

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Vision, Definitions

Page IV

~~*****Village Population Areas** are those rural villages with a significant population density, the widest diversity of land uses and the presence of public facilities and infrastructure.~~

Explanation: The Plan can be simplified by deleting this term, combining its essence with the definition for Population Centers shown in the recommendation below.

Page IV

Population Centers are areas settled at a substantially greater concentration than the surrounding land, consisting of a mix of residential and non-residential uses and community services. Incorporated towns are all population centers, as are those rural villages with the greatest populations, widest diversity of land uses, and the presence of public facilities.

Explanation: By making reference to rural villages in this definition, the term Village Population Areas is unnecessary.

Page IV

Infill, Redevelopment and New Redevelopment in Talbot County consists of minor development projects within existing developed areas. Redevelopment means building or rebuilding on parcels that have been previously developed. Typical examples will be vacant lots in rural villages, replacement of deficient buildings and adaptive reuse of obsolete structures. New development includes subdivision, revisions and site plans on or creating parcels previously not developed.

Explanation: Adding, “new development” to this definition makes it consistent with the definition of “Village Planning Area,” defined as “Master Planned areas within mapped villages with suitable land available for infill, redevelopment and new development.”

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page IV Definitions

Village Planning Areas are ~~Master~~ Planned areas within ~~mapped villages~~ Village Centers and Village Hamlets with suitable land available for infill, redevelopment and new development that shall mirror and complement the historic fabric of the respective village. The County or a developer may initiate the Master Planning process. County initiated Master Plans will be commissioned and paid for by the County. Developer initiated plans shall be subject to the third party review as described in the policies defined in the Talbot County Code.

Explanation: This amendment clarifies the initiation, administration and contractual requirements for Master Plans.

Page IV Definitions (New)

Master Plans include a comprehensive study to evaluate the compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities and services associated with new development and redevelopment and assist County planning efforts. Master Plans, or small area plans are required to evaluate traffic, emergency response and other infrastructure impacts of development on village character. The plans also provide a general understanding among residents on the nature and scale of proposed development.

Explanation: Insertion of this new definition clarifies the scope and components of a Master Plan. As a defined term Master Plan will be capitalized throughout the Plan.

Page IV Definitions

Rural Character is a predominance of farm fields and woodlands; the visible presence of wildlife; an abundance of thriving rivers, streams and wetlands; large, open spaces separating functional towns; ~~and rural~~ villages reflecting County history; low speed roadways which are uncongested; access to farms and other private properties; a minimum of light pollution in the night skies; the absence of strip malls or retail outlets bearing large and prominent names or logos on their exteriors; ~~and~~ and large commercial or residential development.

Explanation: This definition is expanded to include villages as part of the rural character of Talbot County.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page X

~~VII. Public Review and Adoption~~

~~The draft proposal for the Comprehensive Plan has been presented to the public in several forums and public hearings. The initial introduction was at public meetings prior to delivery to the Planning Commission.~~

~~The Planning Commission chose to review the draft document in work sessions prior to scheduling public hearings on the draft plan. Following the public hearings the Commission considered additional revisions. The Plan was officially recommended to the County Council in _____~~

~~The Plan, still in draft form, was received by the Talbot County Council. Council similarly held public hearings and revised the Plan before voting for adoption.~~

Explanation: This section can be deleted as it no longer applies to the adoption process.

Chapter 2, Land Use Plan

Page 2-1

Vision

Land use decisions preserve and enhance the rural character and natural resources of Talbot County, and are based on full participation of our citizens. The desirable Talbot County growth rate ~~that~~ shall maintain or improve our quality of life. Growth management in the County recognizes the fragile nature of our unique geography. Sustainable growth is related to the ability to provide resources and infrastructure.

~~Most b~~Business and residential development will be guided into the ~~planned-incorporated towns, and Designated Growth Areas and population centers~~ consistent with the principles of smart growth. The Countryside Preservation designation, with its limited development allowance, surrounds the towns and creates a distinct boundary between urban and rural landscape.

