

LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes

February 16, 2012

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Lancaster County Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board meeting room of the Lancaster County Administration Building, Lancaster, Virginia.

Present were David Jones, Chairman, Tara Booth, Robert Smart, Glenn Pinn, Steve Sorensen and Ty Brent. David Chupp was absent.

Also present were Butch Jenkins, Board of Supervisors Representative, Don Gill, Planning/Land Use Director, John Mann, Stuart McKenzie, Charles Costello and others.

Mr. Jones asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the January 19, 2012 regular meeting.

Mr. Jones moved to approve the January 19, 2012 minutes as submitted. **VOTE: 6-0.**

PUBLIC HEARING #1

UPDATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER ONE

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill to present the issue.

Mr. Gill stated that the issue was the review and update of the Introduction and Chapter One of the Comprehensive Plan as required by the Code of Virginia.

Mr. Gill stated that all of the changes requested at the previous two Planning Commission meetings had been made and were highlighted on the drafts that were included in the Commission members' packets. He further stated that advertising had been conducted as required by law and to date, other than the discussion at prior Planning Commission meetings, there had been no response from the public.

Mr. Jones opened the floor to public input.

Mr. Costello stated that it looked fine to him.

There was no other public comment and Mr. Jones closed the floor for public input.

Mrs. Booth made a motion to forward the revised Introduction and Chapter One of the Comprehensive Plan to the Board of Supervisors recommending approval. **VOTE: 6-0.**

DISCUSSION ITEM #1

BLUE-GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill to present the issue.

Mr. Gill stated that Stuart McKenzie, Environmental Planner with the Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC), would make a final presentation on blue-green infrastructure planning, the concept of delineating “greenways” or conservation areas with reduced or no development in our county that could be linked to similar areas in adjoining counties to create a “greenway” across the Northern Neck.

Mr. Gill stated that Mr. McKenzie was making these presentations to the Planning Commissions in Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland counties to fulfill the requirements of a recent grant received by the NNPDC.

Mr. Gill stated that the topics for this presentation are “Local Government Tools for Green Infrastructure Protection and Lancaster County Sea Level Rise Impact Assessment.”

Mr. McKenzie made his first presentation concerning sea level rise. He handed out materials that included maps for the Commission members. He spoke of the two types of sea level rise, which are global and local. He stated that the local area has the second highest sea level rise in the United States behind the Gulf area.

Mr. McKenzie talked about how the sea level rise affects green infrastructure, gray infrastructure and private buildings. He mentioned several areas in the County that may eventually be impacted by sea level rise.

Mr. Jones stated that it was a nice presentation.

Mr. Smart asked if Mr. McKenzie would agree that the sea level rise and land subsidence in Lancaster County is about a foot per century.

Mr. McKenzie stated that he would agree that that is an accurate assumption according to the data.

Mr. McKenzie gave a second presentation on Green Infrastructure Protection. He stated that there are policies available to local governments in Virginia to protect natural areas. He stated that these policies include: the Comprehensive Plan, subdivision ordinances, zoning, conservation easements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, creating agricultural and forest districts and use value taxation.

Mr. Jones thanked Mr. McKenzie for his presentations.

DISCUSSION ITEM #2

UPDATE TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET – FY 2013-2017

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill to present the issue.

Mr. Gill stated that the issue was to discuss the FY 2013-2017 Capital Improvement Budget submitted in response to the budget call.

Mr. Gill stated that a summary cost sheet with supporting documentation of the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) items had been included in the Commission members' packets for their review. He stated that all of the items were school related except for the one carry-over request from the Mary Ball Washington Museum and Library.

Mr. Gill handed out a revised capital improvement plan from the school system to all Commission members.

Mr. Gill stated that the Planning Commission's review should not be targeted toward meeting a set dollar figure, but rather determine the necessity of requested items and then prioritize those accordingly. He stated that it is hoped that scrutiny at the Planning Commission level will make resulting approval by the Board of Supervisors an easier process that will clearly identify the priority of requests. He stated that the CIB would need to be docketed for public hearing once this review is complete.

Mr. Gill stated that John Mann from the Lancaster County School System was present to answer any questions that the Commission may have.

Mr. Gill referred to the revised capital improvement plan from the school system and stated that the new school study had been removed, which was the number one priority on the prior plan. He stated that the two remaining items for FY 2013 was the voice-over IP solution and the replacement of eight HVAC units at the Middle School.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill when the Capital Improvement Budget needed to go to public hearing.

Mr. Gill replied that an April public hearing is what has been done in the past.

Mr. Gill reviewed with the Commission members the revised requests for the school system. He stated that he would have an updated budget summary cost sheet in next month's packets.

Mr. Jones asked what needed to be done to the old jail, which is the Mary Ball Washington Museum's request.

Mr. Gill replied that it needed brickwork, painting, roof repairs and new gutters.

Mr. Jenkins stated that the County may have to take over the project, but it had been hoped that the Museum would handle it because they are not under the procurement act, which means that they would not have to solicit bids. He stated that with historical buildings such as the old jail and clerk's office, the mortar for the bricks have to be recreated to be as the original mortar. He stated that if care is not taken, the bricks could be ruined.

Mr. Jones stated that, in his opinion, the old jail project needed to be done. He stated that the longer the project is put off, the more expensive it would be.

Mr. Jenkins stated that he agreed.

Mr. Smart asked about the band room entrance request from prior years.

Mr. Mann replied that the sump pump has a generator now, so it is no longer an issue.

Mr. Gill stated that there were three items for FY 2013 to consider at this time and did not think anything else would come in.

Mr. Smart asked if the Emergency Services and Sheriff's Department had any potential requests.

