

**CECIL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**19 March 2008**

**Present:** Shaffer, Henry; Pugh, Mike; Rossetti, Rupert; Gilley, Paula; Jackson, Ann; Poole, John; Whiteman, Will; Lane, Diane; Wiggins, Ken; Doordan, B. Patrick; Smyser, Chuck; Walbeck, Carl; Bennett, John; Derr, Dan; Hutton, Randy; Buck, Walter; Broomell, Diana; Thorne, Owen; Edwards, Sandra; Clewer, Jeff; Colenda, Sarah; Duckett, Vernon; Cairns, Ed; Strause, Vicky; Denver, John; Folk, Patricia; Butler, Eileen; Stewart, Gary; Polite, Dan; Priapi, Vic; Di Giacomo, Tony; Sennstrom, Eric

**Absent:** Bolender, Brian; Bunnell, John; Day, Shawn; Deckard, Donna; Ellerton, Vaughan; Gell, Robert; Hodge, Robert; Kilby, Phyllis; Snyder, Linda; Tapley, Donna; Whitehurst, Dan

**Guests & Observers:** Bailey, Ronald (Chester County); Baker, Charles (New Castle County); Bickel, Richard (DVRPC); Gleisner, Janet (Harford County); Klimovitz, Larry (BMC); Webb-Owings, Gail (Kent County); Cochrane, Eugene; Buckland, Jim; DiNunzio, Joe; Nemazie, Dave; Weygand, Sharon; Diebold, Chris; Bayer, Michael (ERM); Graham, Clive (ERM); Basu, Anirban (Sage)

**Call to Order:** Dr. Diane Lane called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the 16 January 2008 meeting were approved by acclamation.

**Old Business:** Clive Graham presented a summary of the informational package for tonight's meeting and provided his insights into the region relative to population and jobs.

**New Business:** Clive Graham stated that due to Cecil County's location, ERM was of the opinion that it would be beneficial to the Committee to gain a perspective on the region surrounding Cecil County and the issues and plans in the jurisdictions in our region. Mr. Graham proceeded to introduce the invited speakers consisting of Ronald Bailey from Chester County, Pennsylvania, Charles Baker of New Castle County, Delaware, Richard Bickel from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Council (DVRPC), Janet Gleisner from Harford County Maryland, Larry Klimovitz from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC), and Gail Webb-Owings from Kent County, Maryland.

Charles Baker proceeded to describe the issues facing New Castle County's Department of Land Use. Mr. Baker stated that by 2030 New Castle County will add 79,000 people and 41,000 households. Additionally, the County will need 12 MGD of sewer capacity, 15.8 MGD of water capacity, and 233 miles of roads to accommodate that growth. The growth trend in the County has been a migration to the west and south. Mr. Baker stated that 59,000 people commute into New Castle County daily with approximately 14,000 coming from Cecil County. The County's 2007 Land Use Plan calls for directing more development north of the canal and to centralize

growth south of the canal. The Plan emphasizes a smart growth village/hamlet TND style of development as well TDR's, affordable housing, bio-tech and high tech, and increasing density in the growth area.

Ronald Bailey stated that Chester County is very diverse and is one of the ten most affluent counties in the country. The county is a suburb of Philadelphia in the east, agricultural in the west, and oriented toward Delaware in the south. The county's commuters travel to Philadelphia, Montgomery County and to Delaware. The Route 202 corridor is a major employment center in the county providing 80,000 jobs in the pharmaceutical, financial and bio-tech industries. The Chester County Comprehensive Plan can be found at [www.landscapes2.org](http://www.landscapes2.org). The County's website also has interactive updates on the process to keep the document viable. The County's Comp Plan was adopted in 1996 and acts as a guide. Chester County has 73 municipalities, there are no unincorporated areas. Planning is done at the municipal level. The Oxford Area Plan, the area along Cecil County's northern boundary, is currently underway. The County has spent \$400 million on land preservation initiatives focusing on agriculture and open space. Chester County has some of the finest agricultural soils in the world and accounts for 80% of US mushroom production. It is also a major equestrian center with huge horse farms. Chester County is facing issues relative to infrastructure needs, the Rte. 202 corridor development, and the re-location of defense contractors from Fort Monmouth.