Explanation: The original wording suggests that it would be just as desirable to direct business and residential development into rural villages as into incorporated towns and designated growth areas. The wording recommended by the PC focuses “most” such growth in the latter areas while not precluding business and residential development in rural villages.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 2-3

Policy 2.3 Most new residential, institutional, commercial, business and industrial development should be located in Designated Growth areas, [and incorporated towns](#) ~~and designated Village Planning areas~~. [Most new development in rural areas should be located in Village Planning Areas](#).

Explanation: The PC views historic rural villages as a central component of the county's rural character. We do not equate them in development potential with incorporated towns and designated growth areas. Therefore, we do not agree that "most" new development should occur in rural villages as the original wording states.

Page 2-3

****New Policy 2.3**

[2.3 County Village zoning densities shall support the primary goal of the Plan to preserve the existing rural character of the County and shall not stimulate overburdening roadways, and other existing infrastructure.](#)

Explanation: Along with farmland, open space and uncongested roads, the historic rural villages are a principal component of the County's rural character. This policy which emphasizes that point will help guide the County when rezoning.

Page 2-3

****New Policy 2.4**

[2.4 The County should explore an overlay zone or regional plan for lands served by State Route 33 in order to address the unique land use, traffic, elevation and public safety challenges presented by the unique geography of the peninsula.](#)

Explanation: The extension of sewer service to villages along the Route 33 corridor is likely to increase development pressure on that peninsula. This policy encourages the County to protect the health and safety of citizens and to preserve the rural character of the region by preparing for such development.

Page 2-4

Countywide Land Use Policies

**** New Policy 2.6**

[2.6 In certain areas where the County Council deems redevelopment or reinvestment to be appropriate to support tourism and economic development, the County should provide greater design flexibility for redevelopment projects that will allow for the improvement or replacement of functionally obsolete nonconforming structures and/or uses.](#)

Explanation: This new policy reinforces the STAR legislation.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 2-4

II. General Land Use Plan

The strategy for keeping the County's rural character is dependent upon preserving rural lands and open space, and encouraging most future residential, commercial, and industrial growth to occur in ~~proximity to~~ the incorporated towns, and existing Designated Growth Areas ~~and Village Population Centers with suitable infrastructure~~. Most new development in rural areas should be located in Village Planning Areas. Development in rural areas will be limited to low density residential and low intensity uses that preserve open space and supports condition for farming to continue. Farmland accounts for most of the County's open space and scenic character. The box below lists the County's general land use policies.

Explanation: The PC does not believe "most" future residential growth should occur in our historic rural villages as the original text may be construed. This amendment is consistent with Policy 2.3.

Page 2-8

Amendment, Section II. General Land Use Plan, Part A,1,c. Community Character:

Several Village communities experience problems with failing septic system due to combinations of small lot sizes, poor soil conditions and a high groundwater table. These villages have been designated as Water Quality Strategy Areas in the Tier Maps, following the policy that ~~C~~connections to existing wastewater treatment facilities or local shared facilities are the most practical approaches for correcting existing problems without promoting excessive new development. Methods will be pursued through comprehensive sewer and water plan updates to address public health concerns.

Explanation: Language inserted for clarification.

Page 2-9

2.14 Village growth ~~shall beshould~~ shall derive primarily from infill and ~~peripheral-limited new~~ development. Residential infill development and redevelopment should be compatible with existing character and density of the village.

Explanation: The term "shall derive" removes any doubt or confusion about what the County intends. The term "peripheral" development could be interpreted in many ways, causing confusion to developers and citizens and headaches for County planners.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 2-9

Amendment, Policy 2.15 A ~~Master Plan~~ is required in designated Village Planning Areas to help ~~define its~~describe a village's character, to evaluate the compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities and services associated with development and redevelopment and to assist County planning ~~efforts~~by providing growth aspirations shall be assisted by County staff to develop such plans. Draft village plans shall be vetted with village residents to determine a general consensus on the village's recommendations to the County for applicable future growth policies.

Explanation: This change clarifies the purpose of a "Master Plan" a term now defined in the Plan.

Page 2-12

Amendment, Chapter 2, Sensitive Areas Planning Policies:

****Insert new Policy 2.31** Regional plans should be developed to integrate infrastructure, growth, recreation, natural resources, climate impacts and environmental conservation plans and initiatives. Adjoining villages, subdivisions and agricultural lands should be incorporated into regional plans.

