

..TITLE

A Legislative public hearing to receive input on revisions to the Chatham County Conservation Subdivision Guidelines for Conservation Space Selection to update the source for gis data layers needed to develop fragmentation maps and technical corrections.

..ABSTRACT**Action Requested:**

A Legislative public hearing to receive input on revisions to the Chatham County Conservation Subdivision Guidelines for Conservation Space Selection to update the source for gis data layers needed to develop fragmentation maps and technical corrections.

Introduction & Background:

The Conservation Subdivision Guidelines for Conservation Space Selection were created to inform applicants, consultants and developers on the additional documentation requirements for conservation subdivisions. Recent changes made by the NC Natural Heritage Program have rendered some information within the Guidelines inaccurate.

Discussion & Analysis:

The guidelines need to be updated to reflect changes made by the NC Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP), particularly with regard to data provided by the NCNHP that were previously free of charge and could be accessed on Chatham County GIS. Element Occurrences and Significant Natural Heritage Areas must now be obtained directly from the NCNHP. The county cannot host this data as was the case when the Guidelines were written. There are also new fees associated with obtaining these two items from the NCNHP as of October 2018. Section 2.1 of the Conservation Subdivision Guidelines for Conservation Space Selection has been revised to include the updated information, including the website for the NCNHP where those maps can be requested. An edit was also made to Section 1.2 reflect the staff title change from Environmental Resources Director to Watershed Protection Director. The Natural Resources Director position no longer exists.

How does this relate to the Comprehensive Plan:

Conservation subdivisions are referenced in multiple strategies of the comprehensive plan and Recommendation 03 in the Natural Resources Plan Element reads "Encourage conservation design in and near Conservation and Protected Lands and in Rural Areas" and relates to Goal 5: Conserve Natural Resources.

Recommendation:

Hold the hearing and refer the item to the Planning Board for a recommendation.