Mr. Gill replied that the deadline has passed and he has not received any requests from either of those departments.

Mr. Jones stated that he had placed the requests in the following order: 1) voice-over IP solution, 2) HVAC units at the middle school, 3) weight room, 4) repair old jail, 5) paint the roof at the middle school, 6) chiller, 7) storage facility, 8) track and 9) tennis courts. He stated that these were his thoughts before he had seen the revised plan.

Mr. Gill stated that what is being requested for FY 2013 is the most critical, as the outer years will be reviewed and updated again each year.

Mr. Jones stated that the items in the order of the voice-over IP solution, the eight HVAC units for the middle school and the old jail repair were agreeable to him, if everyone else on the Commission concurred.

The Commission agreed.

Mr. Smart made a motion to forward the revised Capital Improvement Budget for FY 2013-2017 to public hearing at next month's Planning Commission meeting. **VOTE: 6-0.**

DISCUSSION ITEM #3

UPDATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - CHAPTER TWO

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill to present the issue.

Mr. Gill stated that he had included another copy of Chapter Two of the Comprehensive Plan in the Commission members' packets and was looking for any suggestions for changes from the members.

Mr. Gill stated that Mr. McKenzie had stated that one of the maps in Chapter Two had changed since the last Comprehensive Plan review. Mr. Gill stated that that map was the Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area, which changed due to a delineation that was done in the White Stone area.

Mr. McKenzie stated that it was his suggestion to re-do the maps with the same data and that he would be glad to assist.

Mr. Smart referred to page 2-4 and stated that he thought the word "grade" should follow "over 15%" when referencing steep slopes.

Mr. Smart referred to page 2-8, where it discusses a reduction in farmland, and suggested to have a more updated figure than June 2005. He further stated that he thought all the figures should stay to show the trend of declining farmland.

Mrs. Booth referred to page 2-5 and asked if the 83% figure was still accurate when referring to the septic suitability data.

Mr. Gill replied that he thought it was, but that he would contact the Health Department to verify the figure.

Mr. Brent referred to page 2-12, where it refers to the County's Geographic Information System and wanted to know if that system was up and running at the present time.

Mr. Gill replied that the GIS system is up and running and is updated periodically. He further stated that the new flood maps that were approved in September 2010 are on the GIS system as well.

Mr. Brent referred to page 2-13 and stated that the language should change if the County has already done an “exhaustive” inventory and mapping of existing septic systems.

Mr. Gill stated that the Health Department maintains a record of conventional septic systems and Mr. McKenzie had done some mapping for alternative septic systems.

Mr. Gill stated that he would add some language to the Comprehensive Plan that would explain that there is currently a septic clean-out inventory based on the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requirements. He stated that this requires a septic pump-out every five years.

Mr. Brent referred to page 2-13, section D, and asked about the inventory of abandoned or unused buildings and whether it had been done.

Mr. Gill stated that it had not been completed.

Mr. Brent referred to page 2-13, section E, and stated that he thought that the cluster development ordinance should be included in that part.

Mr. Gill added that the Board had recently voted to co-hold conservation easements, which should be added in that section as well.

Mr. Smart referred to page 2-14 and stated that he thought it might be a good idea to add a statement about the declining level of aquifers.

Mr. Jones referred to page 2-1 and asked if there should be a statement about the town water system in Kilmarnock.

Mr. Gill replied that he could add a statement to that effect.

Mr. Jones referred to page 2-15 and stated that he thought the phrase “such as Randall Arendt’s Conservation Design” may need to be removed.

Mr. Costello stated that he thought that everywhere in the plan where an amount of acreage was listed, there should also be a percentage. He stated that it makes it easier to understand and it should be consistently done.

Mr. Costello referred to page 2-11 and asked about the definition of groundwater there.

Mr. McKenzie stated that all potable water is groundwater.

Mr. Costello referred to pages 2-14 and 2-15 and stated that the objectives should be reviewed and modified and/or removed so that they are up to date.

Mr. Jones stated that he agreed and that some of the language should be cleaned up to reflect present time.

Mr. Smart asked about the definition of water table.

Mr. McKenzie replied that the water table is the first occurrence of ground water.

Mr. Smart asked if surface aquifer was the same thing as water table.

Mr. McKenzie replied that the two could be interchangeable.

Mr. Smart referred to page 2-15 and the objective that states, "Create a countywide farmers market to encourage small vegetable and alternative crop farms." He stated that some of that objective is being met with the towns' farmer's markets and the abattoir.

Mr. Gill stated that he wanted to remind the Commission that Rich Steensma with the Department of Forestry attended the November meeting and had discussed the idea of land use taxation being applied to forestland in addition to agricultural land. He asked if that was something that the Commission would like to see in the goals and objectives section of Chapter Two.

Mr. Jones stated that he would.

Mr. Gill stated that the other three counties in the Northern Neck do allow for land use taxation on forested land. He further stated that the forested parcel had to be twenty acres or more according to the Code of Virginia. He stated that most of the larger forested parcels in the County are owned by corporations and he thought the issue in the past was that a corporation did not deserve a tax break.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Gill to find out what the other counties require for their forested land use taxation. He stated that he would like to see some more information on the subject.

Mr. Gill stated that he would research it and get back with the Commission next month.

Mr. Jenkins stated that some people are opposed to the method of the way the forests are harvested, not necessarily who owns them.

Mr. Gill stated that he would make the changes to Chapter Two that had been discussed and bring it back next month as a discussion item.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gill stated that there would be a public hearing next month for a rezoning request from R-1 to A-2. He also stated that the second public hearing would be the Capital Improvement Budget.

ADJOURNMENT

The February 16, 2012 regular meeting of the Lancaster County Planning Commission was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.