

..TITLE

Vote on a request to approve 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:

Vote on a request to approve 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 must now be obtained directly from the NCNHP. The county cannot host the data as was the case when the Guidelines were written. There are also new fees associated with obtaining this item 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 the data can be requested. An edit was also made to Section 1.2 to reflect the staff title change from Environmental Resources Director to Watershed Protection Director. The Natural Resources Director position no longer exists.

A public hearing was held on March 18, 2019 with planning staff presenting the request. There were no public comments provided during the hearing and no written comments were provided. The attached redlined guidelines have been updated from the version provided previously. The current version does not include Significant Natural Heritage Area data as being requested directly from the NCNHP. That data set can be hosted by the county and is available on the conservation gis data viewer. These are technical corrections and planning staff recommends approval.

The Planning Board discussed the request during their regular meeting on April 2, 2019. The Board had a brief discussion about the amendment and expressed no concerns regarding the changes and recommended approval by unanimous vote (11-0).

How does this relate to the Comprehensive Plan:

Goal: Preserve the rural character and lifestyle of Chatham County. Specifically, Land Use Policy 10, Encourage integrated open space in new development; Strategy 10.1, Update open space requirements for new development and the third bullet point reads “Use the Chatham Conservation Partnership (CCP) Conservation Plan, maps and GIS data for land use planning and development review.

Recommendation:

The Planning Board by unanimous vote and planning staff recommends adoption of an ordinance amending 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 .