

Northumberland County Planning Commission
June 20, 2024
Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Northumberland County Planning Commission was held on June 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Northumberland Courts Building and using Zoom (internet and telephonic meeting) with the following attendance:

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

Others in attendance:

Stuart McKenzie

RE: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Kost.

Mrs. Diggs gave the invocation, and Mr. Kost led the commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

RE: AGENDA

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the agenda and Mrs. Diggs seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the agenda.

RE: MINUTES - May 16, 2024

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to accept the May 16, 2024 meeting minutes, and Mrs. Wilkins-Corey seconded the motion. All voted in favor of accepting the minutes.

RE: COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Parker stated he read an article that stated Northumberland County is the fastest growing county in the Northern Neck. Mr. McKenzie stated that since COVID, he has noticed more people in the grocery store and more people at his local solid waste facility. Mr. Williams stated he has noticed more traffic as well. Mr. Parker asked the question how are we preparing for the future of the county? Mr. Parker stated that Callao and Reedville (sewer systems) are draining money from the rest of the county. Mr. Parker added that with only one grocery store in the county, we are pretty much a food desert. Mr. McKenzie stated that there are a lot of houses that are part time residences, if all of these part time occupied houses were occupied full time, he is not sure the county is prepared to cover the cost of the solid and liquid waste generated by these additional

residents. Mr. O'Brien stated that our infrastructure is pretty sufficient, and the Board of Supervisors knows about this potential problem. Mr. Kost stated that he thinks that the CIP subcommittee has already done something about this, as they requested that the county department heads project out five years to anticipate your needs to try to get an idea of future costs. Mr. Kost stated he believes a lot of the increase in persons in the county is due to short term tourist rentals.

Mr. Parker queried what are we getting for the proposed (property) tax increase? Mr. Parker stated there are no incorporated towns in Northumberland County, right Mr. McKenzie? Mr. McKenzie stated that there is one incorporated town in the county, and that is Kilmarnock, but of course the majority of the Town of Kilmarnock is in Lancaster County. Mr. Parker stated that the county is having a hard time maintaining what we have, but is not making progress in building reserves for the future expenditures. Mr. Kost stated the majority of county money is going to the schools. Mr. O'Brien stated that the federal and state mandates that govern school funding (the composite index) has caused much of the local increase in school funding, and the county has no control over that. Mr. Parker stated that as a planning commission we are seeing problems now, wait until a few more years. Mr. Parker stated that the county needs to be proactive, not reactive like we have been. Mr. Parker stated that fishing and farming has kept us going for hundreds of years, but we need more diversified businesses in the county. Mr. Kost stated that some things in the Comprehensive Plan, like needing a reservoir in Callao, is anything being done towards that goal? Mr. McKenzie stated no, the county has not done anything to prepare for reservoirs, as groundwater is still viable. Mr. O'Brien stated that the county is in competition with Warsaw, Tappahannock and Kilmarnock. Mr. O'Brien stated how do we make Northumberland County more attractive to businesses? Mr. O'Brien added that there are numerous instances in our Comprehensive Plan that state we want to protect the rural nature of the county, and he believes that those types of statements are not conducive to attracting businesses to the county. Mr. Parker mentioned that he attended a Kilmarnock Town Council meeting recently and noted that the council members and staff all had a progressive can-do attitude. Mr. Williams suggested that the county needs to be more specific on the type of businesses we need in the county. Mr. Williams stated that in his opinion that the county could use another grocery store, and a few more gas stations. Mr. O'Brien stated that Lancaster County is increasing their personal property tax rate more that Northumberland County is proposing, which makes Northumberland more attractive to persons who may consider moving here, as we have a lower tax bracket, due, in part, to lower government administrative costs. However, Mr. O'Brien stated the majority of the county lacks a sewer system. Mr. O'Brien pondered if Omega Protein would be in Reedville if there was not a sewer system present there. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that Omega Protein was in Reedville long before there was a sewer system in place. Mr. O'Brien stated that restaurant business is down, because disposable income is down. Mr. Parker stated that other localities go after grant money, and it might be time for Northumberland to hire some who can apply for grants. Mr. Parker stated that Northumberland County has no industrial park, and in his opinion the county needs an industrial park. Mr. Parker stated he knows that it is a major investment, in the 10-20 million dollar range Mr. Parker noted that Northumberland County is not known for buying land, but maybe now is the time, as land prices will likely continue to go up in the future. Mr. O'Brien noted that Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan is loaded with references to an industrial park, but that in the same chapter there are passages that call to

