

# Master Plan

## For

# The Town of Barnesville, MD

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Transmitted to Barnesville Commissioners, XXXXX XX, 2020

**Barnesville Planning Commission**

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**Meg Menke, Co-Chair**

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## **Executive Summary**

The following actions are recommended in this Master Plan. Some will require changes to ordinances, some will require decisions and expenditures by Town Commissioners, others will be accomplished by citizen advocacy.

### **Zoning**

- Amend definition and use restrictions on any property used as a tourist home; require the property owner to register Barnesville short term rental offerings with Montgomery County office and comply with those regulations.
- Change regulation of accessory buildings to permit one such structure on a property to be used as home office, or craft/antique sales, etc. A second accessory building for these purposes would require a special exception
- Change parking requirements for home offices and accessory buildings used for craft, antique or other sales.
- Amend Development Standards for Utilities to include cellular communication towers (this conforms to other legislation already adopted regarding 5G cell services)
- Do not add Agritourism as a use in Zoning Ordinance

### **Subdivision**

- Add a definition of "Site Plan"
- Add that Planning Commission may require site plan approval as a condition for granting Subdivision Approval
- Add a definition for Pedestrian Path/Bike Path
- Change Section 10, plat submission, to specify who must sign plat
- Reduce the required number of plan documents to submit from fifteen to ten
- Change the plat submission requirements to conform to new rules at Montgomery County Land Records office
- Add that Town Clerk is the official charged with maintaining and securing land records for Town

### **Forest Conservation**

- Modify ordinance to require that each applicant for building permit submit list of trees that will be removed if a new structure is to be built, or an existing structure increased in size; review to be conducted by Planning Commission

### **Building Permit**

- Modify building permit form to require applicant submit site lines and view sheds when requesting permit for new structure, or a building size is being increased.
- Create a form for Use Permit with recommended fees. This form is particularly important for new structures which may have new or more uses than residence for one family or individual

## **Capital projects**

- Request Verizon to relocate the service box that sits adjacent to Barnesville Road
- Advocate for power lines, both in town and in the surrounding area, to be undergrounded. The goal is to reduce outages from downed trees or limbs
- Continue sidewalk construction until both sides of all roads within Town have sidewalks
- Construct new sidewalk segments in public right-of-way where feasible, and use appropriate materials for each segment
- Seek a solution for excessive stormwater runoff at the intersection of Barnesville Road and W. Harris Road
- For all exterior lighting, including street lighting, move to full cutoff dark sky compliant light fixtures

## **Support for policies within Barnesville**

- Convince State of MD transportation authorities to add crosswalks at key intersections
- Approach owner of vacant land across from Town Hall about securing an acre +/- for Town Hall parking
- Continue enforcing speed limits in Town, including speed cameras, hiring off duty police officers and other strategies that prove effective
- Town Commissioners should request the Planning Commission to prepare annually an inventory of vacant residential or other buildings in town, including an estimate of the maintenance of structure and grounds, with recommendations for code inspections as appropriate.
- Encourage all residents to practice water conservation
- Encourage residents to do regular testing of well water quality
- Encourage residents to regularly monitor their waste water/septic systems
- Encourage residents to limit use of chemicals that will harm groundwater or wildlife
- Residents who are engaged in agriculture should use “best management practices” for all animal waste and other factors
- Residents who have underground tanks for chemicals should remove them as required by law
- Residents should limit use of machinery that generates high noise levels
- Continue tree beautification efforts, especially with street trees
- Increase fees for Town Hall rentals to add a small parking fee
- Continue strategies that support Barnesville’s appearance and function as a “rural village”
- Support policy that Town won’t initiate annexations through 2030, although it may respond to requests initiated by adjacent property owners
- Encourage installation of alternative energy generation, including solar and wind as permitted in zoning ordinance
- Continue “Green Team” activities for individuals and community projects

## **Support for policies Outside Barnesville**

- Continue working for parking improvements and expansion of service at MARC station by coordinating with State and County agencies

- Explore opportunities to bring Ride-on transit services to Barnesville MARC
- Support for Montgomery County Water and Sewer Plan
- Support for Montgomery County procedures for Stormwater Control
- Strongly oppose any new Potomac River Bridge crossing that brings new roadways into Agricultural Reserve
- Strongly support continuity of policies and laws that protect Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve

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## **Chapter 1 Present Conditions**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the history and provides a general description of the present conditions in the Town of Barnesville, including the methods used by the Town to regulate land uses.

### **1.2 Purposes and Goals of the Plan**

Throughout the years, Barnesville has emphasized its efforts to remain small, quiet and well preserved. In the midst of current public debate about transportation corridors, land use and development matters, the citizens are committed to achieving a spirit of mutual respect with the County and State governments that will allow the Town to maintain its undisturbed boundaries and simplistic way of life as a rural residential community. Barnesville, "A Caring Community," seeks to preserve its heritage and control its future growth through its own thoughtful and intelligent actions.

This legacy, if it is to be protected for future generations, requires vigilance and dedication on the part of the citizens of the Town and their elected and appointed officials. Part of that vigilance involves careful planning to anticipate the pressures for change, which the Town inevitably will face. Therefore, the Planning Commission and the citizens of the Town of Barnesville have prepared this Plan, as well as revisions to our Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and Forest Conservation Ordinance, to guide the town into the future.

Barnesville residents have identified community assets which this Plan will strive to preserve:

- A rural village that is primarily residential, with very limited commercial presence
- Status as a municipality under Maryland law, including the ability to govern zoning and land uses within the Town
- Residential uses that permit agriculture and work-at-home activities
- Close links to the Agricultural Reserve that surround our Town
- Views of Sugarloaf Mountain, forests and farms
- Tradition of "all are welcome events" such as holiday parties, annual dinner, etc.
- Historic Town Hall that is used extensively for Town events as well as private events hosted by residents
- Safe streets and close access to commuter rail at the MARC station
- Care for our water supply, streams and other environmental assets
- Reliance on Montgomery County Government for most of the public services needed to serve residents
- Postal service within the Town
- Excellent cooperation between the Town and churches located within our boundaries

### **1.3 Barnesville 1747 to Present**

The earliest reference to the settlement of Barnesville is a survey for a land patent to Jeremiah Hays, recorded on December 10, 1747. Barnesville was named for William Barnes who owned land and built the first house within its boundaries. The town is located at the top of a hill. Throughout the town, this hilltop location allows views of the mountains across the Potomac



River, of Sugarloaf Mountain, and of the valleys and rolling farmland on all sides. Situated in the midst of what was once a rich tobacco-growing region in Montgomery County, Maryland, Barnesville was incorporated as a municipality (formally known as "The Commissioners of Barnesville, Maryland") by an act of the General Assembly of Maryland in 1888. (For a more detailed description of the history of Barnesville, see Appendix 1.)

Barnesville grew up slowly through World Wars I and II, while remaining a rural small town. The wide mix of housing styles in town reflects the many decades of construction, including new homes and additions to existing homes. In the mid-1920s, a group of residents formed an organization to build the Town Hall, a wood frame structure at the corner of Barnesville and Old Hundred Road (formerly known as Stone Street). By the 1950's, Barnesville felt the effects of a growing population, business enterprises, and surrounding government intervention. Properties were annexed and building and business permits became a necessity. The first Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance were adopted in 1959. Threats of removing the post office were halted by petitions to Senator J. Glenn Beall. The Post Office, formerly in the Barnesville General Store, subsequently moved to the Price home (see Appendix 1) and later still, to a stand-alone building across from the Hilton Funeral Home. Barnesville made its debut in Hollywood when portions of the film "Lilith", featuring Warren Beatty, were filmed here during the summer of 1963.

Barnesville was a proud participant in our Country's Bicentennial Celebration. The Town commissioned a commemorative coin for the occasion, held a ceremony to dedicate the Town Flag, and concluded a year of celebration on July 4, 1976 with a grand parade and community picnic.

Celebrations continued with a 100th anniversary of incorporation celebration in September of 1988, highlighted by a Civil War reenactment. The Town also buried a "Time Capsule" in 1998 that contains mementos from many of the citizens. Buried at the site of the well, a landmark located at the corner of Barnesville and Beallsville Roads, its plaque announces the intention that it remain buried for 100 years, although noting that it may be "opened before that time if desired".

Currently, in addition to a variety of civic and church-sponsored events, the Town holds an annual town dinner for all its citizens. It supports Halloween activities sponsored by the Lions Club, hosts an evening of Christmas caroling and treats around the Town Christmas Tree, and continues as the location for the annual July picnic sponsored by St. Mary's Catholic Church. Following the re-opening of the Town Hall in 2008, residents gather from time to time for family movies, baking contests and other community events.

The Town has a website on the Internet ([www.barnesvillemd.org](http://www.barnesvillemd.org)) that includes links to the elected Town Commissioners, notices, official documents and other useful material.

Although the population of Barnesville was quite stable throughout the 20th Century, there have been changes in the make-up of it. Through the first half of the century, there was a large minority of African American families in the town, many dating back decades. However, apparently as a result of improved transportation and the wider availability of jobs, many of

these families have dispersed. One consequence was a greatly decreased minority population in Barnesville by the end of the 20th Century.

Census data supports the view of Barnesville as a stable residential community, with a fairly large number of young families. While we await new data gathered in 2020, we will review patterns documented in the [2010 Census](#). A decade ago, Barnesville had a population of 172 persons in 67 households. One hundred fifty seven persons were white, while 15 are of other races and various ethnic backgrounds. The median age is 48 years, and 27% of the population is under 21 years. There were 71 housing units (all single family), 67 occupied. The population was relatively highly educated, with 58% of the adults having a bachelor or higher degree.

A 2018 estimate from the U.S. Department of Census shows the following:

- Barnesville population has increased to 180 persons
- Number of housing units = 55\* (an estimated number we don't agree with)
- Median Household Income = \$103,750
- Median income for males = \$45,833. For females = \$49,028
- Persons in poverty = 0.7%
- Adults with education at high school level or higher = 100%
- Persons without health insurance = 0.7%
- Median housing value = \$475,000
- Veterans in Barnesville = 10
- Households with broadband access = 98.7%

Auto access from Barnesville to neighboring towns and counties is on roads controlled by the State of Maryland and Montgomery County. Barnesville itself neither owns nor controls any roads. Maryland Route 109 enters Barnesville from the north (Old Hundred Road), which turns to the west onto Barnesville Road then immediately turns south (Beallsville Road) toward the town of Poolesville. The State of Maryland controls this road. Two other roads in town (Barnesville and West Harris) are controlled by Montgomery County Government. During the last decade and continuing today, residents of homes facing Old Hundred, Barnesville and Beallsville Roads are experiencing an ever-increasing flow of commuter traffic in both mornings and afternoons. Speeding and accidents have changed the sense of safety for residents in the Town, a phenomenon which this plan addresses.

Discussion of this important topic is continued in chapter 4 of this Plan.

## **1.4 Existing Land Use and Zoning**

The Town of Barnesville at the present time has only two zones, designated "Residential-Agricultural" (R-A) and "Barnesville Rural Density Transfer" (BRDT). The purpose of the R-A zone has been to preserve and nurture the agricultural nature of the small rural village that is Barnesville. The R-A zone currently requires, for new residences, a minimum area of four acres and, for each new residential lot in a subdivision, a minimum road frontage of 150 feet on a publicly maintained road. Area coverage under the R-A zone is limited to twenty percent of the lot. Permitted uses are generally restricted to agricultural purposes, single-family dwellings,

farm tenant homes, greenhouses and horticultural nursery, guest house, and home occupations.

The BRDT zone is designed to match the Montgomery County zoning that was in place when a property in that zone was annexed into the Town in 1987, and from which development rights had already been sold.

In addition to the permitted uses in these zones, the current 2006 (as amended) Barnesville Zoning Ordinance provides that other uses as set forth may be authorized by special exception granted by the Board of Appeals. Although some jurisdictions may limit residential, agricultural and limited commercial activities to defined and distinct separate areas, the juxtaposition of such uses within the Town of Barnesville is a reflection of its rural heritage.

The four streets within the Town boundaries, Barnesville Road, Beallsville Road, Old Hundred Road and West Harris Road, are lined primarily with residences. The density decreases as distance increases from the main intersection of Barnesville Road and Beallsville Road. The predominant style of architecture is a two-story colonial revival farmhouse, built one hundred or more years ago. West Harris road is a partially paved/gravel road, and residences along this road are not as closely spaced as on the remaining three main streets and, for the most part, represent new farm residences and outbuildings built within the last 25 years.

Other than two churches and the town hall, only four main buildings are not used as residences. Of the housing units, 2/3 were built before 1939, and the large majority are owner occupied. All residences have plumbing, and the average value in 2018 was approximately \$475,000. There is a wide mix of housing styles, from Federal, Italianate, Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, Victorian and Rambler, reflecting the designs that were affordable or in fashion when the homes were built.

A few business structures were in existence when the 1991 Zoning Ordinance was adopted (on November 18, 1991) and were "grand-fathered" by that ordinance. Beginning with the 1991 Master Plan and in other plans and ordinances adopted since, residents foresee Barnesville as a residential town with only incidental commercial uses. Thus, there are a variety of small businesses and other uses located in residences and accessory buildings in the town. These include art and/or craft studios; small technology and/or professional businesses operated from accessory structures on residential property; a variety of "cottage industries" and home offices operated from homes or workshops.

In the 2006 Zoning Ordinance, the Town also specified a list of commercial and other uses that would require a special exception from the Board of Appeals. This list was amended in 2014 to include a beauty salon as a Special Exception use. In the years since 2006, various business uses in accessory buildings have been initiated without applying for and receiving the required Special Exception from the Board of Appeals. This issue will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

On larger agricultural parcels in the West Harris Road area, ancillary agricultural services and activities are offered, such as horse boarding, training and riding lessons.

