

# **AUGUSTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Augusta County Planning Commission members in 2015 were: Eric M. Shipplett, Chairman; Stephen Neil Bridge, Vice-Chairman; James W. Curd; Christopher M. Foschini; Gordon Kyle Leonard, Jr.; and Kitra A. Shiflett. E. Thomas Jennings, Jr. replaced Taylor Cole in August representing the Pastures District. Rebecca L. Earhart served as Secretary to the Commission.

## MEETINGS

In 2015, the Planning Commission held ten (10) regular meetings, one joint worksession and one joint public hearing with the Board on the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission had strong attendance at all of their meetings with Kitra Shiflett attending all ten meetings and the public hearing, only missing the joint worksession. Thom Jennings also had perfect attendance once he was appointed in August and James Curd and Steve Bridge missed only one meeting apiece. The Commission continued their practice of meeting on the second Tuesday of each month and viewing the requests prior to the public hearings.

## WORKLOAD

The Commission had five (5) rezoning requests come before them, as well as two requests to amend proffers, one request to amend the Floodplain Overlay District in the Back Creek area, and three requests to add the Source Water Protection Overlay Area 2 zoning designation to the supplies of three public water systems. The Commission also considered seven (7) Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance amendments ranging from the keeping of backyard chickens to the height of vegetation allowed in drainage easements.

The Commission discussed the potential implications and impacts of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline on the County from a planning perspective in early 2015. The Commission submitted written comments to the Board of Supervisors on the matter for their consideration when developing comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on the proposal. Another significant portion of the Commission's time was spent on finalizing the update to the Comprehensive Plan which received Board approval in August of 2015.

## REZONING OF LAND

Four (4) of the five (5) requests for rezoning were recommended to the Board to be approved with proffers, while one small request to rezone from General Business to Single Family Residential was recommended to the Board for approval without proffers. There were two (2) requests to amend and restate proffers on previously zoned properties. Two (2) of the five (5) rezoning requests also involved amending and/or

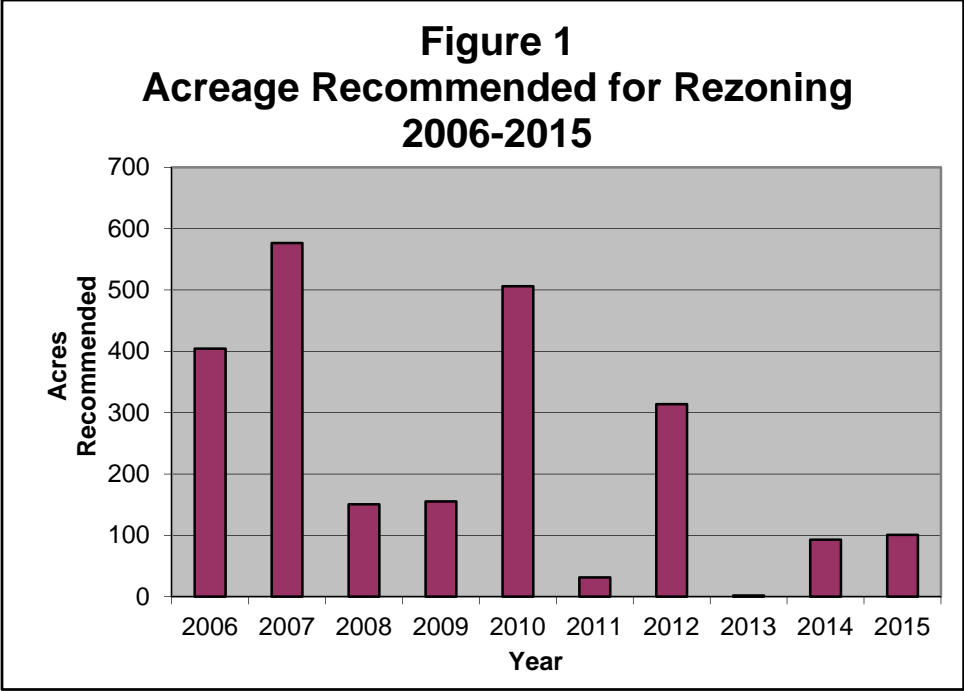
restating the proffers on the property. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the Planning Commission's actions on all the requests for rezoning by magisterial district.

TABLE 1  
RECOMMENDATIONS ON REQUESTS FOR REZONING  
BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
BY MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT

DISTRICT	RECOMMEND APPROVAL WITH PROFFERS	RECOMMEND APPROVAL WITHOUT PROFFERS	RECOMMEND DENIAL	TABLED	TOTAL
Beverley Manor	1	0	0	0	1
Middle River	1	0	0	0	1
North River	0	0	0	0	0
Pastures	0	0	0	0	0
Riverheads	0	1	0	0	1
South River	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	2	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	4	1	0	0	5

The number of rezoning requests in 2015 (five) was the same as in 2014 and represented an increase from the two requests in 2013, but less than the eight (8) in 2012. For the purposes of this report, only the rezoning requests will be considered, not the requests to amend the proffers and add the Floodplain or Source Water Protection Overlay designations. The acreage recommended for rezoning increased as compared to last year, from over 93 acres in 2014 to just over 100 acres in 2015 (see Figure 1 on Page 4). The Board of Supervisors followed the recommendations of the Planning Commission in all five rezoning cases in 2015.

The rezoning requests in 2015 were distributed over four (4) of the seven (7) magisterial districts. The Wayne District had the most requests with two (2), while the Beverley Manor, Middle River, and Riverheads Districts each had one (1) request. There were no rezoning requests made in the North River, Pastures or South River Districts in 2015. Figure 2 (on page 4) graphically depicts the number of rezoning requests by magisterial district. Table 2 (on page 5) lists the acres recommended for rezoning by zoning classification and magisterial district, while Figure 3 (on page 6) graphically illustrates the geographic location of the acreage recommended for rezoning, The Wayne District had nearly 80% of the acres recommended for rezoning, while the Beverley Manor District had nearly 20%. Less than two (2) acres total were requested to be rezoned in the Middle River and Riverheads Districts.



\* Note: This chart does not include requests to add the Floodplain or Source Water Protection Overlays or requests to add or amend and restate proffers.

Again this year, the acreage being recommended for rezoning in 2015 is a little deceiving. Two of the requests totaling 61 acres were for land to be changed from one development zoning classification to another. Less than 40% of the land being rezoned in 2015 was rezoned from General Agriculture.

