

The following table includes all the written and oral comments received on Chapter 6 of the Draft Comprehensive Plan as of November 3. This includes comments of Planning Commission members at the Public Hearing held on October 27, 2005 and some written comments received after the Public Hearing. For each item the County Planning Staff has provided a comment and recommendation for the Planning Commission to address at the November 17, 2005 review of this Chapter. The references are all to the October 27 draft.

COMMENTS ON CHAPTER 6

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	The new Chapter 6, "Implementation and Work Plan," addition to the Northumberland Comprehensive Plan is an excellent idea - if it can stimulate action. Without action plans, the identified issues, goals, and strategies of the base plan, Chapters 2-5, are only paper.	The Action Plans only covers some of the items in the Comp Plan. Many items in the Plan are included to provide guidance and direction for activities of the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission.	
	I have reviewed Chapter 6. It is well written. I really hope the PC and BOS will understand it and act on it.	Agree	
	I also recommend adding a first column that provides a reference number keyed to the chapter. i.e. 3-1, 3-2, etc.	Agree	
A. INTRODUCTION	6:1A remove the phrase "and is doing very well." This is a judgment	Agree it is a judgment. We believe the County is doing very well. The Comp Plan is looking toward the future to keep us "doing very well".	
B. PROCESS	Correct Grammar and punctuation to read as follows: <i>"This involves updating County ordinances in accordance with the policies of this Plan, providing authorization or direction to the staff to perform work or expend resources, authorizing coordination with other governmental entities or establishing special boards,</i>	Thank you.	

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	<i>commissions or study groups.”</i>		
B. PROCESS	<p>“What” and “why” has been the primary focus of the Comprehensive Plan. We must now turn to who, when, where, how, and how much. I suggest that we use the 4th column of the various Chapter 6 tables to designate “who” is responsible. “ Who” can include any board or commission of the county, county staff, DOT, the School Board, and even volunteer support. The expectation of each “who” is to complete the next level of plan including when, where, how, how much. That effort defines a project and sets the stage for Board approval and implementation. Projects will take on their own momentum as driven by their leadership, community need and support, but projects with no leadership will drift and die. Please ID the who's.</p>	<p>It is intended that all items without a clear identification of the “who” are the responsibility of the Planning Staff.</p> <p>This was intended to be implied in Paragraph B. PROCESS and will be clarified</p> <p>Other items have been revised to clarify responsibility.</p>	
C.1 Chapter 3 Land Use Planning Item Rank 1 Page 6:3	<p>I recommend adding a new item: Perform a “Build-out” analysis of each county village to determine the parcels available for village development, as well as those needed to provide future parks, parking, firehouse and other necessary village infrastructure.</p>	<p>“Build-out” analyses are performed to determine the possible maximum density of parcels that can be used for residential use or for commercial property to identify the largest number of buildings and most damaging uses. “Build-out” analyses are used to show what adverse situations might happen under current zoning laws in order to provide a basis for zoning changes. “Build-out” analyses do not identify what is needed but rather what could happen with current zoning regulations. However, we agree a “Build-out” analysis for villages would be useful and will add as a</p>	

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		<p>separate task the performance of a “Build-out” analysis for one or two of the villages, (or more) depending on the availability of resources.</p> <p>The recommendation is to prepare a “Village Plan” which is already in Chapter 3 page 3:13 of the Comp Plan. Here it states: . <i>“Local civic organizations and citizens should plan and sponsor this local development.”</i></p> <p>We will add this to the Action Items.</p>	
<p>C.1 Chapter 3 Land Use Planning Item Rank 1 Page 6:3</p>	<p>The protection of the water supply should be integral to the new Comprehensive Plan of the County. The emphasis on the village concept ("clustering" future growth), on "preserving" agricultural land, and on encouraging economic growth (with commercial and industrial development) will place new strains on the water supply which must receive our attention. <u>Calculating the "build out" of the new settlements and using these data to estimate the impact on water supply seems essential.</u></p>	<p>We agree. We plan on performing a “Build-out” analysis on the waterfront areas which would include impact on water supply.</p> <p>As mentioned above, we will perform a “Build-out” analysis of selected villages as a separate task.</p>	
<p>C.1 Chapter 3 Land Use Planning Item Rank 1 Page 6:3</p>	<p>Water-supply protection must be integrated into the subdivision, zoning ordinances, and building codes. Such list of reforms is too lengthy to discuss here, but any steps to prevent the pollution of the surficial aquifer and the</p>	<p>We will be holding public hearings on the County’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and will take comments for water supply protection at that time.</p>	

