

Northumberland County Planning Commission
June 18, 2025
Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Northumberland County Planning Commission was held on June 18, 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	Absent	Patrick O'Brien	Present
Allen Garland	Absent	Garfield Parker	Present
John Kost	Present	Heidi Wilkins-Corey	Present
Richard Haynie	Zoom	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 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 – May 13, 2025

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the May 13, 2025 minutes, and Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. All voted in favor of adopting the minutes from May 13, 2025.

RE: COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. O'Brien gave Mr. Kost compliments for his work on the Comprehensive Plan revision, as well as Mr. McKenzie. Mr. McKinley gave his appreciation to Mr. Kost as well.

RE: STAFF MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. McKenzie stated that there may be a public hearing next meeting regarding an oversized boathouse.

RE: CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Craig Palubinski who resides at 86 Muriel Drive in Heathsville, VA spoke, stating that he works for Bayshore Design, and designs marine structures such as piers and shoreline stabilization projects. Mr. Palubinski stated that he has a client in the county who would like an open sided roof structure, or gazebo on his pier. Mr. Palubinski stated that VMRC allows these structures on piers, if the locality allows them, and if they do not exceed 400 square feet. In addition, VMRC does not allow any walls, screens or doors, and the structure must be open sided on all sides. Mr. Palubinski stated that Northumberland County allows boathouses of 700 square feet or smaller to shade boats, and he is asking to allow gazebos on piers to shade people. Mr. Williams asked what are the general sizes of these gazebos? Mr. Palubinski stated many are 18' x 18' (360 square feet) and are usually in conjunction with a boathouse. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey made a motion for the Planning Commission to send a memo to the Board of Supervisors requesting permission to investigate open sided roof structures on piers. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion. Mr. Cralle asked if any other counties nearby allow open sided roof structures. Mr. Palubinski replied that King George, Essex and Middlesex Counties allow open sided gazebos on piers. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously, and Mr. McKenzie stated he would send the Board of Supervisors the memo as requested.

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 he created an information sheet on the structural changes made to the Comprehensive Plan as well as a list of potential motions for accepting the changes. That information sheet is below:

**Proposed Revised Structural Changes
to the New & Improved Comprehensive Plan**

Proposed Table of Contents for NEW Document	Location of same material in OLD version	Review Status
Preamble	The first half of Appendix A	V3 + Pillars
Introduction	The first page of Chapter 1	V3
Glossary of Acronyms	nonexistent	Approved
Table of Contents	no change	repaginate
List of Maps	nonexistent	repaginate
Chapter 1: Physical Conditions	Chapter 1	V3
Chapter 2: Land Use Plan	Chapter 3	V3
Chapter 3: Water Quality Protection Plan	Chapter 5	V2 Pending
Chapter 4: Public Facilities & Services	Chapter 4	V3
Chapter 5: Goals, Objectives & Strategies	Chapter 2	V1 (6/18)
Appendix A: List of Historic Places	the last part of Appendix A	6/18
Appendix B: Pillars Score sheet	nonexistent	6/18

Next meeting rescheduled to July 22.

6/18 Agenda:

1. Approve v2 changes to Chapter 3
2. Final Approval of the reordering of the chapters (as above)
3. Approve all changes to Chapter 5 (Issues, Goals & Strategies)
4. Approve changes to Preamble and creation of Appendix B (Pillars of Growth)
5. Review and approve Appendix A (historic places)
6. Enable any final minor edits
7. Approve complete plan for Public Hearing

Planning Commission Motions

1. I move that the edits presented by John Kost and Stuart McKenzie for Chapter 3 tentatively approved pending final completion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan for 2025.
2. I move that the final order and structure of the Comprehensive Plan as proposed be approved.
3. I move that the edits presented by John Kost and Stuart McKenzie for Chapter 5 be tentatively approved pending final completion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan for 2025.
4. I move that the edits presented for the Preamble and Appendix B be tentatively approved pending final completion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan for 2025.
5. I move that the edits presented by John Kost and Stuart McKenzie for Appendix A (list of historic places) be tentatively approved pending final completion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan for 2025.
6. I move that Stuart McKenzie and John Kost are empowered to make any necessary non-substantive minor edits to the document.
7. I move that all of the changes approved be incorporated into the complete Comprehensive Plan for 2025 and, following re-pagination of the Table of Contents, that it be presented in its entirety at a Public Hearing on July 22.

Mr. Kost noted that there were not many changes to Chapter 3, and Mr. McKenzie concurred that they were mainly small changes. Mr. Kost stated that he had sent out Chapter 3 to all the Commission members last week so that they could review the revisions before the meeting tonight.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the revisions to Chapter 3 as presented. Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kost then moved to the reordering of Chapters in the Comprehensive Plan, explaining that he changed the Appendix to Chapter 5 (as Mr. McKenzie requested and he agreed, since it has goals and strategies included), changed Appendix B to A, adding Appendix A, and the other chapter reordering as shown in the color chart on the handout page above.