retain rural character, and if someone wanted to locate a new business here, that would be an immediate turn off. Mr. Parker added that in order for the county to attract businesses, we can't have a defeatist attitude. There are a lot of retired persons in the county, and they need a multitude of services. Chairman Parker asked how do we attract new businesses here, as it seem as if it has to be an emergency before anything gets done. Mr. Kost stated that for home maintenance and construction in the county, it seems you cannot seem to get licensed contractors to show up to do the work, however the underground cash economy, those workers are willing to do the work in a timely manner, although most of them are unlicensed. Mr. O'Brien stated that it is illegal to hire uncertified contractors. Mr. Kost stated he was aware of that fact. Mr. Kost added that he has been going to the Economic Development Commission's meetings and they have had various business owners come to the meeting to discuss the obstacles they face. Mr. Kost stated that the common theme from all of the business owners is that they cannot get employees to show up to work. Mr. Williams opined, if the county were to attract industry, they would have to bring their own workforce. Mr. Williams added that at his restaurant, they have to hire 25% more people than they need to run the restaurant, because of all the absenteeism. Mr. O'Brien stated that a company coming into Northumberland County and bringing their own workforce is not really a bad thing. Mr. Kost queried, why would a business locate here instead of Tappahannock, Warsaw or Kilmarnock? Mr. O'Brien offered that the cost of real estate is high in those towns, and a lot cheaper here in Northumberland. Mr. Kost stated that a business locating in Northumberland has a relative small clientele in the area, businesses have less critical mass, as there is no population density in the county. Mr. O'Brien stated that if you are in Burgess or Wicomico Church, it is only a 20 minute drive to Kilmarnock. Mr. McKenzie stated that you have to be aware of the geography of the area. Tappahannock, Warsaw and Kilmarnock are all at transportation crossroads, which concentrates people who are entering or leaving the Northern Neck peninsula into these choke points. Therefore, they have a larger customer base than we have here in Northumberland County, which is at the end of a dead end road. Mr. McKenzie stated that people have to want to travel to Northumberland County, as it does not have any through traffic as the other counties do. Mr. Kost stated that a good way to expand business is to explore near neighbor industries, that is further processing products that we produce here, such as processing more seafood in the county instead of shipping off somewhere else to package the fish and crabs. Mr. Kost added processing corn as another example, explaining that we need to think about spinning off existing assets that are already being produced. Mr. Kost stated that anything completely foreign to the existing economy will not work. Mr. Kost said that asking existing producers how can we help you to expand or process your product to produce higher profits would be most likely to succeed. Mr. O'Brien stated that to that point, this commission spent a year talking about solar energy facilities. Mr. O'Brien said that Northumberland County is never going to compete with Lancaster, Richmond or Westmoreland when it comes to solar, but the county needs to anticipate new businesses so we can capitalize on those opportunities. Mr. Williams mentioned years ago, and entrepreneur investigated a high speed ferry between Reedville, Crisfield, Maryland, and Point Lookout, Maryland. He proposed 3 ferry boats, able to carry tractor trailers, automobiles and a lot of commercial products. Mr. Williams explained that it fell through as Northumberland County was in favor, Crisfield, Maryland was in favor, but Point Lookout wanted more in the negotiations, and the project fell apart. Mr. Williams stated that a ferry would draw traffic into Northumberland County and expand the possibilities