Although a substantial number of the "older" improved residential properties (e.g., homes more than 50 years old) near the center of Town are smaller than the minimum required lot size prescribed by the existing zoning ordinance (four acres), these are affirmed as non-conforming. There are a number of properties with substantial acreage, ranging from 6 to 35 acres, all but one of which is in the R-A zone. The greatest concentration of large parcels is in that area between Barnesville Road and West Harris Road. There are also large parcels towards the southern edge of town on either side of Beallsville Road, and on the northern edge of town off Old Hundred Road. All of these larger parcels adjoin land in the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve where land is zoned for agriculture, requiring a minimum of 25 acres per residence.

Despite increasing pressure for "farmettes" and large lot residences in our agricultural part of the County, further subdivision of the Town's larger parcels is expected to be difficult, at best, given the constraints of the soil characteristics in and about the Town on the approval and installation of new septic systems. In addition to factors of poor soil conditions, State and County standards for a new septic system now require that the parcel be of sufficient size to allow one approved primary drainage field for the system, plus three approved backup fields. In addition, the septic system must be located more than 100 feet from the well(s) on the parcel. These standards are supported by the 2006 zoning change that increased minimum lot size from two acres to four acres.

### **1.5 How land use in Barnesville is regulated**

As an incorporated municipality in the State of Maryland, Barnesville has the authority to control its own land use in accordance with Maryland law. The town is required to coordinate its plans and policies with other jurisdictions in Maryland.

The Town of Barnesville affirms its support for land use policies that have been adopted by the State of Maryland and Montgomery County Government that favor agricultural uses, preservation of open space, historic sites and sound environmental practices.

- In particular, the town supports zoning for the [Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve](#), which completely surrounds the town. Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve Master Plan was adopted in 1980 and amended in 2004 as part of the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan.
- In 2004, the Town of Barnesville affirmed its desire to be included with other areas and communities in the [Montgomery County Heritage Area](#). The Heritage Area Master Plan identifies the Town of Barnesville as being within the "Farming History" heritage area boundary.
- More recently, in 2018, Town residents participated in a cleanup of the Methodist Episcopal Cemetery, on private property, Barnesville Road. This old church cemetery was a burial site for 60 individuals from 1845 to 1925, but later abandoned. This cemetery is documented in the [Montgomery County Burial Sites Inventory](#), along with the well-known and active cemetery at St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Hays Family Cemetery, on private property on Harris Road, restored in 1997 by the Callear Family.

- The Town also supports Maryland's plans and policies that are known under the general heading of "[Smart Growth](#)." — i.e., directing new housing and commercial uses toward areas already served by substantial roads and public transit, existing educational facilities and public water/sewer service.

The Town of Barnesville, under the Laws of the State of Maryland, has the following authorities and mechanisms available to control local land use and development:

- Master Plan
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Forest Conservation Ordinance
- Building Permits

### **The Master Plan**

Describes the overall visions for the town's future, goals for land use and how new uses and new development will be guided. Maryland Law requires that Barnesville conduct a Master Plan review approximately every 12 years. The goals of Barnesville's Master Plan are implemented through legislation adopted by the Town Commissioners.

### **The Zoning Ordinance**

Is one piece of legislation that the Town has adopted to enforce its Master Plan goals. It defines the R-A and BRDT zones for the town, lists what land uses are permitted in each zone by right and by special exception, outlines specific requirements for lot sizes, building heights, distances from neighbors, and so forth. Barnesville's first Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1959.

### **The Subdivision Ordinance**

Is a second piece of legislation that the Town has adopted to regulate development. This ordinance controls the process of dividing large parcels into smaller lots, or of combining small lots into a larger lot. Barnesville's Subdivision Ordinance was adopted in January 2004; the first subdivision granted under this ordinance was approved by the Planning Commission in 2013.

### **The Forest Conservation Ordinance**

Is a third law that governs Barnesville's environment. It was adopted in 1992 to bring the Town's policies on forestation and reforestation into compliance with the requirements of Maryland's Natural Resources Article. This law applies to any subdivision, grading, building permit, or activity that requires a sediment control permit and involves a unit of land 40,000 square feet or greater.

### **Site Plan**

The Barnesville Planning Commission approved its first preliminary plan of subdivision in 2013. This was the first time the ordinance was applied after its adoption in 2004. During the review and approval process, members noted that they were approving future construction of buildings on two vacant lots. But what these buildings would be and what were details of final design were unknown. Thus the Preliminary Plan approval was granted with a condition that prior to

building permit approval, the property owner needed to come back to the Town for further review and consent.

That condition is called, in a typical subdivision ordinance, "site plan approval." In Barnesville's code, "Site Plan" is not identified or defined. This Plan recommends that it be added. A defined term will make the site plan option and process clear to Town residents, applicants and all others interested in subdivision review and approval in our Town.

### **Building permits**

A permit is required for any new construction or any external addition to an existing structure. Building permits must be issued by the town (the Town's permit certifies that the new construction complies with Barnesville's land use regulations) and by Montgomery County Government (County permits regulate engineering, electrical, plumbing, well, septic and all other aspects of construction.) Agricultural buildings are generally excluded from Barnesville's permit requirements.

Two appointed citizen boards assist the town's three elected officials with the regulation of land uses in Barnesville.

- The Planning Commission (five members) is responsible for recommending changes to the Master Plan, the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance, and for approving new subdivisions. The Planning Commission is empowered to review applications building permits prior to approval by Town Commissioners. Also to review permits that involve disturbance of trees/forests as outlined in the Forest Conservation Ordinance, and require property owners to protect trees using the guidelines in that Ordinance.
- The Board of Appeals (three members) is responsible for approving Special Exception Uses that are listed in the Zoning Ordinance and for approving variances as provided for in the Zoning Ordinance. The Board also hears administrative appeals.

## Chapter 2 Infrastructure Status and Issues

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes public facilities and public services, in Barnesville or nearby, that serve residents of the Town.

#### 2.1 Public Facilities within Town

As set forth in Chapter 1, in 1925 a Town Hall was established by the Commissioners; however, that facility was closed and transferred to private ownership in 1954. In 2003, the owner donated the property back to the Town. In 2005, the Maryland General Assembly approved a capital improvements grant for use by the Town in its Town Hall renovations. The remodeled Town Hall was dedicated for public use in 2008 and is now used for official town meetings, elections, social gatherings and private events. The Town Commissioners and Town Clerk manage its use.

As a community-wide special service, the Town Hall is equipped with an electrical generator, bathroom/shower and extra bottled drinking water, allowing the building to be used during weather or other emergencies. Well water at the Town Hall is not yet at drinking water quality from the tap, but Commissioners are exploring ways to improve it.

The Baptist and Catholic churches in town provide facilities for numerous community events. In addition, both the Monocacy Elementary School and the Barnesville School, located on the outskirts of town, provide facilities for community events.

Until 2019, there had been no public parkland within the Town of Barnesville; however, there is an abundance of park and recreation facilities in close proximity.

- One of these is [Stronghold at Sugarloaf Mountain](#), which, although privately owned, provides a treasured opportunity for the citizens of the Town to enjoy outdoor activities including hiking, rock climbing and bird watching.
- Also located within a short distance are the [C&O National Park](#) and the Monocacy and Potomac Rivers.
- County operated facilities nearby include Owens Park in Beallsville, the [Dickerson Conservation Park](#) adjacent to the C&O Canal, and the [Woodstock Equestrian Special Park](#) in Beallsville.
- The Linden Farm near Dickerson, which is operated by [Sugarloaf Citizens Association](#), is another nearby facility available for public use.
- A recent unique addition to the area's public facilities is The [Darby Store Cultural Park](#) located at the intersection of Rt. 109 and Rt. 28 in Beallsville. This "old fashioned country store" has been open to the public as a general store since 2016.

A new park: In 2019, the Lillard family donated a site at the corner of Barnesville Road and Beallsville Road for park use. This is an important corner in our town — it is the location of holiday caroling, the Town Well, several memorials and a buried time capsule. The park name, chosen by the donors and welcomed by town residents is "Lillard's Corner"



The Town is beginning the process of developing the site as a passive park using Open Space grant funds that are already in hand from the State of Maryland. Town residents have been asked to participate in the design of the park and to provide suggestions for its use. The goal is to have the park design affirmed and installation begun in 2020.

## 2.2 Schools

The Town is served by four public school facilities including the Monocacy Elementary School (located just outside Barnesville to the West), Poolesville Elementary, John Poole Middle School, and Poolesville High School (all in Poolesville). These schools are all part of the Poolesville Cluster. Poolesville High School is repeatedly ranked as “best high school in Maryland” by many evaluators and publications.

Reports released by [Montgomery County Public Schools](#) show the following statistics for 2017-2018:

● <a href="#">Poolesville High School</a>	Enrollment 1183	current capacity 1170
● <a href="#">John Poole Middle School</a>	Enrollment 375	current capacity 486
● <a href="#">Monocacy Elementary School</a>	Enrollment 146	current capacity 219
● <a href="#">Poolesville Elementary School</a>	Enrollment 448	current capacity 539

MCPS enrollment projections show that all of the schools except Poolesville High School will be able to accommodate anticipated changes in student population. Renovation plans for Poolesville High School are being considered by the Board of Education and the Montgomery County Council but there is currently no approved construction funding, nor a schedule for the project to begin. A prior renovation of this facility was done in 1978.

Poolesville advocates and Western Montgomery County, Md. residents have banded together to represent the interests of farmers, students, senior citizens, churches, and non-profit organizations located in the County’s prized Agricultural Reserve to rally for a much-needed new high school with co-located police, health and community services. Barnesville supports that plan. See [here](#) for current information on Fair Access as it becomes available.

In addition to the public schools, just east of town on Peach Tree Road is the [Barnesville School](#), a private educational institution offering instruction from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Current enrollment at the Barnesville School is approximately 130 students. Enrollment is drawn from within the Town, throughout the western Montgomery County as well as parts of Frederick County.

## 2.3 Public Safety and Energy Services

Law enforcement is provided by the Montgomery County Police department. The district station is in Germantown MD, approximately 8 miles from Barnesville. Officers in patrol cars arrive on call (911) or on routine patrols through the area. Crime statistics are published periodically in local newspapers. Crime rate in our Town is very low.



In Chapter 4, we describe the Town's advocacy for speed cameras and hiring of a firm that employs off-duty Montgomery County Police officers for enforcement of speed limits and other traffic violations. These efforts, which began a decade ago, have been successful both for immediate calming of traffic and for providing important data to local and state highway officials who oversee safety on the roads throughout Barnesville.

The Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department, located 3.5 miles away in Beallsville, provides fire and rescue services for the Town. The next closest service is the Hyattstown Volunteer Fire Department, located 5.5 miles north of Barnesville.

Other public facilities are located in the rural areas relatively close to Barnesville. The largest of these is the Dickerson coal fired generating station. Currently owned by [GenOn](#), this plant has been in operation since the mid-1950s. Since that time, there have been several expansion and upgrade projects. In the same vicinity as the power plant, the County has constructed and operates a large incinerator/generating station which burns County refuse (transported by rail to the site) and converts waste to energy. In addition, the County operates a large leaf and yard waste composting facility. All of these facilities are a potential conflict to the rural nature of the area. While they have little direct impact on the town, they all contribute to an apparent industrialization of the Dickerson area and to air pollution. The facilities interrupt the scenic view as they are easily seen from many sites in the Town. Local advocacy groups have banded together at this time to encourage Montgomery County Government to phase out the trash incineration as a method of trash disposal in favor of zero waste strategies. It will take a number of years to make this transition once the County determines what are the best trash disposal alternatives for the County as a whole.

Virtually all electrical, telephone, and cable service is provided above ground on poles. These facilities are considered unsightly by many people. They require extensive trimming of trees, often in an unattractive manner. While there are no known plans for expansion or change of these facilities, if that were to be considered, this Plan recommends that alternative routes or types of service (i.e., undergrounding) should be explored.

The technology for internet services is changing rapidly at the time of this Plan. New 5G communication antennae are being actively promoted by the telecommunications industry. In 2019, the Town adopted an ordinance that regulates aesthetic and permit guidelines for applicant firms to follow. It is unknown when these 5G installations might be offered in our rural town (Barnesville has low population density so the economics may or may not be feasible), but the guidelines are in place when needed.

The Town has no electrical substations or similar facilities at this time. However, just South of the center of Town there is a ground level cable/telephone junction facility. This facility has limited aesthetic treatment and the parking area serving it is very small and unpaved. This Plan recommends that the Town approach Verizon to request improvements, especially to the service vehicle parking area. In addition, any future similar facility or substation should be designed to fit in with the character of the Town.

## **2.4 Existing Trash disposal, Water and Sewer Services**

The town's household trash service is provided to residents by the town under contract with a private company. This firm also collects all recyclable materials. The town also sponsors two days per year when the private contractor picks up large items. All refuse collected by the contractor is transported to the County-owned Transfer Station in Gaithersburg where it is combined with all residential and business refuse for eventual disposal in the Dickerson Waste to Energy Plant. In addition, Montgomery County operates a [public facility in Poolesville](#) ("The Beauty Spot") where residents can take other trash items (no household trash or yard waste) for disposal. This site is open only on Saturdays.

The Town of Barnesville is outside of the public water and sewer "envelope" of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission so there is no public water or sewer service in the Town. The [Comprehensive Sewerage Systems Plan](#) of Montgomery County has placed the entirety of the Town, as well as all adjacent areas, in "Category 6," which indicates no community sewerage service is planned, nor is any such service recommended. The town does not operate or provide any municipal water or sewer services. Town residents rely on individual drilled wells for water, and on individual septic systems for waste disposal.

