

**CECIL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes  
21 January 2009**

**Present:** Bennett, John; Bunnell, John; Broomell, Diana; Butler, Eileen; Cairns, Ed; Clewer, Jeff; Day, Shawn; Denver, John; Duckett, Vernon; Edwards, Sandra; Folk, Patricia; Gilley, Paula; Hodge, Robert; Hutton, Randy; Jackson, Ann; Kilby, Phyllis; Lane, Diane; Polite, Dan; Priapi, Vic; Pugh, Mike; Rossetti, Rupert; Shaffer, Henry; Smyser, Chuck; Stewart, Gary; Strause, Vicky; Thorne, Owen; Whitehurst, Dan; and Whiteman, Will.

**Absent:** Bolender, Brian; Buck, Walter; Colenda, Sarah; Deckard, Donna; Derr, Dan; Doordan, B. Patrick; Ellerton, Vaughan; Gell, Robert; Snyder, Linda; Tapley, Donna; Walbeck, Carl; and Wiggins, Ken.

**Guests & Observers:** McWilliams, Thomas; Bayer, Michael (ERM); Graham, Clive (ERM); Di Giacomo, Tony.

**Call to Order:** Dr. Diane Lane called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Dr. Lane advised that this meeting was intended to be an information meeting, and that any decision or decisions regarding the plan's content would not be an outcome.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the 19 November 2008 meeting were approved, upon the motion of Patricia Folk, seconded by Henry Shaffer.

**Old Business:** The update on the COC schedule by Michael Bayer prompted discussion that resulted in some modifications. The next COC meetings, per the revised schedule contain on pages 4 – 5 of the meeting packet, were to have been on 4 February 2009 (with the Land Use and Agriculture & Preservation Subcommittees reporting), 18 February 2009 (with the Water Resources and Infrastructure & Transportation Subcommittees reporting), and 18 March 2009 (with the Economic Development, Housing & Recreation, and Public Services & Facilities Subcommittees reporting). After discussion, on the motion by Henry Shaffer, seconded by Phyllis Kilby, the schedule was revised to have the next COC meeting on 18 February 2009, with the Public Services & Facilities and Water Resources Subcommittees reporting. The next meeting would be on 4 March 2009, with the Infrastructure & Transportation and the Agriculture & Preservation Subcommittees reporting, to be followed by an 18 March 2009 meeting, with the Economic Development, Housing & Recreation, and Land Use Subcommittees reporting.

Next, there was discussion regarding the June COC meeting regarding its role as a public forum and, therefore, the need for adequate public notice, including advertising and public notices.

**New Business:** Dr. Lane called everyone's attention to the "COC Aligned Goals," found in pages 7 – 10 of the previously-distributed meeting packet. She indicated that these aligned goals, crafted from the submissions of the respective subcommittees, reflected consolidation based upon common themes that clearly emerged when the inputs were compared to one another. In addition, as these are further refined subsequently, there will be the need to begin to differentiate "goals" from "policy statements."

Next, Michael Bayer presented and explained the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map, included on page 11 of the meeting packet and previously-distributed as a handout. The inclusion of draft land use plan scenarios from the Towns of Perryville and Chesapeake City on pages 12 – 13 of the meeting packet were noted, as was the commencement of Elkton's comprehensive plan update effort, in which Mr. Bayer and ERM will be involved. Mr. Bayer explained the workgroup's process and detailed its meetings on last December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>, and how the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map evolved in those meetings.

Mr. Bayer then received comments and questions. Phyllis Kilby questioned the low density" land use category, and whether that really ought to be labeled "sprawl." In the discussion that followed, it emerged that the proposed low density development, while the lowest density among the proposed growth area residential densities, was, nevertheless, significantly higher than either the proposed rural conservation or resource preservation densities.

Eileen Butler questioned the why there were two shades of green (the proposed rural conservation or resource preservation districts). It was explained that those reflected the effect of the downzoning that went into effect on 1 January 2007. There was then discussion regarding using the 1:10 and 1:20, or 1:20 and 1:30, or an across-the-board 1:25 density in the rural areas.

Paula Gilley stated that the growth area to the south of the Town of Rising Sun that is depicted in the current Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Map needs to be added back to the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map, included on page 11 of the meeting packet and previously-distributed as a handout. That would be consistent with a vote in the Land Use Subcommittee. In the ensuing discussion, it was pointed out that the Town does not, and like will not, have the capacity to provide infrastructure to that area. In the development of the 1990 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan, on the other hand, the Town then anticipated that it would, and, therefore, that is why that area to the south of the Town was included as a growth area.

Robert Hodge, in noting the absence of commercial and retailing on the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map, and he stressed that, because it is so important to the economic health of the County to have enough retailing, that more be shown, especially along the Route 40 corridor. Paula Gilley concurred, and in the discussion that followed it was noted that zoning could include commercial and retail locations within the more broad-brush land use districts. The nature of the two mixed use classifications with respect to retailing was also discussed.

Dan Whitehurst questioned whether the high densities in the proposed higher density residential growth areas were actually achievable. If not, then, with downzoning, he wondered if the County would actually have enough developable capacity to accommodate all of the growth now projected. In the discussion that followed, Mr. Bayer indicated that the current proposed land use map would provide the County with adequate developable capacity.

Rupert Rossetti offered that the committee ought to differentiate between what he saw as objective and subjective tracks. In the ensuing discussion, Mr. Rossetti believed that there ought to be a stronger linkage between what is depicted on the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map and the developmental limitations that natural features will impose. He saw the environmental and sensitive areas maps, including the County's watersheds, as necessary "reality checks" to what the developable capacity of the County really is, as well as where it really is.

Sandra Edwards, relative to the earlier question by Paula Gilley, questioned the Preliminary Draft Land Use Map's inclusions of the low density area north of the Town of Rising Sun and the area south of the Town of Elkton to the east of Maryland Route 213. The lengthy discussion that followed included the issues of landowner equity, the developable capacity needed to accommodate future, projected growth, transition zones, and the necessity of coordinating the development of the new Cecil County Comprehensive Plan and those of the respective Towns, especially their Municipal Growth Elements.

On the motion of Rupert Rossetti, seconded by Dr. Diane Lane, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday 18 February 2008, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Cecil College Technology Center, Rm. 208

Respectfully submitted:

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Anthony J. Di Giacomo, AICP  
Principal Planner – Planning & Zoning