

Minutes from the work session of the Planning Commission of the County of Henrico held in the County Manager's Conference Room, County Administration Building in the Government Center at Parham and Hungary Spring Roads, beginning at 2:00 p.m., May 14, 2026.

Members Present: Mr. Jaron N. Dandridge, Chair (Fairfield)
Mr. Bob Shippee, Vice-Chair (Three Chopt)
Mr. Brian Winterhoff (Tuckahoe)
Mr. William M. Mackey, Jr. (Varina)
Mr. Christopher S. Phelps (Brookland)
Mr. R. Joseph Emerson, Jr., AICP, Director of Planning,
Secretary

Members Absent: Mr. Daniel J. Schmitt (Brookland)
Board of Supervisors Representative

Also Present: Ms. Jean M. Moore, Assistant Director of Planning
Mr. Ben Sehl, Assistant Director of Planning
Mr. Ben Blankinship, Sr. Principal Planner
Mr. Tony Gruelich, Sr. Principal Planner
Ms. Rosemary D. Deemer, AICP, County Planner
Mr. Livingston Lewis, County Planner
Ms. Molly Mallow, County Planner
Ms. Ali Hartwick, County Planner
Mr. Seth Humphreys, County Planner
Ms. Neha Shinde, AICP, County Planner

The Commission convened a work session in the Manager's Conference Room at 2:05 p.m.

Mr. Dandridge brought the meeting to order. Mr. Emerson welcomed everyone and laid out the afternoon agenda which included presentations on the remaining chapters and elements of the draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan; proposed amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to address legislation passed in the 2026 General Assembly, housekeeping items and proposed Form-Based Alternative Overlay Districts; and an overview of land use decisions and consistency with the 2026 Comprehensive Plan analysis.

2045 Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Ali Hartwick presented an overview of the *Our Environment* chapter of the draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan, highlighting strong community priorities around protecting environmental quality, open space, and rural character. Ms. Hartwick summarized Henrico's key natural assets such as Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas, conserved lands, diverse habitats, and flood and soil-related development constraints, and outlined conditions related to water, air, noise, and light. Ms. Hartwick also reviewed climate-resilience and sustainability initiatives including green infrastructure, renewable-energy expansion, stream restoration, and tree-canopy programs, along with

compliance with state environmental regulations and concluded with the seven policy areas in the Plan that focus on resource protection, resilience, land-conservation partnerships, and ongoing environmental stewardship.

The Commission complimented the robust contents of the chapter and followed up with questions regarding the county's coal deposits, and how policies will be implemented to encourage solar, stream restorations and other initiatives. Mr. Emerson responded with the Code initiatives and county programs addressing these issues.

Next, Mr. Ben Sehl provided an overview of the *Managed and Sustainable Growth* chapter of the draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan, highlighting strong community support for focusing growth through infill and redevelopment in already-developed areas, with concerns centered on overcrowding, overdevelopment, and walkability. He reviewed what has changed since the Vision 2026 Plan, noting that except for proposed PA/RC, changes in accounted for less than 10% of the county, and the Plan instead places on emphasis on redevelopment corridors and urban development areas as outlined in the draft 2045 Future Land Use Map. He reviewed the nine countywide land use policies addressing alignment with the Future Land Use framework, sustainability, infill and adaptive reuse, high-quality design, economic development, health and livability, public service coordination, connected development, and environmental justice. Mr. Sehl then summarized the Future Land Use classifications including Rural/Environmental, Residential, Mixed-Use, Redevelopment, Office/Commercial, Industrial, and Civic—and corresponding guide to density, design, and location decisions. He highlighted the addition of the Prime Agriculture/Rural Conservation designation and its implications east of I-295. The presentation also covered Special Focus Areas, including Redevelopment Areas/Corridors, Form-Based Alternative Overlays, and Legacy/Small Area Plans, each providing more detailed development guidance. Mr. Sehl concluded by noting that these updates refine long-term development expectations, support community priorities, and serve as the basis for future zoning and infrastructure decisions.