for new businesses. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that we need to think about what attracts people to the county in the first place, which for many is the natural environment, and the water surrounding us. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that we are a tourist destination, for the very fact that we do not have a McDonalds or a Chik-Fil-A, which sets us apart from the rest of Virginia. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated we need to focus on tourism, especially lodging taxes, as those taxes do not affect the people that live here, but brings in money for the county. Mr. McKenzie stated that the county is receiving money from short term rentals (STR's), as the county last year passed the short term rental registry that requires occupancy taxes to be paid to the county. Mr. McKenzie stated that now, the county is receiving taxes from the short term rental companies such as Air BNB, but that the Treasurer had to make repeated requests to receive the tax money. Mr. McKenzie stated that one of problems in managing that tax is that the companies just cut a check for all of the STR's in the county, the companies do not itemize by individual rental properties, they just send a lump sum. Mr. McKenzie continued, the companies do not itemize how much comes from each STR site in the county, so there is no way for the Commissioner of the Revenue to be sure that the STR company is remitting the appropriate amount of taxes for the STR's in operation in the county. Currently there is no state law that requires them to do that, but this problem is being faced by all localities across the United States. Mr. Kost stated that STR taxes are a great way to increase funding of the county without increasing the tax burden for county residents. Mr. Garland stated that he used to own a STR in the county a several years ago, and ended up selling the property. Mr. Garland stated he remembers seeing on his Air BNB invoices a \$50 local tax fee. Mr. McKenzie stated that Northumberland County did not institute the STR occupancy tax until last year, so I believe that Air BNB just pocketed that monthly \$50 local tax fee, which added to their profit margin. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that we should capitalize on our existing natural environment assets, and promote eco-tours, as we are an attractive destination, especially for those persons that live in a highly urbanized environment. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey added that many of the persons that live in those communities have never experienced being out on the water, or surrounded by nature, and it is an experience we need to capitalize upon. Mr. McKenzie stated that Northumberland County is now recognized as National Heritage Area, and heritage tours as well as eco-tours are new ways to capitalize on the county's existing assets. Mr. O'Brien stated that, in his opinion, the main reason there are no new businesses in Northumberland County, is that the county does not have electric transmission lines. Mr. O'Brien continued, we have been told by the Northern Neck Electric Co-Operative as well as Dominion Energy that there are no electric transmission lines in the county. Mr. O'Brien said that a lot of businesses' electricity delivery is problematic, and that the county needs to encourage people to locate solar energy here. Mr. Williams stated that he knows for a fact that Omega Protein spends a 1/2 a million dollars a month to Dominion Energy for their industrial electric bill. Mr. Williams stated that Omega only pays that during the fishing season (6-7 months a year). Mr. McKenzie stated that in the months that are not during the fishing season, then there should be a lot of excess electric capacity in the county. Mr. McKenzie added that he has never heard a business in the county that said that their electricity needs were not met.

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 hearings scheduled.

RE: WORK SESSION ITEMS

Chairman Parker stated he would like to start the discussion on the analysis of requiring business licenses in the county. Mr. Parker stated the county needs to know where we are (with regard to business activity), but we do not have the data. Mr. Parker said that the county needs to gather the data to move forward and into the future, to be able to assess the state of businesses in the county. Mr. Parker stated the county needs to do more to help existing businesses and attract new businesses to help fund county operations (instead of relying on property taxes to fund government operations). Mr. Parker said that if the county doesn't do something to increase business revenue, then in ten years or so, county citizens are going to be stuck in a home that they can't afford to pay the taxes on. Mr. O'Brien stated that he prefers targeted, narrowly focused taxation of tourists and STR's. Mr. O'Brien stated that gathering business statistics is important for the county, but that you do not need a business license requirement to do that. Mr. Kost asked Mr. Parker, what kind of data are you looking for? Mr. Parker stated the county needs data to apply to grant programs, such data like there is "x" number of people, "x" number of cars and "x" number of businesses in the county. Mr. O'Brien stated that VDOT knows the number of people using the roads. Mr. Parker asked, yes, but does Northumberland County staff know? Mr. O'Brien stated this is a bit of a catch-22, you need data to back those requests, but asking the Board of Supervisors for a county statistician that would cost upwards of \$100K would more than likely not happen. Mr. Kost stated that the Economic Development Commission is formulating the paperwork for a summer intern to help with creating the Economic Strategic Plan for the county. Mr. Kost stated that he is not sure what data will be collected, but proposed that the intern could get all the Employer Identification Numbers (EIN's) from the state and see what we can find. Mr. Kost asked if that data would be valuable? Mr. O'Brien said it may or may not be. Mr. Kost suggested that the plan would target tourism. Mr. O'Brien stated that perhaps the county could consider raising the tax on short term rentals. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that if someone who wanted to start a barbershop in the county, and asked the county how many barbershops are currently in the county, at this time, no one in the county would be able to tell the prospective barber that information. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated the same could be said for other types of businesses, such as how many lawn services and or how many plumbers in the county as examples. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that she formerly owned a hardware store and the county merchant's capital taxes were collected every year, and she paid taxes for years on in-stock items that never sold. Then, Mrs. Wilkins-Corey asked how many lawn mowing services are paying merchant's capital tax on their mowers which are worth thousands of dollars, as well as the truck and trailers to move them. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that she did not think many of those lawn mowing businesses are submitting the taxes that every other brick and mortar businesses in the