Explanation: Regional Plans are important and the impacts of development in sensitive areas; those areas served by State Route 33, for example, should be thoroughly understood and planned before significant new development is permitted.

Page 2-12

III. Implemented Recommendations

B. Density/Intensity Regulations

Density regulations control growth by regulating the number of units that may be built per unit area of land (for example one dwelling unit per acre). Intensity regulations may limit the floor area or bulk of a building to a percentage of the site, establish impervious surface ratios, limit lot coverage, hours of operation, or total vehicle trips per acre per day. Both density and intensity regulations are used in Talbot County.

Density limits in the County's Zoning Ordinance were developed with the preferred character of planning areas in mind. For example Sensitive Area and Rural Reserve zoning districts limit the allowable base density for development, consistent with the stated purpose of preserving rural character and natural resources.

Consistent with the vision and policies of this Plan, three village zoning classifications have been defined in Chapter 9 and will be implemented to recognize the unique character of the twenty-two villages. Village characteristics to include; size, density, land uses, services and infrastructure will be reviewed in implementing these policies to ensure each village maintains its unique "sense of place".

Following the 2005 Plan, the County adopted the **Town Conservation (TC)** zoning designation which retains a rural density (one unit per 20 acres +3) in order to discourage suburban style development in areas identified for eventual annexation and urban scale development.

Explanation: The Planning Commission concurs with the language suggested by the Planning Department.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 2-14

Amendment: Chapter 2, Section IV,

A. Transfer of Development Rights

TDR programs, or density exchanges, are used to transfer development potential from lands targeted for preservation to areas designated for growth and are tools the County may explore. A TDR is typically a market-driven, incentive-based mechanism facilitating the purchase and sale of development rights separate from the land itself.

~~The County should discuss the possibility for an inter-jurisdictional TDR or density exchange to encourage greater development density in appropriate villages and other non-municipal settings.~~

Explanation: The PC supports maintaining the ability to explore a Transfer of Development Rights program in the County but not for the purpose of encouraging development density in villages in excess of that allowed by zoning regulations.

Page 2-15

C. Greenways (last paragraph)

More details on this plan can be found on the County's website. The County should consider reviewing the Green Infrastructure Plan and its implementation and making amendments where appropriate.

Explanation: This wording is inserted for clarification.

Page 2-15

D. Infill and Community Redevelopment (2nd paragraph)

This strategy has not been considered in the unincorporated areas of the County, since redevelopment opportunities are generally more effective in densely developed areas such as incorporated municipalities. The County should encourage cooperative strategies with towns and Villages Planning Areas to, ~~when consistent with existing scale and character,~~ better utilize existing infrastructure, and reduce demand for development in rural areas, ~~when consistent with existing scale and character and promote village vibrancy.~~

Explanation: Edit to provide consistency with other areas of Plan for villages.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 2-15

V. ~~Additional~~ Planning Tools that may be considered

In addition to the implementation recommendations described above, the following planning tools were outlined in the 2005 Plan ~~but not~~ and may be considered for use.

A. Bonus (Incentive) Zoning

Conventional zoning places limitations on the intensity of property use. Alternately, incentive zoning is a trade between the community and the property owner. In exchange for providing community benefit for, ~~(e.g. affordable~~ or workforce housing, or parkland, ~~public parking facilities, or higher quality development);~~ a developer is given a density bonus. ~~Incentive zoning may be considered to promote the development of workforce and affordable housing in Village Planning Areas.~~

Explanation: The PC is not in favor of incentive zoning in historic rural villages believing that such zoning could adversely affect the rural character of those villages and the County. The PC believes that affordable housing should be located in areas with easy access to employment opportunities, health and social services, schools, markets and other necessary family services and facilities.

Page 2-16

B. Small Area Plan

Small area plans or site development plans provide a preplan layout of the development types, roads and other public facilities/amenities desired for a particular site or area. The term small area plan was used in the 2005 Plan in relation to **Village Center** planning. This edition suggests provides more comprehensive ~~Village~~ Master Plans for designated Village Planning Areas.

