



Gloucester Department of Community Engagement and Public Information

6382 Main Street

Gloucester, Va. 23061

804.693.5730 • www.gloucesterva.info

November 4, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Quinton Sheppard

qsheppard@gloucesterva.info

Public Input Being Sought on Potential Zoning Ordinance Changes That Would Remove Some Burdensome Regulations

County staff, in partnership with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors, have completed a comprehensive rewrite of Articles 1-9 of the County's Zoning Ordinance. Articles 1-9 include regulations for all the zoning districts, permitted uses, supplemental regulations for those uses, and general development standards related to other items such as screening and buffering, common open space, etc.

After a four-year long in-depth review, staff is excited to present the draft to citizens in the form of public open houses to occur in November. Open houses are planned for the northern, central, and southern sections of the County. The purpose of these meetings is to help citizens understand the zoning changes so that they can express their concerns or appreciation for the changes to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors when they hold formal public hearings on the changes. Meetings will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the following dates and locations:

November 14 at Abingdon Elementary School

November 17 at the Gloucester Main Library

November 29 at Rappahannock Community College's Glens Lecture Hall

These meetings will include short presentations at 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. summarizing the major changes, followed by opportunities for attendants to speak with staff about specific zoning districts, uses, and/or regulations that most interest them. Since the proposed zoning ordinance changes are rather complex, and are specific to various properties, it would be beneficial to attend these interactive meetings. "We really encourage people to come educate themselves and learn how these changes may impact what they can and can't do on their properties before these changes are adopted," said Anne Ducey-Ortiz, Gloucester's Director of Planning, Zoning & Environmental Programs.

The purpose of the comprehensive update has been to implement the County's Comprehensive Plan and further the Board of Supervisors' strategic plan goals - including spurring a thriving economy, encouraging a mix of uses and housing, preserving the County's rural atmosphere, and removing unnecessary regulations. A major part of the update includes reformatting the ordinance so that the public can more easily determine the permitting procedure. Major topics of discussion with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors throughout the process have included home occupations, animals, and freight containers.

A summary of the comments received at the November public open houses will be presented to the Planning Commission at its regular meeting in December or January. At that meeting, commissioners will decide if further revisions are needed, or if they are ready to move forward with formal public hearings in early 2023. Comments from the public will also be accepted and considered as part of the public hearing process with both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. As a reminder, these meetings are televised and can be viewed on channel 48 or on the County's meeting portal, www.gloucesterva.info/640/Meeting-Portal.

The working draft and other information on the update can be found at this link: <https://www.gloucesterva.info/1135/Zoning-Ordinance-Update>. For more information, contact Carol Rizzio or Anne Ducey-Ortiz at 804-693-1224. Comments are encouraged from anyone (citizens, business owners, property owners) interested in the future growth and development in the county. Comments will also be accepted through the County's website for those who are unable to visit the in-person meetings.

###