

**GARRETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

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**MINUTES**

**The Garrett County Planning Commission** held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 2, 2018, at 1:30 p.m., in the County Commissioners Meeting Room. Members and guests in attendance at the meeting included:

Tony Doerr	Tim Schwinabart	Deborah Carpenter –staff
Jeff Conner	Liz Georg	Chad Fike -staff
Shelly Argabrite	Jim Hinebaugh	David Moe
Doug Barton	Chet Parsons, AECOM	Terri Cutright
Amy Loomis		

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

**A. Miscellaneous**

**1. Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Appeals Cases-**

1. **VR-781** - an application submitted by James Blint for a Variance to allow the addition of a second story to an existing single family residence. The owner proposes to stay within the current building footprint. The property is located on 335 Paradise Acres Road, tax map 66, parcel 35, lot 4 and is zoned Lake Residential 1 (LR1). The Planning Commission offered no comments on the request.

2. **SE-467** - an application submitted by Jason Huston for a Special Exception for an eight-bedroom Transient Vacation Rental Unit. The property is located at 127 Bobcat Hill Road, tax map 57, parcel 558, lot 6 and is zoned Lake Residential 1 (LR1). The Planning Commission offered no comments on the request.

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

**3. Action on Major Subdivisions- None**

**4. 2017 Annual Report Review**

Director Carpenter presented the 2017 Annual Report for discussion, review and vote. The Report includes summaries of Planning Commission meetings, subdivision activity, building activity, land preservation programs and a discussion of local goals. The Commissioners had one question about the number of dwelling units in charts on page 16 and the fact that the total numbers in the Construction Value chart did not equal the number of units in the New Housing Units Growth chart. It was later noted that the note below the New Housing Units Growth chart specified that the County had issued 83 permits, but 24 were replacement units and therefore did not qualify as new growth.

Director Carpenter noted that County had reached its local goal of 10% of growth in PFA areas, with 15% of new lots, 12% of residential development permits and 13% of commercial development permits being located within PFAs. However, this is the first year that goal has been reached, and due to the lack of consistency in achieving the goal it should remain unchanged. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to maintain the goal of 10% of growth located in PFA areas and to approve the 2017 Annual Report as written. The Report will be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners and the Secretary of MD Dept. of Planning.

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

1. Update description of current economic conditions and activity, as well as economic projections.
2. Include a discussion of the occupancy, infrastructure and potential of existing industrial parks.
3. Include reference to the pending construction of the shell building in McHenry Business Park, as well as an assessment of the ‘inventory’ available for incoming businesses.

4. Discuss various aspects of workforce development, including but not limited to:
  - a. Job availability vs. workforce availability
  - b. Cost to employers to provide affordable health care
  - c. The cost of operating a business in MD
  - d. An aging workforce
  - e. The preponderance of candidates failing drug testing
  - f. The cost of housing
  - g. Adequate wages vs. welfare
  - h. Employee retention
  
5. Include a discussion of agritourism, noting the need to adequately define the term, the need to ensure equity in the allowable business processes, and allow for flexibility for farmers to supplement their income. Update description of existing conditions for coal, non-coal and gas resources.

The Commission agreed that the above list adequately represented their thoughts in relation to Chapter Eleven and agreed that it would be forwarded to AECOM.

#### **6. Comprehensive Plan – Infrastructure Chapter**

Director Carpenter introduced the topic of having a chapter on infrastructure as requested by the Planning Commission in previous meetings. All have agreed that the need for adequate infrastructure needs to be highlighted, but Director Carpenter noted that we need to begin by defining what we mean by the term. In the past we have referred to five elements – water, sewer, transportation, electricity and broadband. Water and sewer discussions are located in the water resources element of the document, while transportation issues reside in the transportation element, both of which are required by law. Director Carpenter expressed concern that the terms electricity and broadband do not adequately encompass the breadth of the discussion we should be having about infrastructure. For example, electricity may be more about the provision in basic needs to a structure, like light and heat, while broadband is more about all forms of communication including phone, TV and radio as well as internet. After some discussion, Chet Parsons from AECOM, the Comprehensive Plan consultants, suggested that perhaps we want to refer to these elements as hard and soft infrastructure.

As to where the discussion of infrastructure should reside within the document, Chet Parsons presented an example of Wicomico County’s Comprehensive Plan, where it was located within the Community Facilities element. Discussion did not lead to a decision on where to put this element, but it can be placed in either the economic or social sections.

Discussion was also held about the avoiding repetition by placing all recommendations in what is currently identified in the Comprehensive Plan RFP

as Chapter V Action Plan. The idea of this Chapter is to avoid repetition and put all recommendations for policy changes and specific actions in one location rather than both in each respective chapter and at the end. Director Carpenter noted that the last chapter of the current Comprehensive Plan does provide additional detail about the recommendations including responsible party and timeframe for completion. Chet Parsons noted that when responsible parties are named for action items, they need to be involved and have buy in for the process from the beginning. Commissioner Argabrite noted that it is important to add measurements for achieving those recommendations as well.

## **7. Community Visioning Workshop**

AECOM explained their process and progress to date. They have been focused on gathering data for Chapter One and on stakeholder group meetings. Terri Cutright has been organizing and conducting stakeholder meetings with various groups in order to gather the thoughts from those agencies intimately involved in parts of the Plan. These are the groups that could possibly be identified as responsible entities in the Action Plan.

The Visioning Open House to be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> from 7 – 9 pm at the Garrett College Special Events Center will be the kickoff of citizen engagement. Chet explained how the stations will be set up, as well as the expectations of each Planning Commission member. They will be asked to locate themselves at a station for half of the session and mingle for the other half. Chet identified the stations as Community Vision, Community Assets, and Needs and Opportunities. He noted that this is not a presentation, so the public can come and go at their leisure during the two hour timeframe.

Director Carpenter noted that the press release had been distributed to local media outlets, as well as on social media and with local groups to be included in newsletters and eblasts.

**B. Next Scheduled meeting** –The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for **June 6, 2018**, in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, at **1:30 pm**.

**C. Adjournment- 2:35 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

William J. DeVore  
Zoning Administrator