

Recessed Meeting
Tuesday, April 20, 2010
Joint Work Session
Northampton County Planning Commission & Board of Supervisors

This was a recessed meeting of the Northampton County Planning Commission held in joint session with the Northampton County Board of Supervisors in the former circuit courtroom, 16404 Courthouse Road, Eastville, Virginia, on the 20th day of April, 2010.

Those in attendance were Chair David Fauber, Vice-Chair Martina Coker, Roberta Kellam, David Kabler, Robert Meyers, Marshall Cox, Michael Ward, John Wescoat, Jr., and Mary Miller.

Board members in attendance were Richard Tankard, H. Spencer Murray, Willie C. Randall, Laurence J. Trala and Oliver H. Bennett.

Staff members present were Katie Nunez, County Administrator; Janice Williams, Assistant to the County Administrator; Sandra Benson, Director of Planning & Zoning; and Kay Downing, Administrative Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 5:47 p.m. and a quorum established.

The Planning Commission's 2009 Annual Report was presented to the Board and was briefly explained by Ms. Sandra Benson, Director of Planning. The Board then reviewed a listing of proposed 2010 Work Tasks.

Brief discussion was held on updating the Comprehensive Plan. It was suggested that 2010 census data would be beneficial in accomplishing a total update. Commissioner Miller noted that entrepreneurs were omitted from prior workforce numbers and should be included in the future. It was suggested that a rudimentary review be done in the interim then once all census data is available a more thorough update be accomplished.

A general discussion relative to economic development was held. Mr. Randall stated his opinion that the "economic development pieces" need to be worked on to provide enticement for businesses to locate here. The County Administrator questioned whether this would be a function for the Board's soon-to-be-appointed Economic Development Advisory Committee. It was the consensus of the Board that the Planning Commission could work in conjunction with the Committee. Mr. Meyers, a member of the Planning Commission, suggested the addition of the Chamber of Commerce. It was the consensus of the Board to add this task to the 2010 list.

It was also the consensus of the Board to delete the 2010 work task listed as follows, "discussion of potential historic district and appointment of a historic review board or re-constitution of architectural review board, as contemplated in the "Vision for Northampton County" articulated

in the Comprehensive Plan, Part 1, Section 1.3, as this item does not appear on the Board of Supervisors' Goals for 2010.

Mr. Randall and Mr. Murray urged the Planning Commission to be open to new ideas and that a multi-dimensional approach was needed, to-wit: development in town edge areas as well as along Route 13.

Mr. Trala asked about the status of the Town Edge Plan. Ms. Benson reported that the commission had conducted one meeting with the Town of Exmore and that future coordination efforts are underway with Mr. Artie Miles, Exmore Town Manager.

Discussion was held on Commercial Waterfront District uses as listed in the zoning ordinance in the two Waterfront Villages, Oyster and Willis Wharf. Mr. Murray stated his opinion that clarification is needed and that waterfront should not necessarily be restricted to marine uses exclusively. Ms. Nunez mentioned that height issues may need to be explored as well. Commissioner Fauber noted that some differences between the two waterfront villages are evident. Mr. Tankard agreed noting that Willis Wharf is known and developed as a leading east coast commercial hatchery which is not the case for Oyster. Commissioner Fauber stated that Oyster does not want to be over-developed commercially. Mr. Murray cautioned that the county should be careful about preventing investment and stressed that the county's current financial situation is unsustainable. Mr. Randall concurred as did Mr. Bennett noting that more business opportunities should be encouraged.

Brief discussion was held on promoting growth in and around the incorporated towns. Mr. Murray noted that an incremental public service authority is needed along with better access roads to implement better planning and promotion of uses allowed in the commercial corridor areas. The Board also discussed possible work task additions to include: (1) review of Route 13 corridor zoning; and (2) review of all commercial, existing business, and existing industrial zones. Mr. Tankard suggested references in future comprehensive plans include commercial offerings allowed within the incorporated towns. He also suggested the possible need for a new highway zone called "TS" for travel services allowing the county to target what is desired in this type of district. Commissioner Kellam suggested that additional "bullets" could be added to the comprehensive plan to expand objectives along certain areas of the U.S. 13 Corridor and the EB Existing Business District.

It was noted that sales tax revenue has decreased as there are fewer services and products provided within the county itself. Commissioner Miller suggested that private capital development be promoted since entrepreneurs attract other entrepreneurs and that the county may simply need a "marketer."

Commissioner Wescoat stated his opinion that sales are mainly conducted on the internet now which will continue to increase in the future. He suggested that the county may need to focus on manufacturing activities and export commodities.

There being no other business the Planning Commission adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary