

CECIL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

18 February 2009

Present: Bennett, John; Bolender, Brian; Broomell, Diana; Butler, Eileen; Clewer, Jeff; Colenda, Sarah; Day, Shawn; Denver, John; Derr, Dan; 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; Tapley, Donna; Thorne, Owen; Whiteman, Will; Wiggins, Ken; Bayer, Michael – ERM; Graham, Clive- ERM; Di Giacomo, Tony; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Buck, Walter; Bunnell, John; Cairns, Ed; Deckard, Donna; Doordan, B. Patrick; Ellerton, Vaughan; Gell, Robert; Poole, John; Snyder, Linda; Walbeck, Carl; Whitehurst, Dan

Observers: Hartman, Ron; Leocha, John – MDP

Call to Order: Dr. Lane called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Dan Derr made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes with the addition of revisions to include Paula Gilley's comments relative to the restoration of the growth area south of the Town of Rising Sun and Robert Hodge's comments concerning the lack of depicting the commercial activities within the County on the draft Land Use Map. The motion was seconded by Robert Hodge. All members present voted in favor of motion to approve January meeting minutes. Motion carried.

New Business: Dr. Lane announced that Maryland Public Television (MPT) will be broadcasting a documentary titled "Sprawl: The Tipping Point" on Saturday, 21 February 2009 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. MPT will present an overview of growth and development issues in the State and focus on key issues such as Terrapin Run, Baltimore City's Westport project, and BRAC.

Dr. Lane reported that she has met with the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning Commission in joint session to discuss the COC progress with its assigned task. Discussion also included future meetings with the Planning Commission and the path ahead for the COC.

Dr. Lane stated that she will be meeting with the North East Chamber of Commerce to provide a briefing on the COC's progress.

Dr. Henry Shaffer presented the Public Service Committee report. Dr. Shaffer introduced the committee members and support staff. He stated that the subcommittee looked at 11 elements (Public Schools, Higher Education, Public Library, Health Department, Union Hospital, Emergency Services, Fire & Rescue Services, Law Enforcement, Correction Services, Juvenile Services, Solid Waste) in the preparation of their report. The Committee's issues were identified including the adequacy of public services and

facilities and what services would be needed to meet existing and future demands; funding for future capacity expansions and the demands for funding public services and its impact on the County's fiscal health; and committee support for specific funding strategies. Dr. Shaffer stated that general recommendations of the Committee were to align new or expanded public services and facilities with the growth pattern and expectations of the Comprehensive Plan; Identify funding source options that support the growth determinations identified in the Comprehensive Plan and specific to public services; and to employ innovative financing methods and streamline the process to allow for the funding and building of projects of immediate need. The committee's implementation strategies were presented as well as recommendations for the Public Schools, Higher Education, Public Libraries, Health Department, Hospitals, Fire & Rescue/EMS, Law Enforcement, Correctional Services, Juvenile Services and Solid Waste. Clive Graham inquired as to the issue of water supply in rural areas for fire fighting purposes. Vicky Strause indicated that the issue was addressed in the sub-committee's report.

Rupert Rossetti presented the Water Resources Committee report. He presented a summary of progress to date, strategies to cope with nutrient cap limitations, spray irrigation evaluation results, wetland treatment methods, Susquehanna River Basin Commission discussions, and overall conclusions indicating that a new water supply should be developed and new methods of disposal should also be developed, neither water supply or wastewater disposal is a limiting factor, and that affordability may be an issue. Further report will be forthcoming in regard to the non-point source issues. Will Whiteman opined that other areas of the Country treat wastewater with more innovative methods than Maryland. He lamented that our regulations do not permit alternative/innovative treatment options. Rupert Rossetti concurred that the regulations get in the way of innovative treatment methods. Chuck Smyser interjected that Ohio used aerobic systems but moved away from due to a lack of proper maintenance and management issues. Mr. Whiteman stated that perhaps a regional system would be more successful in addressing those concerns. Discussion ensued regarding Mr. Rossetti's presentation of the Committee's report. Sarah Colenda inquired as to whether a reservoir was considered as a back up supply in the event of a natural or manmade calamity. Mr. Rossetti said his committee considered a reservoir.

Michael Bayer presented a summary of the process to date and where we are headed. ERM has attempted to reflect the COC input in the development of the map and its previous iterations. Dr. Lane noted that the hard copies of the maps in the meeting packet are there due to technical glitches that precluded the presence of David Black and his GIS data. Eileen Butler questioned whether there are additional maps on-line. Dr. Lane answered in the affirmative. Michael Bayer summarized where we are and the next steps in the process. He reviewed the schedule and the upcoming meeting agendas. Mr. Bayer indicated that the April meeting may need to include a broader discussion of the process and that the master schedule may be bumped. He emphasized that the process should not be rushed and discussion of the issues should not be impeded. Mr. Bayer reviewed the work of the subgroup that prepared the draft land use map. The 1990 map is a baseline with a current capacity of 67,512 units. He explained the output of the model runs and the density tweaking that occurred. Mr. Bayer reminded the group that the creation of the map is a visioning exercise. The vision will be continually revised based on committee input. Discussion ensued on employment areas, commercial areas, density model

inputs, and yields. Mr. Bayer stated that sustainable and feasible growth is the goal. The next steps will be to complete the model run for transportation, complete the Water Resources Element, receive the sub-committee reports to guide ERM in the drafting of the Plan, draft the Plan elements and continue dialogue with the Towns. Dan Derr noted that he is uncomfortable with the densities as some are too high and some too low. Clive Graham provided an explanation as to why the proposed densities are what they are and stated that long term goal is sustainable growth. The model run will permit ERM to report back in March as to whether that is so. Dan Derr noted his objection to the proposed densities. Discussion ensued on the proposed densities, the issue of realistic buildout, the issue of downzoning in the rural areas, MDP's growth simulation model, concentrating growth, the percentage of future growth that will occur in the Towns, and transient nature of the model run. Dr. Lane noted that pg. 24 of the meeting packet indicates that the current rural densities have not changed and that the COC is still waiting for subcommittee reports. Discussion ensued regarding the future population of the County and failure to reach agreement on issues needed to make decisions. Michael Bayer stated that the subgroup created the map and a density framework has been created and will be tested. Options include revising the draft map or the draft densities depending on the results of the model run. More specifics will be looked at with the COC input. Discussion ensued regarding whether the COC was ready to move forward, whether the area south of Rising Sun should be shown as growth area, whether the best use of the railroads traversing the County is being made, and whether the proposed density is alright. Mike Pugh desired a more detailed explanation of the objects of the model so that he can assuage his confusion on the issue. Clive Graham stated that the modeling will show whether the Plan is affordable, sustainable, feasible, does it need to be adjusted, he said that we cannot expect too much from the model. Discussion ensued on whether the model should be run immediately or later in the process, the effect on the schedule, the potential numbers to be used and whether it would improve the final product.

Randy Hutton made a motion to go ahead with the modeling. Brian Bolender seconded the motion. Discussion ensued on the motion and to amend the motion to state that the COC agrees to run the model but does agree to the map or densities are final. All members present voted on favor of amended motion. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Dr. Lane adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, AICP