## Chapter 3 Environmental Status and Water Resources

### 3.1 Geology and Water issues – Present Conditions

Barnesville is located on a hilltop in the watershed of the Little Monocacy River, which flows into the Potomac River. Geologically, the Town is in an area of Marburg schist, which is bluish-gray to silvery-green fine-grained schist with intermixed quartzite. The Town is not served by public water or public sewer.

The Town contains the headwaters of several streams that eventually flow into the Little Monocacy River:

- A stream that originates on P602. (number = parcel number.)
- A stream that originates in a spring on P338.
- A stream that originates on P130.
- Several streams that originate immediately outside the town boundaries to the south and west.

There are several ponds within the Town boundaries, one adjacent to Old Hundred Road at the northern Town boundary and two behind the Post Office.

With no public water, all residents of the Town obtain water from individual wells on their own property. The water is drawn from an underground aquifer with the formal geologic name "Ijamsville formation of Paleozoic age" in a geographic area commonly called the Piedmont. Protecting the streams and this underground water supply is a key environmental priority of the Barnesville master plan.

Large areas with natural, not man-made, surfaces characterize Barnesville and the surrounding areas, thus permitting significant recharge of our water supply. "Recharge" means re-filling the underground water supply from rainfall and other water on the surface. It also refers to "cleansing" the surface water as it filters through soils and rock before reaching the aquifer. Recharge occurs virtually everywhere that there is no impervious surface cover such as roads, parking lots and buildings.

The water level in the aquifer for our area has been studied since 1952 at the old well, a landmark located on both private and Town property at the corner of Barnesville and Beallsville Roads. This well, no longer used for domestic water purposes, has a depth of 46 feet. It is hand-dug, stone-lined, and has a casing that varies from 60 to 24 inches diameter. Referred to as "[Mo Cc 14](#)", the well is used for monthly measurements by US and Maryland Geological Survey personnel. The highest water level measured there was 18 feet below land surface on April 5, 1993. The lowest water levels were when the well was dry: on Dec. 2, 1957, Dec. 6, 1965, Jan 3, 1966 and Feb. 2, 1966. The data for Spring 2019 show water levels above normal and significantly above what was measured two years prior, reflecting recent months of heavy rainfall.

A review of the historical record shows no sign of any systematic lowering of the water table although there are large seasonal and yearly variations reflecting general rainfall conditions. The data indicate that the current withdrawals have no apparent impact on the water supply.

The quality and quantity of the water supply are highly variable throughout the Town. Some wells are relatively shallow, while others are deep, some produce low flows while other nearby wells produce high flows, and some have objectionable taste or quality, while others are of high quality. Some wells are or have been contaminated by surface or subsurface organic contamination, or as a result of leaking underground fuel storage tanks. In some cases, water purification systems are in place. There is no systematic testing of well water although the Town recently organized a community well water testing program and a number of residents participated. Results varied across the community with most wells producing acceptable water.

## **Wells**

Wells in the Town of Barnesville draw 100% of their water from Maryland's Piedmont Sole Source Aquifer. The Aquifer geology is characterized by widely varying underground rock formations and water holding areas. In Barnesville and the surrounding areas, it is not uncommon for adjacent wells to show widely varying flow rates. The Town understands the need for water protection and stresses to both current and new residents important practices in water conservation and water quality.

Town residents are particularly concerned about new construction, both in the Town and in the surrounding Agricultural Reserve (under the jurisdiction of Montgomery County Government.) New wells have some potential to diminish the water available to existing homes and community buildings. Thus, the Town monitors proposals for nearby new subdivisions or construction. Wells to serve such new subdivisions and/or new construction are regulated by Montgomery County, not the Town. The Town in 2005 changed the minimum lot size for new single-family residences from 2 acres to 4 acres in recognition of well and septic permitting requirements.

All well drilling activity in The Town and in the surrounding Agricultural Reserve is approved, inspected and monitored by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS) – Well and Septic Section. The Town has no role in approving wells.

## **Septic Systems**

Most wastewater from homes and businesses in Barnesville is treated by domestic septic systems. Because the vast majority of homes in Barnesville were built prior to 1939, it is a reasonable assumption that the septic systems of these homes are more than 65 years old, which is longer than the typical useful life of a modern septic system. Any repair or replacement that has occurred since 1950 is likely to be recorded in the offices of Montgomery County Government. The Town is aware of some systems that have been repaired or rebuilt to contemporary standards in recent years. However, many septic systems in town are of unknown construction and unknown quality. There is no systematic evaluation of septic systems.

The [Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services \(MCDEP\) – Well and Septic Section](#) also has the responsibility for approving, inspecting, and monitoring septic systems within the Town. The Town of Barnesville has no review, approval, or regulatory authority over septic systems within the Town.

The Town does strongly support the [Montgomery County Water and Sewer Plan](#) and during the subdivision approval process, works closely with the MCDEP staff. All new construction, within the Town must obtain the prior approval of the proposed well and septic system from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDEP), Well and Septic Section. The 2018 update, Chapter 4 section [V. Individual Wastewater Disposal Systems And Rural Sanitation](#) (page 4-77) lists Barnesville as a rural community area with existing and anticipated septic system problems. The staff at MCDPS does not have any specific information on the location and status of “failing septic systems” in the Barnesville area. The Town is aware of several septic systems that have been abandoned and new systems installed since the original statement was included in the 1986 Plan. At a recent Town meeting (Spring 2019), residents mentioned six or more septic systems that have been replaced. No one at the recent Town meeting had any knowledge of any current failing septic systems within the Town.

### **Alternatives to Private Wells and Septic Systems**

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) provides public water and sewer mains to most of Montgomery County, but not to Barnesville. Neither the Town nor WSSC have plans to extend the existing public water and sewer mains to the Town limits. Furthermore, the Montgomery County Agriculture and Open Space Plan prohibits the extension of public water and sewer into the area surrounding Barnesville unless there is a public health crisis to be addressed. The closest WSSC public water and sewer mains are located several miles to the east of the Town of Barnesville, in the Germantown area.

Neither is the Town considering a community septic system. The Town is located on a hill, with homes and other buildings at the top and on all sides of this hill. Thus, the Town consists of four large drainage basins, making it unrealistic to contemplate the location and cost of several community septic systems and the sewer conveyance systems for a small rural community of 68 homes.

### **Stormwater Management**

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services ([MCDPS](#)) reviews, approves, bonds, and permits all Sediment Control Plans and Stormwater Management Plans for all new subdivision plans within the Town of Barnesville. The MCDPS also provides County inspection services during and after site construction. The Town supports these Montgomery County roles and procedures.

The applicant’s design engineer is required to provide construction observation services and to submit “As-Built” Plans and computations for review and approval to the County, prior to the MCDPS releasing the applicant’s performance bond.

The Water Resources Element (WRE) prepared by the staff at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) has included the existing and proposed developments within the Town of Barnesville into their recent nutrient levels and non-point source loading calculations. Because of the existing zoning within the Town and the State and County requirements for well and septic systems, new, large, dense subdivisions will not be developed within the Town.

The Stormwater Management review and approval process considers minimizing impervious surfaces, in addition to pre-treatment, best management practices, water quality, and water quantity features. The Town's Planning Commission and its consultant also review the applicant's Sediment Control Plans and Stormwater Management Plans and may make recommendations to the applicant and to the MCDPS.

Barnesville is currently working with staff from Montgomery County Government on excess stormwater runoff in two areas: (1) excessive water flowing onto West Harris Road through a culvert that drains impervious surfaces on the south side of Barnesville Road, and (2) standing water on Old Hundred Road that does not drain as planned, especially notable in freezing weather when this water leads to dangerous icy conditions.

#### **Little Monocacy Watershed issues**

The Town of Barnesville drains towards the west into four unnamed tributaries to the Little Monocacy River, which flows into the Potomac River, just south of the Monocacy River at Dickerson. The State of Maryland has classified the Little Monocacy River as a Class I stream.

The Little Monocacy River is part of the Lower Monocacy watershed, which includes portions of Montgomery, Frederick, and Carroll Counties. The State of Maryland has determined that the Lower Monocacy is impaired. The watershed has four impairments; three will require a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) analysis and one that has already completed a TMDL.

The suitability of receiving waters is dependent on a number of factors including scale considerations and proximity to the impaired water body. The question of suitability of receiving waters to accommodate stormwater discharge must consider the contribution of that discharge to the overall impairment.

Relative to the overall watershed upstream of the existing and required TMDL mentioned above, the Town of Barnesville represents a very small fraction of the overall stormwater discharge to the Little Monocacy Watershed.

Moreover, the potential future changes in terms of Barnesville's land cover are also minor. The Town does not have any plans for annexation through 2030. Therefore, it is evident that future stormwater discharges from Barnesville will not increase significantly by 2030.

Because of TMDL modeling uncertainties and the need for adaptive management strategies to attain water quality goals, the issue of suitability of receiving waters to receive stormwater discharges cannot be adequately evaluated in advance of the TMDL implementation process

itself. As a result, any potential need to evaluate the existing or future ability of receiving waters to assimilate stormwater discharges from the Town would be assessed under the leadership of Montgomery County within the larger context of TMDL watershed implementation plans.

### **3.2 Geology and Water Issues – Recommendations**

It is a goal of this plan to educate Town residents as to the importance of water quality and particularly, to encourage homeowners to monitor their water and waste-water systems carefully. Failure of a home septic system may result in sewage coming to the surface of the ground causing odors, wet areas, and possible breeding grounds for flies and mosquitoes. In addition, a failed system may contaminate wells not only of the owner, but also of neighbors. Leaking or overflowing septic systems must be attended to immediately by contacting the Montgomery County Office of Permitting Services, Well and Septic Division. Specialists in this office are eager to help homeowners find effective means to repair and improve damaged septic systems. The County and State may have funds to assist rebuilding failing septic systems.

Additional water related recommendations include the following:

**Chemical Use.** Residents should carefully control and monitor the use of any chemicals or other pollutants in the vicinity of their wells, with special emphasis on preventing spills. All residents who use fertilizers and/or other outdoor household or industrial chemicals should follow best management practices in applying or disposing of such materials

**Underground Tanks.** It is a general finding that all tanks, especially underground, will eventually leak and are likely to cause very hard-to-handle groundwater contamination. Residents who have underground tanks for gasoline, fuel oil or other chemicals should remove them as required by law.

**Water Testing.** Residents should have their drinking water tested on a regular basis. The Town has publicized this recommendation and in 2018 offered a package price to reduce the cost of the testing for Town residents and increase the likelihood of testing. The County Health Department can assist in evaluating test results if requested. This Plan recommends repeating the testing offer at regular intervals.

**Agricultural Practices.** This plan also encourages residents who engage in agricultural activities to use "best management practices." This means using conservation and pollution control practices that manage waste, agricultural chemicals and/or hazardous materials so as to minimize movement into surface or groundwater. The plan suggests that owners of livestock use nutrient and manure management practices that control the amount, placement and application of animal waste to the extent possible to prevent pollution of groundwater.

**Water Courses.** The Zoning Ordinance previously included a restriction on the location of structures near streams or watercourses: "There shall be a minimum setback of 500 feet for all buildings (except public recreation and agricultural structures) from the banks of all streams or water courses." In reviewing the existing map of streams and measuring the distance to residences and accessory buildings, the Town finds numerous situations where buildings have

existed for many decades within that 500-ft. Limit. A review of current requirements by other jurisdictions also showed that 500 feet was excessive. Thus, in 2006, the Town Zoning Ordinance was amended to "a minimum setback of 150 feet for all buildings from the banks of streams or watercourses."

### **3.3 Additional Environmental Issues**

Although the issues surrounding water supply and sewage disposal are of prime concern to the Town, other issues related to the environment are also of concern.

#### **Air Quality**

Located in a rural setting, the Town generally enjoys good air quality. However, it is of concern that there are increasing numbers of facilities "upwind", i.e., Southwest to Northwest, that can adversely affect the air quality. Present facilities include the Dickerson coal fired power plant, Montgomery County Resource Recovery Facility, and the Dickerson Composting facility. The Maryland Public Service Commission has just approved a new 650-Megawatt power plant in the Buckeystown area, evidently to be located close to the Aluminum plant already there. This increasing concentration of industrial uses is of major concern as the total impact of the facilities continues to grow.

There are additional sources of air pollutants in the Town. Increased auto and truck traffic adversely affects air quality in the Town. Finally, there are occasional local problems with smoke from wood burning stoves used for heating; however, there is no indication that this is a serious problem, nor that it is increasing.

#### **Noise**

The Town has the normal small town sources of noise, especially those associated with modern mechanical devices. Examples include the use of power driven machinery such as saws, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, etc. With fewer farm animals now being raised in the Town, there has been a decrease in livestock noise. However, outdoor dog barking continues to be an annoyance for those living nearby.

Auto and truck traffic volumes continue to increase in the Town. This traffic generates noise that increasingly interferes with the enjoyment of the residents, and challenges the view of the Town as a quiet and peaceful place. Unfortunately, there appears to be little that the Town can do by law either to reduce the noise from it because the most effective steps are preempted by State and Federal law. Recent installation of added stop signs in Barnesville has changed the pattern of truck traffic passing through the Town, a welcome change.

#### **Trees**

The presence of trees has some effect on limiting adverse noise and air quality problems, but certainly has a positive effect on the attractiveness of the Town. Barnesville has had an apparent decrease in the number and size of trees in the Town, sometimes due to disease, other times due to cutting. In the past, the Town has supported various beautification efforts, including making trees and flowers available to residents. This Plan recommends that these



efforts be continued, and specifically that residents be encouraged to plant and care for trees along the streets of the Town (consistent with safety concerns, of course). The [Tree Montgomery](#) and [MCA Re-Leaf](#) programs assist in planting trees and recent campaigns to utilize these programs have resulted in dozens of new trees being planted inside Town boundaries.

