

CECIL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
27 May 2009

Present: Bennett, John; Broomell, Diana; Butler, Eileen; Cairns, Ed; Clewer, Jeff; Colenda, Sarah; Derr, Dan; Doordan, B. Patrick; Duckett, Vernon; Edwards, Sandra; Folk, Patricia; Gilley, Paula; Jackson, Ann; Kilby, Phyllis; Lane, Diane; Polite, Dan; Pugh, Mike; Rossetti, Rupert; Smyser, Chuck; Stewart, Gary; Thorne, Owen; Walbeck, Carl; Whitehurst, Dan; Whiteman, Will; Graham, Clive – ERM; Black, David; Di Giacomo, Tony; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Buck, Walter; Bunnell, John; Day, Shawn; Deckard, Donna; Denver, John; Ellerton, Vaughan; Gell, Robert; Hodge, Robert; Priapi, Vic; Shaffer, Henry; Snyder, Linda; Strause, Vicky; Tapley, Donna; Wiggins, Kennard

Call to Order: Dr. Lane called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by John Bennett to approve the 20 May 2009 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by B. Patrick Doordan. All members present voted in favor of motion. Motion carried to approve the minutes.

New Business: Dr. Lane announced the resignation of Brian Bolender from the Citizen Oversight Committee (COC). Dr. Lane presented a summary of the evening's agenda and stated that she desired the COC to move straight through the meeting agenda without a break so it might be possible to avoid a meeting on 3 June 2009.

Clive Graham advised the COC that there were three handouts for tonight consisting of one titled Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Map Issues, one titled Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Meeting Packet, and one titled Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Citizen Oversight Committee Goals Objectives Policies and Action Items which is a multi-colored matrix. Mr. Graham presented an explanation of what the matrix is trying to achieve and how the color scheme relates to the impending tasks of the COC and ERM. Carl Walbeck noted that the matrix was mailed too late and the text was too small to read. Dr. Lane noted that the goals were mailed by Michael Bayer last Friday. Mr. Graham explained that the items highlighted in yellow will be discussed tonight, the items highlighted in orange will be discussed on 6/17 with the draft white paper, and the items highlighted in blue to be discussed in the draft comprehensive plan. The items in bold will need to have careful attention paid by the COC as some of them represented conflicts among subcommittee recommendations. The white paper will be discussed in a public forum tentatively scheduled for 7/15/09. Once the white paper language is agreed upon, it will form the basis of the Comprehensive Plan. Mike Pugh queried as to the meaning of the recommendation to maintain equity value of agricultural land and the implications if that is accepted. Mr. Graham responded that agricultural equity issue will be addressed in the white paper and the language to be inserted could be debated then. Ed Cairns noted that some issues are the same. Clive Graham stated that there will be overlap and that

combining and consolidating will occur. Diana Broomell questioned as to how the COC will recognize red flags and how will conflict be resolved. Dr. Lane stated that the COC will resolve issue conflicts. Vernon Duckett interjected that the goals are worth little without methods to make them happen. Dr. Lane reminded the COC that they need to decide the direction in which to proceed and reiterated that the yellow will be decided tonight, the orange in the whitepaper, and the blue in the draft plan.

Clive Graham presented the contents of the map issues packet. The first issue is the concept map that resulted from the map sub-committee in December and January. Each consideration in the packet that is associated with an issue is a starting point for discussion. Mr. Graham stated that the first issue is how big should the County be at build-out. Pat Doordan noted that the numbers are not achievable nor are they realistic. Ed Cairns questioned as to the need to study buildout, why not focus on 2030 projection. Mr. Graham responded that the buildout permits the County to decide on 2 alternate long term views on whether the County should be smaller or larger, need to plan for more people, more jobs, more roads, etc. Ed Cairns noted that the concept plan map makes more sense and logic and creates less impact through more concentrated growth. Dr. Lane stated that buildout won't occur for 70 to 100 years. Improvements can be made incrementally to keep pace with growth. Eileen Butler queried as to whether a third option should be considered and asked if the County was capable of handling the future growth. Vernon Duckett interjected that the issue of finances has been ignored and that we are headed for a deep and extended depression. Will Whiteman wanted to know why the MDP 2030 projections aren't being used. Mr. Graham stated that MDP's numbers will be used in the plan. Will Whiteman was flummoxed by the need to look out 70 to 100 years. Carl Walbeck said that he liked the current zoning numbers combined with the concept plan's geography. Diana Broomell was vexed by the size of the numbers and pleaded for more caution in growth. Ed Cairns posited that the concept plan was the better way to grow.

