

Northumberland County Planning Commission
May 13, 2025
Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Northumberland County Planning Commission was held on May 13, 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	Present
Vivian Diggs	Present	Patrick O'Brien	Present
Allen Garland	Present	Garfield Parker	Present
John Kost	Present	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Present
Richard Haynie	Absent	Charles Williams	Present

Others in attendance:
Stuart McKenzie (County Planner)

RE: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Parker.

Mr. Parker led the commission in the invocation, and 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 – April 17, 2025

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the April 17, 2025 minutes, and Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. All voted in favor of adopting the minutes from April 17, 2025.

RE: COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Commission Members.

RE: STAFF MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. McKenzie stated that the June Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled on June 19, 2024, which is a state and federal holiday. Mr. McKenzie stated that an alternative date of June 17 would not work because the county is conducting an Economic Development Commission Meeting, and the county policy is only one meeting per night, so as to not limit citizen's participation. The commission members agreed that

Wednesday, June 18 would be the best date to hold the June Planning Commission meeting.

RE: CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

RE: PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no Public Hearing

RE: WORK SESSION ITEMS

Mr. McKenzie stated that since Mr. Kost is making changes to the Comprehensive Plan as its stylistic editor, then he should discuss the changes, since he is more familiar with the changes made. Mr. Kost stated that the only chapter that has not be reviewed by the Commission was Chapter 3, as it is waiting for review by the Zoning Administrator. Mr. Kost explained that work is still needed on the Appendix, as we should have everything else done to inform the review of the Appendix revision. Mr. O'Brien stated that he believes that the revisions Mr. Kost made to the Comprehensive Plan are better laid out, and easier to read.

Mr. McKenzie stated he had an issue with one of newly revised goals for the village of Lottsburg. Mr. McKenzie stated that the new goal stated that the county should promote the addition of more light industry/manufacturing in the Lottsburg village area. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Lottsburg village does not consist of a growth area, and is only composed of support areas. Mr. McKenzie stated that support areas are defined earlier in the chapter: "The County has designated certain areas adjacent to commercial hubs as "support areas". In the three principal villages these are located immediately beyond the commercial hubs and are mixed business and residential. In the smaller villages, these are considered residential support areas since they focus on providing services to the immediate surrounding areas and some through traffic on Route 360 and Route 200. The Support Area is intended to be zoned to permit the location of small general businesses in areas now zoned agricultural or residential- general." Mr. McKenzie added that he does not feel that light industry or manufacturing is compatible with adjacent residential properties in the Lottsburg area, or that the residents of Lottsburg village necessarily want more light industry or manufacturing next door. Mr. O'Brien stated that any light industry or manufacturing would require a conditional use permit (likely with conditions) in Lottsburg, so he did not see how it makes any difference. Mr. Kost stated that he agreed with staff that this goal is not consistent with the support area, and maybe we should move this goal to Callao or Heathsville. Mr. O'Brien stated that no one is going to launch or move a business to Northumberland County based on a passage from the Comprehensive Plan, and that is why he wants to keep the language.

Mr. O'Brien then made a motion to leave the newly added goal for more light industry/manufacturing in the Lottsburg village section of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McKenzie stated he also had an issue with one of the new goals for the village of Village, as one of the new goals was to "Promote residential development along Waverly Road between 360 and Whay's Creek Rd." Mr. McKenzie stated that Waverly Road is on the other side of the county from Village. Mr. Kost stated that the goal was placed in the wrong village, and should be in the Lillian village section. Mr. McKenzie said that is what he had thought, and is he is OK with that goal in the Lilian village portion of the chapter.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the Land Use Plan (Chapter 2) revisions. Mr. Garland seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