Explanation: Recommendation suggests a more appropriate verb.

Page 2-17

Per MDP letter dated 12/27/2015

VII. Recent State Law

A. Amendments (from fifth paragraph)

The original designations and the maps were accepted by the Maryland Department of Planning in February, 2013. This plan presents slightly revised Tier definitions and a correspondingly revised map (Map 12) at the end of this chapter. Per state law the Tier map is hereby incorporated as part of the *Talbot County Comprehensive Plan*.

Tier I — Existing Sewered and Mapped Growth Areas

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

This tier consists of properties presently served by an existing municipal sewer system for the purpose of growth and development. Private systems in areas not planned for growth and areas served by public sewer primarily for environmental health, safety and water quality improvement are not identified as Tier I.

Tier II — Mapped Growth Areas Planned for Sewerage

This Tier has been subdivided into sub-tiers A, B and C, for consistency with County and municipal growth as outlined in the respective comprehensive plans.

Tier IIC areas are not planned for sewer in the near term, in County Water and Sewer Plans. As described in Section II. A. (beginning on page 2-4), the County has delineated Designated Growth Areas and Future Growth Areas. Designated growth, generally within existing PFAs, are situated in Tier IIA. Other areas identified for future growth but not currently in a PFA are included in either Tier IIB or IIC, depending on the horizon for annexation and development.

Tier III – Mapped Water Quality Strategy Areas with Limited Septic System Capacity

Tier III-A — Rural Communities Not Planned for Sewerage

This sub-tier identifies areas that,

1. are not planned for public sewerage systems in the County Comprehensive Plan or Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan,
2. are located in rural villages or other existing rural subdivisions,
3. are not dominated by agricultural or forest land, and
4. are planned for infill and limited development only.

Tier III-B — Water Quality Strategy Areas, ~~With or Planned for Sewerage~~

This sub-tier identifies rural villages and existing developed subdivisions designated as water quality strategy areas that,

1. have or ~~are planned to~~ may have public sewerage systems to address water quality and,
2. are planned for infill and limited development only.

These areas ~~may have~~ are planned for sewer service in order to improve water quality and efficiently manage sewer capacity.

Tier III-C — Areas of Limited Sewer Service

This sub-tier identifies existing developed subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas currently served by septic systems that,

1. where feasibly and reasonably practical, ~~are to~~ may be served by public sewer from the Region II or Region IV Wastewater Treatment Plant, and
2. where new development is limited to infill and redevelopment on existing lots within developed subdivisions.

Tier IV — Mapped Resource Protection Areas

This tier covers over 113,000 acres, which exceeds 80 percent of the land area in Talbot County and more than 88 percent of the non-municipal land area. This land is designated for limited development in the County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance and has been identified for preservation

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

under applicable state programs and regulations.

PC Recommendation: Concur with MDP suggested revisions.

Chapter 3, Transportation and Utilities

Page 3-4

Amendment, Chapter 3, B. Transportation Facility Planning.

The County should be mindful of ever-increasing traffic volumes on its roads. Of special concern are one way in/out roads such as MD 33 and MD 333. This is an important consideration in light of anticipated sea level rise and the certain needs for rapid egress in the event of a hurricane, as well as expedient access for emergency vehicles. For these reasons (and because of the quality of life effects of traffic congestion) the County should give careful consideration to the carrying capacity of those roads when making transportation or infrastructure decisions. [The County has made significant investments in its roads in recent years to alleviate congestion, including the widening and rebuilding of Glebe Road from Unionville Road to MD 322.](#) The development of a solution to congestion in the St Michaels town center would also help address these concerns.

Explanation: Minor edit to address public concern.

Page 3-4

Policy 3.2 The County will encourage continuous improvements to the entire road network and will ensure that all improvements further the land use, environmental, ~~and~~ transportation [and utility](#) goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Explanation: Road improvements may provide opportunity for improving other infrastructure such as fiber optics.