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	<p>exhaustion of the artesian aquifers are well worth the effort. For example, water-level drawdown from pumping by large water users is harmful to neighboring wells as well as the aquifer itself.</p> <p>I put forth these points as guides to specific actions yet to be defined. But defined they must be!</p>		
	<p>On page 6.3 I recommend that we “Establish representatives in each village to help facilitate village plan development and to keep the BOS informed.”</p>	<p>Do not agree. This adds another layer of bureaucracy. Each member of the BOS names two members to the PC. Any “village plan development” should be performed with or through the appropriate PC member or members. We do agree that the responsible PC members be identified.</p>	
	<p>On page 6.3 I recommend adding to item 5: “Use open space guidelines that result in no more than 5% of each site being covered by impervious surface (rooflines, driveways, road allocation, etc.)” That is the generally accepted level at which destruction of the shallow aquifer and erosion run-off starts to occur. That also results in an average lot size of about 2 acres</p>	<p>There was no discussion of 5% or any similar number during the public hearings on Chapter 3 or Chapter 5 and we have no references to indicate that it is a “generally accepted” figure. It is not a normal consideration in open space guidelines. We do not believe this is a valid criterion to drive lot size, although without a LID implementation some figure may be appropriate in villages. Further, we do not understand the arithmetic that would arrive at a 2 acre figure.</p> <p>This Chapter 6 addresses Action Items and not lot sizes. We recommend this comment be directed toward a specific section of the Comp</p>	

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		Plan Chapter 3 or as a recommended change to a specific Zoning or Subdivision Ordinance section.	
	On page 6.4 I recommend we “Develop ordinances which limit waterfront condominiums in a fashion acceptable to adjacent residents and consistent with good environmental design.”	The revised Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances will address waterfront condominiums. The specific wording recommended is not currently in the Comprehensive Plan.	
C.1 Chapter 3 Land Use Planning Item Rank 5 Page 6:4	The responsible organization to analyze and make recommendations regarding Enterprise Zones should be the Economic Development Commission.	We agree and will modify the Action Item.	
Notes 3-1, 3-2 and 3-3	Several comments were received regarding the write-up details on the three notes that addressed LID, TND and Open Space Design.	These three supporting papers will be deleted. They were presented for information at the public hearing. Since only selected and relevant parts of all three tools would be recommended for use in the subdivision and zoning updates, it would be confusing to include generic write-ups in the Comp Plan.	
Note 3-3	Some of the TND does not seem to apply in our case. Generally we have communities on the water and conduct day-to-day business in the villages. Schools and playgrounds are generally centrally located, rather in the neighborhoods. In fact, TND seems to make sprawl worse in a rural environment, particularly when many of the residents are retirees. I would suggest either a re-write that is consistent with our needs or that we forget about it.	It is agreed that TND does not appear to be too applicable at present. Looking ahead, to the time a developer wants to put a complete subdivision next to a village, especially one with sewage such as Callao, selected principles of TND should be applied. TND does not make sprawl worse, all the cases in the literature point to the opposite. See McMahon’s or Arendt’s books on TND. The write-up in Note 3-3 will be deleted since it was included only to address the principles and concept. The reference will remain in Chapter 3.	
C.2 Chapter 4.	This item is confusing and is not needed.	Agree, it will be deleted from Chapter 6. Also	

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Public Facilities and Services Intro Item on Bikeways		some rewording on B.5 Bikeways in Chapter 4 is planned before the final draft version of the Comp Plan is submitted to the PC	
C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 1	The coordination should be broader than just working with the NNPDC. See comments on Chapter 5 Action Items.	Agreed, other organizations are normally included in NNPDC coordinated activities.	
C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 1	<p>1. While not an immediate crisis that demands all-out attention (I'm thinking of the embarrassingly-poor condition of our school facilities), the condition of the County's water supply is slowly and steadily deteriorating. For the most part, the endangered water quality of the surficial aquifer (chiefly from agricultural pollution) and the deplorable condition of large-diameter wells that draw water from this aquifer (resulting from a complete inattention by state environmental and health agencies) threatens to destroy a valuable natural resource. Furthermore, the continued high rate of groundwater withdrawal from the principal aquifers of the County by large water users in adjacent regions constitutes a threat of the greatest proportion. <i>(Therefore:)</i></p> <p>2. Officials of Northumberland County should go on record that the protection of the County's water supply is a high priority goal. <i>(and also:)</i></p> <p>3. County officials should demonstrate their commitment to the goal of water-supply protection by appointing an advisory board that can provide them with the kind of expertise</p>	<p>Agreed, these items should be addressed when the organization to respond to the upcoming State request for a water supply plan is established by the BOS. Necessary expertise will be requested and/or appointed to support the organization established.</p> <p>The County would support any data gathering and activities and establishment of a database and related organizations to analyze and maintain the data on a long-term basis.</p>	

