



# Planning Commission Annual Report 2015

## Train Depot

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Phase II of the Amherst County Train Depot renovation project concluded in 2015. This phase of the project included renovation of the exterior portions of the building, such as: rafter and sheathing replacement, new (historic) terracotta roof tiles, exterior siding, windows and doors, painting, grading, an entrance road with parking area, guardrail, sidewalks, concrete patio, a stormwater bio retention pond and utility connections. Elements such as the roof tiles, siding, windows and doors and exterior paint color represent historic features that were preserved to promote the historic features and elements of the building. Phase III of the project is anticipated to be completed in 2016 and will include completion of the interior of the building to allow for office and meeting space for the Economic Development Authority, as well as a visitor center, and office and meeting space for the Chamber of Commerce.

## Broadband Update

Amherst County Planning and Zoning staff has been working closely with a local ISP (Internet Service Providers) to promote the availability of broadband in Amherst County. Because Amherst County is both a suburban and rural locality many portions of the County remain without viable internet service. The availability of broadband technologies in rural undeserved areas is critical for Amherst County to remain competitive in today's advanced economy. Broadband service provides higher speeds of data transmission including internet services. Such access for Amherst County citizens will provide opportunities for online learning and distance education, it will allow entrepreneurs and small and home-based business owners a way to communication through e-commerce, increases the productivity and efficiency of businesses who utilize the Internet, makes government services more readily available to citizens, saves companies and organizations money by allowing employees to telework, and allows friends and families the opportunity to communicate better. Additionally, the Amherst County Comprehensive Plan 2007-2027 supports the use and expansion of broadband services. Staff will continue to work to find ways to effectively promote the expansion of broadband technologies throughout Amherst County.



## 2015's Numbers<sup>1</sup>

The Amherst County Planning Commission meets on the third Thursday of every month at 7 PM at the Amherst County Administration Building.

In 2015 the Planning and Zoning Department approved the following:

- 325 Zoning permits
- 50 Single family dwelling permits.
- 20 Building addition permits.
- 69 Home occupation permits.
- 100 Accessory structure permits.
- 10 Wireless communication facility permits.
- 8 New sign permits.
- 7 Replacement or modification sign permits.
- 1 Commercial/ 2 Institutional site plans.
- 0 PC Approved Major subdivisions.

## Special Exceptions / Site Plans

Nine special exceptions were recommended to the Board of Supervisors for approval by the Planning Commission in 2015. Seven of those special exceptions have been approved by the Board of Supervisors and the other two will be heard by the Board in January 2016. As in recent years, several special exception requests were related to automobiles with two requests for used automobile sales and an additional request for an automotive repair garage. The Planning Commission also heard their first special exception request for a kennel in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District after a change to the code to allow this use. Other special exceptions approved in 2015 included a tattoo studio, an expansion of church facilities in the R-1 Limited Residential District, and a ministry retreat and conference center in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District.



Five site plans were also approved by the Planning Commission in 2015. A site plan was approved in September for the construction of a Taco Bell in Madison Heights. At the December 17 meeting a site plan was approved for the construction of a cell tower at Elon Elementary School. Site plans were also approved for additions to two existing churches and for the construction of living quarters at a ministry retreat and conference center.

## Block Grant



Building Better Neighborhoods

The Old Town Madison Heights – Stumps Hill Area Community Revitalization Project was officially closed in December 2015. The following summarizes the entire project and 2015 activities.

Amherst County, on behalf of the OTMH – Stumps Hill Area, was awarded a total of \$1,222,249.00 between two project phases. Phase 1 provided \$724,000 and was completed in May, 2014 and Phase 2, which provided \$498,249, was closed in December, 2015.

With the closeout of Phase 2 in December, 2015, the County had utilized a total of \$1,126,357.71 in CDBG grant funds, combined with \$47,716.72 in local, state, and federal funds, were utilized to accomplish the community benefits.

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

## Meet the Planning Commission

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

## Ordinance Changes

An ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 17, 2015 to amend or make additions to multiple sections of the Amherst County Zoning and Subdivisions Ordinance. This ordinance was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on October 15, 2015 and was a combination of various changes proposed by the Planning Commission over the past year. These changes included changes that had been drafted by the Planning Commission in 2014. These included allowing for single family attached dwelling developments in the County, allowing kennels as a special exception use in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District, requiring sidewalks in certain developments, modifications resulting from changes to the Code of Virginia, alterations to clarify existing staff procedures, and amendments to modify existing regulations with respect to site plan and subdivision requirements.