Page 3-5

****New policy 3.19;**

[3.19 The County will continue to discuss existing conditions and avenues to improve automobile, pedestrian and bicycle safety with SHA and other relevant agencies.](#)

Explanation: Consistent with citizen comments.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 3-10

Policy 3.27 The County shall seek mechanisms to supply the necessary broadband service for its economy by first establishing a task force charged with identifying models for an infrastructure to deliver efficient and equitable access to this service for commercial development, telecommuting workforce development and community resilience. [The County should require installation of fiber optic infrastructure where possible in development, redevelopment or other Public Works projects.](#)

Explanation: Provisions for conduit or fiber optic cable could be written into Public Works project specifications and subdivision and development requirements.

Chapter 4, Community Services and Facilities

Page 4-3

* Amendments to these sections have been reviewed and recommended by the Director of the Department of Emergency Services, Clay Stamp.

A. Public Safety, *Section II, A. 2. Emergency Services (new paragraphs):*

2. Emergency Services

a. The Department of Emergency Services has three divisions: 9-1-1 Operations Center, responsible for processing and dispatching emergency calls; Emergency Medical Services, providing emergency care and medical transportation; and Emergency Management, implementing and coordinating responses to natural and man-made disasters.

Talbot County has a comprehensive road naming and property numbering program, a Geographic Information System (GIS) for dispatch and tracking emergency response, and a fully staffed operations center to effectively deliver emergency services.

Talbot County will maintain a consolidated 9-1-1 Operations Center to receive all 9-1-1 emergency calls for assistance in Talbot County, dispatch law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services, and monitor and appropriately issue alerts for developing local and regional emergency situations as well as state or national major emergency situations.

[The emergency services department oversees the emergency management program, emergency medical services, emergency communications, and other appropriate emergency services as designated by the County Council. Talbot County will maintain an emergency medical service response system designed to deliver advanced life support services for medical emergencies to the community.](#)

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Talbot County has an effective emergency management division, with detailed hazard mitigation, evacuation and emergency plans and operations. The County will continue to maintain and update the Talbot County Emergency Operations Plan which exists to provide for continuity of government, the assignment of operational responsibilities, operational coordination, issuance of public alerts, and the coordination of evacuation and sheltering. Coordination and evacuation planning will continue with local and State transportation officials, law enforcement, and other appropriate agencies and organizations to alert and facilitate the movement of threatened populations.

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with recommendations from Clay Stamp, Emergency Services Director.

Page 4-5

2. Priorities for implementation

f. Develop specifications for backup generators and fuel tanks to provide municipalities, the County and village community facilities with a continuous source of electrical power.”

Explanation: Amendment consistent with public comment.

Page 4-6/4-7

***Amendment, 3. Coastal and Climate Hazards—Projections and Strategies**, insert new paragraph after “Other existing, regional plans...”,

The five pillars of community resilience in Talbot County are:

1. Health, Safety, and Welfare
2. Economic Stability
3. Infrastructure
4. Education
5. Environment and Shoreline Protection

These pillars have been introduced into the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan as general guidance. It is the County’s intent to use the five pillars to direct capital projects, form working groups, and secure grant funding in the future. Community resilience cannot be supported by only one or several of the pillars; to be a truly resilient community in the face of emergencies of all sorts, it is the belief of Talbot County that we must invest in all pillars equally.

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with recommendations from Clay Stamp, Emergency Services Director.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 4-7

*Public Safety Policies

4.11 Talbot County ~~should~~ shall research and implement plans to improve ~~community~~ resilience in the face of coastal and climate hazards and other threats to the foundation of the community such as public safety, health, and welfare, the economy, education, the infrastructure, and the environment.

****New policy:** 4-12 Talbot County will maintain an emergency management program as part of the federal, State, local, and private sector emergency management network to identify and recommend ways to mitigate hazards, effectively plan for response to major emergencies, monitor and appropriately issue public alerts, and coordinate evacuation, response and recovery operations.

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with recommendations from Clay Stamp, Emergency Services Director.

Page 4-9

III. Health Care and Social Services

A. Hospital (Fourth paragraph)

~~Their~~Shore Health facilities on the Eastern Shore were combined in 2013 to form University of Maryland Shore Medical Center (UMSMC). The University of Maryland Medical center took possession of the parcels in October, 2015, setting in motion a schedule to improve the site. Under the terms of the hospital property settlement. UMMS will commence planning and design of an acute care hospital within 5 years. If construction is not substantially completed within 15 years, the County has the legal authority to ~~could~~ require the hospital to convey the property back.