Barnesville adopted a Forest Conservation Ordinance in 1992 consistent with state law. The purpose of the law is to protect trees within the Town when areas of land that exceed 40,000 square feet will be disturbed by construction, subdivision, etc.

Note that a forest is defined in the code as follows:

“A biological community dominated by trees and other woody plants covering a land area of 10,000 square feet or greater. "Forest" includes areas that have at least 100 live trees per acre with at least 50 percent of those trees having a 2-inch or greater diameter at 4.5 feet above the ground; and areas that have been cut but not cleared. "Forest" does not include orchards.”

See Chapter 6 for a discussion of possible changes to Town Code to encourage the preservation of mature trees.

## Light

While many persons do not view lighting as an environmental issue, it has become more widely understood as an environmental challenge. In some circumstances, light can be a pollutant. While night lighting is desirable for traffic safety and certain security situations, excessive or poorly designed lighting is both wasteful of resources (electricity) and can affect the ability of others to enjoy their property. Intrusive or glaring light that spills into neighboring homes can affect the ability to sleep and reduce or remove the ability to “enjoy the night sky” and can have negative and deadly effects on many creatures including amphibians, birds, mammals, insects and plants.

Probably the largest contributor to light pollution is the poor design of streetlights. While most jurisdictions are now installing more efficient and less polluting "full cutoff" lights, the street lights currently in the Town are not "full cutoff", and thus spill light onto property far from the street where the light is needed. This both wastes energy and intrudes into areas where it is not desired. The Town should consider moving to "full cutoff" light fixtures that are more efficient and control more effectively where the light is applied.

Security or Farm lights can be another source of light pollution. They are frequently very bright, and are usually installed without any control of where the light is applied, and often operate dusk to dawn, whether needed or not. While such lights do not appear to be a major problem in the Town, the Town should consider making information available to Town residents concerning light pollution, why glare and excessive lighting is undesirable, and how we can reduce it while meeting our lighting needs.

## **Alternative Energy Systems**

Barnesville supports use of alternative energy sources, including wind, solar and geothermal, to replace electricity generated by utility companies using carbon fuels.

In 2010, Barnesville amended its Zoning Ordinance to permit roof mounted solar and wind energy systems in RA and BRDT zones. Ground mounted solar and wind systems are permitted after receiving a Special Exception permit. Many residents in Town have installed roof-mounted systems for heating and cooling their homes.

### **3.4 Barnesville's "Green Team"**

A few years before this Plan was adopted, the Town convened a volunteer committee to focus on environmental initiatives, called The [Green Team](#). Among the activities being promoted are the following:

- Encouraging residents to participate in National Wildlife Association's certification as wildlife habitat
- Participation in a County program called [Trees Montgomery](#)
- Working on Sustainable Maryland certification and participating in various Sustainable Maryland projects and initiatives
- Training residents in climate change objectives and techniques
- Cooperation with local school on environmental projects
- Conducting a Municipal Energy Audit
- Encouraging lighting that conforms to dark sky standards
- Potential: a bi-annual clothing swap and give-away, perhaps other household items as well
- Working with our local lighting utility company to transition to LED lighting within the Town

## Chapter 4 Roads, Traffic and Safety in Barnesville

### 4.1 Existing Transportation

Residents and visitors to Barnesville utilize four forms of transportation: foot, bicycle, private vehicle, and mass transit via the MARC train at the Barnesville station just south of the corporate limits of the Town.

Within the Town itself, particularly at the "core intersection" of Beallsville Road and Barnesville Road, many residents simply walk to the post office, to places of worship, or to visit neighbors. The Town is responsible for maintenance and snow removal of the sidewalks on Barnesville Road.

Currently, sidewalks serve fewer than half the Town's residences, even in the central portion of the town, and do not provide safe or comfortable access to many destinations, including the Post Office. The Town has embarked on a program of sidewalk construction with the help of County and State funding. Two new sidewalks have been added in the past year, and more are in planning stages. Nevertheless, walking in many areas is both unsafe and unpleasant. This is a serious problem, as the roads are narrow and do not have adequate shoulders.

Although some residents use the bicycle for local trips or for recreation, the narrow roads, heavy traffic and lack of shoulders inhibit safe bicycle riding. Nevertheless, the Montgomery County Master Plan of Bikeways includes several routes through Barnesville, and there are many recreational riders using these routes throughout the year. While the presence of bicycle riders adds to the relaxed atmosphere of the Town, the risk of accidents for bikers and drivers is very serious.

Montgomery County's 2005 Functional Master Plan for Bikeways has been revised. It is currently the [Bicycle Master Plan](#). The plan recommends new bike paths and bikeable road shoulders in our area which could offer bikers safer options than using the narrow, hilly roads that lead into and out of Barnesville.

At the present time, there are four public roads within the Town limits. State Route 109 is designated as Old Hundred Road to the north of Barnesville and as Beallsville Road to the south of Barnesville. Route 109 is maintained by the Maryland State Highway Administration. All of Barnesville's roads are designated as "rural/rustic roads" in the [Montgomery County Rustic Roads](#) Program. More information is available on their website.

Running east to west is Barnesville Road, which is owned and maintained by Montgomery County and is designated as a Rural Rustic Road. The County's Master Plan of Highways classifies both Route 109 and Barnesville Road as "arterial roads" as distinguished from more heavily traveled "controlled major highways" and "freeways and parkways". According to the Master Plan of Highways, the typical rural arterial highway consists of a total right-of-way of eighty feet, within which twenty-four feet is paved road and ten to twelve feet on either side is shoulder.

In Barnesville, because of the age of Barnesville Road and the dwellings located on it, right-of-way is necessarily narrower. The paved portion of the road is only eighteen feet in width and the width of the entire right-of-way through the Town is forty feet. Residences and structures on Route 109 are generally set further back from the road than those structures on Barnesville Road and, as a result, the State of Maryland has acquired an eighty-foot right-of-way for Route 109 in many places.

The fourth road within Barnesville is West Harris Road, which begins at Barnesville Road near the center of Town, proceeds north and serves as the northern boundary of the Town limits, and eventually terminating near the base of Sugarloaf Mountain. It is tarred and chipped for a short distance within the Town limits but is unpaved for the rest of its length. Owned and maintained by Montgomery County, it has a thirty-foot right-of-way, with a ten-foot paved surface. Montgomery County has designated West Harris Road as an “Exceptional Rustic Road.” As such, it is planned that West Harris Road will not be paved and will remain an inviting country road.

Both Barnesville Road and Route 109 provide connections for town residents to Interstate 270, with MD-109 being the shortest route (5 miles to I-270.) Barnesville Road is the most direct route to the METRO station at Shady Grove (Gaithersburg), the closest access point to the Metrorail System. Ride On commuter bus service to other destinations in Montgomery County is not available in Barnesville, but is available in Poolesville. There are plans to provide new Ride On service to the MARC station in Boyds from parts of Clarksburg.

Immediately to the south of the Town limits is the Barnesville Train Station. Passenger rail service to Barnesville is now operated as commuter rail service between Brunswick and Washington, D.C. by the Maryland State Railroad Administration. The MARC commuter rail service from the Barnesville Station offers convenient and efficient mass transit for those residents of the Town and surrounding area who work or visit down County and points south. Commuter trains run Monday through Friday only. Six eastbound trains stop at the station each morning; trains going west stop in the afternoon. A [timetable can be found here](#) for all weekday trains.

The original B&O station at Barnesville was razed around 1960. The present station is a former gas metering building that was relocated from Rockville in 1978 through a cooperative project by the Town, County, and individual citizens.

There are no new public road-building projects proposed for the Barnesville area by State, County or Town. There is a long-standing proposal being promoted by advocates from the State of Virginia to build a new Potomac River Crossing (i.e., bridge and limited access highway that would connect highways in Virginia to highways in Maryland). One alternative being publicized for the “Tech-way”, as this project has come to be called, would create a new bridge across the Potomac near Poolesville and a new road going toward I-270 that would cut the Agricultural Reserve and pass near Sugarloaf Mountain. The Town of Barnesville is strongly opposed to all the alternatives for this proposed Potomac crossing, and in particular is opposed to the option that would build a multi-lane road in the Agricultural Reserve.

### **Major issue: Volume of traffic and speeding**

For the past ten to twelve years, residents have observed ever-increasing through traffic in the Town. Barnesville Road and Rt.109 have a very heavy load of commuter traffic and substantial truck traffic during the weekday morning and evening rush hours. Employment centers have expanded east of the Town. New residential development has arrived to the north. While most drivers use I-270 for their work commutes, that highway has become overloaded, causing drivers to look for alternate routes. The roads through Barnesville have become that “alternate.”

The heavy traffic is a burden to the Town by causing very high noise levels during commuting hours, and by elevating the risk to town residents who are attempting to leave their driveways. Pedestrians are at particular risk from the heavy traffic. The threat is compounded by the often high rates of speed of the traffic.

In fall 2018, the State of Maryland installed a pair of three-way stop signs to moderate the safety risks. This decision is widely welcomed by Town residents and came about as a result of many smaller changes and strategies by the Town during the past ten years. These are described below.

### **History of Speed Cameras**

Soon after these heavy traffic patterns began, Town residents noticed the high speeds of drivers ignoring the legal limit of 30 mph, often driving through Barnesville at 50 mph or even higher speeds.

In 2007, Montgomery County Government, at Town request, installed two speed cameras.

- On Barnesville Road eastbound, at the western boundary of Town (site # 1363). This camera location captures the heaviest morning commute traffic.
- On Rt. 109 southbound, approaching the stop sign at Town Hall (site # 1364)

Speed limits in the Town are 30 mph. Tickets are issued if the vehicle exceeds 41 mph. Both cameras have the ability to record the date, time and speed of each vehicle passing. Data in the next section, supplied by the Montgomery County Police Department, verifies the scale of traffic volumes and speeds that Barnesville experiences.

**Speed camera data for 2017 – 2019:**

Total Passes Year Over Year					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	% Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	437,726	449,141	2.61%	406,679	-9.45%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	295,241	296,699	0.49%	348,846	17.58%
Total	732,967	745,840	1.76%	755,525	1.30%

Total Citations Year Over Year					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	% Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	3,738	3,897	4.25%	3,225	-17.24%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	2,741	2,497	-8.90%	2,362	-5.41%
Total	6,479	6,394	-1.31%	5,587	-12.62%

% Citations to Passes Year Over Year					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	% Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	0.85%	0.87%	2.35%	0.79%	-9.20%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	0.93%	0.84%	-9.68%	0.67%	-20.24%

Total Vehicle Speed < 31 MPH					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	266,786	279,908	4.92%	256,658	-8.31%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	194,928	195,683	0.39%	236,844	21.03%
Total	461,714	475,591	3.0%	493,502	3.77%

Total Vehicle Speed 31 – 41 MPH					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	166,213	164,383	-1.10%	145,953	-11.21%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	96,810	97,823	1.05%	109,024	11.45%
Total	263,023	262,206	-0.31%	254,977	-2.76%

Total Vehicle Speed 42 + MPH					
Location #	2017	2018	% Change	2019	Change
#1363 Old Hundred Rd	4,727	4,850	2.60%	4,068	-16.12%
#1364 Barnesville Rd	3,503	3,193	-8.85%	2,978	-6.73%
Total	8,230	8,043	-2.27%	7,046	-12.40%

Note: Almost ¾ of a million cars pass these speed cameras per year. Most are not speeding, but consistently, 1% are doing so. Camera data for 2019 show that:

- 4,068 drivers were speeding when passing the camera on Barnesville Road
- 2,978 drivers were speeding when passing the camera on Old Hundred Road

Approximately 64% of all vehicle passes at both sites were at or below the posted speed limit.

Approximately 35% of all vehicle passes at both sites were between 31 and 41 MPH. While these vehicles are traveling above the posted speed limit, it cannot by current law, be enforced with automated speed enforcement.

Approximately 1% of all vehicle passes at both sites were traveling 42 MPH or higher. The highest speed recorded in 2019 was 65 MPH down from 69 MPH in 2018.

Regular travelers through Town readily became aware of the cameras and slow for them, at least until they are passed. However, drivers often increase their speeds after that. As a result of this phenomenon, the Town convened a Traffic Committee to recommend additional strategies, as described in the following sections.

### **Town Engages Streethawk, Inc.**

Streethawk, Inc. is a private company staffed by uniformed off duty police officers in Montgomery County. For a fee, it provides officers to do traffic control or other service to municipalities, private businesses, schools and churches, etc. Barnesville's Town Commissioners entered into a contract with the firm to monitor traffic in Town, with ticketing as required when speeds exceed posted limits. The contract began in July 2017. The Town receives no revenue from the tickets issued despite paying for the time of the off-duty officers.

In 2019, citations were issued to 1,431 motorists for speeding, stop sign violations and other infractions, an average 119 per month. Enforcement has generally been occurring only two days per week for a three-hour shift. Some speeders have been issued tickets for speeds higher than 70 mph. The roadway with highest speeds is southbound Beallsville Road, going downhill. In addition to speeding citations, the officers on duty have responded to accidents and near misses in Town, and apprehended various drivers whose vehicles were transporting illegal drugs. A number of trucks and drivers have been cited for safety violations as well as speeding.

Streethawk continues its work in Barnesville today, expanding services at Town request to weekends as needed. Even on weekends, officers are issuing more citations than had been expected. Some of the speeders are unfamiliar with Barnesville and have been detoured through town due to extended bridge reconstruction on Route 28 between Dickerson and Frederick.

### **Response by the Maryland Highway Administration**

The Maryland State Highway Administration ([SHA](#)) has control of Route 109, the state roadway through Barnesville, and thus bears liability for traffic control and safety of drivers and pedestrians. Town officials had been in contact with SHA staff many times over many years requesting assistance but had not achieved what we asked for. Now, however, because the Town was able to produce ticketing data from speed cameras as well as on-site police citations from Streethawk, the staff of Maryland Highway Administration began to reassess its position regarding road safety in Barnesville.

