

**Northumberland County Planning Commission**  
**March 20, 2025**  
**Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Northumberland County Planning Commission was held on March 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Northumberland Courts Building and using Zoom (telephonic meeting), with the following attendance:

Chris Cralle	Present	Roger McKinley	Absent
Vivian Diggs	Present	Patrick O'Brien	Present
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Present
John Kost	Present	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Absent
Richard Haynie	Absent	Charles Williams	Present

Others in attendance:

Stuart McKenzie (County Planner)

Philip Marston (Zoning Administrator)

**RE: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Parker.

Mr. Cralle led the commission in the invocation, with Mr. Williams led the commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**RE: AGENDA**

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the agenda, and Mr. Kost seconded the motion. All voted in favor of accepting the agenda.

**RE: MINUTES – February 20(27), 2025**

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the February 20 (postponed due to inclement weather to the 27th), 2025 minutes, and Mrs. Diggs seconded the motion. All voted in favor of adopting the minutes from February 20(27), 2025.

**RE: COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

There were no commissioner's comments.

**RE: STAFF MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. McKenzie noted that the Capital Improvement Plan Subcommittee has met three times, and has met with most Department Heads to discuss their submitted projects. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Draft CIP will likely come to the Planning Commission for a public hearing at the April 17, 2025 regularly scheduled meeting.

## **RE: CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

## **RE: PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Mr. Parker asked Mr. McKenzie to read the notice for the public hearing. Mr. McKenzie stated that the public hearing tonight was a request by Crystal Cove Housing, LLC, owner, and Carolyn Crockett, applicant, for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a child care facility on property zoned B-1, Business General. The property is shown as Tax Map Parcel # 36-(1)-25-C and is located at 740 Jessie Dupont Memorial Highway. Mr. McKenzie retrieved the citizen comment sign up sheet from the doorway to the meeting room and noted to the Chairman that no one had signed up to speak.

Chairman Parker asked if the applicant would like to tell the Commission about their proposed child care facility in Burgess. Dr. Crockett stated that she lives at 374 Lewis Lane and has extensive expertise with children and that there is a tremendous need in the county for child care. Dr. Crockett stated that all of the existing child care facilities have a waiting list for children wanting to be enrolled. Dr. Crockett recounted her past jobs of being an educator at Northumberland Middle and High School, as a special needs educator, and working in Middlesex and Richmond school systems. Dr. Crockett stated that she wanted to work with children to make them productive citizens and is passionate about her work. Dr. Crockett thanked Phillip Haynie for allowing her the opportunity to follow her dream.

Mr. Kost mentioned that Dr. Crockett has a special needs children background, and asked if the child care facility is for special needs students? Dr. Crockett responded her child care facility is for all children. Mr. Kost followed up with another question, what are the ages of children you are going to care for? Dr. Crockett responded that they are going to start out with one year olds and then branch out to toddlers. Mr. Kost asked if Dr. Crockett has a list of potential clients? Dr. Crockett stated that Social Services has a list and she is working with them. Mr. Kost asked Dr. Crockett if she is familiar with all of the state laws regarding child care facilities, and Dr. Crockett responded that yes, she is very familiar with the state regulations regarding child care facilities.

Mr. Cralle stated he appreciated the service Dr. Crockett wants to provide and added that he appreciates her starting a new business in the county. Mr. Cralle asked how many jobs would be created when she opens her business? Dr. Crockett stated that there will only be one or two employees (besides herself), but she expects to hire more, as they expand the number of children they look after.

Dr. Crockett noted that the building official has visited the site and building and stated that she needed a handicapped handrail and needed to build a fence for the playground, both of which she plans to do.

Mr. O'Brien informed Dr. Crockett about the county approval process for her business, that the Planning Commission only recommends an action to the Board of Supervisors,

and that the Board of Supervisors has the authority to approve their conditional use permit. Mr. O'Brien stated that after the Planning Commission meeting tonight, the Board of Supervisors will consider her request at next month's Board of Supervisors meeting. Dr. Crockett stated that she understands the process.

