

**Economic Development Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2008**

The following members were in attendance at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic Development Subcommittee:

Sarah Colenda, Chairperson
Robert Hodge
Gary Stewart
Ken Wiggins
Vernon Duckett
Brian Bolender

The following guests were also in attendance:

Eric Sennstrom, Planning and Zoning

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 PM. Minutes were reviewed and it was recommended that the minutes be changed to indicate that Vernon Thompson noted that economic growth coming from the east was coming from Elkton and should be directed to Delaware. There is also economic growth coming from the west due to BRAC and that growth should be channeled along the growth corridor from North East to Perryville. The minutes from our last meeting, with that change, were accepted.

Eric Sennstrom presented to the group on the concept of a “growth corridor” in the County. Although not specifically called a growth corridor, the various comprehensive plans that have been completed with the first in 1962 have all referred to directing growth into an area running east to west and roughly bordered by Route 40 on the south and I95 on the north. The area has actually shrunk somewhat with each subsequent revision of the comprehensive plan due to lack of infrastructure investments by the County and / or subsequent growth in those areas that negated any need to be included in future growth areas. It was discussed that in order to truly define the growth corridor, most capital money should be directed to improvements in these areas and away from any rural areas, thus encouraging the growth in the corridor.

From the maps presented, it was evident that the present Zoning Maps match well with the loosely defined growth corridor. The Office of Economic Development is concerned that there is a diminishing inventory of available commercial / industrial space in the growth corridor, which is augmented by the advent of residential growth in the corridor. There is also concern that the growth corridor has to be at a pedestrian scale to match these uses and provide areas where people want to live, work and recreate. It was suggested that if given a blank County map, it would be informative to see where Vernon

Thompson and the Commissioners would direct growth if there were no issues associated with any particular choice. This could easily be done using the County's GIS through David Black.

The County Commissioners have been following the dictates of the growth corridor and have been investing in infrastructure upgrades in the corridor. Eric sited the Elkton West project, the Meadowview upgrades, the planned Seneca Point upgrades, and the transition of the Highlands down to Meadowview as investments that were intended to provide for the intended improvements in the growth corridor.

Moving forward, the group feels it is important to review each parcel on its own merits to see what makes sense in each location. We have a database of parcels that can be utilized as a starting point for this discussion. We also need to review where water, sewer and gas are available since that affects possible uses. As a group, we will need to discuss what type of industrial / commercial growth is acceptable, as we all agree more warehousing is not conducive to long term growth.

It was suggested that saying growth will not happen is an irresponsible approach to our task with the comprehensive plan. Rather we should decide how to direct the growth, and how the communities we work and live in will look in 50 years. We should not be afraid to go out on limbs and suggest keeping people near to their work, or going to higher densities in the growth corridor, although this will not work in Perryville or Charlestown due to natural constraints.

We also reviewed some correspondence from Vernon Duckett relative to the topic and agreed to include these issues in our discussion moving forward.

Our next task is to develop a list of priorities for the consultant so that they can begin to assemble sample layouts for the whole committee to review. Gary Stewart agreed to put together the first flush of the list to start the discussion. Since the list needs to be to the consultant no later than July 15th, we agreed to have a special meeting on Thursday, July 10th, at 4:00 in the Rising Sun Room of the County Administrative Building.

Our next regularly scheduled meetings are:

August 19th 4:30 PM New County Administrative Building, Rising Sun Room

October 21st 4:30 PM New County Administrative Building, Rising Sun Room

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 10th at 4:00 in the County Administrative Building, Rising Sun Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20.

Respectfully submitted:
Brian Bolender