county are paying. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that that is not fair to the businesses in the county that do pay the merchant's capital taxes. Mr. O'Brien stated that all developed countries have that problem. Mr. Kost said that if the IRS hasn't found them, if the Virginia Department of Taxation hasn't found them, then how is the county going to find them? Mr. Parker asked staff what they have found with regards to business information? Mr. McKenzie stated he did a quick ½ hour search on the internet for "Northumberland County, Virginia business information" and did not find much. Mr. McKenzie stated he did find a summary from the US Census Quickfacts that he showed on the video screen that stated there are, in 2021, 304 Total Employer Establishments in Northumberland County. Mr. McKenzie then cited the next line of the report that stated Total Employment, which was 1,644 persons. Mr. McKenzie then stated that the 2023 estimated population was 12,391 persons, which works out to 13.27% of the citizens in Northumberland County that work at Northumberland County businesses. Mr. McKenzie added that that means that approximately 86% of the Northumberland County population works outside of the county, which was somewhat disconcerting. Mr. O'Brien stated that you also need to think about part-time jobs, seasonal jobs and persons that work multiple jobs. Mr. McKenzie stated he is not sure how much business data we can get from government sources, because when there are only a few of a certain type of businesses, the government will suppress the data so that the businesses cannot be singled out for scrutiny, or by their competition. Mr. O'Brien stated that he understands, they only give out aggregate business data. Mr. O'Brien stated that it seems that what we are doing now overlaps what the Economic Development Commission is doing. Chairman Parker stated there is always going to be some overlap. Mr. Parker said that we need to know what businesses are operating in the county now, so we won't be wondering what and how many businesses we have 10 years from now. Mr. O'Brien reminded the chair that the Planning Commission does what the Board of Supervisors says. Mr. Kost relayed that he believes the Economic Development Commission has more freedom to investigate things than the Planning Commission. Mr. Parker suggested we continue the discussion on requiring business licenses to the next meeting. Mr. Kost offered to make a list of pro's and con's regarding requiring a business license, and to work with county staff to make it available before the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Parker agreed.

Mr. McKenzie stated that he wanted to inform the commission that he had talked with the Commissioner of Revenue about whether the surrounding counties require a business licenses. The Commissioner of Revenue looked into it and said that Richmond and Lancaster County do not require a business licenses, but that Westmoreland and Essex County do require business licenses. Mr. McKenzie further elaborated that while Richmond and Lancaster County do not require business licenses, the Town of Warsaw (in Richmond County) and the Town of Kilmarnock (in Lancaster County) do require business licenses.

Chairman Parker asked staff to transition to reviewing Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McKenzie stated that Chapter 3 is the heart of the Comprehensive Plan, in his opinion, as it shows where the county wishes (business) growth to occur within the county. Mr. McKenzie stated he wanted to throw out some questions for the commission members to ponder. Mr. McKenzie asked the commissioners if they thought that the village growth and support areas are of adequate size to allow for future (business) growth. The second thing Mr. McKenzie asked the members to consider is whether there

should be a setback from the growth and support areas for solar energy facilities. Mr. McKenzie stated that the Comprehensive Plan states in Chapter 3 that the county growth areas are intended for general businesses. Mr. McKenzie stated that a solar energy developer contacted the county about a Comprehensive Plan evaluation of a proposed solar energy facility in Heathsville. Mr. McKenzie stated that 1/3 of the solar panels would be placed inside the Heathsville growth area. Mr. McKenzie stated that after consulting with the zoning and county administrator, the response to the solar developer was that the proposed solar energy facility was not in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, as the solar energy facility is not deemed a general business as set forth in the definition of the county growth areas. Mr. O'Brien stated that the county has a large amount of cheap land in the county, and that solar energy facilities should be permissible in land zoned A-1 Agriculture. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey added with a conditional use permit from the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that she thinks we should protect our commercial growth areas. Mr. McKenzie stated he thought the most appropriate place to put how the county wants solar energy facilities to be placed in the county should be in Chapter 3, section 5, Policies for Special Areas. The consensus of the members is that they felt that is the most appropriate place to address solar energy facilities.