Ed Cairns made a motion to use the concept plan and to allocate 2030 numbers. Carl Walbeck seconded the motion. Paula Gilley noted that there are other map issues that need to be discussed before the COC votes. Ed Cairns agreed to table his motion until the other issues are dealt with. Eileen Butler stated that lower growth numbers should be used and issues should be resolved. Gary Stewart said that all population projections are questionable due to recession and other factors. Discussion ensued regarding population projections and buildout scenarios. Rupert Rossetti suggested using the concept plan with current zoning numbers. Gary Stewart inquired as to MDP's margin of error in making projections. Sarah Colenda stated that buildout equates to total infrastructure in growth area. Eileen Butler opined that long term planning is good.

Clive Graham presented the next issue as being the area to the west and south of the Town of Rising Sun. He stated that Option A would be to show it on the concept map as a Low Growth Area or to go with Option B which would be to leave it as a Rural Conservation Area. Paula Gilley presented a rationale as to why a portion of the area known as the Tosh property should be included in the Low Growth Area. She continued by explaining the impacts of the Rural Conservation designation on the Tosh family and that the Low Growth designation would only go as far south as Wyatt Lane. Dr. Lane noted that the COC has tried to avoid effects on property rights.

Motion was made by Paula Gilley to show the area as Option A on the concept map. Motion was seconded by B. Patrick Doordan. Twelve (12) members of the COC voted in favor of the motion. Nine (9) members voted in opposition. One (1) member abstained. Two (2) members did not vote. Motion carried to include as Option A.

Clive Graham presented the next issue which is the effort to define the growth area versus the growth corridor versus priority funding areas. The idea is to clear up confusion that exists and to have clarity in the white paper. Rupert Rossetti said that the COC needs to clarify to avoid a fuzzy definition. Mike Pugh objected to the language relative to medium density and the provision of water and sewer and that clarity was needed. Discussion ensued on density, priority funding areas, and establishing infrastructure. Clive Graham indicated that the definition will be clarified in the white paper to be presented on 6/17/09.

Clive Graham stated that the next issue was to determine the location and extent of the Priority Preservation Areas. He noted that three areas have been proposed, one on Elk Neck, one in the north, and one south of the canal. Options available to the COC include choosing one, two, or all three. Dan Derr questioned the feasibility of the PPA's and suggested creation of a better PPA. Dan Polite and John Bennett explained the methodology behind the PPA's depicted. Mike Pugh noted that the PPA's are too broad brush and that refinement needs to occur. Owen Thorne stated that the APM sub-committee did not have the time or resources to drill down to refine the areas. Consequently, the areas are broad brush that will be refined by others. He is concerned with preserving the productive soils.

Carl Walbeck made a motion to include all three PPA's on the concept map. Motion was seconded by Eileen Butler. Thirteen (13) members voted in favor of motion. Five (5) members voted in opposition. Six (6) members did not vote. Motion carried.

Clive Graham presented the next issue which concerns rural density. Option A is to have no change from the current situation. Option B is to reduce the density in the NAR to make consistent with the SAR. Option C is to reduce the density in the NAR to make consistent with the SAR, with enhanced TDR sending rights.

Motion was made by John Bennett to adopt Option A. Motion was seconded by Dan Derr. Eleven (11) members voted in favor of motion. Seven (7) members voted in opposition to motion. Six (6) members did not vote. Motion carried.

Clive Graham presented the next issue as how to show the area south of Elkton on the concept map. Option A is to retain concept plan designation. Option B is to designate the area as Rural Conservation per the current comp plan.

Motion was made by Eileen Butler to adopt Option B. Motion seconded by John Bennett. Ten (10) members voted in favor of motion. Eleven (11) members voted against the motion. Three (3) members did not vote. Motion was defeated. Option A remains the depiction of the area on the concept map. Clive Graham presented the next issue as to whether the commercial areas should be shown on the concept map. Option A is to not show the commercial areas on the concept plan map. Option B would be to show the retail areas.

Gary Stewart made a motion to adopt Option A. Sarah Colenda seconded the motion. Seventeen (17) members voted in favor of motion. No members opposed the motion. Seven (7) members did not vote.

The COC brought the motion of Ed Cairns regarding the concept plan back from the table. Ed Cairns agreed to amend his motion to use the concept plan with the additions agreed to tonight. (Option B) Carl Walbeck seconded the motion. Eleven members (11) voted in favor of the motion. Ten (10) members voted in opposition. Three (3) members did not vote. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Dr. Lane adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: 17 June 2009, 6:00 p.m., Elk Room, County Administration Building

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, AICP
Director – Planning & Zoning