Mr. Williams asked Dr. Crockett how Crystal Cove Housing, LLC., as listed on the application plays into the project. Dr. Crockett stated that her future landlord, Mr. Phillip Haynie owns Crystal Cove Housing, LLC., which owns the house and property she is planning on renting. Mr. Williams asked about how many staff persons she would be hiring. Dr. Crockett stated that the State regulations say one staff for 10 children above toddler age, and that one staff is required for every four toddlers.

Dr. Crockett stated that they are only using the front of the building, as that area was approved by the building official and that she needed a handicap handrail and to fence in the playground area.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the site plan in the Conditional Use Permit Application shows no lighting. Dr. Crockett stated that the existing structure has lights. Mr. O'Brien stated that the only reason he was asking is that during winter it get dark early. Dr. Crockett stated that the child care center closes at 5 pm and that they do not plan on being at the building in the evening.

Chairman Parker opened the Public Hearing at 7:15 pm. There were no signatures on the sign in sheet for any citizens to speak.

There was a citizen online who wanted to comment, his name was Reverend Dr. Linwood Blizzard, II a resident of 843 Crabtown Road, and he requested that the Planning Commission recommend approval of this conditional use to the Board of Supervisors. Dr. Blizzard stated that the county has a lack of child care facilities and this is a very good opportunity for youth development in the county. Dr. Blizzard stated that Dr. Crockett has the skills and will be an asset to the youth of the county. Chairman Parker thanked Dr. Blizzard for his comments.

Mr. Phillip Johnson Haynie, Jr. of 1015 Whays Creek Road stated that he would like to speak regarding Dr. Crockett's application. Mr. Haynie stated that today is a sad day for America. The President signed an Executive Order to dismantle the Department of Education. Education is a key opportunity for poor people to move up, and this change will affect people with student loans, like me, and he questioned if student loans are gone. Mr. Haynie stated that he has a son that is autistic and his son goes to Richmond every school day to get care for him, as there are not facilities in the county for that kind of care. Mr. Haynie stated it was important for the county to have a backup plan. Some children in the county, the parents don't have the time to care for the child, because they are working, and those kids can get further and further behind. Mr. Haynie stated that to raise productive citizens, we need to invest in education or invest in prisons. Mr. Haynie concluded by stating that Dr. Crockett's application is a great project and he encouraged the Planning Commission to support approval of the conditional use permit.

Chairman Parker asked if anyone would like to speak. Hearing none, Chairman Parker closed the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.

Mr. Kost made a motion that we adopt the request and that all required permits and/or licenses shall be obtained from all appropriate regulatory agencies including but not limited to Va. Department of Social Services, and that the building shall comply with the Virginia Statewide Building Code. Any proposed lighting shall be non-reflective and directed downward to prevent any glare on adjoining properties. Non-compliance of any of these conditions shall result in this permit to come back before the Board of Supervisors for possible revocation. This motion is made in due consideration of the public health and safety, the general welfare of the community, public necessity, convenience, and in the exercise of good zoning practices and in pursuant to the body's statutory authority. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Chris Cralle	Aye	Roger McKinley	Absent
Vivian Diggs	Aye	Patrick O'Brien	Aye
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Aye
John Kost	Aye	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Absent
Richard Haynie	n/a	Charles Williams	Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

The Zoning Administrator, Philip Marston, alerted Mr. McKenzie that the first condition had been revised and the first condition as presented was inaccurate. Chairman Parker asked the citizens and Dr. Crockett to not leave as there was a correction to be made. Mr. McKenzie stated that he had an older version of the conditions and that as Dr. Crockett probably knows is that the Department of Social Services is not in charge of regulating child care in the State, but instead the Virginia Department of Education is charged with that regulation. Mr. McKenzie stated that the first of the draft proposed conditions should read "all required permits and/or licenses shall be obtained from all appropriate regulatory agencies including but not limited to the Va. Department of Health and Va. Department of Education's Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Development."

Mr. Kost stated that he wanted his motion to be amended as read. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion, and the vote was as follows:

Chris Cralle	Aye	Roger McKinley	Absent
Vivian Diggs	Aye	Patrick O'Brien	Aye
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Aye
John Kost	Aye	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Absent
Richard Haynie	n/a	Charles Williams	Aye

The amended motion passed unanimously.

