

**Maryland Planning Directors' Roundtable – Spring 2010**  
**Wednesday, June 2, 2010**  
**10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**  
**Banneker-Douglass Museum, Annapolis**

**Meeting Summary ([Agenda](#))**

**Introductions and Opening Remarks**

[Rich Josephson](#), Director of Planning Services for MDP, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Secretary Richard Hall also welcomed everyone and began by inquiring as to how many people attended the APA Conference in New Orleans last month. Secretary Hall felt it was a very good conference and interesting agenda.

Secretary Hall said he would like to hear a little more from the Planning Directors today. The last meeting was held in March so he would like to use this meeting to give everyone some opportunity for more discussion.

**Departmental Legislation from the 2010 General Assembly Session**

Secretary Hall referred to the two Bills that were passed the last Session.

- [The Sustainable Community Act of 2010](#) – focus is to bring in key non-historic buildings. (Amanda Conn will talk further about this)
- [Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission](#) – new name given to the Smart Growth Task Force. This Commission will have 36 active slots; and the new Commission will begin in September. Secretary Hall asked that anyone having suggestions for names to serve on the new Commission, should let MDP know. Jenny King is the key contact for the Growth Commission.

Before continuing on with the meeting, Secretary Hall asked everyone to please introduce themselves.

He then introduced [Amanda Conn](#) to elaborate a little more on both bills. Ms. Conn prepared a hand-out giving the highlights of each.

Ms. Conn referred to The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010, saying the regs were published last week. This will include a ranking and rating process, along with favoring provisions (projects that meet those favoring provisions). A

provision would favor areas that have regulation implemented streamlining. Ms. Conn asked that everyone think about whether they have in his or her jurisdiction an area or areas that have redevelopment. Ms. Conn advised everyone that a letter will be sent out very soon requesting areas of regulatory streamlining. Some examples of regulatory streamlining or development incentives will be provided in the letter. You will need to certify these areas by the end of July; including mapping and or identifying these areas.

## **PlanMaryland Update**

Rich Josephson presented a [power point presentation entitled “A Statewide Plan for Smart and Sustainable Growth.”](#) The process for PlanMaryland involved a lot of different State agencies; and the collaborating process will be continuing. There has been quite a bit of outreach and public participation. Other activities include interviews with stakeholders, public forums and internet surveys. Have received quite a bit of feedback and are trying to keep it simple. Would like to have a plan that can be implemented. Comments have also been received from people attending the public forums. Ten forums have been held so far. Plans are for a series of forums next year and to hold them in other places and to try and spread out. Some of the common themes from the forums include environmental and preservations issues, particularly in Southern Maryland; and strong preservation on the Eastern Shore.

With regard to the stakeholder meetings, Mr. Josephson said they are trying to reach out to other organizations as well.

Concerning rankings for the forums, Mr. Josephson suggested taking a look at the State Planning Visions to see what is important – the top visions include: Quality of Live and Sustainability; Community Design; Environmental Protection; Transportation; Economic Development and Implementation. He indicated that he would like to receive comments to see what is working and what is not. People have been very appreciative; and raised some expectations. Would also like to see the State working together to make things happen and also look for incentives that will work and go long term.

Mr. Josephson highlighted the things that will make PlanMaryland work and also the timeline for this effort, which includes completing the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the forums; developing draft issues; preparing a draft plan for review; and preparing a final plan. Mr. Josephson also referred everyone to the website: [www.plan.maryland.gov](http://www.plan.maryland.gov). Mr. Josephson said he is trying to reach as many people as possible. He also plans to talk with other State agencies and the importance of the planning process. Also plans to talk with the sister agencies and getting together with the County Planning Directors to help in preparation of the draft plan.

Secretary Hall added that at this point, things are pretty much general, but definitely would like to have feedback.

### **Smart, Green & Growing Legislation – Milestones approaching**

[Peter Conrad](#) advised everyone about the on-line Planning Commission Education Course. The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 requires local jurisdiction's Planning Commission/Board and Board of Appeals members to complete an education course on or before July 1, 2010. The Maryland Department of Planning has developed this course as a result of the law. Mr. Conrad said Maryland has joined eight other States nationally. This effort went on line in late September and has seen a significant surge. At least 450 people activated accounts on line; including 1200 Board of Appeals and Planning Commissioners; with 200 people completing the on-line course.

[John Coleman](#) also advised that MDP has partnered with MML for a live version of the on-line course at their summer conference. Some of the Planning Directors have conducted their own training, and Mr. Coleman said to let him know when this has been completed.

Mr. Josephson said binders will be provided at MML with material that is currently on-line.

Mr. Josephson also talked about [Annual Report Guidance](#). He handed out a [brief overview](#), saying the report is required to be submitted to the governing body and MDP. There are basic annual report requirements; reports are due by July 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. There is also a template that will help provide information that should be included in the annual report. The question of how to calculate density was talked about. Mr. Josephson asked everyone to take a look at the draft and would like to have comments within the next couple of weeks or so and then will get something out as soon as possible.

Mr. Josephson added that this gives local governments an opportunity to see what is going on. Reporting requirements have been in place for a long time.

### **2010-2020 Heritage Areas Strategic Plan**

[Matt Power presented a power point](#) beginning with some background of the Plan, noting there are eleven certified heritage areas. A consultant was hired to help with this effort and MDP spent 18 months with the consultants. The program was reviewed to see how it could be improved. Mr. Power went over the chief elements of the plan that include the Statement of Three Focus Areas; Identification of Strategies; and Program Performance Measures.

Also looked to see what makes the heritage areas unique. The program gives straight up operating opportunities; and is a way to strengthen the role of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

Mr. Power encouraged everyone to work together on this effort. It can also be found on line at [www.mht.maryland.gov/heritageareas-plan.html](http://www.mht.maryland.gov/heritageareas-plan.html).

### **Roundtable wrap-up and announcements**

Before opening up the meeting to the Planning Directors, Secretary Hall thanked everyone who had a hand in the Census effort.

[Dave Umling, Planning Director from Cumberland](#): working on a comp plan and coordinating a planning conference to include PA, MD and WVA. The focus is rebuilding our nation's infrastructure.

[Derrick Berlage, Planning Director for St. Mary's County](#) reported that his staff is working on a comprehensive plan regarding rural preservation zone – preserve 80% of their county, and also updating the zoning ordinance for rural areas. There will be a Maryland APA Seminar on July 14<sup>th</sup> at St. Mary's College.

[Jenny Plummer-Welker, Calvert County](#), added that the Planning Commission adopted the Solomons Design Manual.

[Marsha McLaughlin, Planning Director for Howard County](#) said that BMC, Harford, Baltimore County and City, Howard and Annapolis are working on a 50-year vision transit study.

[Jack Lenox, Wicomico County](#), Eastern Shore – come visit – open for the summer.

Secretary Hall noted his recent visit to Frederick County where he met with the County Commissioners, Mayor and staff. The meeting went very well and everyone was in agreement that they want to have smart growth.

Andy Ratner asked everyone to check out PlanMd on the web; and also noted the annual Bernie Fowler Wade-In that will be held on Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> at the Jefferson Patterson Park in Leonardtown, Maryland.

**Secretary Hall adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.**