Explanation: Recommendation includes edits and clarification.

Page 4-12

IV. Housing

A. Workforce Housing

Some current or prospective County residents who are fully employed have difficulty obtaining housing to meet their needs due to a shortage of safe, affordably priced rental or for-purchase housing. Local housing costs may exceed the incomes of workers in instances of limited housing supply or strong competition that drives up purchase prices. Challenges also include difficulty in obtaining financing.

Explanation: Recommendation clarifies additional workforce housing challenges.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 4-13

IV. Housing (last paragraph)

Comprehensive Plan policies favor new development in [areas incorporated towns, designated growth areas and Village Planning Areas](#) where the availability of public services enables homes to be built at a lower cost and on smaller parcels.

Explanation: Recommendation states intent.

Page 4-13

B. Affordable Housing (third paragraph)

The location of housing – its proximity to jobs, childcare, stores and services and whether or not these are accessible by car, transit, or walking – also have a significant impact on the cost of living and therefore affordability, [practicability and suitability](#).

Explanation: Recommendation emphasizes role of location in planning.

Page 4-14

Housing Policies

Amendment: Policy 4.14 In areas with public sewer and adequate infrastructure, the County encourages the development of a variety of housing types, styles and designs, ~~including allowances for accessory dwelling units, apartments, cottages, duplexes and townhomes~~. Existing housing stock should be maintained, conserved and improved to support social and economic diversity within the community. Single accessory apartments or cottages should be permitted in agricultural or rural residential districts of the County.

Amendment revises policy to be consistent with language in 2005 Plan.

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with change in response to public comment.

Page 4-15

Amendment: Policy 4.21: The County ~~should~~ [will request that the Affordable and Workforce Housing Commission, with Planning Department support, reconvene to](#) gather information concerning government agencies and nonprofits that could provide expertise and data, and gather information about what other localities have done to successfully address the need for affordable and workforce housing, while ~~being mindful of~~ [protecting and preserving](#) our unique area and quality of life.

Explanation: Planning Commission favors continuation of this effort.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 4-14

Housing Policies

****New Policy 4.23**

4.23 To ensure that affordable housing is practical and suitable, it shall be located in close proximity, and with easy access, to employment opportunities, social and health services, schools, food markets and other resources affecting the cost of living.

Explanation: This new policy aligns with affordable housing practice.

Chapter 6, Natural Resource Conservation

Page 6-4

Future Development Scenario (Second paragraph)

The non-point source loading analysis continues to anticipate the use of septic denitrification technologies to impact the County's receiving waters. Also, plans are underway to extend sewer to areas of failing septic systems and mapped properties-communities and subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas, further reducing the amount of nitrogen and bacteria released into rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Explanation: Recommendation consistent with Tier III-C definition.

Page 6-6

5. Agricultural Water Users

As is the case throughout the Eastern Shore, Talbot County's farmers employ irrigation using both surface water and groundwater. Irrigation is most frequently used in areas to the south and east of Easton. Most surface water used for irrigation is drawn from Tuckahoe Creek. Groundwater for irrigation is generally drawn from the surficial aquifer. Recent droughts and near-droughts have led to an increased number of acres under irrigation since 2000; however usage is not consistent from year to year. In the 2012 Census of Agriculture 2014 Farm Services Agency report, irrigation was available on 30,900 approximately 4,660 acres of farmland, up from 20,161 acres in 2007.

Explanation: Revision corrects inaccuracy.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 6-13

Water Resource Policies

6.14 The County will require properties with failing septic systems to be connected to sewer if that service is available or, if it is not, the property owner will be encouraged to install a “Best Available Technology (BAT) septic system” in the Critical Area to meet the highest standards of treatment and encourage the use of BAT systems countywide.

Explanation: Revision provides clarification.

Page 6-13

Water Resource Policies

6.16 The County will continue to identify areas, communities and subdivisions where failing septic systems or other public health concerns exist, and work to extend public water and/or sewer service to existing lots of record within Tier III-B and Tier III-C.

