

GARRETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

203 South Fourth Street –Room 208
Oakland Maryland 21550
(301) 334-1920 FAX (301) 334-5023
E-mail: planning@garrettcountry.org

MINUTES

The Garrett County Planning Commission held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 7, 2018, at 1:30 p.m., in the County Commissioners Meeting Room. Members and guests in attendance at the meeting included:

Tony Doerr
Bruce Swift
Jeff Messenger

William Weissgerber
Liz Georg
Paul Durham

David Moe
Deborah Carpenter -staff
William DeVore -staff

1. Call to Order - by Chairman Tony Doerr at 1:30 pm.
2. The February minutes were approved as corrected.
3. Report of Officers – None
4. Unfinished Business – None
5. New Business – None

A. Miscellaneous

1. Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Appeals Cases-

- a. **VR-778** - an application submitted by William Weissgerber, et al, for a Variance to allow the construction of a single family residence, to within 20.0 feet of the rear property line. The owner has purchased the buy down from the State of Maryland. The property is located at 145 Thornberry

Lane, tax map 66, parcel 546 and is zoned Lake Residential 1 (LR1). The Planning Commission had no comments on the request.

2. Action on (PRDs) Planned Residential Developments- None

3. Action on Major Subdivisions- None

4. Comprehensive Plan Discussion-

Director Carpenter explained that the kick off meeting with the community for the development of the new Comprehensive Plan would be on **May 18th**, at Garrett College, between **7:00 and 9:00 pm**.

5. Comprehensive Plan Chapter Nine–*Consultant Topic List*- Director Carpenter distributed a list of topics that would be sent to our consultant, AECOM. Plan topics for Chapter Eight include:

1. Update existing conditions and projected housing unit numbers in cooperation with Garrett County Community Action.
2. Add a reference to the Pathways to Homeownership program and any other applicable programs.
3. Add a mention of the grant that the Dove Center has received to build transitional housing units.
4. Issues to be considered in this chapter are:
 - a. Costs of development and the influence, positive and negative, of regulation.
 - b. Lack of long term rentals and variety in the housing stock, both which may aid middle income families and the elderly.
 - c. Whether private/public partnerships can resolve some issues.
 - d. The homeless population and the availability of cold weather shelters.

6. Comprehensive Plan Chapter Ten–*Mineral Resources Element*

Director Carpenter reviewed Chapter 10 of the Plan with the Commission. This chapter is required by the State and the director noted that the existing tables and maps in the Chapter would have to be updated by our consultant. AECOM can find important information from the Maryland Bureau of Mines regarding surface and underground coal mining in the County. Non-coal mining should also be researched and updated accordingly. Natural gas would also be mentioned, including the existence of natural gas in the Marcellus and Utica Shales, by modern methods, such as fracking, though the practice has been banned in Maryland.

The director noted that it may be best to include renewable energy into this Chapter. That type of energy would include biofuels, biomass, geothermal, solar, hydro and wind energy systems. Allowances should also be considered for residential and agricultural uses, especially for wind and solar.

The loss of farmland, due to large industrial solar arrays should also be discussed along with any recommendations to consider changing local zoning ordinances. Policies and actions in Section 10.4 include only three recommendations, as part of the 2008 Plan, which was at the start of the shale gas debate. Considerations should be made to add or remove, or elaborate, on these recommendations, developing new goals where necessary.

The director briefly reviewed the progress report sent by AECOM that outlines the headway that has been made by the consultant, so far. Topics include: data collection, stakeholder interviews, preliminary issues identified and a community visioning workshop. Primary issues identified under natural resources and recreation include: development patterns, water resources, Deep Creek economic issues and parks/trails/recreation issues.

Paul Durham believes that the Energy Advisory Committee Report that was recently assembled could also be useful in providing the information needed in this Chapter.

The director will compile and distribute a summary list of the topics to be considered by the consultant concerning this Chapter.

Next month, Chapter 11- Economic Development will be reviewed, which is one of the final chapters of the Plan.

- B. Next Scheduled meeting** –The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for **April 4, 2018**, in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, at **1:30 pm**.

- C. Adjournment- 2:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

William J. DeVore
Zoning Administrator