CECIL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITIZEN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
4 March 2009

Present: Bennett, John; Broomell, Diana: Butler, Eileen; Clewer, Jeff; Colenda, Sarah; Day, Shawn; Derr, Dan; Doordan, B. Patrick; Duckett, Vernon; Edwards, Sandra; Folk, Patricia; Gell, Bob; Gilley, Paula; Hodge, Robert; Hutton; Randy; Jackson, Ann; Kilby, Phyllis; Lane, Diane; Polite, Dan; Priapi, Vic; Rossetti, Rupert; Shaffer, Henry; Smyser, Chuck; Stewart, Gary; Strause, Vicky; Tapley, Donna; Thorne, Owen; Whitehurst, Dan; Whiteman, Will; Graham, Clive – ERM; Black, David; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Bolender, Brian; Buck, Walter; Bunnell, John; Cairns, Ed; Deckard, Donna; Denver, John; Ellerton, Vaughan; Poole, John; Pugh, Mike; Snyder, Linda; Walbeck, Carl; Wiggins, Kennard; Di Giacomo, Tony

Observers: McWilliams, Tom; Tevebaugh, James

Call to Order: Dr. Lane called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Owen Thorne to approve the February meeting minutes with the revisions to add the words “not” and “as being” to the second sentence of the last paragraph. The motion was seconded by John Bennett. All members present voted in favor of motion to approve. Motion carried.

Dr. Lane presented a summary of the meeting agenda which contained two subcommittee reports and she indicated that there would be a discussion of the relevant issues that have been forwarded to her at the end of the agenda.

New Business: Owen Thorne presented the report of the Agriculture, Preservation and Minerals subcommittee. Mr. Thorne introduced the members of the subcommittee. He proceeded to present the subcommittee’s areas of interest, process, goals, and guest speakers. Mr. Thorne’s presentation focused on the County’s agricultural situation, forestry situation, agricultural preservation issues, Priority Preservation Areas (PPA), Natural Resources, and related land use issues. Discussion ensued regarding PPA’s and whether it is mandatory to have it in the Plan. Clive Graham responded that the County’s status as a certified County required the inclusion of a PPA. He indicated that the main benefit of certification is that it permits a greater retention of funds to be used for easement acquisition in the County. Gary Stewart queried on the apparent incongruity implementing the PPA recommendation and the green infrastructure recommendations in that it would preclude the establishment of a growth area. Eileen Butler ruminated on whether adequate consideration of open space goals, wildlife corridors, or bike/ped greenways occurred.

Dr. Gell presented the report of the Infrastructure and Transportation subcommittee. He indicated that page 34 of the meeting packet contained the goals of his subcommittee and that he would be

presenting from that list. The subcommittee is of the opinion that maintaining and enhancing the quality of the road system, focusing transportation investments in the growth area, encouraging funding mechanisms to finance improvements, supporting mass transit, establishing commuter rail, encouraging freight shipments by rail, encouraging accessibility to nearby airports, promoting ridesharing, protecting scenic highways, and using the county's waterways to ship goods are important to the County's future. Discussion ensued regarding the subcommittee presentation and goals.

Dr. Lane reiterated to the COC that certain looming issues will demand a frankness and level of clarity in the discussions so that the difficult decisions confronting the group can be dealt with. Discussion ensued regarding the COC concerns with the proposed draft map and associated densities, the members' needs in regard to clarity around the numbers so that their confidence can be boosted. Dr. Lane presented a list of issues she has received from individual members about the map, the numbers, whether they reflect reality, what population does the County want, and do we want to limit sprawl. She indicated that she feels the level of commitment is good and she understands the frustration in representing your constituency when uncertainty reigns. A candid and open dialogue will be required to move the process forward and to create a land use map and document that contains solid goals for the County's future.

David Black presented a presentation on an alternate method of a buildout analysis that he has developed that has a more solid basis in reflecting reality than does the MDP model. Dr. Lane queried the COC on which method they would prefer to use. The COC indicated that they would like to look at current density buildout and proposed density buildout based on draft land use plan using David Black's methodology. Clive Graham presented an overview of density projection and yields pertaining to MDP's model.

Dan Whitehurst presented his powerpoint presentation regarding the County's growth area and its ability to accommodate future growth. Eileen Butler asked what amount of growth can the County have based on environmental constraints and why is the MDP model predicting 67,512 additional units. She suggested looking at the County and determining what we can carry as to future growth. Dr. Lane queried the Committee as to whether they desired to use David Black's method to look at the existing plan and come up with the yield numbers, and to take the proposed land use map and come up with the yield numbers using the same densities for both. The COC said yes to this course of action.

Discussion ensued regarding the ultimate size of the County, the size of the growth area and rural areas, the issue of greenbelts, and the issue of design constraints. Dr. Lane stated that David Black's analysis will be presented at the 3/18/09 meeting.

Adjournment: Dr. Lane adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 3/18/09 at 6:00 p.m. in the Elk Room, County Administration Building.

Respectfully submitted:

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Eric S. Sennstrom, AICP
Director – Planning & Zoning