Explanation: Revisions are consistent with previous Plan language.

Page 6-13

Water Resource Policies

6.20 The County shall actively seek ways to improve/implement the periodic inspection of septic systems, in order to protect public health and environmental quality by correcting failing conditions.

Explanation: Absence of septic system inspection program leaves citizens vulnerable and the County vulnerable to possible legal action.

Page 6-13

Water Resource Policies

****New Policy 6.21**

6.21 The County shall work to provide sewer service to western villages, communities and subdivisions mapped Tier III-B and III-C for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of its citizens through improvements in water quality. This sewer service is not intended for the purpose of supporting new development outside the boundaries of Tier III-B and III-C.

Explanation: New policy clarifies the purpose of new sewer service strategy.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Chapter 7, Economic Development and Tourism

Page 7-6

Amendment: Chapter 7, Section II, F. Technology to Support Economic Development, third paragraph:

Talbot County is ~~at risk of falling behind in~~ working to establishing the necessary broadband capacity to support its economy and workforce. Providing a network to improve the quality and availability of ~~data~~ high speed data services to businesses and residents is essential. ~~The need to move forcefully in catching up is a matter of some urgency.~~

Explanation: Revisions cast issue in more positive light.

Page 7-6

Amendment: Policy 7.2 To be competitive, the County shall seek mechanisms to supply ~~equitable access to~~ broadband services, with the objective of developing efficient and equitable access for commercial development, remote work, workforce development and community wellbeing. The County should require installation of fiber optic infrastructure where possible in development, redevelopment or Public Works projects.

Explanation: New language facilitates installation of fiber optic infrastructure.

Page 7-6

Amendment: Policy 7.3 The County should consider promoting and negotiating broadband services and should establish a task force to seek ways to improve access to wireless communication as a public utility.

Explanation: Revision advances case for wireless communication.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 7-7

Economic Development Policies

Amendment, **New Policy 7.10

7.10 The County should support and encourage the appropriate enhancement, redevelopment, and reinvestment in existing tourism related nonconforming structures and uses so that they may contribute positively to the County's economic base.

Explanation: This is a new policy to support appropriate tourism related projects under the STAR legislation.

Chapter 9, Community Design and Appearance

Page 9-5

a. Rural non-residential

Non-residential development permitted in the agricultural and rural areas includes agribusinesses or maritime businesses including but not limited to, grain storage facilities, aquaculture, seafood processing, farm markets, farm equipment dealers, and on farm processing that provide services to the nearby farms and marine uses.

Agricultural and rural areas are the preferred locations for these businesses. New residential subdivisions should not be located near such areas in order to avoid potential conflicts over noise, dust or odors that these businesses generate.

Commercial and industrial development in agricultural and rural areas should be located on appropriately sized roads. Buildings should be sited close to the roadway, while providing appropriately sized entrances and parking for large commercial and farm vehicles. Consideration should be given to providing deceleration or turning lanes to reduce conflicts between turning vehicles and through traffic.

To preserve the rural character of these areas, lighting should be shielded and directed downward. Consideration should be given to reducing lighting between 10:00 PM and 5:00 AM to the minimum required for safety and security.

~~Agricultural and rural areas are the preferred location for these businesses. Residential subdivisions should not be located near agribusinesses that may be considered a nuisance because they generate to minimize conflicts over noise, dust or odors generated by businesses.~~

Explanation: Move the final sentence to become the second paragraph of that section and alter as noted above.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 9-8

Amendment, Section III,A. Village Planning Process: Second Paragraph:

Several villages have developed their own plans to reflect and preserve the diversity and individual character of their respective communities. These plans will be published separate from this Plan and will be made available to the public as well as to the Planning Commissioners, for guidance in deliberations that may affect individual villages. [The existing plans provide useful information that will assist County staff and organizations in future decision making. Plans can be found on the County website.](#)

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with inclusion of amendment per public comment.

