

Planning Commission Annual Report 2014

Comprehensive Plan Strategies

At the October 2, 2014 Planning Commission meeting, members of the Commission were asked by staff to provide a list of three strategies in the Comprehensive Plan that each member would like to see pursued. These strategies were submitted back to staff and combined into a list of 14 strategies. Of these strategies, eight were in the Economic Development section of the comprehensive plan, three in the Public Education section, and one each in the Transportation, Information Technology and Broadband Services, and Urban Development Area sections. Commission members were then asked at the November 6 meeting to rank the list of 14 strategies from most important to least important. The results of the ranking were presented to the Planning Commission at the December 4 meeting. The top seven ranked strategies were related to Economic Development, showing the strong desire by the Planning Commission to attract and retain businesses in Amherst County. Public Education also ranked as an important area for the Commission members. Representatives from the Amherst County Economic Development Authority and Amherst County School Board were asked to come speak at a meeting in January 2015 to discuss their respective Comprehensive Plan strategies.

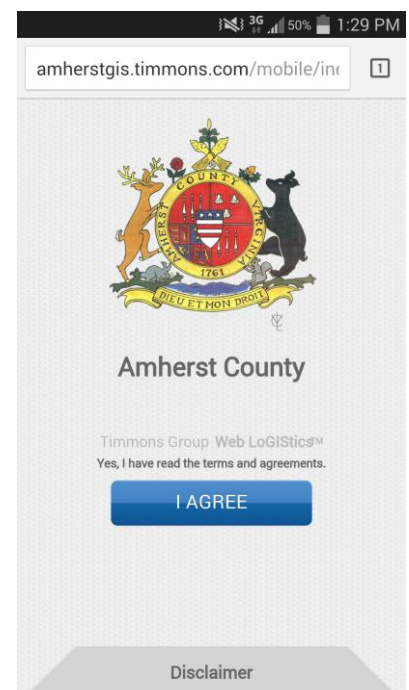
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GIS Upgrade

In 2014, the Amherst County Geographic Information System (GIS) experienced a number of positive changes and additions. The GIS was upgraded to provide a variety of features and improvements. The GIS provides an opportunity for users to search a multitude of data, such as: parcel, real estate, flood plains, election districts, water and sewer lines, address points, buildings, national forest, zoning information and a host of other data types. Staff committed more time and energy towards ensuring that the system was updated with current data and new sources of information that provided essential data to the public.

As an addition to the desktop Geographic Information System parcel viewer upgrade, Timmons Group also completed and released a mobile version of their website. This new site was created using HTML5 and JavaScript and is functional across all mobile device platforms. The website address from a mobile device is the same as the desktop version: amherstgis.timmons.com



2014's Numbers¹

In 2015, the Amherst County Planning Commission will meet on the third Thursday of every month at 7 PM at the Amherst County Administration Building.

In 2014 the Planning and Zoning Department approved the following:

- 360 Zoning permits
- 58 Single family dwelling permits.
- 19 Building addition permits.
- 94 Home occupation permits.
- 77 Accessory structure permits.
- 7 Wireless communication facility permits.
- 7 New sign permits.
- 5 Replacement or modification sign permits.
- 4 Commercial/ 1 Industrial site plans.
- 1 PC Approved Major subdivisions.

A-1 Agricultural Residential District

The adoption of the Amherst County Comprehensive Plan in 2007 encouraged the Amherst County Planning Commission to consider adopting regulations that promoted the protection of rural and agricultural areas. As a result of the Comprehensive Plan's policies, the Planning Commission spent a considerable amount of time working on a number of zoning and subdivision ordinances amendments. Specifically, the Planning Commission studied lot sizes and densities in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District ("A-1 District") and possible provisions for cluster subdivisions. As part of the updated Comprehensive Plan in 2013, the Planning Commission added language that further supported initiatives that protect agricultural land and open space within Amherst County.