The ordinance also included amendments that were presented by staff to the Planning Commission in 2015. The Planning Commission drafted language at their May 21, 2015 meeting that included key changes to setback requirements that had caused numerous variance requests over the past years. The side and rear yard setbacks in the Agricultural District were changed from 25 feet if the adjoining property was less 10 acres or less and 50 feet if the adjoining property were greater than 10 acres to a uniform setback of 25 feet for all properties. The 200 foot setback requirement from National Forest property was also removed. Other changes drafted in May included establishing provisions for aviation facilities as a special exception use in the A-1 Agricultural Residential District, adding for use of a “combined access drive” to provide access to multiple lots on a primary road, including amateur radio towers as an accessory structure, and adding accessory structures as permitted uses in Planned Unit Developments.

### AMHERST COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING

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PERMIT/PLAN TYPE: Parcels of Land: (Comm. Revenue)	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Annual-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Annual-15
<b>Zoning Permits:</b>	19431	433	436	360	19	10	18	33	34	41	35	34	23	25	23	30	325
Residential uses/structures:	348																
Single-family	41	32	55	58	4	1	6	6	1	6	1	10	1	4	2	8	50
Single-family, manufactured, transportable in two (2) or more sections (Doublewide)	13	14	11	15	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	7
Single-family, attached (townhouses)	6	8	13	7	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	1	1	23	1	35
Dwelling, short-term tourist rental	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Two-family (duplexes)	3	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Multi-family	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building addition/expansion	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Home occupations	34	32	21	19	0	0	2	2	3	0	3	1	1	2	2	4	20
Other	71	182	109	94	1	4	3	9	5	12	6	3	6	7	6	7	69
Commercial uses:	30	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
New buildings/structures	5	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Change in use to existing building or property	21	7	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed-use buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wireless Communication Facility	6	10	8	7	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	1	0	1	0	10
Other (Business Licenses)	32	36	41	33	3	2	0	2	0	5	3	1	4	4	0	1	25
Industrial uses/structures:	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Industrial uses/structures:	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
Accessory structures/uses:																	
Storage buildings/sheds	35	34	34	31	1	2	1	3	6	3	4	3	1	1	2	3	30
Carports/Garages	18	16	29	24	6	0	2	1	3	0	2	3	3	1	2	1	24
Pools, above-ground and in-ground	6	10	13	13	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	7
Agricultural buildings	8	13	10	14	0	0	1	0	2	2	2	1	0	1	2	1	12
Other (Decks, Porch, etc)	11	29	26	19	0	0	2	4	5	1	3	4	0	0	6	2	27
Signs:																	
New signs	10	5	15	7	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	8
Replacements/modifications of existing signs	10	1	6	5	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	7
<b>Zoning Permits for Special Exceptions:</b>																	
Residential	2	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Commercial	9	10	8	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	5
Industrial	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Institutional	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2

	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Annual-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Annual-15
<b>Site Plans:</b>																	
Residential:																	
Mobile home parks	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
Townhouse developments	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-family developments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial:	8	14	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Agricultural:	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Industrial:	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Institutional:	7	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Subdivision Plats:</b>																	
Subdivision, Planning Commission																	
Preliminary plats	7	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Final plats	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Subdivision, administrative	13	17	12	9	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	8
Family Division	8	15	7	16	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	5
Reconfiguration	39	27	20	33	1	2	3	4	4	1	8	4	3	6	1	5	42
Resurvey (not a subdivision)	35	14	27	43	3	3	3	7	5	4	4	6	7	0	0	3	45
<b>Subdivision Info:</b>																	
# of Lots (Admin., Family, Final, etc.)	25	144	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# of Lots with Public Water	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Zoning Map Amendments (Rezoning):</b>																	
	0 301+		0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
			0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
<b>Ordinance Amendments:</b>																	
	8	12	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
<b>BZA Appeals:</b>																	
	6	3	2	4	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
<b>Erosion and Sediment Control Plans:</b>																	
Residential:	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial:	2	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4
Industrial:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Institutional:	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Land Disturbance Permits:</b>																	
Residential:	10	11	7	29	5	1	4	4	2	4	6	6	3	3	1	10	49
Commercial:	5	6	11	5	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
Industrial:	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Institutional:	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total LDA (acres):	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Public Water Connection (ACSA)</b>																	
New Connections (Business)	0	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
New Connections (Residential)	NA	43	26	24	2	0	7	3	1	2	0	0	3	3	0	3	24

	Annual-11	Annual-12	Annual-13	Annual-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Annual-15
<b>Public Sewer Connection (ACSA)</b>																	
New Connections (Business)	NA	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
New Connections (Residential)	NA	17	11	5	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	9
<b>911 Addresses Issued:</b>	64	58	79	80	8	5	3	3	10	7	6	7	4	5	6	2	66
<b>Complaints/Violations:</b>																	
Unpermitted Structures:	13	3	0	15	0	3	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	13
Illegal Signs:	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Junk Vehicles:	2	2	5	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	9
Nuisance:	2	2	7	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	5
Misc:	2	4	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Business Related:		5	4	7	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>37</b>