One of the Town's requests to SHA had been for a 3-way stop sign at the intersection of Barnesville Road and Beallsville Road. After studying citation data and verifying traffic volumes



with other means, SHA staff engineers concluded that a better strategy was a pair of 3-way stops: one at the intersection identified by the Town, and another at the intersection of Old Hundred Road and Barnesville Road.

Town officials convened a community meeting to hear directly from the engineers with details about the proposal, including queueing data so residents could predict how much traffic backup might occur on Barnesville Road during rush hours when the stop signs were in place. After deliberation, following this meeting, Town Commissioners concluded that safety was paramount and requested the State of Maryland to install the two pairs of signals as proposed. Stop sign installation occurred in October 2018.

As of this writing, The Town has more than fifteen months experience with the new signs. Traffic through Town has slowed significantly. In particular, the volume of truck traffic on Barnesville Road has declined significantly (this was a prediction by the engineers.) Streethawk has been monitoring compliance with the stop signs, issuing warnings and citations as needed. Reports of these citations indicate few repeat offenders. Town residents are not experiencing difficulty with queues of cars blocking driveways.

The Town is encouraged to continue monitoring and enforcing speeds within the Town limits. This plan supports continued work and advocacy by the Transportation Committee. The next safety issue needing to receive attention and correction is the evidence of high speeds by vehicles heading out of Barnesville to the south, going downhill on Beallsville Road. This is related to safety issues at the MARC station, which follows.

### **Major issue: Access and Safety at the Barnesville MARC Station**

Because the MARC Station is just a few hundred yards outside the Town limits, residents are frequent users of the commuter rail service. Demand for commuter service is increasing on the line, resulting in high demand for parking spaces in the two MARC parking lots. There is no bus service to the station. Some residents live close enough to walk, but there is no sidewalk or other safe walkway available and no signage to warn drivers that pedestrians may be present.

In addition, individuals opting to ride the MARC trains on weekdays are frequently finding the parking lot full when they arrive. Some commuters are now parking on the edge of Sellman Road then walking across Beallsville Road to the train platform. This is not a signaled intersection and has very poor sight-lines.

For all the above reasons, this Plan encourages the Town to continue working with various Montgomery County and State agencies to bring improvements to Barnesville's MARC station. Discussions are already underway, exploring alternatives that might be helpful. Some are outlined below:

### **Connectivity**

Poolesville is the nearest town with Ride On bus access but bus route 76 does not connect the Barnesville MARC Station to Poolesville via that Ride On bus service. This seems like a lost opportunity for a rapidly growing commuting population in Poolesville who could benefit from

MARC service. Such a bus could also connect Barnesville residents to the Shady Grove metro station.

The Town of Barnesville also is trying to work with the State and County to get pedestrian and bicycle access from Barnesville to the MARC station – a little less than a mile.

### **Safety**

With virtually no shoulder on State Route 109, it is extremely hazardous for any pedestrian to attempt to walk or bike from the Town of Barnesville to the Barnesville MARC train station. Barnesville is working with the County to get sidewalks in the town limits but wants the walkway to continue all the way to the train station. This will require support from MARC and others and ideally should be part of an overall plan to make MARC service more accessible in the County. As with all the MARC stations, parking is currently a challenge as the lot fills up daily and spills onto access roads that have no safe pedestrian crossing. Bus service connecting to Poolesville would alleviate the need for some parking and improve the situation.

### **Additional Parking**

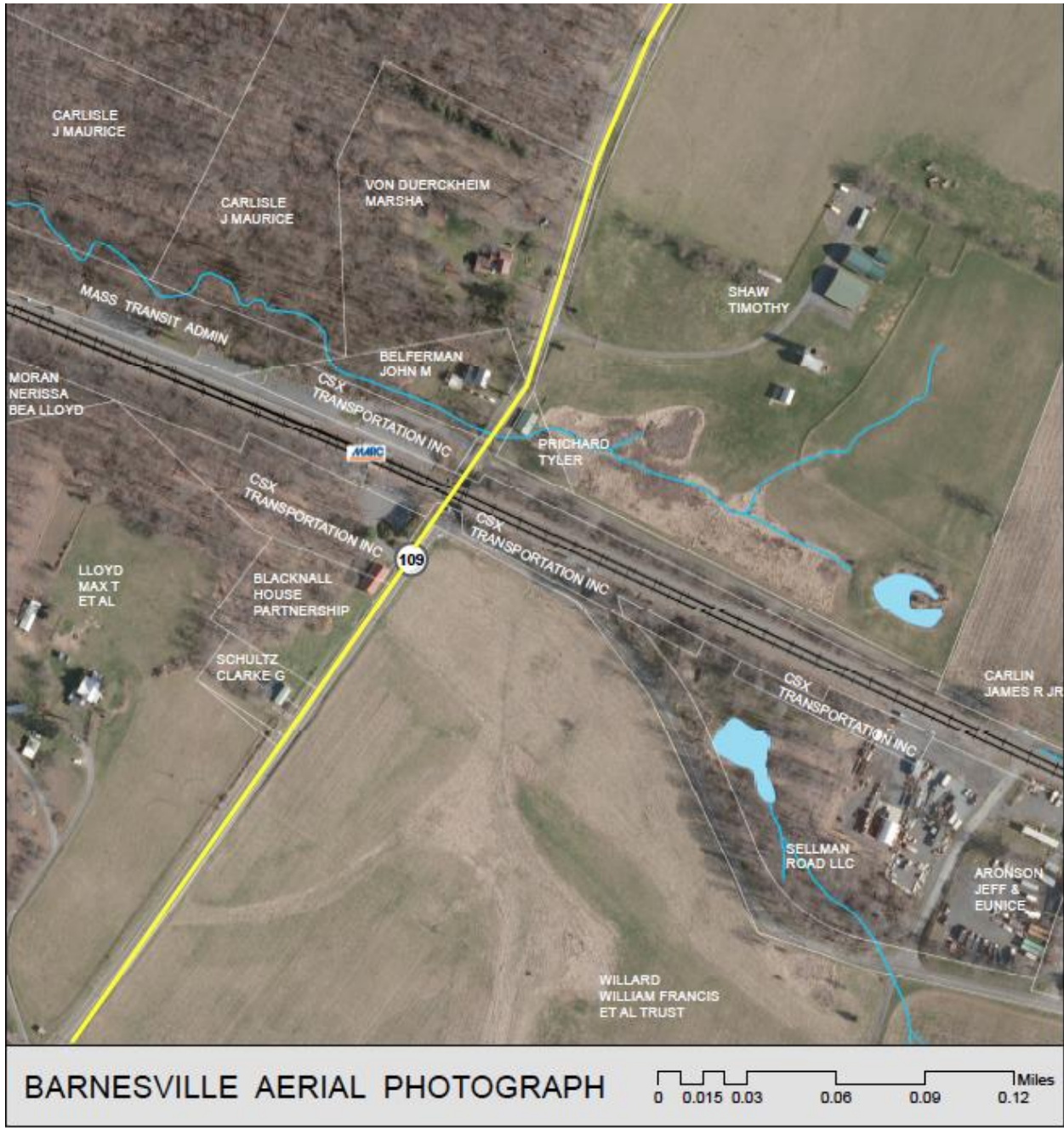
Town residents have expressed an interest in expanding parking at the MARC station. As noted above, some individuals park now along Sellman Road and walk to the train platform. If additional parking were to be approved either along Sellman, or on the other side of the tracks and overpass, there would need to be major pedestrian safety improvements, perhaps including an overpass for pedestrians that parallels the train overpass above Route 109.

Other parking possibilities are expansion of the lot along the north side of the tracks, or perhaps relocating the historic general store building to enable expanding the lot on the south side of the platform. The County has also confirmed that they own the land on Hillrise Lane opposite the train station that was used as a through road until the at-grade railroad crossing was closed down. Now, the land is vacant and could be used to provide parking if adequate safeguards for pedestrians crossing Route 109 were put in place via stop signs or other traffic controls.



### **Ag Reserve and MARC Rail Communities**

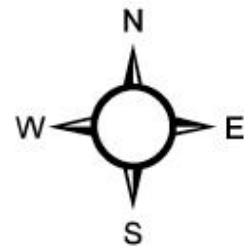
Sitting in the heart of the Ag Reserve, there is an opportunity to make the MARC station in Barnesville part of an overall effort to make the Ag Reserve more accessible to State and County residents. Likewise there is an opportunity to add Barnesville to the MARC rail communities effort that has begun in nearby Boyds. In addition to the station there is an unutilized historic site, a former General Store, adjacent to the MARC train station. Thus Barnesville has some of the same historic and cultural resources as Boyds and Germantown.

Below is a map showing parcel ownership in the vicinity of the MARC platform. Barnesville's leaders have begun discussions with County and MARC staff, exploring all of the issues above, and this Plan urges that exploration to continue.



### MARC STATION VICINITY 2017

-  MARC Station
-  Property Ownership



## Chapter 5 Sidewalks – Pedestrian Safety, Parking

### 5.1 History of sidewalks in Barnesville

From 1888, when the Town was incorporated, the Commissioners of Barnesville were dedicated to providing sidewalks for residents. They supervised the building of the first sidewalks from oak boards and other lumber. Realizing that this sidewalk material needed regular repairs, the Town began installing the first concrete sidewalks in 1910. (See sidewalk Segments A, B and C in the chart below.)

However, Barnesville’s concrete sidewalks were never constructed throughout Town, on all roads and on both sides. In 2005, the Master Plan recommended re-starting sidewalk construction on selected road segments, as identified in the chart below. These recommendations were aimed at serving public destinations in Town, including Hilton Funeral Home, Lillard Store, Town Hall, Catholic Church, Baptist Church and Post Office.

Since 2005, the Commissioners have worked with a consultant, Town residents/property owners, and public officials to begin the anticipated construction. Two new segments have been built since then. (See Segments E and G in the chart below.)

This plan recommends continuing sidewalk construction, not just for the above-mentioned destinations, but for every part of the Town. Thus the chart below identifies sidewalk segments throughout the Town, on both sides of the roads within Town, and in some cases beyond (e.g., to the train station on Beallsville Road, and to the public elementary school on Barnesville Road, both of which are just outside the Town Boundary).

The plan’s goal is to make Barnesville safer for all residents and pedestrians who wish to walk or bike for exercise, visit neighbors or attend town events, and allow children and adults safe places to wait for transportation to school or elsewhere.

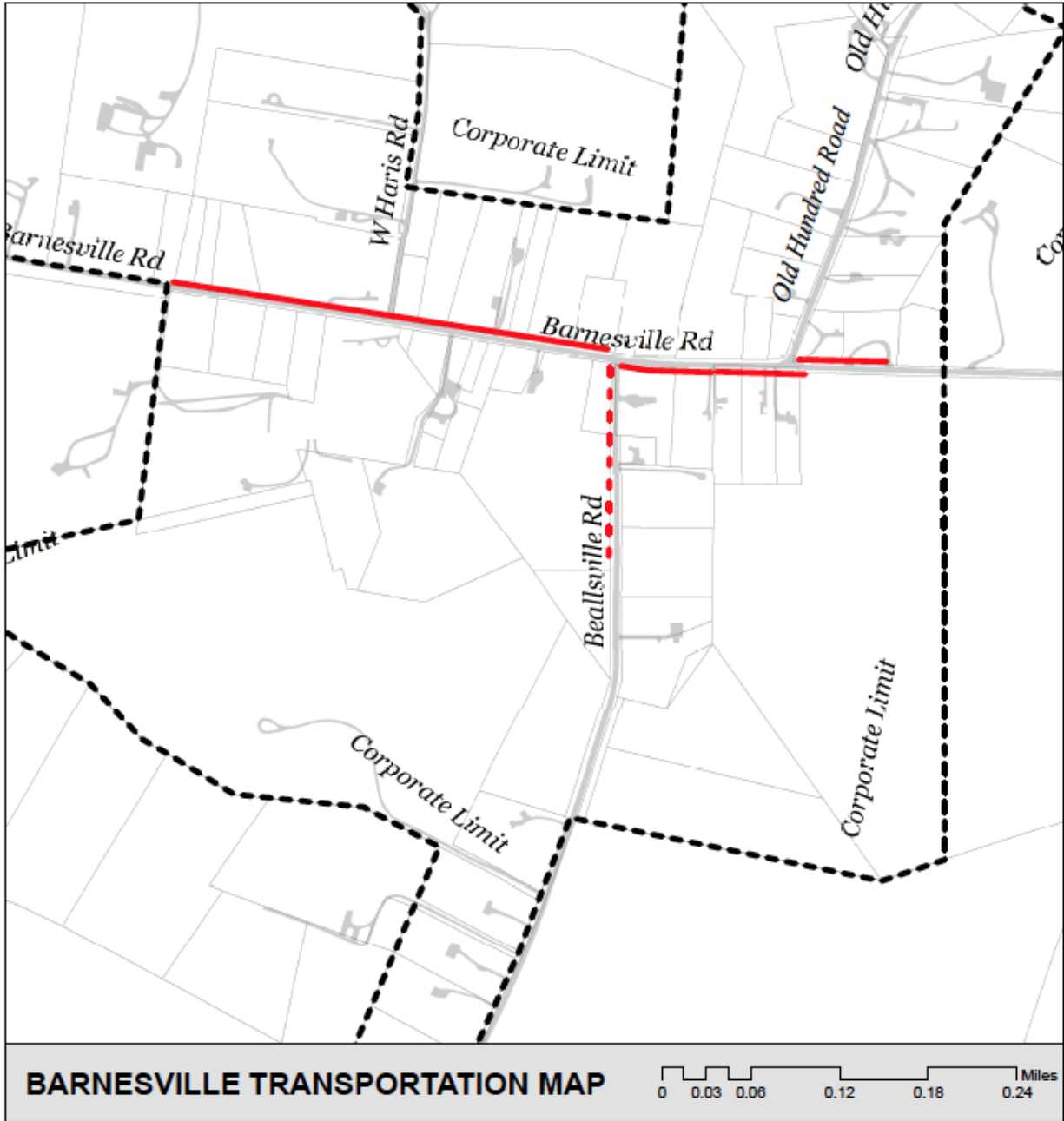
**Chart of sidewalk segments**

Segment Label	Where	Existing, proposed, on hold or “new”	Date constructed or to be constructed; other notes as needed
A	North side of Barnesville Rd, edge of town to Harris Road.	Existing.	Unknown.
B	North side of Barnesville Rd, Harris Rd to intersection with Beallsville Rd.	Existing.	Unknown.
C	South side of Barnesville Rd, from Beallsville Rd in front of 18040 Barnesville Rd	Existing.	Rebuilt by State of MD contractors, after 2005.