Ms. Rosemary Deemer presented an overview of the *Safe and Connected Spaces and Public Facilities & Services* chapters, highlighting community priorities around improving schools, pedestrian safety, and road maintenance, and noting that congestion and safety remain the county's top transportation concerns. She summarized the chapter's vision for a safe, efficient, multimodal network that expands walking, biking, and transit options while reducing car dependency. Ms. Deemer reviewed conditions and needs across all travel modes emphasizing targeted safety improvements, expanded bike and trail networks, better transit integration, and continued investment in accessible infrastructure. She then outlined the county's core public facilities: schools, fire and police services, libraries, utilities, public health, and wireless communications, describing their current capacities, recent expansions, and long-term needs. Finally, Ms. Deemer explained the Plan's implementation framework, including policy tools, capital planning processes, and supporting documents such as the Major Thoroughfare Plan, zoning and subdivision ordinances, the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, all of which guide coordinated public investment and ensure facilities keep pace with projected growth.

Staff discussed how mailers were going to be sent to all residents and business owners in the county, similar to what was done for the Varina District meeting in March.

Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances

Mr. Ben Blankinship presented an overview of the zoning and subdivision ordinance amendments proposed to implement the updated Comprehensive Plan, noting that the package includes changes tied to plan implementation, new state code requirements, and community and staff-identified improvements. He highlighted two major plan-related changes: creation of a new A-2 Agricultural District to support the proposed Prime Agriculture/Rural Conservation future land use designation, including increasing minimum lot sizes and widths and the establishment of three new Form-Based Alternative Overlay districts for Lakeside, Brook Road, and the Best Products Reimagined area to assist in reinvestment. Mr. Blankinship also summarized several state-mandated amendments, including allowing manufactured homes by right in residential districts, enabling religious and nonprofit landowners to develop affordable housing under specific criteria, and reducing parking requirements near mass transit. He reviewed additional community and staff-driven adjustments such as clarifying outpatient versus inpatient treatment facilities, revising lot-width measurements, expanding eligibility for accessory dwelling units, and allowing screened porches to encroach into rear setbacks under administrative review. He concluded by outlining upcoming Planning Commission and Board hearing dates and emphasized that many technical “housekeeping” updates are also included in the draft ordinances.

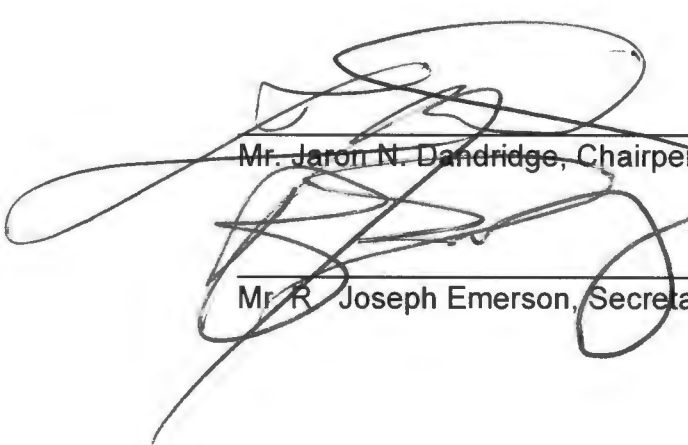
The Commission discussed manufactured homes requirements, including conversion to real property, the potential of by-right high density and affordable housing on property owned by religious institutions and non-profits and whether the residents of the affordable housing are required to stay. The Commission also discussed ADUs and county’s efforts to be more flexible.

Overview of Consistency with 2026 Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Molly Mallow provided an overview of rezoning consistency trends from 2021–2025, noting that approximately 150 rezoning and proffer amendments were approved during this period, with 64% consistent with the primary designation in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. Consistency rates have remained relatively stable across the five years, with some recent infill cases deviating from the primary designation but aligning with surrounding land uses and broader plan goals. Ms. Mallow also highlighted how requests that were not consistent with the primary designation often aligned with overlay districts, special focus areas, enterprise zones, or secondary plan recommendations, demonstrating that many inconsistencies still supported other objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff concluded by emphasizing the importance of upcoming updates to the Future Land Use Map and the evolving role of overlay districts and focus areas.

The Commission appreciated the research and discussed the importance of consistency with comprehensive plan, and also that the Plan as a guide does allow flexibility under its current process.

The Planning Commission adjourned the work session at 5:50 p.m. and the Commission recessed until 6:00 p.m.



Mr. Jaron N. Dandridge, Chairperson

Mr. R. Joseph Emerson, Secretary