With staff support, the Planning Commission drafted an ordinance that addresses a number of issues that were associated with the A-1 District. On June 11, 2014, the Amherst County Planning Commission held a joint public hearing with the Board of Supervisors to discuss a downzoning of the A-1 District. After a public hearing on the matter and considerable public feedback, the proposed ordinance was recommended for denial by the Planning Commission and was motioned on a 3-2 vote of the Board of Supervisors to postpone the ordinance indefinitely.

Stormwater



As of July 1, 2014 new regulations went into effect concerning the Virginia Stormwater Management Program. Previously it was thought that Amherst County would be required to become a Virginia Stormwater Management authority. Legislation out of the 2014 Virginia General Assembly (SB 423) permitted many localities to allow the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to operate the program on

the locality's behalf. Amherst County has chosen to allow DEQ to operate the program on its behalf. Amherst County will continue to operate an Erosion & Sediment Control Program. If you are a builder or land developer, you could be required to obtain a Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) authority permit for each new project from DEQ prior to issuance of a local land disturbance permit.

1. For a complete breakdown of 2014's numbers see Appendix 1.

Meet the Planning Commission

Member	Phone Number	Email	District
Derin Foor – Chairman	277-8940	dsfoor@countyofamherst.com	District 2
Beverly Jones – V. Chairman	929-7617	bcjones@countyofamherst.com	District 5
George Brine	929-6830	gjbrine@countyofamherst.com	District 4
Lillian Floyd	929-7420	lhfloyd@countyofamherst.com	At-Large
Leslie B. Irvin	384-1512	lbirvin@countyofamherst.com	District 3
Michael Martineau	946-2697	mkmartineau@countyofamherst.com	District 1
David Pugh (Board Liaison)	509-2038	dwpugh@countyofamherst.com	District 4

**Michael Martineau and Lillian Floyd completed the
Virginia Certified Planning Commissioners' Program in 2014**

Ordinance Changes

Several ordinances were adopted during 2014 to amend or make additions to the Amherst County Zoning and Subdivisions Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors adopted four ordinances at their May 20, 2014 meeting that had been recommended by the Planning Commission on April 17, 2014. An amendment was made to the zoning ordinance to clarify that townhouses are only permitted uses in the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District. Amendments were also made to several sections of the zoning ordinance to define and add breweries as a permitted use in the B-2 General Commercial District and M-1 Industrial District and as a special exception use in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District and V-1 Village Center District. An addition was made to the ordinance to check for delinquent charges before processing certain applications. When an application is received for a special exception, variance, rezoning, or land disturbance permit, the Planning and Zoning office checks that all charges associated with the subject property are paid before the application is processed. The final ordinance adopted at the meeting was to clarify the definitions of “clinics and medical offices” and “substance abuse treatment facility” and add a definition for a “substance abuse treatment clinic”, with the latter added as a special exception use in the B-2 General Commercial District. This ordinance also clarified and added several uses in the shopping center as permitted uses which had been previously approved at various times by the Board of Supervisors.

Language has also been drafted by the Planning Commission and staff for several other changes to the Zoning and Subdivisions Ordinance that have not yet been adopted. On July 17 drafted amendments were finalized to allow for single family attached dwelling developments in the County and to allow kennels as a special exception use in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District. At the October 2 meeting a draft of miscellaneous code changes was considered by the Commission. Some of the changes are a result of changes to the Code of Virginia, other proposed changes are to clarify existing staff procedures, and still other proposed amendments would modify existing regulations with respect to site plan and subdivision requirements. These proposed amendments are expected to be brought to public hearings as ordinances for adoption into the Zoning and Subdivisions Ordinance in 2015.