D	West side of Beallsville Rd from Barnesville Rd to Post Office.	Recommended in 2005 Plan to serve Post Office. Design may incorporate a wooden walkway for part of length.	Not scheduled; Town Commissioners are negotiating with County and State officials.
E	South side of Barnesville Rd, from point where existing sidewalk ends to intersection with Old Hundred Rd.	Recommended in 2005 Plan to serve Town Hall.	Installed by Montgomery County contractor fall 2018. Area near large existing tree has special permeable surface (non-concrete) to permit the tree to remain.
F	North Side of Barnesville Rd, from intersection with Beallsville Rd to intersection with Old Hundred Rd. (ends at Town Hall.)	On hold. Not recommended in 2005 plan.	Would serve Town Hall if built.
G	North side of Barnesville Rd, from intersection with Old Hundred to driveway of Baptist Church.	Recommended in 2005 Plan because it connects Town Hall with Baptist Church and parking there.	Installed by Montgomery County contractor at County expense. Was initially built as an asphalt path, then replaced by concrete sidewalk in Fall 2018.
H	West side of Old Hundred Rd, from intersection with Barnesville Rd for homes along that side of Old Hundred Rd.	On hold. Not recommended in 2005 plan unless funds for construction become available.	Would serve Town Hall.
I	East side of Beallsville Road from intersection with Barnesville Rd to Hilton Funeral Home. This segment is opposite Segment D above.	New Segment in this plan.	Note this segment was labeled "alt D" in the 2005 Plan.)
J	South side of Barnesville Rd, from intersection with Beallsville Road to western edge of town.	On hold. Not recommended in 2005 plan.	This segment is across the road from existing sidewalk, Segment A.
K	East side of Beallsville Road, Connects with end of segment I, at Hilton Funeral Home, and extends to the southern-most boundary of town on Beallsville Rd.	New Segment in this plan.	Part of this segment was given to the town in an easement as a condition of subdivision approval. ~ From this point (easement) to the train station is on private land outside the Town, but the plan requests a negotiated continuation of a walking path all the way to the Train station.

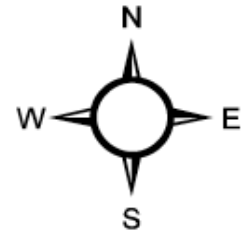
L	West side of Beallsville Rd, from Post Office to southern-most boundary of town.	New Segment in this plan.	This segment is opposite segment I. From the end of Segment L to train station is on private land outside the Town, but the plan requests a negotiated continuation of a walking path all the way to the Train station.
M	North side of Barnesville Road from the end of Segment A to the western-most boundary of Town.	New Segment in this plan.	From the end of Segment M to elementary school is on private and public land outside the Town. This plan requests a negotiated continuation of a walking path all the way to the entrance of elementary school.
N	East side of Old Hundred Rd, from intersection with Barnesville Rd.	New Segment in this plan.	Opposite segment H on west side of Old Hundred Rd.
O	West side of Harris Rd, from intersection with Barnesville Rd to town Boundary.	New Segment in this plan.	
P	East side of Harris Rd, from intersection with Barnesville Rd to town Boundary.	New Segment in this plan.	
Q	South side of Barnesville Rd, - extends Segment E to Town's eastern Boundary.	New Segment in this plan.	

See map with sidewalk segments identified, next page.



**Legend**

-  Roadways
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Sidewalks



## **Recommendations carried forward from 2005 Plan**

This Plan believes that with sensitive design, the proposed sidewalks will be of minimal adverse impact on the adjoining properties, and may well improve their value.

- As the Town moves to construct the sidewalks, it should make maximum use of the opportunity to do so in conjunction with related roadwork by the State or County.
- The Plan recommends that new sidewalks be constructed within existing public rights of way wherever possible.
- The Town should work actively with each adjoining property owner to assure that the sidewalk enhances the property, and that the concerns of the owner are taken fully into account.
- The Plan recommends that the Town work with the County to select appropriate materials for the sidewalks.
- The Plan further recommends pavement crosswalk markings and/or signage where appropriate.
- The Town should seek opportunities to work with Montgomery County Government and the State of Maryland to fund, design and build all of the sidewalks mentioned. All roads and rights of way in Barnesville are controlled by these jurisdictions.
- The Plan recommends crosswalks be installed at Old Hundred and Barnesville Roads.

## **Sidewalk Access and Parking for Town Hall**

Even with new sidewalks in place, some residents and visitors to the Town Hall will come by car. At this time, there is minimal paved space in front of the Hall for parking two or three vehicles. There is no turn around space, so vehicles will inevitably be making potentially unsafe movements in or out of the parking area, from or onto Barnesville Road.

Since the re-opening of the remodeled Town Hall, supplemental parking space has been offered to the Town at no cost by the Barnesville Baptist Church. This arrangement has worked well. The new sidewalk recently installed (Segment G) from the church's lot to the intersection with Old Hundred Road permits safer walking.

The 3-way stop signs installed by the State of Maryland at this intersection show evidence of managing traffic to increase safety for both drivers and pedestrians. New pedestrian crosswalk markings will improve safety even further.

Although there have been no crises involving parking arrangements described above, this Plan recognizes that a Town-owned parking lot for Town Hall visitors would be preferred to "borrowed parking" which is now all that is available. Vacant land across Barnesville Road from the Baptist Church is one target of opportunity — it may be possible to acquire land of between .5 and 1 acre, preferably at the northwestern corner of the site, for development of a Town Hall lot. The distance to the Town Hall from the referenced corner would be no longer a walk than the walk from the church parking lot.

This plan recommends that Town Commissioners explore this possibility with the property owner.



## Chapter 6 Municipal Growth

This chapter is the municipal growth element for the town of Barnesville's comprehensive plan. It presents analyses of land consumption and facilities impacts that can be expected as a result of the projected growth of the town's population from the year 2020 to the year 2040.

Barnesville's population in 2010 was 172 persons. The Town provides limited municipal services to its residents. From the time of its formation in 1888, the town has never provided public services such as roads, schools, libraries, public water and sewer services. This plan anticipates no change in that policy. Thus any increase (or decrease) in population over the coming twenty years will not cause an expansion of services offered by the municipality. Public services to Town residents are provided today by Montgomery County Government and any increased demand from the Town has been factored into service projections by the County.

The Town's historical rural character, scenic agricultural views and sense of community combine to make Barnesville a good place to call home. By preserving the Town's assets, its connection to agriculture and the social community that we have today, we can achieve a balance between old and new that respects the land, the water, and the ecosystem. It is not a goal of the Town to grow or add public or commercial services. Rather Town policies will be targeted toward retaining our residential nature and preserving our viability as a small rural town.

### 6.1 Barnesville's past (prior to 2020)

#### Population and housing (census info)

Year	Population	Housing Units
1930	119	NA
1940	121	NA
1950	130	NA
1960	145	NA
1970	162	47
1980	141	54
1990	170	63
2000	161	65
2010	172	67

#### Recent history of annexations

In 1987, Barnesville annexed seven parcels located on Beallsville Road. All properties were three acres or less in size and had older homes on them. Also in 1987, the Town annexed a farm that has a pipe stem access onto Beallsville Road with agricultural land adjacent to the

Town boundary. All of these annexations were requested by the property owners. The seven smaller properties were zoned R200 in Montgomery County. When they came into the Town, all parcels were put into Barnesville's R-A zone, a single-family residential-agricultural zone. The farm property, prior to annexation, was in two zoning categories. The small "pipe stem" portion was zoned R200. The larger farmed portion was in the County's RDT zone; development rights associated with the property had been sold prior to 1987. In order to bring this property into the Town with no change in land use, the Town created a BRDT zone, modeled after the County's RDT zone, and placed the entire farm property into that BRDT zone. Thus, the 1987 annexation was accomplished with no change in land use or density.

### **Land uses**

Barnesville has always been a residential community with limited commercial properties. More than 90% of the 88 parcels in Town are used for single-family dwellings or are undeveloped. A few parcels have existing structures that are not habitable and have been in that condition for twenty or more years.

Properties with structures other than housing are either community buildings (churches, Town Hall) or properties that were grandfathered in as non-conforming commercial uses when the first town master plan was adopted. These few grand-fathered properties have historic status in the Town, including a funeral home, a small office building/post office and a general store.

### **Notes on recent residential changes:**

One subdivision has been approved (in 2014), creating two residential lots, each slightly in excess of 4 acres. Both are currently vacant, although one owner is preparing plans for construction.

On the BRDT farm parcel described above, a new residence is under construction. This follows many years when the land was vacant. Several residential structures have been or are being extensively renovated. Various residential properties in Town are vacant. Several are listed for sale, one is neglected by its out-of-town owner.

### **Town's policy on providing public services**

Barnesville provides limited municipal services, as follows:

The Town provides weekly trash and recycling pickup (private contractor) and street lighting. The Town provides sidewalks; the current master plan includes a plan for adding sidewalks to improve pedestrian access to churches, Town Hall and post office.

Town meetings, including legislative and planning/zoning services, are held in the Barnesville Town Hall, which the town owns and maintains.

The Town issues building permits; every applicant must also obtain a building permit from Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. All permit inspections and storm water management services are provided by Montgomery County Government.

In its entire history, the Town has never provided public services such as roads, mass transit, schools, libraries, public safety, public water and sewer services, etc.

Here is an inventory of public services for Town residents, along with the service provider and the location of nearest service:

- **Schools:** none in Town. Montgomery County Public high school and middle school located in Poolesville; elementary school is less than one mile outside town limit.
- **Water and Sewer:** none; all properties on private well/septic. Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission has no plans to extend water/sewer lines from Germantown or Clarksburg.
- **Bus Transit:** none. Ride-On buses by Montgomery County available in Poolesville or Germantown, approximately 7 miles.
- **Metro Rail Mass Transit:** none. Nearest METRO station at Shady Grove.
- **Commuter Rail:** MARC service available Monday-Friday; station is just south of Town boundary Library: none. Nearest Montgomery County Public Libraries in Poolesville and Germantown.
- **Health & Social Services:** none in Town. Montgomery County offers these services in Germantown.
- **Public Safety:** none in Town. Montgomery County Police Station in Germantown; nearest Fire/Rescue station in Beallsville, 4 miles.
- **Parks and Recreation:** A passive park is located in the center of Town. Nearest Montgomery County parks in Beallsville, approximately 4 miles.
- **Post Office:** located in Town.
- **Roads:** no roads owned or maintained by the Town. Our roads are (a) State Rt. 109 and (b) County roads Barnesville Rd and W. Harris Rd.

## 6.2 Barnesville's future (through the year 2030)

### Anticipated annexations

Barnesville does not anticipate initiating any annexations. Should a property owner adjacent to the town boundary request annexation, the Town's policy will be to seek citizen input as to desirability of annexation and then to annex it only with the land use that is in place under Montgomery County zoning.

### Anticipated land uses changes

Barnesville is committed to remaining a rural village. There is no plan to change zoning categories from the existing R-A and BRDT zones.

If no land is annexed by the Town, the only land use changes likely to occur will be when vacant parcels are developed for single family residential purposes. Twenty undeveloped properties in Barnesville are zoned R-A, Residential Agricultural. Most of these are small out-lots adjacent to a parcel with an existing single-family house. These will not be developed because the minimum lot size for a new single- family dwelling unit is 4 acres.

Vacant properties or underdeveloped parcels large enough to be subdivided into lots that meet the minimum lot size for new housing are as follows:

Parcel # - Street name	Number of acres	Number of potential added building lots *
P550 - Barnesville Rd	25.46	6
P488 - Barnesville Rd	8.55	2
P545 - Barnesville Rd	4.53	1
P488 - Barnesville Rd	8.55	2
P545 - Barnesville Rd	4.53	1
Thomas - Barnesville Rd	25.00	6
P478 - Old Hundred Rd	4.78	1
P388 - Old Hundred Rd	9.16	2
P338 - Old Hundred Rd	10.40	1
P340 - W Harris Rd	14.00	2
P505 - W Harris Rd	19.73	3
<b>Total Potential*</b>		<b>27</b>

\*NOTE: Barnesville’s Zoning Ordinance requires access to a public street to add a dwelling unit to a vacant lot. The Subdivision Ordinances requires 150’ of frontage on a public street for each dwelling unit. Thus, some of the vacant or underdeveloped parcels listed above may not achieve all possible dwelling units due to this requirement. In addition, some may not meet requirements for well and septic. Thus the “TOTAL” number of units above must be understood as an upside estimate only.

**Population projections**

For purposes of this analysis, we projected all possible future dwelling units, but of course, not all will be built in the horizon of this study. Nevertheless, using the current average household size of 2.5, the above full potential (27) dwelling units could increase the Town population by 68 persons compared to the number living here in 2020.

**Implications for public services from the above**

No new public services will be required for an anticipated population increase of 68 persons.