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	<p>necessary to chart a course that emphasizes the well-being of the residents of Northumberland County and serve as liaison with regional commissions and state agencies. This group could also collect and maintain an information base of water-supply data necessary to guide policy making.</p>		
<p>C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 2</p>	<p>Please reword this item to include all four items as equivalent activities</p>	<p>Wording has been changed as recommended.</p>	
<p>C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 2</p>	<p>On page 6.6 I recommend we add Vir-Mar beach as a Water Access Improvement Project</p>	<p>Vir-Mar Beach is not currently owned by the County. Development and/or improvement plans will need to be coordinated with the State and, at this time, would have to be performed by volunteer organizations.</p>	
<p>C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 2</p>	<p>Why not also add 48-(1)-33, the 17.5 acre site adjacent to Dameron Marsh? It could easily be developed as a picnic site with water access for shallow draft canoes/kayaks and would just need mowing. It could be a major county park with very little effort/expenditure</p>	<p>Dameron Marsh is not currently owned by the County. Development and/or improvement plans would have to be performed by volunteer organizations and coordinated with the State.</p>	
<p>C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 2</p>	<p>It has been informally recommended that organizations such as NAPS, the Lions and other volunteer organizations could take on these types of tasks.</p>	<p>This is very good, they can take on developing a detailed plan for Vir-Mar Beach improvements and maintenance and the Dameron Marsh improvements and coordinating them with the State and County.</p>	
<p>C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Item Rank 3</p>	<p>On page 6.6 I recommend we expand the wording to encompass site preplanning as a “Community Center” including a new High School, first class auditorium, YMCA facility w/swimming pool, and all other elements of a</p>	<p>The task of preparing a preliminary site analysis is to do only the first step to identify how much land is really available. Then overlays can be prepared with the various alternatives.</p>	

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	true center of community activity.		
C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services Page 6:7 Item Rank 4	With reference to a regional marine research and educational facility: On Page 6.7: Yes, Yes, Yes	See a contrary view below..	
C.2 Chapter 4. Public Facilities and Services	6:7 Item 4 Is the word “shall” intentional? This would be a great thing but I sincerely doubt BOS is up to it. I have no idea if some academic institution intends to expand, but as there aren’t many academic institutions in Virginia, it wouldn’t hurt to write a letter to each of them and find out. There isn’t a lot of new money being poured into research these days and it is Federal money that drives things like this. Unless the Federal Government decided to open the coffers to this kind of research (which would immediately be tapped by established institutions like VIMS) I don’t see this happening short of a sugar-daddy providing the funds. That immediately gets into the issue of what the County would do to facilitate such a concept? The County owns no appropriate land that could be donated. There is no reason for NNPDC to be involved if this is a County initiative.	We will change the word “shall” to “should”. We agree there are a lot of problems and can think of a few more. But at the same time that should not stop us from pursuing this idea. We think this is a good item for the EDC to pursue as lead organization. The NNPDC is currently involved in sponsoring marine training through the RCC. We do not see the problem in getting as many organizations on our side as possible.	
C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:7	I am very skeptical that working with NNPDC will be productive, having done so several times. The water issues are much more critical in Lancaster and Northumberland County than they are in other Northern Neck Counties. In addition, NNPDC responds to funding, and is somewhat	A requirement that the County participate in a water supply planning study for the State is in process of being implemented. We need to participate regardless of the history of NNPDC actions since we believe this approach is more beneficial to the County.	

