

**NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING MEETING
North East Town Hall Meeting Room
106 South Main Street
North East, Maryland 21901
Thursday, September 26, 2024 / 4:00 PM-6:00 PM**

-CALL TO ORDER-

Mrs. Vennell opened the workshop at 4:05 pm.

Present for the meeting included, Members Judy Duffy and Neil DeMatt; and Steering Committee members Amy Yackanech, Town of North East Grant-writer, Grant Handley, Assistant Town Administrator, Stacey Dahlstrom, EPR-PC Consultant for the Comprehensive Plan, Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning, and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant. Absent from the meeting included Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore, Chairman Mark Dobbins, Planning member Calvin Wilson and Melissa Cook-Mackenzie, Town Administrator.

-APPROVAL OF MINIUTES-

August 22, 2024

Ms. Yackanech made a motion to approve the August 22, 2024 minutes with a minor correction. Ms. Duffy second the motion and the motion was approved by all. Mr. Handley abstained as he was not present for the August meeting.

-REPORTS-

None.

-NEW BUSINESS-

**North East Comprehensive Plan:
Chapter 2. Land Use and Chapter 4. Community Facilities Element**

Mrs. Vennell commented that the changes to the draft that are agreed upon during this evening's review of the refinements and amendments to the North East Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 2. Land Use Plan and Chapter 4. Community Facilities Element will be attached to the September 26, 2024 meeting minutes.

Review of Chapter 2. Land Use

Page 2-1: No changes were proposed.

Page 2-2 and 2-3: The Planning Area

Ms. Dahlstrom reported that the Land Use Maps and the table are in the process of being updated.

Page 2-4: Revision at the end of the 2nd paragraph from the bottom:

Mr. Handley commented that this paragraph suggests that the Town will be making changes to the infrastructure through upgrades to accommodate future growth. However, Chapter 4 statement contradicts this statement by reporting that the infrastructure is in place to meet the future demand of water. After some discussion it was determined that the language in Chapter 4 (page 4-10) should be updated to be consistent with Chapter 2, page 2-4.

Page 2-5: Revision to paragraph 3:

There are two projects that could be added to the key projects listed. The installation of a new powder activated carbon system project and the Leslie Water Treatment Plant pond sediment removal project. Mr. Handley will get the information and forward it to Ms. Dahlstrom and Mrs. Vennell.

Pages 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10: No changes were proposed.

Page 2-11: Park and Open Space

Mr. Handley suggested that “school athletic fields” be removed from this paragraph since the fields are not open to the public. Mrs. Vennell suggested clarifying that the common open space within the Town’s residential subdivisions is owned by the Homeowner’s Association and should not be considered as land open to the public.

Ms. Dahlstrom stated that the zoning differs from the land use. Mrs. Vennell gave an example of a school has an institutional use, however, it can be located in a residential zoning district. Should the use as a school no longer exist, the structure could be turned into residential living units. Ms. Duffy inquired if the town park is considered forested. Mrs. Vennell replied yes, according to the State maps. Ms. Dahlstrom reported that the information for the land use was obtained from the Land Use Land Cover which is based on an aerial view of the land uses as visible today and it is interpreted at the State level.

Mr. Handley inquired if the Planning Office has received a final copy of the GIS North East Data Viewer-Maps for North East. Mrs. Rhoades replied that Ms. Buffington had one final correction to make and has not forwarded the revised final map. Mrs. Rhoades will reach out to Ms. Buffington for an update. Ms. Dahlstrom stated that Ms. Buffington will forward a PDF of the GIS North East Data Viewer-Maps for North East so that the Town could post it on the Town website.

Ms. Dahlstrom is working to update all of the Comprehensive Plan Maps into a GIS format, therefore, any changes or updates that are needed in the future can be done through Ms. Buffington at the Maryland Cooperative.

Page 2-12: No changes were proposed.

Review of Chapter 4 Community Facilities Element

Pages 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5: No Changes were proposed.

Page 4-6: Recreation:

Paragraph 2 and paragraph 4:

North East Community Park:

Mr. Handley suggested adding the new amenities at the Park: two sand volleyball courts and horseshoe pits. In addition, add wording regarding the recently installed Veterans Brick Reflection Memorial.

Turner Park:

Mr. Handley suggested striking the wording: "baseball diamond" and change the wording to "sportsfield" to coordinate more closely with the latest plan for Turner Park. Also, change "pickle ball court" to "pickle ball courts".

North East Preserve:

Ms. Yackanech suggested adding a paragraph about the North East Preserve. Ms. Vennell concurred and also suggested adding something under the Greenway Trail. Town staff will work on both paragraphs and forward it to Ms. Dahlstrom for inclusion in the new paragraph. Mr. Handley suggested that a reference be made to the cost of the project as it is a multi-million dollar.

Pages 4-7, 4-8: No changes were proposed.
No Changes.

Page 4-9: Other Services

Paragraph 1:

Mrs. Vennell reported the following updates from Ms. Cook-Mackenzie:

- 1) Electric and street lighting for the Town: Provided by Delmarva Power.
- 2) Cable Television is provided by Comcast.
- 3) Street repairs, street cleaning and snow removal are completed by the Town work force or are contracted out.

Ms. Yackanech suggested adding the wording that the streets are town owned, and that there are also MDOT/SHA owned streets throughout Town. Adding verbiage that MDOT/SHA provides street repairs, cleaning and snow removal for Route 272/North and South Main Street/Mauldin Avenue; and Maryland Route 7/East and West Cecil Avenue.

Page 4-10: Water and Sewer Services

Paragraph 3 and 5:

Re-write the paragraphs as they are inconsistent with Chapter 2. See comments above, page 2-4. Blend wording for compatibility regarding current and future infrastructure and daily water needs.

Page 4-11: Educational Facilities

Paragraph 2:

Mr. Handley reported the wording should indicate that the Town is currently and will continue to monitor road conditions. Also add a sentence to include the Town of North East, MDOT/SHA, Cecil County and WILMAPCO are working together concerning traffic plans and new developments south of the Town. Ms. Dahlstrom will add the wording.

Page 4-12: Greenways

Paragraph 2:

General Commercial and Central Business were listed as General Commercial/Central Business district throughout the document. Update this paragraph for consistency.

Other Services: Paragraph 1, 2 and 3

Ms. Dahlstrom reported she will add language with statistics for people age 60 and over.

Mr. Handley reported that a community center is being considered. Ms. Dahlstrom replied she will update the paragraph.

Ms. Vennell also stated that in paragraph 3 there are several words hyphenated which should not be hyphenated. Ms. Dahlstrom will remove the hyphens.


Workshops: November and December

The next workshop is scheduled for November 7, 2024. The group will be reviewing Chapter 3 Transportation and one additional chapter, yet to be determined.

The following workshop shall be scheduled for December 19, 2024.

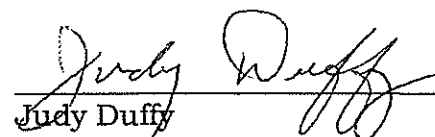
Mr. DeMatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 p.m. Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully Submitted:



Lisa Rhoades
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Approved:



Judy Duffy
Vice-Chairman