AMHERST COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING

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See us at:
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PERMIT/PLAN TYPE:	Annual-08	Annual-09	Annual-10	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Annual-14
Parcels of Land: (Comm. Revenue)	19098	19235	19434	19431															
Zoning Permits:	394	362	386	348	433	436	26	19	23	54	37	39	28	38	30	33	13	20	360
Residential uses/structures:																			
Single-family	97	74	52	41	32	55	7	2	3	2	5	4	4	6	10	7	2	6	58
Single-family, manufactured, transportable in two (2) or more sections (Doublewide)	17	20	28	13	14	11	0	1	1	3	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	0	15
Single-family, attached (townhouses)	18	12	13	6	8	13	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	7
Dwelling, short-term tourist rental	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Two-family (duplexes)	4	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-family	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building addition/expansion	39	62	76	34	32	21	3	1	0	0	1	5	1	3	1	3	1	0	19
Home occupations	62	67	70	71	182	109	8	7	6	20	12	11	9	7	5	5	2	2	94
Other	15	35	7	30	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Commercial uses:																			
New buildings/structures	5	1	8	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Change in use to existing building or property																			
Mixed-use buildings	1	2	2	21	7	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Wireless Communication Facility	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (Business Licenses)	0	3	2	6	10	8	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	7
Industrial uses/structures:	6	8	38	32	36	41	0	3	4	5	1	4	1	6	2	3	2	2	33
Institutional uses/structures:	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Accessory structures/uses:	5	4	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Storage buildings/sheds	33	18	33	35	34	34	1	1	5	4	7	2	1	3	3	2	2	0	31
Pools, above-ground and in-ground	23	21	20	18	16	29	2	0	2	3	2	2	1	4	2	6	0	0	
Agricultural buildings	15	7	13	6	10	13	1	0	0	6	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	13
Other (Decks, etc)	5	5	8	8	13	10	0	1	1	5	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	14
Signs:	11	9	2	11	29	26	1	0	0	1	1	5	2	2	1	1	2	3	19
New signs																			
Replacements/modifications of existing signs	11	15	12	10	5	15	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	7
Exceptions:	6	11	9	10	1	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	5
Zoning Permits for Special																			
Residential	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Commercial	0	1	2	9	10	8	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Institutional			0	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

	Annual-08	Annual-09	Annual-10	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Annual-14
Site Plans:																			
Residential:																			
Mobile home parks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Two-family developments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhouse developments	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-family developments	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial:	12	0	2	8	14	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Agricultural:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Industrial:	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Institutional:	5	0	3	7	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	20	7	7	15	17	8	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Subdivision Plats:																			
Subdivision, Planning Commission																			
Preliminary plats	0	0	1	7	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Final plats	14	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subdivision, administrative	28	18	20	13	17	12	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	9
Family Division	28	21	16	8	15	7	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	0	16
Reconfiguration	34	37	40	39	27	20	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	3	4	7	4	33
Resurvey (not a subdivision)	26	17	23	35	14	27	4	5	6	2	1	1	1	4	3	3	6	7	43
Subdivision Info:																			
# of Lots (Admin, Family, Final, etc.)	246	267	170	25	144	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# of Lots with Public Water	83	117	63	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zoning Map Amendments (Rezoning):			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Ordinance Amendments:			0	8	12	7	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
BZA Appeals:	5	5	4	6	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
Erosion and Sediment Control Plans:																			
Residential:	6	4	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Commercial:	2	7	3	2	5	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
Industrial:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Institutional:	5	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total LDA (acres):	64,532	51,95	7,107	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land Disturbance Permits:		3,26																	
Residential:	39	18	9	10	11	7	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	3	8	8	2	3	29
Commercial:	5	2	3	5	6	11	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	5
Industrial:	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Institutional:	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total LDA (acres):	62,697	39,59	<8.24	0										0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Water Connection (ACSA)																			
New Connections (Business)				0	6	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
New Connections (Residential)				NA	43	26	4	0	5	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	24

	Annual-08	Annual-09	Annual-10	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Annual-14
Public Sewer Connection (ACSA)																			
New Connections (Business)				NA	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
New Connections (Residential)				NA	17	11	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	5
911 Addresses Issued:	130	130	88	64	58	79	2	9	9	8	9	5	9	5	7	8	2	7	80
Complaints/Violations:						0													
Unpermitted Structures:			3	13	3	11	2	1	1	4	0	1	3	0	0	1	1	1	15
Illegal Signs:				1	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Junk Vehicles:			1	2	2	5	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
Nuisance:			2	2	2	7	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Misc:			2	2	4	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	6
Business Related:			0	2	5	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	7
Total:	12		28	17	30	3	1	9	10	1	2	4	1	2	3	3	3	1	40