### **Re-statement of policy on providing public services**

Barnesville does not anticipate changing its policy regarding municipal services between 2020 and 2040. Town residents will continue to rely on Montgomery County Government for services such as schools, libraries, public safety, water and sewer services, transportation, permit inspections, etc.

## Chapter 7 New Issues

### Introduction

In the years since 2005 when the prior Barnesville Master Plan was approved, significant changes have occurred in communications, in society and on our planet. We now have cell phones that are also computers. Digital Photography. GPS. Audiobooks. Ride sharing. Texting. Airline boarding passes on your phone. Home sharing. Streaming music/movies. Drones. Robots. Apps. Online shopping. Telecommuting. Climate changes and instability. Social Media. Round-the-clock world news coverage. The changes go on and on.

Even the early months of this year, 2020, brought surprises. Everyone in Barnesville is coping with significant changes in our daily lives as we collectively face a new, highly contagious virus that brings risks of serious illness, even death to every community on earth. Health experts have advocated social distancing to limit the spread of disease and Maryland's elected leaders have imposed stay at home orders that remain in place as this plan is being put into final draft form. We don't know what changes are ahead for our Town in a Post-Coronavirus world.

Someone passing through Town would see no evidence of these significant changes because the physical layout and appearance of Barnesville has changed little. But residents are participating in all of the above social, economic and technological changes, and thus some uses made of buildings and land have changed.

This chapter lists and discusses various new patterns and suggests those that the Town address through new procedures, new legislation or changes to existing codes.

### 5G communication Technology

When broadband services were first approved in Montgomery County, one condition was that all municipalities be served by the franchisee. Thus Barnesville is one of the areas within the Agricultural Reserve with cable and internet services available to any residence without additional installation costs. Now that internet availability has become even more important than cable access, customers are eager to get the highest bandwidth possible.

A recent opportunity for even higher bandwidth is a new antenna technology called 5G. Federal agencies and service providers have pushed hard throughout the country to make sure there are no local jurisdictional impediments to installing this technology where customers want it. This came into focus for the Town officials in spring 2019 when a deadline for municipal regulatory changes approached. The requirement was to adopt standards prior to April 15<sup>th</sup> or forever forego the opportunity. Town officials did adopt the standards shown in [Ordinance to Regulate Small Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in the Rights-of-Way](#) for our town at that time.

### Home sharing – Short Term Rentals

Barnesville residents are using online businesses such as Airbnb and VRBO – not just as customers but also as providers of accommodations within the Town. Current zoning for our

Town lists “Tourist home” as a Special Exception use. The definition for Tourist Home does not clarify whether the home’s owner (or representative) must be on the premises. Current residents offering the service have not sought or received the special exception.

Another recent event to note is that Montgomery County regulations now require annual registration and inspection of short term rentals. See [legislation here](#). The provider must also pay a 7% hotel occupancy tax.

This Plan recommends that the Town adopt a Zoning Text Amendment to accomplish the following:

- Make Tourist Home a Permitted Use once the homeowner provides proof of Montgomery County registration and has passed the County inspection.
- Amend the definition of Tourist Home to clarify that the homeowner or a non-owner permanent resident designated by the owner must be “on location”, i.e., no un-hosted short term rentals.
- Require payment of an annual fee to the Town. The fee would be set by resolution.

### **Scenic View Protection**

Scenic Views are defined as having, providing, or relating to a pleasing or beautiful view of natural scenery such as mountains, hills, valleys, etc. Town residents enjoy various views of nearby Sugarloaf Mountain, pastures, fields and forests. These views are highly valued not only by residents but also by their visitors and even individuals passing through town.

During Subdivision of land, protecting scenic views is used as a standard when the Planning Commission evaluates an application for subdivision of land. Applicants must document how new construction affects views from current residential properties.

This plan recommends that the Town’s Building Permit application be used in a similar way. The permit form should be modified to require each applicant to identify when a new building or addition to an existing building will block a neighbor’s view. While zoning restrictions do not address blocking scenic views, the building permit applicant would be asked to clarify why closing off a view for neighboring properties is the preferred solution, why no other solution is feasible. The application would then be evaluated by the Planning Commission for compliance with all zoning requirements, followed by a recommendation to the Mayor and Commissioners for approval or modification.

### **Tree Preservation**

Barnesville’s method of preserving trees and forests has, to date, been through the Forest Conservation Ordinance. Today, with more emphasis on climate change and environmental protection, this Plan suggests the Town develop added strategies for emphasizing the value of and protecting trees because, for example,

- Shade on houses reduces demands for energy
- Trees provide wildlife habitat and sequester carbon
- They add beauty to the Town
- Plus many other advantages.

The Town's current Ordinance stresses the value of tree retention in Section 9.

## 9.2 Retention

*The following trees, shrubs, plants, and specific areas are considered priority for retention and protection and shall be left in an undisturbed condition unless the applicant has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission, that reasonable efforts have been made to protect them and the plan cannot be reasonably altered:*

*(A) Trees, shrubs, and plants located in sensitive areas including the 100- year floodplain, intermittent and perennial streams and their buffers, steep slopes, nontidal wetlands, and critical habitats;*

*(B) Contiguous forest that connects the largest undeveloped or most vegetated tracts of land within and adjacent to the site;*

*(C) Trees, shrubs, or plants determined to be rare, threatened, or endangered under:*

*(1) The federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 in 16 U.S.C. 1531--1544 and in 50 CFR Part 17,*

*(2) The Maryland Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act, Sections 10-2A-01 through 10-2A-09 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and*

*(3) COMAR 08.03.08;*

*(D) Trees that:*

*(1) Are part of a historic site,*

*(2) Are associated with a historic structure, or*

*(3) Have been designated by the State or the Town as a national, State, or Town champion tree; and*

*(E) Any tree having a diameter measured at 4.5 feet above the ground of:*

*(1) 30 inches or more; or*

*(2) 75 percent or more of the diameter, measured at 4.5 feet above the ground, of the current State champion tree of that species as designated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.*

The current Ordinance includes exemptions, however, and this is where the Plan suggests changes. In the current Ordinance, building or modifying a single family house on an existing lot does not require tree preservation unless an area of 40,000 square feet of forest is to be cut, graded or cleared.

This plan recommends that the Ordinance be modified to require every building permit application, whether for renovation or new construction of a single family residence, to identify the trees on the lot that will be removed or severely altered for construction purposes. Should the assistance of an arborist be needed, it will be at the lot owner's expense.

The Planning Commission is already tasked in the Forest Conservation Ordinance with all responsibility for reviewing and enforcing the ordinance and requirements. Thus the Planning



Commission will review and approve or negotiate modifications for tree preservation when presenting a recommendation to the Town Commissioners.

### **Parking for Town Hall**

As noted in Chapter 4, visitors to the Town Hall are permitted by the Baptist Church to park cars on their lot. This informal agreement has worked well since 2008.

- This Plan recommends that the fee schedule for renting the Hall include a small fee for “parking appreciation” and that the Town transfer the proceeds to the Baptist Church in gratitude for their courtesy. It will be the Town Commissioners who set the fee amount.
- This Plan also recommends that the Town Commissioners explore with the land owner across Barnesville Road from the Baptist Church whether that owner might donate or sell approximately one acre of this vacant land to the Town. The land would be used for constructing a lot for visitors to the Town Hall.

### **Parking on Private Property, for Residential or other permitted uses**

The zoning ordinance, Section 7, currently permits parking on residential or other property if the parking is associated with a permitted use on that property. Planning Commission members acknowledge that as home business uses become more prevalent and are added to the list of permitted uses, there may be vehicles associated with those businesses that have commercial use or size or carry commercial signage – i.e., not merely passenger vehicles belonging to residents.

Nevertheless, this plan recommends no change to the zoning permission given to parking associated with permitted uses. In the view of Planning Commission members, the number and variety of non-passenger vehicles is not large enough to change the residential character of the Town.

Section 7 of the Zoning Ordinance focuses on Parking and lists the number of spaces required for various permitted uses. Planning Commission members reviewed all the requirements, and recommend two changes as follows:

- Subsection C-3, (office uses) – Remove the requirement that links parking requirements to the square foot size of office. Add a requirement that there be at least one space for each 2 employees
- Subsection C-6, (spaces devoted to retail sales, such as a craft shop or antique sales), Remove the requirement that links parking requirements to the square foot size of office. Add a requirement that there be at least one space for each 2 employees plus 2 spaces for visitors or customers.

### **Vacant residential properties**

In recent months, the Planning Commission has noted that some existing residential buildings in Town remain vacant for months and even years. Sometimes the vacancy is caused by bank foreclosure or death of an owner, sometimes by what appears to be abandonment or neglect. A vacant property may be of concern due to uneven property upkeep compared to neighbors. In

addition, there may be security concerns if no one is monitoring a vacant building. Furthermore, vacant residences provide no revenue to the Town through State and Local income taxes.

This Plan recommends that the Planning Commission report annually to the Town Commissioners on the location of each residence that has been vacant continuously during the previous 12 months. This report will include the name and address of the property owner, length of time vacant and an assessment of the property's upkeep (land and building structures.) In cases where there appears to be neglect, the Planning Commission will advise the Town Commissioners to request inspection and action by Montgomery County housing code officials.

### **Craft, Antique, Home Occupation and Professional Offices**

There are many residential properties in Town where owners or occupants maintain a business, and this pattern appears to be growing as contemporary technology facilitates such work.

Many residents operate home businesses or professional offices, some operate art, craft or antique studios or shops. When such activities are in the main residence, they are a permitted use. If in an accessory building, current zoning requires the use apply for and have a special exception.

For many years, this special exception requirement has not been followed, and there have been no known complaints, neither regarding the lack of process nor the uses themselves.

This recent history seems to indicate no apparent need for the special exception requirement in accessory buildings. Thus, this Plan recommends a change to the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

- Permit the use of one accessory building on a residential property for art or craft studio, antique shop, home occupation or professional office (i.e., no longer require a Special Exception), provided that there is sufficient off-street parking and driveway access for the added use (see requirements in Section 7 of the ordinance.)
- Require a special exception for such uses of any additional accessory building(s) on the same property. Parking requirements must be met for all uses on the property.
- Clarify the definition of Home Occupation to permit sales of products related to the business as a minor part of the occupation.

### **Agritourism**

These are activities involving any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. Both the State of Maryland and Montgomery County have been promoting Agritourism as an attractive activity for rural areas. The motivation is stated as both economic development and preservation of open space.

In the Town of Barnesville, where we have RA Zoning and even farms within Town, it might seem logical to make agritourism a permitted use. This Plan notes, however, that the essence of Agritourism is commercial, i.e., selling events and products, especially in a way that encourages large numbers of visitors with money to spend.

Given that retaining the Town as a quiet rural village is the significant goal for our residents, it would be contradictory to encourage the “busy-ness” of Agritourism in our small village. Our road access is by two-lane roads, often with limited sight lines due to hills. In recent years, many agritourism events are focused on production and sale of alcoholic beverages. Barnesville does not wish to compromise vehicle or pedestrian safety by encouraging drivers on our rural roads who have been drinking.

This Plan recommends not adding agritourism as a listed use. Thus, it will not be permitted if it is not mentioned.

### **Ancillary Dwelling Units (ADUs)**

Montgomery County Government and other counties/cities around the United States have initiated a new land use strategy to encourage the supply of affordable dwelling units. The approach is to change the zoning on parcels for single family dwelling units to permit one additional “ancillary” dwelling unit, either as a separate structure on the lot, or within the main dwelling unit. While controversial, various forms of this modification to single family zones are being considered, and some have been adopted in recent months.

Barnesville’s Planning Commission discussed the pros and cons of this change for our Town, because members recognize the need for affordable housing, whether for family members or a friend or for parties yet unknown. Our town, however, has one major difference from the majority of land in Montgomery County — our residences rely solely on wells and septic systems. To permit an additional dwelling unit on any property within the town would require assurance that there is sufficient drinking water and septic capacity on that property to support the change.

Because the adoption of ADUs is so new in Maryland and elsewhere, and because well and septic capacity issues have not been explored, members of the Planning Commission defer further consideration of ADUs at this time. As the evidence becomes available – i.e., does the strategy work to create additional affordable housing? under what circumstances? — the Town may wish to consider future changes favoring ADUs.

## Chapter 8 Zoning Ordinance Updates

This Chapter lists recommended changes to Barnesville’s Zoning Ordinance.

Insert **[text to be inserted]**

Delete text to be deleted

### Section 3. Definitions

Page	Definition	Text	Notes
6	Guest or Tourist Rooms	A room, rooms or suite of rooms in a building originally designed, constructed and utilized as a single-family dwelling in which <b>[the owner or owner authorized agent is resident]</b> , for compensation, living and sleeping accommodations are provided for transient visitors to the Town and for which all furnishings and housekeeping services are provided and maintained by the management. The guest or tourist room shall have no provision for cooking, except that if they have minor kitchenette facilities.	<p>Intent is no rentals where the owner or their agent is not present. Home swaps would be permitted.</p> <p>Make Tourist Home a Permitted Use once the homeowner provides proof of Montgomery County registration and has passed the County inspection Amend the definition of Tourist Home to clarify that the homeowner or a non-owner permanent resident designated by the owner must be “on location”, i.e., no un-hosted short term rentals. Require payment of an annual fee to the Town. The fee would be set by resolution..</p>

### Section 6. Development Standards

Page	Section	Text	RA	BRDT	Notes
14	(2) Transportation, Communication & Utilities	Radio, television & microwave[, <b>cellular communications, towers and structures]</b>	SE	SE	Update reflected in 5g ordinance
14	(3) Commercial	Antique shop in an <b>[one]</b> accessory building operated by a resident is permitted.	SE <b>[P]</b>	SE <b>[P]</b>	One accessory building permitted. Additional accessory building by SE
14	(3) Commercial	Home occupation in an <b>[one]</b> accessory building operated by a resident is permitted.	SE <b>[P]</b>	SE <b>[P]</b>	One accessory building permitted. Additional accessory building by SE
15	(3) Commercial	Craft, Artisan or Photography Studio in an <b>[one]</b> accessory building operated by a resident Any accessory building requires a Special Exemption.	SE <b>[P]</b>	SE <b>[P]</b>	One accessory building permitted. Additional accessory building by SE

## Section 7. Off-Street Parking and Service Requirements

Page	Section	Text	Notes
19	C. Number of Spaces Required for Specific Uses (3)	Each office use, including professional offices, but excluding medical practitioners, shall provide one (1) parking space for each two hundred (200) square feet of office space. <b>[non-resident employee.]</b>	Remove requirements based on square feet of office space.
19	C. Number of Spaces Required for Specific Uses (6)	Each commercial use devoted to retail sales shall provide two (2) parking spaces for each five hundred (500) square feet of floor area devoted to the use, plus one (1) space for every two (2) <b>[non-resident employees.]</b> employees who do not reside on the premises.	Remove requirements based on square feet of commercial space.

