redevelops existing downtowns, and ~~may lead to~~ improvements in existing infrastructure, like water, water treatment, sidewalks and roads.

Livable Communities promote construction of varied housing types ~~in town~~ for varying income and age levels. Building apartments, condos, townhouses and free-standing homes on smaller sites ~~in town~~ creates more affordable housing. Homes built in "livable communities" appreciate faster, improving town economy and personal investment. When people of all incomes and ages live nearby in well-designed residences, socialization and neighborliness produces safer and healthier outcomes for all.

Livable Communities support transportation options such as pedestrian transportation enhancements like safe sidewalks and bike lanes. Bus transportation helps people to go further. Fewer cars reduces carbon emissions, resulting in cleaner air and healthier people.

The Livable Communities concept encourage desirable amenities within walking distance like grocery, medical, library, education, arts and play facilities.

2.6 Future-Land-Use Map

The following Future-Land-Use Map summarizes the districts and ~~recommendations-policies~~ described in this Comprehensive Plan for the purpose of geographically locating and delineating specific districts, ~~and policies.~~ The Future Land Use Map represents planned land uses for the County based on policies

developed during the Comprehensive Plan review process and does not necessarily reflect existing zoning or land uses.

The Land use review was completed and changes will be made and re-submitted for review.

Commissioner Ward noted a conference he recently attended that was hosted by Conservation International that focused on maintaining sustainability. The discussion focused on using a grid which highlighted key components by which to grade sustainability. It was suggested that the Commission attempt something similar with the comprehensive plan recommendations as there are presently so many with no focus on order or greatest impact. Discussion took place and it was agreed that the recommendations should be prioritized and reduced. Peter Stith said he would provide a copy of the goals and implementation strategies organized by section for the Commission's review.

Peter Stith informed the Commission that a copy of Commissioner's Ward draft introduction to the Land Use section was e-mailed for review.

Future Land Use Map Review

The Commission began preliminary discussion about the Future Land Use Map and strategy for the review.

With no further discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Downing that the meeting be adjourned until December 2nd, 2014, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Chatmon. The motion carried with all in favor (5-0).