Mr. Kost asked about item 6, on page 14 of Chapter 3. Mr. Kost wanted to know if the county has any short term plans in place for building a sewer system in Heathsville or Burgess. Mr. McKenzie stated that no, there are no plans to build a sewer system anywhere in the county. Mr. Kost then stated that the Comprehensive Plan should accurately state what is in store for the county, and should not be a wish list. Mr. McKenzie stated he understood what Mr. Kost was saying, and the rest of the commission agreed. Instead of removing item 6, the consensus among members was to add a sentence at the end of stating something like, "at this time, the population density does not support the financing of a sewer system in these areas." Mr. McKenzie said he would make the changes requested by the commission to item 6.

Mr. Kost moved on to item 2 on page 15 of Chapter 3, under the goals for the village of Callao and asked are there plans being developed for building a reservoir on Lodge Creek, near Callao? Again, Mr. McKenzie stated no, there are no plans that he knows of for constructing a reservoir outside of Callao on Lodge Creek in the near term. Mr. Kost, using the same rationale, stated that if the project is not imminent, then it should not be in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. O'Brien stated that previous discussions have centered on the fact that planning, permitting and building a drinking water reservoir is not economically feasible at this time. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that the goal is a bit misleading, as it is not planned for in the near term and stated she was OK with removing the Lodge Creek reservoir goal. Mr. McKenzie stated he would delete item 2, as the local groundwater resource is still viable for access to potable water for citizens in the county.

Mr. Kost continued, on page 20, in Chapter 2 is reference to the village of Heathsville, Mr. Kost stated that it states one of the businesses located in Heathsville is a pharmacy, which has recently closed. Mr. Kost recommended that the commission delete that business from the list. The majority of members agreed, and staff agreed to delete that business from page 20. Mr. McKenzie added that previously, there has been discussion about using store brand names in the Comprehensive Plan, and that the consensus was to

remove the brand name, and only reference by the type of store. Mr. McKenzie stated that if the commission was OK with that, he would remove all store brand names and refer to them generically. The commission members agreed.

Mr. Kost referenced page 28 of Chapter 3, regarding the village of Reedville historic district. Mr. McKenzie stated that there is a historic area in Reedville, but it is not a certified historic district. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated that Chapter 3 stated that the historic district was registered on the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. McKenzie apologized for his error, and he explained that although it is a designated historic area, there is no local historic board that manages the historic district, and added that only state historic rules must be followed in the district. The commissioners stated that a sentence to that effect should be added at the end of that 2nd paragraph. Staff agreed.

Mr. Kost then pointed out the 1st goal for the village of Reedville, that stated the county would establish guidelines for retaining the original “town character”. Mr. Kost asked if the county is undertaking that task. Mr. McKenzie stated that he did not know of any progress with that goal, but commented that “town character” is a pretty nebulous concept. There was discussion amongst commission members and the consensus was that if that goal was not to be undertaken, then it should be removed. Staff stated they would strike the 1st goal for Reedville, as instructed. Mr. Williams relayed a story about a house in the Reedville Historic District that needed to replace the gutters. Originally, they had planned on putting on modern PVC gutters, but on second thought decided to spend the extra money and put on historic gutters to mimic the gutters they were replacing. Mr. Williams stated that after a few years, the replacement historic gutters were damaged, and that they eventually replaced the gutters with modern PVC gutters.