Director Eric Sennstrom summarized a letter he received from James Cowhey, Executive Director of the Lancaster County Planning Commission. Mr. Cowhey was unable to attend and consequently, sent written comments highlighting issues facing his county. These were Agriculture; Farming and Rural Economy; Susquehanna River Water trail and Heritage Areas; Octoraro Greenway; Lancaster Natural Heritage Areas Inventory; and Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG).

Janet Gleisner presented remarks relative to Harford County. Ms. Gleisner stated that the county will experience much growth by 2030 and will increase its population to 282,000. The current Land Use Plan is from 2004 and is due to be updated in 2010. The Plan seeks to accommodate future growth and preserve agriculture. The County's growth area was created in 1977 centered on the I-95/US 40 and MD 24 corridors. 80% of growth has occurred in that area. There is sufficient land area in the growth area to handle the projected growth out to 2025. The County faces issues with environmental constraints, density increases to fit today's demands, and APFO impacts. The County presently has a 105% threshold for school capacity. The state uses 120%. This creates a situation where a school district can be closed to development unless the County front funds the needed improvements. It also can lead to growth occurring in rural areas. There has also been a shift in the type of housing product being proposed to comply with the APFO. More 55+ communities are being proposed. The County has attempted to coordinate with the municipalities on water and sewer service. Issues of concern regard the off base BRAC growth, Perryman well field, Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC), transportation issues, and lack of funding assistance from the State. Specific transportation issues regard the lack of alternative modes, the Hatem Bridge re-decking, the I-95 corridor expansion. The County has preserved 43,000 acres of farmland, and 55,000 acres are the goal by 2012. They use MALPF, a local purchase of development rights (PDR) program and Rural Legacy. The issues for Harford County are maintaining a viable agricultural economy, encouraging the use of TDR's, future

funding for ag preservation, targeting growth, funding for infrastructure improvements, and addressing environmental issues.

Richard Bickel provided a presentation on the DVRPC region to the County's northeast. The DVRPC is the MPO for a 9 county region in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In addition to the 2 states and 9 counties, there are 353 local governments in the DVRPC region. The agency is advisory in its role as it attempts to plan for orderly growth. Each of the 353 local governments has its own priorities. The DVRPC region has 5.5 million people and 2.8 million jobs. By 2035, it is estimated the region will have 6.1 million people and 3.1 million jobs. Since 1930, the region's land development has increased at a rate 5 times the increase in population. Obviously, sprawl is a problem. The DVRPC growth vision is for sustainable growth with accessible multi-modal transportation system. The 2030 plan seeks to support a concept of growth concentrated in centers to support public transit and discourage the blurring of community character. The plan recognizes 4 types of communities: core, older suburbs, growing suburbs, and rural areas. Goods movement is a key to region's road capacity. Other key issues regard open space, land use, property taxes, older suburbs, growing suburbs, traffic growth, and linking land use and transportation through innovative designs.

Gail Webb-Owings spoke about Kent County's historic focus of preserving its agricultural economy and rural character. Since 1900, the County has experienced a population increase from 18,000 to 20,000. Chestertown is the County's major growth center. The County looks to tourism as key to its economic future. The County is tied to Cecil County and New Castle County by issues such as Rte. 301 expansion, the Sassafras River, Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway, and water resources issues. The County is also experiencing a surge in mushroom farms re-locating from Chester County.

Larry Klimovitz provided a background of himself and the BMC. Mr. Klimovitz has worked in local government for Harford County and for State government in the Office of Budget and Management. The BMC was organized in 1992 by Gov. William Donald Schaeffer in an effort to streamline State government. It is a private non-profit organization consisting of 40 employees. 6 jurisdictions (Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, Howard County) use the BMC to address regional issues such as transportation planning, comp plans and water issues. 75% of BMC efforts involve transportation issues. The MPO's region contains 2.6 million people. That is projected to increase to 3.1 million by 2035. There is always a funding deficit in regard to demand. BMC works with MDOT and MDP for short and long term planning related to water supply, homeland security, crime prevention, and air quality. Regional trends include increased cost of living, affordability, demand for services, BRAC impacts, real estate values, Socio-economic and racial diversity issues, aging population, and workforce issues. 125,000 commute from BMC region to Washington DC area. 25,000 commute from Pennsylvania to BMC region. MARC train improvements are needed, aging infrastructure is also an issue.