**RE: WORK SESSION ITEMS**

Chairman Parker asked Mr. McKenzie about Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan revision. Mr. McKenzie stated that he had made changes to Chapter 5 that were requested by Planning Commission Members at the last meeting, and that the changes were not substantive. Mr. McKenzie stated that there were problems with consistency referring to state agencies, as sometimes they were referred to by their acronym and other times the agency name was written out. Mr. McKenzie went through the changes made to Chapter 5 with the Commission members, in two instances changing the word “shall” to “should”. Mr. Kost pointed out that on page 5 of Chapter 5, a, b, and c, have the word “health department” when it should read “VDH”. Mr. McKenzie stated he noted the change and would fix that. Next, Mr. Kost stated that on page 7, a, c, and d, as well as 6 a on the same page, there is a need to change “RPA” to “CBRPA”. Mr. McKenzie noted those changes to correct at a later date. Other changes requested by Mr. Kost, trading acronyms for the agency, occurred on page 5:9, 1.b. remove Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Department of Health, and the Virginia Department of Conservation to VDEQ, VDH and VDCR, respectively. On page 5:10, change Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to VDEQ. Mr. Kost requested on page 5:14 to put a space between a and water, and on page 5:15 to delete subsection d, because it is no longer needed. After discussion amongst the Planning Commission members, on page 5:17, d, the Commission recommended to un-delete restroom facilities for Shell’s Landing and Lodge Creek, and to remove Crane’s Landing from the list since the site is cramped for space for parking and turning around as it is. Mr. Kost requested on page 5:17, 12 b to change “Health Department” to VDH. On page 5:19, the Commission asked if the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement was signed on June 16, 2014? Mr. McKenzie did a quick internet search on his laptop and stated yes, that is correct.

Chairman Parker asked about the progress of the Chesapeake Bay Cleanup. Mr. McKenzie stated that Virginia has made a lot of progress in reducing pollution from agricultural practices, and have fenced hundreds of miles of freshwater streams to keep livestock from eroding the stream banks, not to mention, polluting the water with their wastes. Mr. McKenzie stated that more than half of the farm fields in Northumberland participate in the winter cover crop program that keeps soil from washing away when no crops are present to hold the soil in place. Mr. McKenzie stated that Virginia has also made great progress reducing the nutrients from their sewage treatment plants as well. However, Mr. McKenzie stated, the State is not doing as well reducing urban and suburban stormwater runoff pollution. Mr. McKenzie added that in urban and suburban settings, there are many small parcels with hundreds of property owners, and in this setting, it is much harder implementing best management practices. Agricultural best management practices are much easier to implement, as one property owner may own hundreds of agricultural acres. Mr. McKenzie added that Virginia and Maryland are very close to meeting their nutrient reduction goals, however, Pennsylvania is behind in their efforts to reduce nutrients going into the Chesapeake Bay.

Mr. Kost addressed the Commission regarding his proposal to make the Comprehensive Plan more readable to the average citizen. Mr. Kost stated he would like to make changes such as take the history of Northumberland County section out of the Appendix and put it at the beginning of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Kost said that a lot of demographic data is shown in Chapter 3 and there is a lot of duplication in the document. Mr. Kost stated he believed Chapter 2 is the Executive Summary. Mr. Kost stated that the fundamental

flaw with the Plan is that it not a Plan, it is an inventory. Mr. Kost stated he felt that money gets in the way of the county accomplishing its goals. Since there is no money, why bother. Mr. O'Brien stated he feels the same way as Mr. Kost, that we need to look at the Plan as a whole, as it seems as if the purpose of the Plan is to make sure there is no change, and keep things the same, and perhaps that was the plan of the county elders when the original plan was written. Mr. Kost stated that a water facility in Heathsville is not going to happen. Mr. O'Brien said he feels that the county is still mad at the developers of the large subdivisions in the 1960's and 1970's. Mr. O'Brien stated he was not sure you can get citizens behind anything, other than real estate development, as long as all of them are saying "not in my backyard".