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Rank Item 1	<p>subservient to state pressures. I do not believe that DEQ will act in the best interests of the two counties involved, and it is my understanding that the resources of the United States Geologic Survey are being directed elsewhere. The two counties can achieve their goals independently. The long-range strategy is already in place - set land aside for reservoirs. Other issues such as massive groundwater withdrawals in Maryland and West Point are political and we should not waste time, and certainly not resources, trying to change them because we will not be successful. There is no reason NNPDC should not be involved, but we should not expect them to take the lead. We need to do this ourselves. I would reword the item to read:</p> <p>The Board of Supervisors should assign persons to work with Lancaster County to establish a long-range strategy for assuring adequate quantities of potable water for residents and businesses of the two counties.</p>	<p>As to the recommendation shown in bold at the end of the comment, we expect to work with NNPDC on this item. See the first item in the set of Action Items for Chapter 4.</p> <p>We believe it would be counter-productive to attempt to circumvent NNPDC on this issue.</p>	
C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan	<p>First, I would like to commend the staff for its efforts to protect the water supply of the county. I believe that your recommendations to the BOS are an excellent beginning of what is certain to be a long-term effort.</p> <p>However, there are a lot of misconceptions and downright untruths concerning the state and future of the county's water supply being floated (as it were) by persons who simply don't know</p>	<p>Thank you.</p> <p>And we agree with your subsequent comment. We plan that the Committee formed as Action Item 1 for Chapter 4 will include the necessary expertise.</p> <p>I hope our "Experts" don't fit the mold you define. Does "Seldom wrong and always in doubt" work?</p>	

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	<p>what they are talking about. I'm reminded of a definition of an EXPERT that I once heard, "Seldom right but never in doubt." The county staff and the BOS will have to be careful not to permit policies based on bad science or just plain ignorance to be promulgated. Such policies could prove to be costly and even dangerous.</p>		
<p>C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 1, third part</p>	<p>Second, let me make a suggestion regarding an item on page 6:8. It reads, "The Subdivision Ordinance should be reviewed and modified as necessary to be compatible with the policies for the protection of potable water and providing an adequate supply of potable water. . . ." I believe that this reform is essential. I urge the BOS to include in Chapter 128: Subdivision of Land a provision that addresses the protection of the county water supply. Specifically, in Article IV General Regulations, Section 128-19 Improvements E, I would recommend revising E. Private water and/or sewage facilities. They read something like the following: "The subdivider shall provide all information needed to determine what improvements are necessary to protect the groundwater supply. The subdivider shall also provide plans for all such improvements, including a statement by a licensed well driller or engineer that such improvements, when properly installed, will be adequate for protection of the groundwater supply."</p>	<p>Thank you for the recommended revisions.</p> <p>This detail is what we will expect to receive as input at the public hearings when we get to specific Subdivision Ordinance revisions and the related rationale.</p>	

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	<p><i>The required information could range from a copy of the VDOH well permit (and perhaps driller's log) and a simple estimate of water consumption (based on the AWWA standard of 74 gallons per day per capita) for small subdivisions to the results and interpretation of pumping tests carried out on the wells for large subdivisions (or other potential large water users).</i></p> <p><i>It is important to recognize that an obligation to protect the groundwater supply doesn't only apply to the regional or county-wide supply. It also applies to protecting the supply of the particular subdivision and its neighbors. Large withdrawals of groundwater certainly affect the overall, regional supply by drawing down the artesian water levels, but they also have a direct and immediate affect on the water levels in the wells of neighbors. In fact, the water use by a large subdivision may draw down the water levels in the wells of neighboring homeowners (or businesses), causing the wells to "run dry" because the water level has dropped below the pumps of their wells.</i></p> <p><i>One side benefit from this revision is that the county would acquire a ready database of groundwater withdraws--information now sorely lacking.</i></p>		
C.3 Water Quality and	Ref Comp Plan B.7.B.2 This is DEQ's mandate, not NNPDC. Nobody at NNPDC has expertise in	The basic item in the Comp Plan was to use the new well that would probably have to be	

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<p>Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 2</p>	<p>this area. I have been trying to find monitoring wells for 5 years without success. What do you expect NNPDC to do? The biggest help would come from the Health Department who could be on the lookout for suitable wells. The county could formally request the use of one of the wells at the old menhaden plant. It is my understanding that one is still in use but the pumps are still in the other ones. As far as sodium/saltwater intrusion is concerned, VDH periodically monitors water chemistry in all public water supplies in the county. All that needs to be done is to request these analyses as they are filed and keep track of any changes that may occur. To my knowledge VDH does not do this, as they are only concerned with parameters involving public health.</p>	<p>drilled for the new Middle School as a monitoring source. The action item was to simply define the parameters to be measured and the specification for the system as a first step.</p> <p>Statements during the Public Hearing and subsequent submittals indicated that such an approach would not provide useful data from a well at the Middle School since it would be "active". As a result the task is being revised and generalized in Chapter 6 and the related item also being revised in Chapter 5. See the comments below.</p> <p>Also, there is no reference to NNPDC. We would expect the NN Soil and Water District personnel would do the monitoring and the DEQ would write the specifications.</p>	
<p>C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 2</p>	<p>.....This may be more important than adapting some old, abandoned well in order to monitor its water level. (By the way, unless we have an accurate geologic log of the well and know with certainty in which artesian aquifer the well is screened, then all we can say is that "the water goes up and down.") For all intents and purposes, all the well gives us is a lot of lousy information about conditions of the artesian aquifers.</p>	<p>See the explanation above and the comment below.</p>	