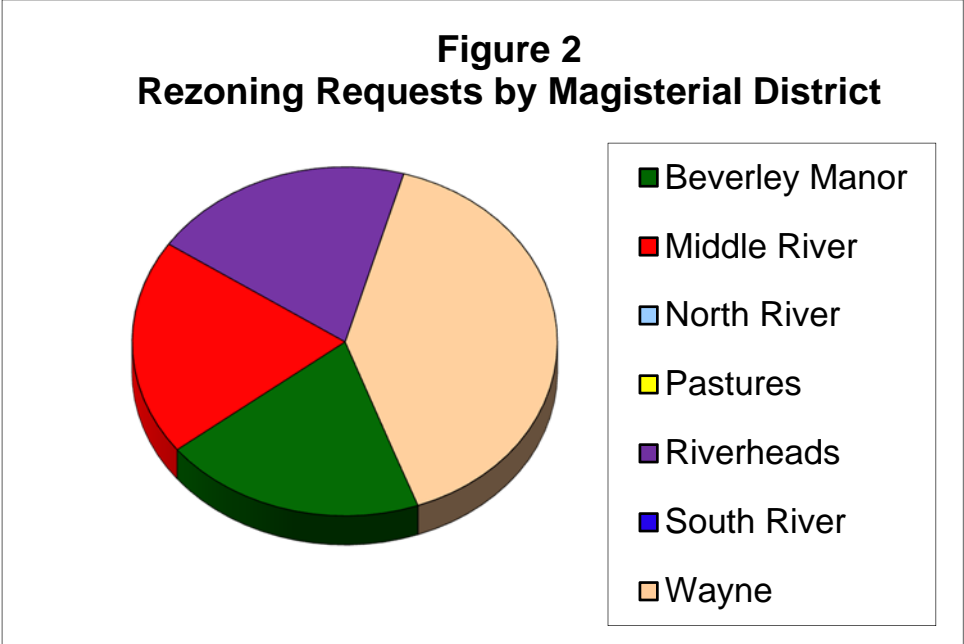
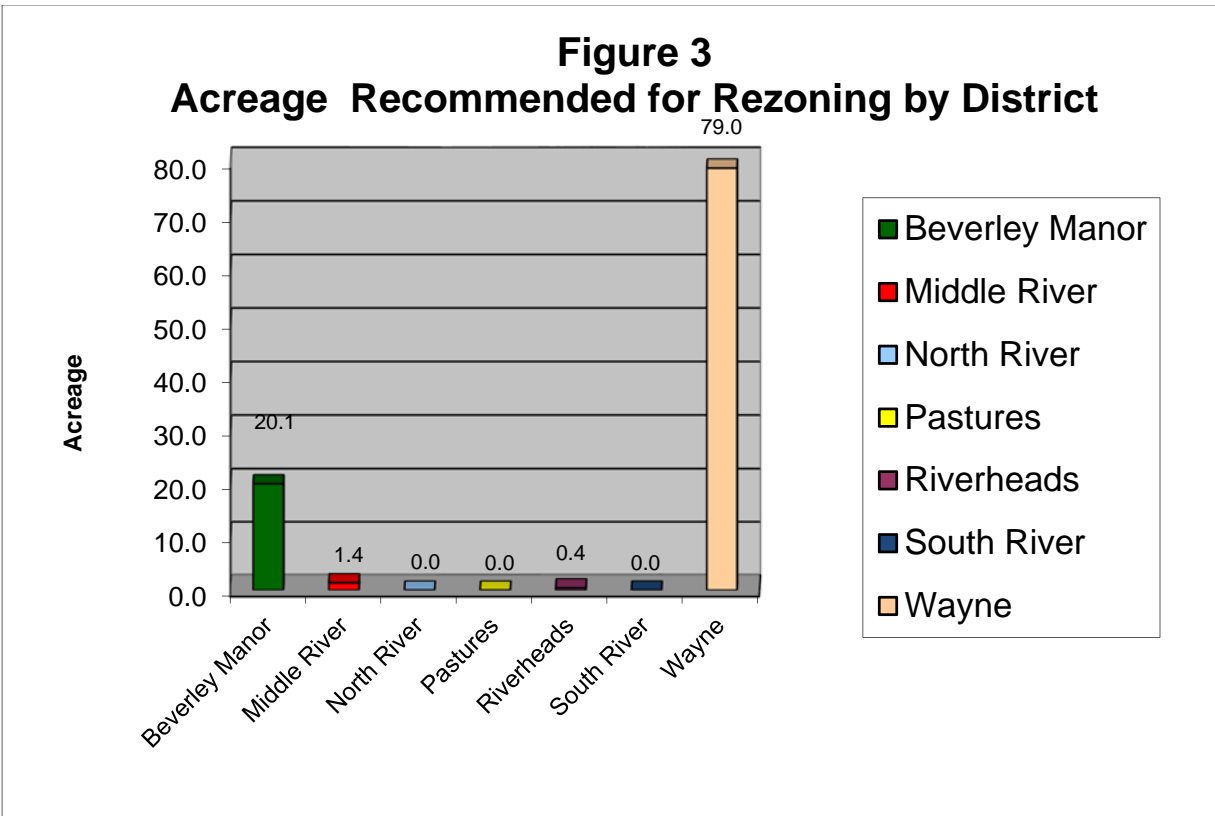


TABLE 2  
ACREAGE RECOMMENDED FOR REZONING  
BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION AND MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT

<b>ZONE</b>	<b>Beverley Manor</b>	<b>Middle River</b>	<b>North River</b>	<b>Pastures</b>	<b>R'heads</b>	<b>South River</b>	<b>Wayne</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
General Agriculture	0	0.93	0	0	0	0	0	0.93
Rural Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Single-family Residential	0	0	0	0	.421	0	64.613	65.034
Attached Residential-Duplexes and Townhouses	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.024	8.024
Manufactured Home Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-family Residential	10.755	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.755
Airport Business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Business	9.304	0	0	0	0	0	6.348	15.652
Planned Commerce	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Industrial	0	0.46	0	0	0	0	0	0.46
Planned Unit Developments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>20.059</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>.421</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78.985</b>	<b>100.855</b>

\* Note: This table does not include requests to add the Floodplain or Source Water Protection Overlays or requests to add or amend and restate proffers.