Mrs. Wilkins-Corey made a motion to accept the final order and structure of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kost stated that in Chapter 5, page 15, Mr. McKenzie revised the population numbers from 2000-2020, using US Census data. Mr. McKenzie noted that the Census Bureau expects the county to lose population going into the future. Mr. Williams asked why are we losing population. Mr. McKenzie stated by out-migration and deaths.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the changes made to Chapter 5. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kost then began to describe his work on the Preamble, which is a new section that has been added. Mr. Kost stated that he mentioned Covid and its impact, including the expanded internet access provided in the County from federal grants. Mr. Kost stated that he created Appendix B, the community growth assessment tool, along with the associated

community scoring sheet for feedback on how the county is growing. Mr. Kost stated when the Plan is sent to the Board of Supervisors for final approval, he is going to ask every Board member to fill out the community scoring sheet. Mr. Kost suggested that we can put the scoring sheet on the county website so that citizens could provide feedback to the county supervisors. Mr. Kost asked if that scoring sheet could be a fillable form online that would tabulate the scores. Mr. McKenzie stated that the current county website is not interactive, and a good compromise would be to create the scoring sheet as a fillable PDF file, but suggested they request permission from the Board of Supervisors before taking any actions. Mr. O'Brien suggested that in addition to asking the Board of Supervisors to complete the scoring sheet, that we should sent it to the local chapter of the NAACP for them to complete, as it is a view from a different part of the county, and very well could be more objective than the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Kost stated that he will need to talk to the Board of Supervisors and see how they would like to proceed. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey asked who interprets the scoring sheet? Mr. Kost stated that he would tabulate and score the results for the Planning Commission members and the Board of Supervisors (if they decide to participate). Mrs. Wilkins-Corey said there can be so many different experiences and interpretations, it is hard to "black and white the responses", as interpretation is part of the challenge. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that two people with the same scoring sheet data could very well come up with to very different interpretations. Mr. Kost agreed, and stated that if there are different interpretations, then that fosters community discussion. There was a suggestion of placing the community assessment questionnaire at polling places during the fall election, and Mr. McKinley quickly stated that it is illegal to put up any literature at a polling place.

Mr. McKinley made a motion that the edits presented for the Preamble and Appendix B be tentatively approved pending final completion and approval of the Comprehensive Plan for 2025. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kost stated that Appendix A used to have a lot of demographic information in it, some historical information was used for the preamble, but most of the information was dated and therefore of limited use, so it was deleted. Mr. Kost stated that the only portion remaining of Appendix A is the list of historic places in the county. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey suggested that the Dey House in the historic place list be edited to remove the phrase "now a Texaco Office", as that use discontinued a few years ago. Mr. Kost agreed to make the change. Mr. O'Brien made a motion to approve Appendix A as revised. Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Parker stated that he wanted to have a Planning Commission meeting to discuss the "cleaned up" version of the Comprehensive Plan in its final form (without any track changes revisions showing) before the Commission has a public hearing meeting on recommending adoption by the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Kost said that should be no problem.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion that Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Kost are empowered to make any necessary non-substantive minor edits to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McKinley seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Parker reiterated that he wanted to have a Planning Commission meeting to be able to see the document in finished form so we can review it and note any changes we feel necessary before holding a public hearing. Mr. Kost stated he would accept all changes made to the draft, revised Plan, and repaginate the document by the end of next week, and send out to Commission members via email.

Mr. McKenzie noted that the proposed date for the public hearing of July 22 would not work, because State Codes requires the public notice second publication date to be at least seven days from the actual public hearing date, and with a July 17th public notice ad, that is only six days until the proposed July 22, 2025 meeting date. There was discussion of moving the July meeting dates to accommodate Mr. Kost's schedule, but in the end the Chairman stated let's move the July meeting date back to its regularly scheduled date, July 17, 2025, to review the finalized Comprehensive Plan, and then move the August Meeting date to Thursday, August 28, 2025 and advertise for a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan at that meeting. Mrs. Heidi Wilkins-Corey made a motion to move the July meeting date back to Thursday, July 17, and to move the August meeting date to Thursday, August 28, 2025. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

RE: DISCUSSION ITEMS

There was some discussion regarding the School Board's revelation to the Board of Supervisors at a recent meeting that they are \$1.3 million overdrawn. Several commission members stated that there was no responsible party in the school system that checked spending, and that several School Board members were without knowledge of the budget and spending amounts. Mr. O'Brien noticed that there is a small raise included for employees in the proposed county budget. Mr. Williams asked how can you give a raise when there is no money? Mr. Kost stated it maybe possible to find some money with budget cuts. Mr. Parker emphasized the fallout from the budget debacle. Mr. Parker stated the county lost the best principal in Virginia schools (as voted on by his peers), and several teachers have left as well. Mr. Parker lamented that the students are the ones hurt most by the overspent budget and lack of oversight by the School Board.

RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kost made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. O'Brien and the meeting ended at 8:25 pm. The adjournment vote was as follows:

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