

# Harris graduates from zoning appeals class

Abel M. Harris, a member of the Powhatan County Board of Zoning Appeals, was among the graduating class of the tenth Virginia Certified Boards of Zoning Appeals program on May 20.

The certification program is an educational effort designed to provide new and veteran boards of zoning appeals' members with a comprehensive introduction to zoning and the critical responsibilities borne by local boards of zoning appeals.

The first phase of the 10-week course included two days of classroom instruction on such topics as the job of the board zoning appeals member, board of zoning appeals powers and duties, the nature of zoning, zoning's legal foundation, and the relationship between planning and zoning.

The second phase of the program required each participant to read five texts and complete ten home study lessons based on the readings. Each participant was also required to attend and critique a planning commission meeting or board of zoning appeals meeting outside their home jurisdiction.

The final phase of the program was a two-day workshop featuring discussion and individual exercises on leadership styles, communication techniques, conflict management, meeting mechanics, and issues pertaining to decision-making in the public sector.

"It takes a special person, one who is committed to public service, to go through a 10-week program that involves a great deal of evening and weekend study," Chandler said. "Powhatan County is fortunate to have such a



**Abel Harris**

dedicated public official."

The award-winning program is sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension's Community Resource Development program, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Virginia Citizens Planning Association.