Page 9-9

Amendment, A. Village Planning Process, last paragraph:

The three classifications listed in the ~~amended~~ Zoning Ordinance permit an increasingly diverse range of uses to better assure [that new](#) development is compatible with village scale and to achieve ~~their village's distinctive~~ objectives. [The Zoning Ordinance shall provide greater detail and characterization of the three village zoning districts to include density and bulk requirements.](#) The general village provisions of this Plan shall be applied to all village zoning districts as applicable.

Explanation: These matters are best resolved through comprehensive rezoning text and map amendments, the next step in updating regulations after the comprehensive plan. Planning Commission concurs with inclusion in response to public comment.

Page 9-11

Amendment, Chapter 9, Section III,C, Village Design Guidelines, fourth paragraph:

As discussed in Chapter 2, Village Planning Areas are Master Planned areas with suitable land available for infill, redevelopment and new development. Master ~~p~~Plans, or small area plans are required to ~~successfully~~ evaluate [traffic, emergency response and other infrastructure impacts](#) ~~the~~ of development ~~or redevelopment on villages while maintaining on~~ village character. The plans also provide a general understanding among residents on the nature and scale of proposed development.

Explanation: Master Plans for new development in village planning areas are required to examine potential impacts. (Need clear explanation of Master Planning definition and process)

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

Page 9-12

Village Design Policies

Amendment, Policy 9.10: New development and redevelopment in villages should be compatible with existing character in terms of land use, density, scale, setbacks, site layout, mix of use, and general design to maintain their unique “sense of place.” [In Village Planning Areas, Master Plans shall be required for review of small scale and major subdivision, and major site plans. Master Planning shall include a comprehensive study addressing compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities and services associated with new development and redevelopment.](#)

Explanation: Revision provided in response to public comment to highlight scope of Master Plans in Village Planning Areas.

Page 9-12

Village Design Policies

****New policy 9.13**

[9.13 The County will review permitted density and bulk requirements for all village zoning districts. Consideration of village rezoning shall be completed through the comprehensive mapping process keeping in mind the unique character of each village.](#)

Explanation: Planning Commission concurs with recommendation written in response to public comments.

Page 9-12

Village Design Policies

9.13 The County will work to revise sewer connection and allocation policies [in Water Quality Strategy Areas mapped Tier III-B](#) to concentrate available capacity on addressing existing failing or polluting septic systems within villages and allow for ~~moderate planned growth and~~ [infill, redevelopment and new](#) development on existing lots of record within established sewer service areas.

Explanation: Edit provided for clarity and consistency as moderate planned growth is not a defined term.

Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

(except as noted otherwise, all recommendations are unanimous)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Application of Tier IV on Royal Oak property</p> | <p>The Commission has suggested modification of the Tier designation adopted in 2012, for a property in Royal Oak. All five PC members support the expansion of Tier III into the area shown as “a” and the exclusion of the area labeled “c” from Tier III. Two members supported inclusion of area “b” into Tier III. three members voted to retain Tier IV in this area. PC Comment: Concur with recommendation as shown on the attached map</p> |
| <p>Tier map details are provided at the end of this document for a. Deep Harbor Farm Tier III-C Amendments</p> | <p>Planning Commission does not support the inclusion of the parcels north of Deep Harbor Farm in Tier III-C. PC Comment: The parcels in question are a reserve area left over after the subdivision of Deep Harbor Farm. They are not part of the subdivision itself. Septic systems for the properties are not failing. Serving them with sewer would require a separate line down the lane, setting a precedent for many other similar lots off Route 33. The Public Works Advisory Board members support the area under consideration for III-C designation.</p> |
| <p>Tier map details are provided at the end of this document for a. New Road Tier III-C Amendments</p> | <p>Planning Commission supports the inclusion of the parcels along New Road for inclusion in Tier III-C as shown on the attached map. PC Comment: Concur The Public Works Advisory Board members support the area under consideration for III-C designation.</p> |
| <p>Land Use Plan map amendments for the St Michaels and Oxford areas, as shown at the end of this document.</p> | <p>Maryland Department of Planning has identified some areas of minor inconsistency between the future growth areas surrounding municipalities. PC Comment: Concur</p> |

****Amend subsequent policy numbers with the addition of new policies.**

*****Review entire Plan for references to this term and amend accordingly.**