

**Northumberland County Planning Commission**  
**March 17, 2022**  
**Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Northumberland County Planning Commission was held on March 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Northumberland Courts Building and using Zoom (telephonic meeting) with the following attendance:

Chris Cralle	Present	Garfield Parker	Present
Vivian Diggs	Absent	Roger McKinley	Present
Alfred Fisher	Absent	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Present
Ed King	Present	Charles Williams	Present
Richard Haynie	Present	Patrick O'Brien	Present

Others in attendance:  
Stuart McKenzie (County Planner)

**RE: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fisher.

Ms. Wilkins-Corey led the commission in the Pledge of Allegiance, while Mr. Cralle gave the invocation.

**RE: AGENDA**

Mr. McKinley made a motion to accept the agenda as is, and Mr. Cralle seconded the motion. All voted in favor of accepting the agenda.

**RE: MINUTES- February 17, 2022**

Ms. Wilkins-Corey stated there was an error made on page 4 of the February 17, 2022 minutes that misattributed a statement from Mr. Parker to Mr. McKinley. Mr. McKenzie made a note to correct the error in the minutes to reflect that Mr. Parker made the statement. Ms. Wilkins-Corey motioned to accept the minutes with correction made, and that was seconded by Mr. McKinley. All voted in favor of accepting the revised minutes from February 17, 2022.

**RE: COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Commission member comments.

**RE: STAFF MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Staff did not have any comments.

**RE: CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

There were no citizens comments.

**RE: PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were no public hearing scheduled.

**RE: WORK SESSION ITEMS**

There were no work session items scheduled.

**RE: DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Parker asked Mr. McKenzie to begin the discussion on Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, and Mr. McKenzie stated at the last meeting they had progressed to page 21, discussing basketball courts and baseball facilities, but that he would like to go back towards the beginning of the chapter (page 14) to bring discuss the public water access section. Mr. McKenzie stated that back in 2015, when the PC last revised the Comprehensive Plan, that the Commission was hoping to accomplish some improvements to multiple water access facilities in the county to make more recreation opportunities available. Mr. McKenzie recounted a meeting with VDOT, and VDGIF staff that he and Mr. Tadlock attended when the county wanted to get permission to add a fishing pier at Coopers Landing. VDGIF stated that the parking area for the existing boat ramp does not meet DGIF minimum size standards, so adding another use to the site (a fishing pier), would be out of the question, since according to their standards, there would not be enough room to park vehicles of the patrons. Mr. McKenzie further stated that DGIF has a lease with VDOT for use of the land as a public water access site, and that the county asked if the lease could be transferred from DGIF to the county (since the county does not have rigorous parking standards, then a fishing pier could be built if the county owned the lease). VDOT stated that transferring land to the county is possible, but not at the expense of another state agency's assets (DGIF). Therefore, the addition of a fishing pier at Coopers Landing was effectively killed. Mr. McKenzie states the Comprehensive plan passage on page 14 outlines several improvement projects that are no longer being considered, so modifications should be made to that section or portions of that section should be deleted. Mr. Williams asked if there was any land adjacent to Coopers landing that the county might be able to buy, and Mr. McKenzie stated he did not think so. Mr. McKinley asked if there was any extra room at Shell Landing (for a fishing pier)? Mr. McKenzie stated yes, but was not sure how the lease to DWR (formerly DGIF) would play into that new use. Mr. Williams stated he didn't think there would be many fish caught at a fishing pier in Shell Landing, as the creek has little fish, but not sizable fish. Mr. McKenzie stated that Hampton Hall Landing and Rowes Landing are two county owned water accessible sites that could use some improvements. Rowes could use some improvements to the boat ramp and Hampton Hall Landing needs a road, parking lot and a boat ramp/courtesy pier, to make it useful again as a water access site, without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for waterfront land. Mr. McKinley asked if Rowes Landing is the headwaters of the Coan, and Mr. McKenzie replied in the affirmative. Mr. McKenzie stated that the water depth at Rowes Landing is

rather shallow, approximately 3 foot, but has plenty of depth for a small skiff, canoe, kayak or paddleboard. Mr. McKinley asked if the ramp was concrete or wood, and Mr. McKenzie replied he thought it was concrete. Mr. McKinley asked if there was a pier next to the boat ramp and Mr. McKenzie replied, a skinny 4-foot wide courtesy pier is next to the ramp. Vice Chairman Mr. Parker stated we can hold off making any recommendations until the next meeting, when Chairman Fisher is present.

