

**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
MAY 14, 2024 - 7:00 P.M. – Council Chambers**

Commission Members Present:

Mr. Ray Rosenberger, Chairman
Mr. David Britton
Mrs. Mollie Cherrix
Mr. Michael Dendler
Mr. Steve Katsetos
Mr. K. Savage, Councilman
Mr. Robert Shendock

Commission Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael T. Tolbert, P.E., Town Manager

Call to Order

Chairman Rosenberger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Invocation

Chairman Rosenberger offered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Rosenberger led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation

Chairman Rosenberger opened the floor for public participation.

- Mrs. Patricia Farley, 3243 Lisa’s Lane, advised they were just at the Budget and Personnel Committee meeting regarding short-term rentals. She feels this ties in with a portion of the Planning Commission’s packet titled “Chapter 3 - Land Use”. She stated the Commission has a description of goal for maintaining the community. She added that a lot of them feel that the increased number of short-term rentals is changing neighborhoods. She talked of her neighborhood adding they don’t pay anything toward maintenance. She encouraged the Commission to promote those who live on the Island year-round. She stated that Chincoteague was a real place with hardware stores, and she wants to continue to find ways to maintain the quality of life while accommodating tourists, enough that it sustains the budget. She feels they are on that path.

- Mrs. Tina Zoller, 3454 Main Street, echoed Mrs. Farley and added that maintaining the community is extremely important. She added that the proportion of short-term rentals to housing and long-term rentals is out of whack. She commented on the development on the south end of the Island. She misses her neighbors that lived there for generations. They were volunteers, had jobs, and were members of the community. What they have now is in and out, up, and down Main Street with heavy campers which is a burden on the infrastructure and nature

of our town. She added that it affects her daily life. She can't enjoy her front porch because it's a speedway. It is impossible for families to find housing at a normal price. She feels that this is becoming a luxury destination where regular people who live here are being priced out. It's a balancing thing because people want to make money on their investment. She added that the realtors stated that the market is oversaturated with short-term rentals. She hopes they can do some planning like they did in protecting Eastside from development. She would like to see the Town put some breaks on.

Mr. Shendock referred back to the survey from 15 years ago where the people liked the character of the Town. He stated that to maintain infrastructure you have to balance tax revenue. In 1990 he bought his house for \$95,000. At that time there wasn't a lot of money coming onto the Island and the economic conditions changed.

- Mr. Bob Zoller, 3454 Main Street, bought a house in 1995 and it has changed in the last 20 years, as every town changes. The important thing is they have to find balance. He commented on the bridge location change.

Mr. Shendock feels the importance is to gather a lot of input and intelligently project how things are going to change. He feels that Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 is where it should change.

Chairman Rosenberger stated that properties and rentals have increased. More and more people are purchasing existing homes. The dilemma is balancing and identifying what the Town wants as far as growth to the extent you can achieve it. He commented further.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Shendock motioned, seconded by Mrs. Cherrix to adopt the agenda as presented. Unanimously approved.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Shendock motioned, seconded by Mrs. Cherrix to approve the minutes of the April 9th, 2024, meeting as presented. Unanimously approved.

Review of 2025 Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 2 & 3

Flag Lots

Chairman Rosenberger discussed flag lots. He feels there's an advantage of a flag lot, but there are disadvantages to the Town.

Building and Zoning Administrator Bowden stated that currently the Code doesn't say a lot about flag lots. He stated that a flag lot has its place. If you have a home with an extra 10,500 square feet that you want to give to your child and there's no access, you can create a flag lot to get access to your property which is the normal purpose. However, there are some places where they've bought lots and instead of creating a road and a subdivision, they're creating flag lots off the road and making a 30' wide road to get an easement to but they're all flag lots. That's not a good use of a flag lot.

Chairman Rosenberger stated that he lives on a flag lot. It was created at a time when Sunnywood Manor was built. There were 4 flag lots with a 25' road and is self-maintained by the occupants. The water meter is at Sunnywood Drive and the pipe from the meter to his furthest neighbor is almost 300 feet. The maintenance responsibility falls on each of the property owners. The issue becomes, who will maintain the road it becomes a rental especially with the traffic coming in and out.

Building and Zoning Administrator Bowden added that it also depends on how the flag lot and the road was created. He added that you will have 10' legs and if there isn't an easement cut for each leg then the neighbor could put a fence up on his part of the flag lot, then you only have a 20' road. The flag lot was part of your land, and you had the right to do that.

There was further discussion.

Houseboats

Chairman Rosenberger suggested coming up with something as a recommendation, so they had something to review. He mentioned item #5, Floating Boathouses, from the last meeting regarding occupancy issues. He commented and stated there are no restrictions.

Building and Zoning Administrator Bowden suggested allowing existing commercial marinas and there is only one. They wouldn't allow rentals on any private piers. The only place they would be allowed would be in a commercial marina, and the houseboat would have to have a HIN.

Chairman Rosenberger advised that the Town of Ocean City, Maryland doesn't allow this at all.

Building and Zoning Administrator Bowden advised because they wouldn't have appropriate parking and sewage.

2025 Comprehensive Plan - Chapter 2 & 3

Chapter 2

Mr. Shendock stated they would like to revise a paragraph which lists the significant changes since the last update. He noted that at the end of Chapter 2 there is a resiliency section. They met the resiliency requirement in the last rendition. ODU felt this was the best Resiliency Plan which is infused in the whole Comp. Plan. He commented on Northampton's Comp. Plan. He stated that he is curious to see how ODU will go about implementing the development of the resiliency plan and if it's going to have input without process, or whether they'll read the current Comp. Plan.

Town Manager Tolbert advised he is sure they've read the current Comp. Plan. He is also sure they'll want some kind of involvement. He added that he currently doesn't have the official agreement.

Chairman Rosenberger asked if there was a timeline on this.

Town Manager Tolbert stated there is a timeline, but he hasn't received the agreement. He was unaware of the award until someone emailed him that the Town received the award.

There were further comments, and they feel that Chapter 2 doesn't need a rewrite.

Mr. Shendock stated that he feels they should review the goals and objectives after they redo the other chapters.

Announcements or Comments

They discussed the upcoming hiring and duties of a Town Planner. They discussed the increase in assessments and equalization, along with zoning and signage.

Adjourn

Mr. Shendock motioned, seconded by Mrs. Cherrix to adjourn. Unanimously approved.

Chairman, Mr. Ray Rosenberger