Mr. Kost stated he was offering to volunteer to try to make the Comprehensive Plan easier to read, making sure to call out County recommendations and make this a useful document, and to have this done by the April Meeting. Mr. McKenzie stated his one concern is that about tracking changes made to the document. The track changes works well, until you start moving paragraphs and chapters around, as there is no way to show that type of editing. Mr. McKenzie stated that currently he can show every change that has been made since 2016, and he is worried that in the near future, that may not be the case. Mr. McKenzie stated that if asked, he wants to be able to show the average citizen every change that has been made to the Comprehensive Plan since the last adopted plan. Mr. Kost asked if the average citizen is familiar enough with the existing Plan so they want to compare? Mr. Kost stated he does not think so. Mr. Kost continued, if we make this a shorter, more readable document, there will be no need for a comparison. Mr. Kost stated that the existing document is not a Comprehensive Plan, and that he will not vote for this Plan. Mr. Kost stated the challenge is how can we exploit our natural resources to help the local economy. Mr. O'Brien asked when you talk of exploiting the natural resources, what are you talking about? Mr. Kost replied how is the best way to use the waters around us, for recreation, for fishing and oystering. Mr. Kost questioned, are there better ways to use our farmland? What are the benefits from farming commodities that we cannot eat, and are not processed here, so the only benefit the county gets is from the farmers sales, income, and property taxes? Mr. O'Brien stated, as an example, boating, there is huge surplus dockage in the county. Mr. O'Brien stated that since we had the high gas prices, a lot of people got rid of their boats and most boatyards are not even close to full. Mr. Kost stated that he doesn't expect to come up with all solutions right away. Mr. Kost stated he worked on the transportation committee for the Loudon County Comprehensive Plan, obviously a larger population and economy. The question that Mr. Kost wants to ask, is there something we can be doing differently to attract more business into the county? Mr. O'Brien noted to Mr. Kost there will likely be resistance to any changes. Mr. Kost stated he is not proposing anything radical. Mr. Cralle asked Mr. Kost, when he was in Loudon County, how far out were you looking? Mr. Kost stated 10 years out, as required by law. Mr. McKenzie stated the State Code states a Comprehensive Plan should look out 20 to 25 years. Mr. Williams stated that if you could identify changes that could be useful for the county, that would be good. Mr. Williams stated that we have the second largest amount of shoreline in Virginia and we only have one public beach and no swimming beaches. Mr. O'Brien stated that in his opinion editorial changes are fine. Mr. Kost reiterated that he is not going to make any whacky proposals, but he does think there are opportunities. Mr. Kost stated he thought the Commission so far has done a good job updating the Plan, but that it needs a little more. Mr. McKenzie stated that we

are required by state law to have certain components to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McKenzie explained to the Commission that typically, after the Planning Commission adopts the Draft Comprehensive Plan, then county staff sends the Draft Plan to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Department of Transportation for review to make sure the Plan has the required components. Mr. McKenzie stated that he did not want to lose control of the document. Mr. O'Brien asked what does lose control of the document mean? Mr. McKenzie state he feels he will not be in the know of what all of the changes that were made. Mr. O'Brien stated that he is fine with Mr. Kost making editorial, stylistic changes, but no substantive changes. Chairman Parker asked each commission member how they felt about Mr. Kost taking over revising the Plan. All members queried stated they were amenable to letting Mr. Kost revise the Plan in a stylistic, but not substantive manner. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to allow Mr. Kost to work as the stylistic editor in chief of the document. Mrs. Diggs seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

Chris Cralle	Aye	Roger McKinley	Absent
Vivian Diggs	Aye	Patrick O'Brien	Aye
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Aye
John Kost	Aye	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Absent
Richard Haynie	n/a	Charles Williams	Aye

The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

Mr. Kost stated that there are only small changes in Chapter 5, and the track changes makes it look messy and unprofessional. Mr. O'Brien stated that you do not want to give the Board of Supervisor's a marked up copy.

## **RE: DISCUSSION ITEMS**

There were no discussion items scheduled.

## **RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

## **RE: ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Williams and the meeting ended at 8:41 pm. The adjournment vote was as follows:

Chris Cralle	Aye	Roger McKinley	Absent
Vivian Diggs	Aye	Patrick O'Brien	Aye
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Aye
John Kost	Aye	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Absent
Richard Haynie	n/a	Charles Williams	Aye