Mr. Parker asked Mr. McKenzie for the next section to examine. Mr. McKenzie asked Commission members to go to page 30 of Chapter 4, stating that at the time we wrote the Comp. Plan, the county was still relying on Volunteer Rescue Squads, and since that time, the County has hired a full time paid rescue squad crew, and we should reflect that by revising this section to reflect that. Mr. McKinley asked what page Mr. McKenzie was referencing, and Mr. McKenzie stated page 33. Mr. McKenzie stated he would talk to Mr. Tadlock and Mr. Packett to determine the language to add to the Comp. Plan. Ms. Wilkins-Corey stated that on the accompanying map that the Reedville Rescue Squad is no longer in operation. Mr. McKenzie stated he would make the revisions to the map. Mr. O'Brien asked about the distance a house can be from a rescue squad in order to receive a discount on your home insurance rate. Mr. McKenzie stated it was six road miles, and it is fire department location that gets a homeowners insurance discount, not rescue squads. Mr. Williams asked the closest rescue squad to Reedville is the Northumberland Rescue Squad in Burgess and then the Mid-County Rescue Squad in Heathsville. Vice Chairman Mr. Parker stated that as the population becomes more geriatric, there will likely be an increase in emergency calls.

Mr. Parker asked staff what was next, Mr. McKenzie responded that the entire Social Services section of the Comp Plan, he does not know a lot about, but would need to get with Mr. Tadlock to clarify that all the services that are mentioned are still being provided by the Department of Social Services in the county. Mr. McKinley asked if the Social Services has a director, to which Ms. Wilkins-Corey replied yes. Mr. McKinley stated perhaps the director could come and brief the Commission on the programs being offered by social services in the county. Ms. Wilkins-Corey asked if they were still doing the adult daycare in Burgess. Mr. Parker stated that with COVID, a lot of programs have been suspended. Ms. Wilkins-Corey stated if they do have adult daycare somewhere else than in Burgess, we can just state that there is a program and not mention the location, because it could change over the course of few years. Mr. Parker asked Supervisor Haynie if the Social Services is looking for a new home. Mr. Haynie stated that there is some consideration about a new location, but nothing has been decided yet. Mr. Parker asked, out of curiosity, about the old jail building, is anybody going to use it? Mr. Haynie stated that the old sheriff's office building with the jail is in need of demolition. Mr. Parker asked if the old sheriff's office building is costing the county money, to which Mr. Haynie replied, very little. Mr. Haynie further explained that the building needs a new roof, that the cell block section of the building is no use to us (since we send prisoners to the regional jail in Warsaw). What is left after you demo the cell block is one-half a building and instead of adding on to the old building, it would be better to tear the whole thing down and start anew. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Bay Aging section of the Comp Plan needs to be reviewed as well, with COVID, who knows what programs were suspended or even dropped. Mr. McKenzie stated he would coordinate with Mr. Tadlock regarding the Social Services and Bay Aging sections. Mr. Parker asked Mr.

McKenzie if he had any other areas of Chapter 4 that need updating. Mr. McKenzie stated that he did not at this time, but would review the chapter again before the next meeting to be sure.

Mr. Parker asked if any of the Planning Commission members had any questions or revisions to Chapter 4. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated she would like to go back to the water access section regarding Coopers Landing and Rowes Landing, and stated that the paragraph starts out with four planned improvements, and if the county is not going to do those improvements, then this whole section should be removed. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated if we are not doing the improvements and just listing the water access sites in the county, then we need to add Shell Landing to it. Mr. McKenzie stated that the tables on 4-12 and 4-13 list all of the water access sites in the county. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated if we aren't doing the improvements then we should delete the section. Mr. McKenzie stated it is a bit of a catch-22, if we want to make the improvements in the future, we can point the prospective grant funding agency we want to apply to the section of the Comp Plan that shows that the improvements are approved by the Supervisors by adoption of the Comp Plan. If we take these proposed improvements of the Comp Plan, then they lose the validity of being sanctioned by the county. Mr. McKenzie stated it was up to the Commission to decide whether to get rid of it or modify it as to leave the door open for funding. Ms. Wilkins stated she understood, but for instance, the Coopers Landing Fishing pier, we cannot do it, so that should be removed. Mr. McKenzie stated that yes, that is the current reality. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey said we should remove the Coopers Landing, because there is no improvements, leave the Great Wicomico Fishing Pier launch because we are moving forward with that, but delete the courtesy pier, since the canoe/kayak launch is going to be primitive with no pier. Mr. McKenzie agreed.