Clive Graham opened the floor for questions.

Eileen Butler asked about TDR issues. Mr. Baker replied that New Castle County had two issues, not enough incentive and barriers to transaction were too high.

Eileen Butler queried about private wells. Ms. Gleisner stated Harford County does not permit community wells in the coastal plain because of the proximity to APG.

Dr. Diane Lane inquired about the 105% threshold for school capacity. Ms. Gleisner explained that the 105% threshold is tied to an impact fee and it can lead to a school district being closed for development.

Paula Gilley asked about the 105% threshold for school capacity. Ms. Gleisner explained that Harford County front funds for school improvements and hopes for reimbursement from the State.

Dr. Diane Lane asked when the State contributes. Mr. Klimovitz replied that you must negotiate with the State and it is always a risk.

Will Whiteman inquired as to impact fees. Ms. Gleisner explained that they are targeted solely to schools and are in the amount of \$7-8,000.

John Poole asked about water supply and contamination issues. Mr. Baker replied that south of the canal groundwater is the primary source for drinking water. North of the canal surface water is the primary source. Water supplies are regulated by the State.

Will Whiteman asked if streams are used or reservoirs. Mr. Baker replied that both are used.

Eileen Butler asked about impact fees. Mr. Baker replied the fees are for public safety, parks and sewer. No fees are collected for roads since the County does not maintain any roads.

Ken Wiggins asked about special taxing districts. Kent County does not have them and Harford County's Council voted them down.

Randy Hutton asked about the village/hamlet concept. Mr. Baker replied it is a mixed use concept on large tracts. It is presently being reviewed for potential changes.

Rupert Rossetti asked about a building permit cap in Kent County. Ms. Webb-Owings replied it was considered by the Commissioners but never approved.

Rupert Rossetti asked about DVRPC Center plans. Mr. Bickel replied that the idea is to concentrate growth around transit stops to encourage mix uses.

Eileen Butler asked about water resource recharge. Mr. Baker replied New Castle County is moving toward watershed planning, but is not there yet.

Sarah Colenda asked about recreation areas. Mr. Baker replied New Castle County requires active recreation in open space. 50% is required.

Diana Broomell asked if stormwater facilities can be placed in open space. Mr. Baker replied yes it can.

Clive Graham thanked the speakers and stated that their presentations were very informative.

Anirban Basu presented an overview of the Cecil County Growth Study with selected excerpts.

Sarah Colenda presented the Economic Sub-committee report. Clive Graham reminded the group that the municipalities will be coming to the May meeting. Carl Walbeck presented the Infrastructure and Transportation committee report. Rupert Rossetti presented the Water Resources Committee report.

Vicky Strause asked if Mr. Rossetti was considering recreation waters. Mr. Rossetti replied he was not; this issue would fall under the Housing and Recreation subcommittee.

Walter Buck suggested the Susquehanna River as a drinking water source. Mr. Rossetti agreed that it should be considered.

Owen Thorne presented Agriculture Sub-committee report. Henry Shafer presented the Public Service committee report. Jeff Clewer presented the Housing and Recreation committee report. Ann Jackson presented the Land Use Committee report.

Dr. Diane Lane distributed the “Better Models for Development in Maryland” booklet.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday 21 May 2008, 6:30 p.m. Cecil College Technology Center, Rm. 208

Respectfully submitted:

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Eric S. Sennstrom, AICP  
Director – Planning & Zoning

DVRPC – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission  
BMC – Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
MARC – Maryland Rail Commuter  
SRBC – Susquehanna River Basin Commission  
BRAC – Base Realignment and Closure

MGD – Million Gallons per Day  
TDR – Transfer of Development Rights  
TND – Traditional Neighborhood Dev.  
PDR – Purchase of Development Rights  
MALPF – MD Ag Land Pres. Foundation