Mr. Kost moved on to page 41 of Chapter 3, and asked what kind of progress had been made on creating the Reservoir Overlay (Zoning) District. Mr. McKenzie stated that no progress had been made, and added that he is not sure that the reservoir sites listed in the 1968 NEDCO Northern Neck Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan (the basis for the Potential Reservoir site map in Chapter 1) were viable with regards to today's environmental permitting process. Mr. Kost stated that if no work has been done on the Reservoir Overlay since 2016, then that Reservoir Overlay (Zoning) District goal should be removed. The consensus of the Planning Commission to remove the Reservoir Overlay District, and staff agreed to strike that sentence at the bottom of page 41. Mr. Williams stated that cruise ships and navy ships desalinate ocean water for their drinking water onboard, so the technology is out there, the county just needs to be able to pipe the water to the citizens. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey stated or the county could have small desalination package plants near the major subdivisions to reduce the cost of laying pipe. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey added that she believes that constructing reservoirs is not financially feasible for our county. Mr. McKenzie added that the county is not currently providing any water for the citizens, and does not own or operate any water system at this time. Mr. McKenzie continued, saying that the concept of the county deciding to start providing expensive potable water service to the citizens of the county may not be a plausible alternative in the future, either, due to the financial burden it would place on the county.

Mr. Kost asked Mr. McKenzie about the other zoning overlay district that is proposed in Chapter 3, and Mr. McKenzie stated the Highway Corridor Overlay district, that has not had any progress made either. Mr. McKenzie stated that the problem that the Highway Overlay District is trying to solve is that we do not have interstate highways, so through traffic is mixed in with local traffic, which is a recipe for accidents. Staff further explained that corridor management is currently being handled by VDOT, and local businesses are not happy with the fact that they have to build a half a million dollar turn lane to access their newly built business off a primary highway. The turn lanes that VDOT requires are supposed to reduce the possibility of rear end crashes from people exiting the highway, as through traffic is intent on getting to their long distance final destination. Staff stated that he believes that the county does not want to place any additional burden on citizens with regards to locating new businesses on our main corridors than what VDOT requires. Mr. Kost stated that he does not know the history of these past initiatives, and that he is looking to the staff to inform him in these matters. Mr. McKenzie stated he would be glad to do that for commission members to the best of his ability. Mr. McKenzie stated he understands that not making a progress on a stated initiative may give the impression to the public that the county is not doing its job, but that some initiatives may be placeholders for action in the future. The consensus was to leave the Highway Corridor Overlay (Zoning) District as is.

Mr. McKenzie summarized the changes the commission wanted to make, to delete the goal for a reservoir in Callao, and to remove mention of the Reservoir Overlay (Zoning) District. Mrs. Wilkins-Corey added that we need to remove the goal for a reservoir in Heathsville as well. Mr. McKenzie stated he understood and would make the changes.

Mr. Kost stated that in several places in the Comprehensive Plan there are the terms open space, green space and protected space, and he did not know the definitions of them and wondered if they were being used uniformly. Mr. McKenzie stated he would be glad to define them, open space usually refers to cultivated farmland, green space is open space with native vegetation, either marsh grasses, grasses and shrubs, or forested areas, and protected space are lands either open or green that have a conservation easement in place on the property. Mr. O'Brien stated when he read in the Comprehensive Plan about green space, he found it hysterically funny, as anywhere you look in Northumberland County, there is green space, what is the county worried about? Mr. O'Brien stated he sees continuous references to the pastoral or rural character of the county, as if that is of some value to be protected, but he stated that he doesn't want that to send a signal that we are anti-development.

Chairman Parker stated that he wanted to stop the discussion here, as it is getting late. He added that just because the Comprehensive Plan language is old, it doesn't mean it needs to throw it out.

Chairman Parker asked Mr. McKenzie to give a Board of Supervisor's report on July's public hearings, which Mr. McKenzie did.

Mr. O'Brien stated that with regards to the Board giving the old EVB Bank building to the School Board, would that mean that the School Board would have to maintain the building? Mr. McKenzie stated that owners are responsible for maintenance of their

property, so he assumed that was the case. Mr. O'Brien asked Mr. McKenzie to verify that, which he agreed to do.

RE: DISCUSSION ITEMS

There were no discussion items scheduled.

RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Jim Johnson of 403 Judith Sound Road was online listening to the meeting and stated he applauds the commission for their effort in discussing the issues facing the county, and noted that the discussion was very interesting.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kost made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. O'Brien to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 pm. The adjournment vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.