Mr. Kost moved on to the next chapter for review, Public Facilities and Services. Mr. Kost had staff scroll through the chapter, pointing out revisions made. Mr. Kost stated on page 13, he moved a recommendation regarding inland residents being able to access state waters from Chapter 1, to here, as Chapter 1 is supposed to address the existing conditions in the county and not have policy recommendations interspersed. Mr. Kost then noted he pulled out recommendations and put in a text boxes to highlight them, one recommendation to increase the number of public beaches in the county and another for the county to establish a public park. Mr. Kost noted that both recommendations were in the chapter, and he just pulled them out of the paragraph and reformatted the text. Mr. Kost stated there was a new recommendation for the Board of Supervisors to work with Virginia Commonwealth University to expand the availability of urgent care facilities throughout the county. A commission member commented that is a good thing, and he could not see how anyone could argue against that goal. Mr. Kost stated that one of the recommendations was surprising to him that he did not notice before was the recommendation to provide tax breaks to elderly low income persons in the county. Mr. Kost stated that having worked in social services in another state, he believed tax breaks are more of the state government function and not a local government function. Mr. O'Brien stated that the county has a fairly large amount of land that is county owned, and can we use that for low income housing development? Mr. Kost stated that the last section of the chapter talks about surplus land. Mr. O'Brien reasoned that a reduction in

the cost of land acquisition for the developer will make the profit margin more attractive to developers. Mr. McKenzie informed the commission, regarding county real estate tax assistance to the low income elderly in the county, that the Commissioner of the Revenue spoke to the Board of Supervisors about that program recently. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Commissioner said the maximum tax relief afforded to elderly low income citizens was capped at \$600. The Commissioner stated he called neighboring jurisdictions and that amount was in line with what the other counties were offering their elderly low income residents. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Commissioner closed his summary by stating the program was never meant to pay all of the county real estate taxes for an elderly low income individual, only to provide some relief to the tax burden. Mr. Kost mentioned the county owned property, the Board of Supervisors is in the process of selling one of the properties the Planning Commission recommended to sell, and then mentioned the Poor House Tract that the county owns, and that there might be opportunities to capitalize on that property. Mr. O'Brien stated that Northumberland Historical Society feels very strongly about this site. Mr. O'Brien predicted that there will be a lot of opposition to developing this site, and no doubt, they would be very vocal. Mr. O'Brien stated the feeling he got was that they did not want to touch it. Mr. Kost stated that the Poor House Tract was the largest tract we reviewed, and he wants the county to examine opportunities for the site. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the Public Facilities and Services chapter, as revised. Mr. Kost seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Next, Mr. Kost discussed the "Preamble", which gives context and talks about the history of the county. Mr. Kost stated that he added a section at the end of the Preamble to outline the dilemma the county is currently in. The paragraph stated that many people in the county enjoy tranquility of the county, but that the younger people of the county move away because there are no opportunities here, the working age people would like to see more growth while at the same the elderly are requiring more services, and may have a scarcity of service providers in the future. Mr. Williams stated that you identified the problem, but where are the answers. Mr. Kost asked Mr. Williams to give him a week. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to approve the Preamble as presented. Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

After some discussion regarding local resident's NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) attitude regarding creating new public water access sites, to include beaches, Mr. Kost stated he wanted to wrap up the discussion. Mr. Kost stated he will send out the revised Chapter 3 (Water Quality and Shoreline Protection) and the new Appendix A will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Kost hope that meeting would be the final review of the Comprehensive Plan. Mrs. Heidi Wilkins-Corey asked where is Chapter 2? Mr. Kost stated that Appendix A is where the content of Chapter 2 is located.

Mr. Kost stated that he would not be available for the scheduled Planning Commission Meeting on July 17th and asked the Commission if we could reschedule that meeting as well. Mr. Kost stated that July 22nd would be a good alternative date. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to move the July meeting date to the 22nd. Mr. Kost seconded the motion, the Commission voted unanimously to set the July Planning Commission meeting to Tuesday, July 22nd and the motion passed.

Mr. Parker asked if the County has a Strategic Plan/ Mr. McKenzie stated no, but the EDC is working on a Strategic Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan could be considered a strategic plan. Mr. Parker stated that it would nice to have a Strategic Plan that could be re-evaluated every five years. Mr. Parker stated that the county needs to look at the broad picture. Heathsville is the county seat, and it is not an incorporated town, and he feels it should be a center of growth and activity in the county. Mr. Parker stated that Northumberland is a bedroom community to Kilmarnock. It is time for Northumberland to do its own thing. Mr. Parker stated that what is changing in society, businesses are not replacing retiring or leaving workers, because they are replacing working with artificial intelligence, and we need to prepare for that.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

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. McKinley and the meeting ended at 8:10 pm. The adjournment vote was as follows:

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