

Press Release

Workshop to Plan the Future of McHenry

The public is invited to a planning workshop for the future of McHenry at Garrett College on Friday May 4th (7:00 p.m.) and Saturday May 5th (beginning at 9:00 a.m.). The purpose of the workshop is to explore ways that McHenry can be made a better place for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Who should attend? Property owners, residents, businesses, and anyone else who cares about the future of McHenry.

The workshop is being led by Garrett County Planning and Land Development Office as part of the 2008 update of the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan. The need to plan the future of McHenry was identified in a 2004 Planning Study. That study noted that McHenry is important as the gateway and major retail center for the Deep Creek Lake area, and also has important public uses such as the fairgrounds, Garrett College, the visitors' center, and post office. The study added, however, that McHenry does not function well especially at peak periods:

- Some left turn traffic movements are problematic.
- There are few safe places to walk.
- There is no park or public open space.
- There is almost no public access to the lakefront (without crossing private property) and no facilities such as parking.
- Parking overflows at some commercial sites.

A number of new developments are proposed that will have a significant effect on McHenry including the County's new Exhibition Center and the Adventure Sports Center.

The workshop will focus on "Downtown McHenry"; the area roughly bounded by Sang Run Road to the north, Marsh Hill Road to the west, Timber Ridge Road to the south, and Garrett College to the east. The workshop will also consider the McHenry "Influence Area" including Point View and the Wisp Resort.

The workshop will be participatory and hands-on. Detailed maps will be available and participants will have the opportunity to mark up the maps and identify specific ways in which McHenry can be made a better place regarding land use, traffic and circulation, parking, open space, sidewalks, trails and bicycle routes, signage, and landscaping.

The workshop will begin with a presentation at 7:00 pm on Friday evening May 4th in Garrett College auditorium. The Saturday session will begin at 9:00 am in the auditorium and then break into small working groups led by facilitators. While we strongly recommend the public attend the Friday evening session, persons can participate on Saturday even if they cannot come on Friday.

If persons cannot attend the workshop but wish to comment, or if they have questions or need more information, please contact John Nelson, Director Garrett County Planning and Land Development Office at 301 334 1920 or by e-mail at johnn@garrettcounty.org.