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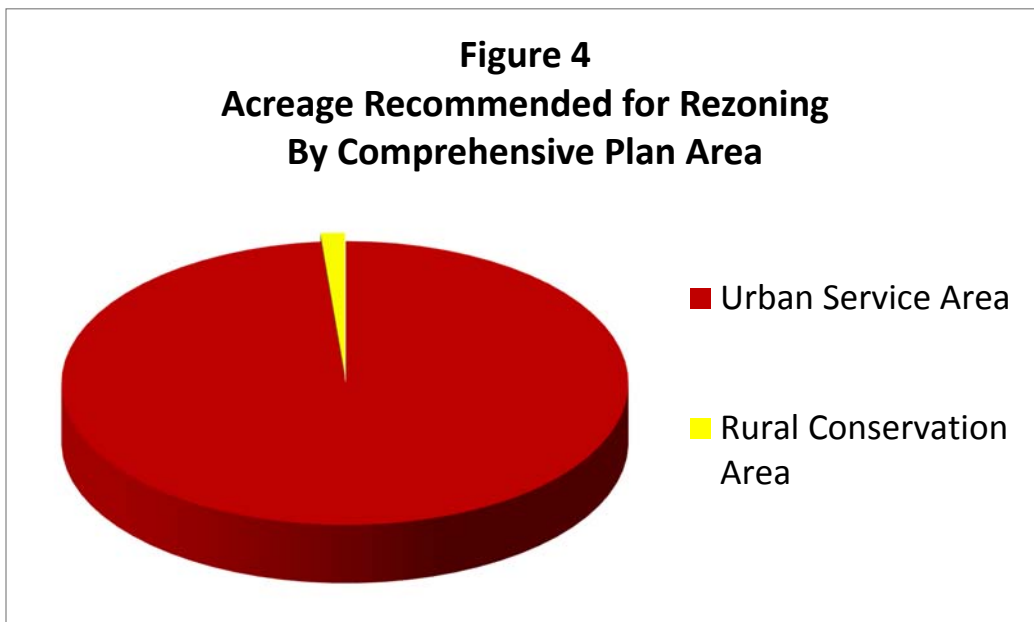
### RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

One of the goals of the Augusta County Comprehensive Plan Update 2014/2015 is to target the County's growth to those areas with the public services designed to accommodate the development. The Plan recommends that 80% of the County's future residential growth locate in the Urban Service Areas, while Community Development Areas are planned to accommodate up to 10% of the future residential growth. Rural Conservation Areas and Agricultural Conservation Areas are each expected to accommodate less than 5% of the future residential development, with Rural Conservation Areas expected to accommodate the majority of the rural residential development in the County.

One way to track how well the Comprehensive Plan is being implemented is to view the number of rezonings being sought by Comprehensive Plan Planning Policy Area. In 2015, there were four (4) requests for rezoning in the Urban Service Area and one (1) in the Rural Conservation Area. The request in the Rural Conservation Area was to modify the zoning on an existing industrial site by changing the zoning to match the parcel boundaries and included rezoning almost an acre back to General Agriculture.

Another way to track the Plan's implementation is to view the amount of acreage being requested to be rezoned by Comprehensive Plan Planning Policy Area and the

amount of acreage recommended for rezoning in each Policy Area by the zoning classification (see Figure 4 below). The vast majority of the acreage, over 99 acres, was recommended for rezoning in the Urban Service Area. Less than two (2) acres was recommended for rezoning in the Rural Conservation Area and an acre of that request was to rezone land back to General Agriculture from General Industrial. Of the land being recommended for rezoning in the Urban Service Area, almost 40 acres was being requested to be rezoned out of General Agriculture to facilitate new business and residential development, while over 60 acres was being zoned from one residential or business zoning classification to another.



#### ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Again in 2015, changes to the County’s development regulations was a significant portion of the Commission’s workload. The Planning Commission reviewed and made recommendations on seven (7) Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance amendments that went to public hearing in 2015. The Planning Commission recommended ordinance changes to regulations on floodplains, agri-tourism, commercial vehicles, mini-warehouses, bonding requirements and drainage easement requirements. The Board of Supervisors approved all six (6) amendments recommended by the Commission, although they didn’t approve one of the recommended changes to the mini-warehouse regulations. The Board followed the Commission’s recommendation not to allow backyard chickens in residential subdivisions.

#### FLOODPLAIN AND SOURCE WATER PROTECTION OVERLAYS

The Commission recommended changes to the County’s floodplain ordinance, as well as recommended changes to the Floodplain Overlay district in the Back Creek area

of the County. The Back Creek changes involved adding 456 acres to the floodplain overlay district and taking 440 acres out of the district. These changes were the result of an engineering study undertaken by the County in cooperation with FEMA and DCR.

There were also requests to add the Area 2 Source Water Protection Overlay designation to more than 6000 acres located in the recharge areas for the water systems in Churchville, Dooms (Vesper View and Crimora Mines), and Harriston. These areas were added to the existing Source Water Protection Areas already approved in the County. These recharge areas were identified as a result of extensive study by the Service Authority on these three water systems.

### REVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Planning Commission completed their review of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2015. The Commission held a joint worksession on the Plan in June to review with the Board their recommendations for changes to the Plan. They held a joint public hearing with the Board on the Plan in July. After considering the comments from the hearing and additional written comments received, the Commission recommended approval of the Plan to the Board and the Board adopted the Update on August 26, 2015.

### LOT CREATION

There are two ways to create lots in Augusta County. The major subdivision process is the typical way lots get created in residential, business, or industrial zoning. In 2015, 159 lots were created through the major subdivision process. The other way lots can be created in the County is through the minor subdivision process. This process allows a single lot zoned agriculture to be created off a larger tract of land and approved administratively by the County Subdivision Agent. In most cases, these lots are created to be sold and houses to be built on them. Up to two lots zoned residential, industrial or business can also be created in this manner, although the minor subdivision process is most frequently used in the agricultural areas. In 2015, only two (2) lots were created through the minor subdivision process that weren't zoned General Agriculture and they were both Single Family Residential lots.

To get a clearer picture of the number of residential lots being created in Augusta County in any given year, you must analyze both the minor and major subdivision plats being approved in the County. In 2015, 157 new rural residential, single family and attached residential lots were created through major subdivision plats (see Table 3 below). This is the first time in many years where the number of residential lots created through the major subdivision process has exceeded 150. In 2015, thirty-six (36) new lots were created through the minor subdivision process in General Agriculture, while two (2) Single Family Residential lots were created through the minor subdivision process. More than 80% of the new residential lots in the County were created in areas zoned residential in 2015. Figure 5 (on page 9) graphically presents the number of residential lots created through the major subdivision process versus the minor subdivision process in 2015.



New lots created in the County are required to have frontage on a public road. The only exception to that is in the General Agriculture districts where it is possible to create a lot without road frontage, but meeting all other lot requirements, and convey it to a family member. In 2015, eight (8) of the thirty-six (36) lots (approximately 22%) created in General Agriculture districts were created using the Family Member Exception.

**TABLE 3  
LOTS CREATED IN 2015**

Zoning	Minor Subdivision Lots	Major Subdivision Lots	Total New Lots
Rural Residential	0	14	14
Single Family Residential	2	74	76
Attached Residential	0	28	28
Master Planned Community (residential)	0	41	41
Multi-Family Residential	0	0	0
General Business	0	2	2
General Industrial	0	0	0
Planned Commerce	0	0	0
General Agriculture	36	0	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>197</b>