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<p>C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 2</p>	<p>It would be nice if we could find a well with "... both geologic and geophysical logs of the well." as per the above comment, and know the exact screening depth, but I'm not optimistic. Even in the absence of such information, simply monitoring the same well over time provides useful information. Drillers tend to drill to the top of the deep aquifer and stop, and the well logs I have seen suggest the aquifer is very sandy and relatively homogeneous at the top. If this is true and the aquifer is not severely partitioned, then one well is as good as another. At this point I will settle for "any old well from some oyster plant". A statement should remain in the Comprehensive Plan as to the need for a monitoring well(s). As was said at Planning Commission, the United States Geologic Survey no longer does the measurements and guy who was responsible for our area, Randy McFarland is being re-assigned. DEQ makes the measurements now, quarterly. I have the contact and they would like more wells. The Health Department is paranoid about designating a well for monitoring purposes as they are afraid of contamination. This is nonsense, of course, because a well with a locked cap can't cause contamination any more than one being actively pumped.</p>	<p>Will keep the need for a monitoring well in the Comp Plan Chap 5 and Chap 6 based on this rationale.</p>	
<p>C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline</p>	<p>While the well at the Middle school is not usable for scientific research, the need for good data on the artesian aquifers is real. I would suggest</p>	<p>The Action Item will be reworded to indicate SAIF will work with the County Staff on this project. See also above items.</p>	

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Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 2	<p>that the county go after grants to install a proper one and identify county property that could be used for it.</p> <p>Ball park figure would be \$120,000. SAIF Water would be glad to help with the process of getting grants and getting it drilled. We can rightfully expect DEQ to do the monitoring once it is in place.</p>		
C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 3	<p>....See the comment above. This should be done in coordination with Lancaster County. The more bureaucracy that gets involved in this issue (5 counties plus the state instead of just two counties) the more time and money will be wasted.</p>	<p>The initial plan was sponsored by the predecessor organization to the NNPDC in combination with the US Department of Agriculture. It is unlikely that our County and Lancaster would be willing to fund the engineering study and we would need the DOAg and/or the Corps of Engineers involved. The purpose of this task was to start the process. The County will undoubtedly have to seek grant funds and is more likely to receive them by following a regional approach.</p>	
C.3 Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan Page 6:8 Item Rank 4 and 5	<p>The items involving VDH are not likely to be productive. Changing Virginia's "grey water" law so that only the toilet empties into the septic tank is another badly needed change. Our experience with VDH and sewage sludge suggests that significant expenditure of time/resources on these issues will likely prove futile.</p>	<p>We agree it is difficult to get VDH to change their regulations. However, we believe we have the obligation to try.</p>	
C. Implementation	<p>As a new overall item, I recommend that a county survey be conducted to determine public</p>	<p>We have had a series of Public Hearings on the Comprehensive Plan starting in January</p>	

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and Work Plan – General Comments	attitudes in all primary issue areas.	2005. All primary issues were presented and discussed. We do not see what purpose a survey to determine public attitudes on primary issues would serve. The responsibility of the BOS and the PC is to be aware of the public attitudes in all primary issue areas.	
C. Implementation and Work Plan – General Comments	I also recommend that development of a pamphlet, DVD or expansion of the website, be included as a new item to describe both the responsibilities and benefits of living in Northumberland. (everything from required setbacks to recycling center and launch ramp locations) Building permits should be contingent on the owner signing an affidavit that he has read and understood his stewardship responsibilities.	We do not see where this is a Comprehensive Plan issue. Most building permits are submitted by contractors; and we believe the recommended affidavit is unworkable. The suggestions appear to be the ongoing activities of NAPS and other County organizations.	
C. Implementation and Work Plan – General Comments	Maybe we could get some of the volunteer organizations to bite off one or more of the tasks, just as we hope the Historical Society will do the "inventory." Formalizing the effort and periodically getting an update on progress would be wise.	Agree. See the water access action items.	
C. Implementation and Work Plan – General Comments	There are many sociological issues that are not addressed such as accommodating the elderly and poor and Spanish-speaking; and providing incentives for minorities. There are many persons in sub-standard housing.	A new section on Health and Human Services is being added to Chapter 4 of the Comp Plan to address some of these issues. Not all are Comprehensive Plan items.	