Mr. O'Brien stated that in the future, the commission will get a copy of the revisions that are proposed to be made so that they can consider the whether or not to make the changes. Mr. McKenzie stated that yes, at this point, he is taking notes, but has not begun the revision process. Mr. McKenzie stated he will revise the Comp Plan using the Track Changes feature that shows deletions as strikethroughs, and adds the new language in red for consideration for adoption. Mr. McKenzie stated that after we go through one iteration, it might be prudent to go back over the whole document one more time before presenting it to the Board of Supervisor's for approval to look for consistency and overall flow of the document.

Mr. Parker asked Mr. McKenzie if he took his fishing rod down to Coopers Landing, could he fish on the bank. Mr. McKenzie stated yes, if you do not fish from the boat ramp courtesy pier. Mr. McKenzie noted that the boat ramp was paid for with boat fuel tax, so the site is to be used by power boaters launching their boats. Mr. Parker then asked about fishing at Cedar Point Landing. Mr. McKenzie stated to the best of his knowledge, Cedar Point is a dead end road, with room to park two cars, and that yes, as long as you stayed in the right of way of the road (and not trespassed on neighboring properties) then you could bank fish there as well.

Mr. McKenzie added that the Marina Chart in Chapter 4 need updating as well, stating he knows that at least one marina has expanded the number of wet slips recently. Ms. Wilkins-Corey stated she thinks that the Smith Point KOA has closed. Mr. Parker stated

that the county hasn't indicated any improvements at Vir-Mar Beach. Mr. McKenzie stated not that he is aware of any improvements planned, and noted there was some friction with the neighbors of Vir-Mar Beach, and that the Sheriff was doing extra patrols there to avoid any rowdy behavior of visitors.

Mr. Parker summarized that Northumberland County has limited recreational opportunities, to which Mr. McKenzie replied yes, we do not have any playgrounds, parks, tennis courts, basketball courts, or other recreational areas other than the ones mentioned. The county does not have a parks and recreation department, and the county donates funding to the local YMCA to provide some opportunities for recreational opportunities for the citizens. Mr. McKenzie stated that the section on swimming pools also needs to be updated, because we do have a swimming pool (at the YMCA), and he will make those revisions. Mr. McKenzie stated he believes the YMCA has a program with the school system to teach kids how to swim, which is a good thing. Mr. Parker stated that now we have the Boy & Girls Club coming to the county, and it will be located in Burgess, which is also good for the kids.

**RE: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REPORT**

The Board had a final meeting on the Re-districting plan, and voted to approve Option 3, which should work out for the county, and is online for viewing. The Board also recognized WH Shirley for his years of service to the Planning Commission with a resolution and a wooden plaque. There was a joint meeting that started at 4:30 pm with the Board of Supervisors and the School Board, and the School Board is asking for an additional million dollars. The public hearing was to clarify the revisions to the solar ordinance as 200 foot from the edge of the right of way of state maintained roads, which passed unanimously. Mr. McKinley asked about the redistricting plan, and whether all supervisors voted for the plan, Mr. Haynie stated that it was a 4 to 1 vote, with Mr. Tomlin voting against the plan, however, the plan passed and is on its way to be approved by the State Attorney General.

**RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Parker stated that the Commission could stop here and pick up the review of the Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 at the next meeting. Mr. King made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Mr. O'Brien and the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm. The adjournment vote was as follows:

Chris Cralle	Aye	Garfield Parker	Aye
Vivian Diggs	Absent	Roger McKinley	Aye
Alfred Fisher	Absent	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Aye
Ed King	Aye	Charles Williams	Aye
Richard Haynie	n/a	Patrick O'Brien	Aye