## Section 9. Building and Use Permits

Page	Section	Notes
27	B (2) Contents of Application for Building Permit (b)	The Building permit form should be modified to require each applicant to identify when a new building or addition to an existing building will block a neighbor's view. While zoning restrictions do not address blocking scenic views, the building permit applicant would be asked to clarify why closing off a view for neighboring properties is the preferred solution, why no other solution is feasible. The application would then be evaluated by the Planning Commission for compliance with all zoning requirements, followed by a recommendation to the Mayor and Commissioners for approval or modification.
27		Barnesville's method of preserving trees and forests has, to date, been through the Forest Conservation Ordinance. Today, with more emphasis on climate change and environmental protection, this Plan suggests the Town develop added strategies for emphasizing the value of and protecting trees because, for example, Shade on houses reduces demands for energy Trees provide wildlife habitat and sequester carbon They add beauty to the Town Plus many other advantages. The Building permit and the Forest Conservation Ordinance should be updated to reflect this emphasis.
28	(3) Contents of Application for Use Permit	It is recommended that a formal Use Permit be developed and used.

## Chapter 9 Subdivision Ordinance Updates

This Chapter lists recommended changes to Barnesville’s Subdivision Ordinance.

Key:

Insert = **[text to be inserted]**

Delete = text to be deleted

### Section 3. Definitions

Page	Definition	Text	Notes
2	Add - definition for Site Plan	<p><b>[A site plan is an architectural plan, landscape architecture document, and a detailed engineering drawing of proposed improvements to a given lot. A site plan is required prior to receiving a building permit whenever listed among the conditions for approval of a Preliminary Plan and Record Plat.</b></p> <p><b>The site plan must include, at a minimum: property lines, easements, topography, adjacent public road(s), existing and proposed structures with, size, height, design and setbacks for buildings, location of well and septic, areas to be landscaped, stormwater and sediment control plans, location and dimensions of hard surfaced areas including driveways, parking and other areas. ]</b></p>	<p>This term is not currently defined in Ordinance.</p> <p>Goal is to allow Site Plan approval to be a condition of Preliminary Plan approval when the Planning Commission deems it to be consistent with the purposes of the Ordinance and in best interests of the Town.</p>
2	Add - definition for Pedestrian Path or Bike Path	<p><b>[A strip of land intended for walking and/or biking by members of the public, granted by easement to the Town when required by the Planning Commission as a condition of Preliminary Plan approval.]</b></p>	<p>This term is not currently defined in Ordinance.</p> <p>The Town’s Comprehensive Plan may identify a recommendation to improve opportunities for walking/biking. The Planning Commission may require a new Preliminary Plan approval to grant an easement for public use.</p>

**Section 10. Plat Specifications. Information to contain....**

Page	Topic	Text	Notes
7	Section 10 - Specifying signatures on Plat Submissions  Also Section 12, - same signatures needed	Such plats shall be made or drawn upon tracing linen or parchment of the uniform size of eighteen inches by eighteen inches, shall contain the <b>[signatures of surveyor, landowner, and bank. (In the alternative, the landowner may provide proof that land has no mortgage or lien amount due.) Plat will contain]</b> directions and distance....	Ordinance lacks specifics of who must sign a plat.

**Section 29. Preliminary Plans - Filing and Specifications**

Page	Topic	Text	Notes
19	Filing of Plan	The subdivider or his/her agent shall file fifteen <b>[ten]</b> copies of the preliminary subdivision plan with the Planning Commission including one which shall be in the form of a reproducible drawing	Experience has shown that fifteen copies is excessive. The Planning Commission can request more copies from applicants if needed.

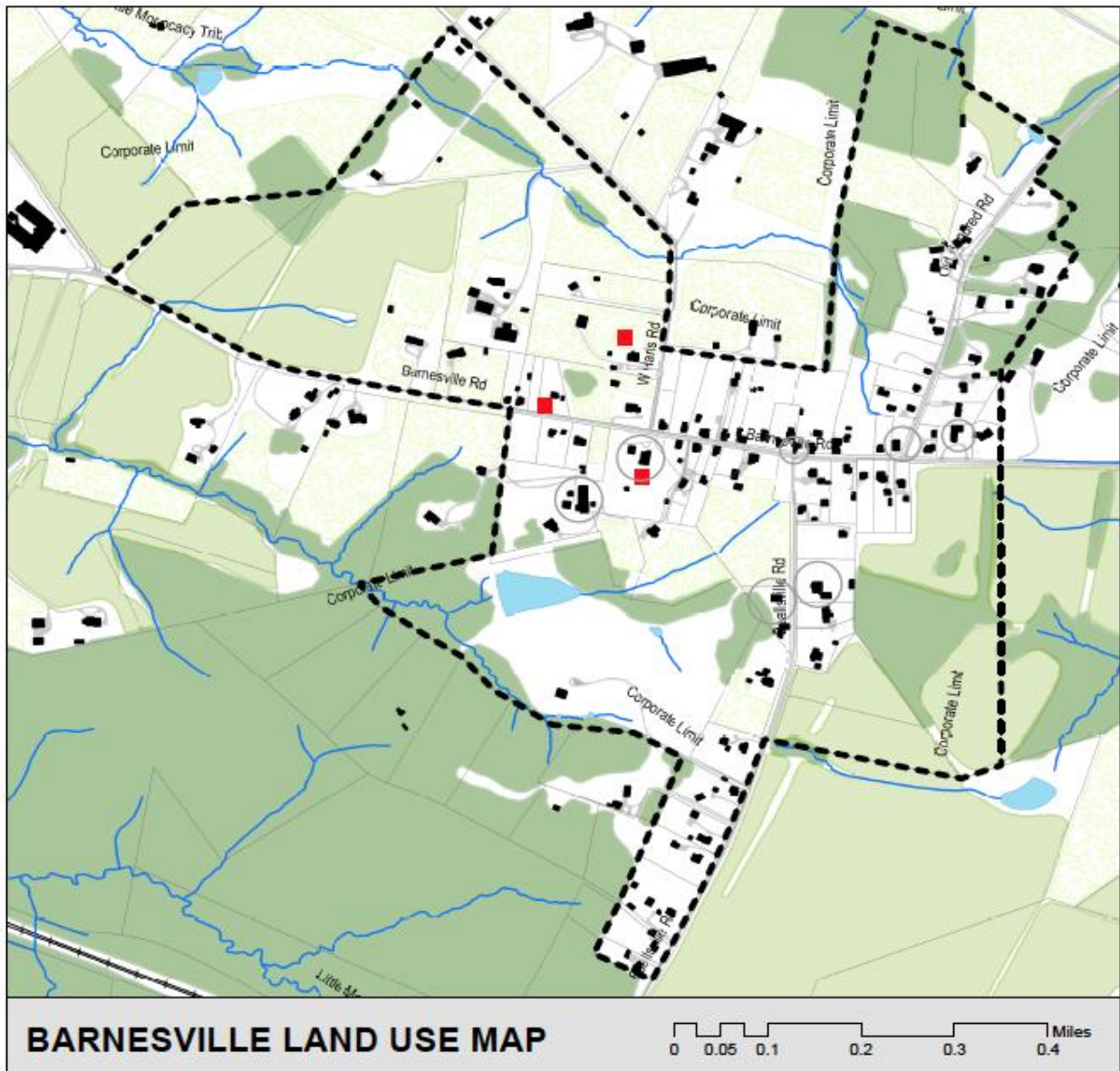
**Section 31. Final Record Plats - Specifications**

Page	Topic	Text	Notes
27	Section 31 (d) Specifications Section 32 (e)(5) - Signing and reproducing of Plats	The final subdivision record plat shall be clearly and legibly drawn in black India ink on tracing cloth, <b>[mylar sheet, or other materials as set forth by County Land Records Office.]</b>	The Land Records Office of Montgomery County has updated procedures and now requires plats on mylar sheets. Plat submission specifications may change in the future, so the Town's more general wording as proposed will apply both to present and to future cases.
32		The original tracing of each plat so recorded shall be filed with the Planning Commission <b>[Town Clerk]</b> and shall remain there at all times.	The Town Clerk maintains all official Town records in the Town Offices.

Note that on Page 24, Sec 30 (d) (5), there is a typo that should be corrected. The word in Ordinance is "competed" but should be "completed".

# Maps

## Land Use

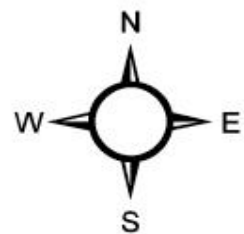


**BARNESVILLE LAND USE MAP**

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

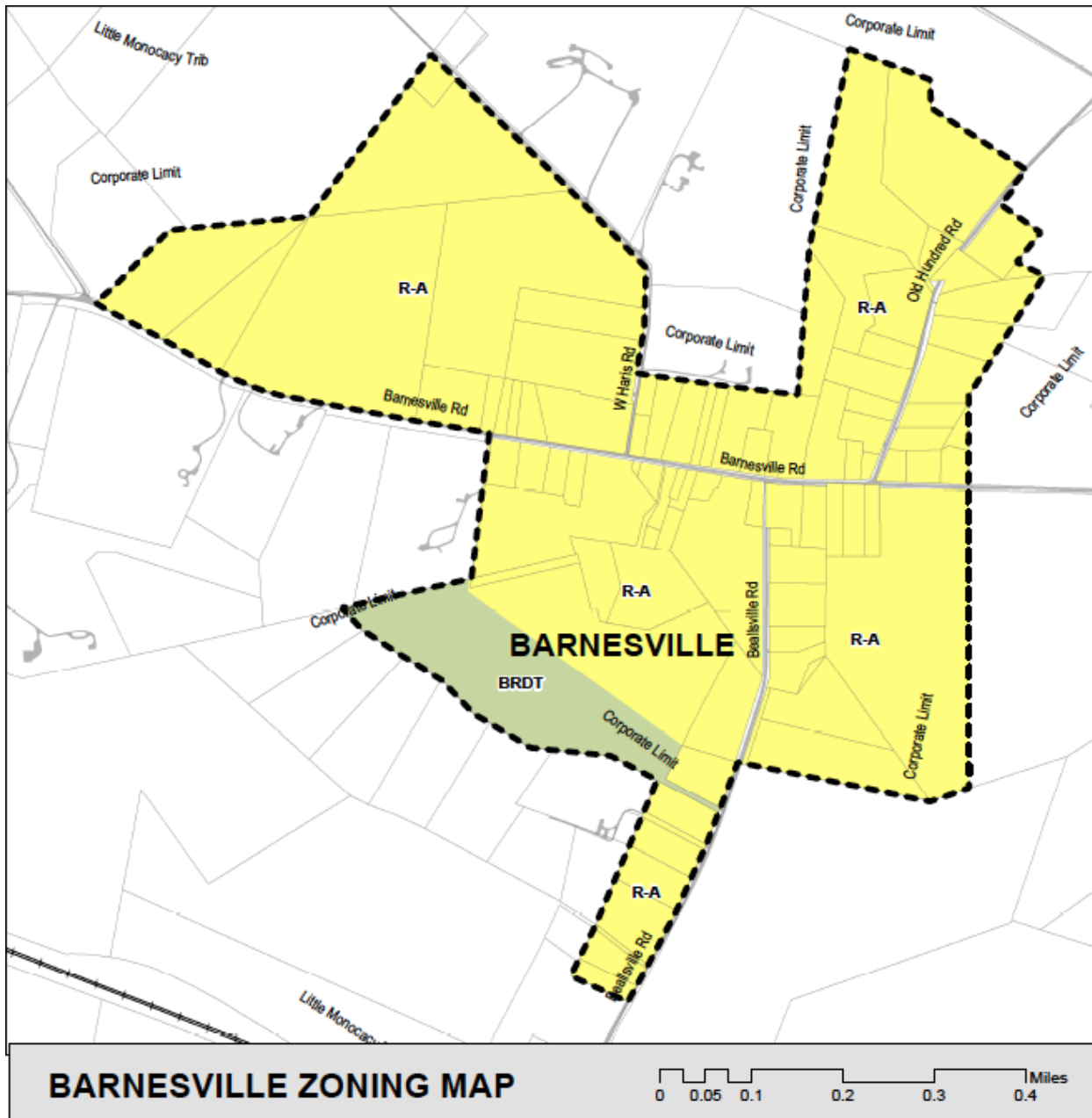
### Legend

- Buildings
- Commercial, Religious, Public Uses
- Agricultural Pasture Land
- Agricultural Farm Land
- Forest
- Cemeteries



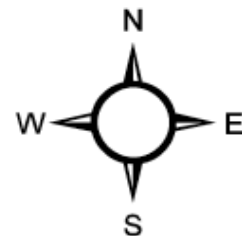


# Zoning

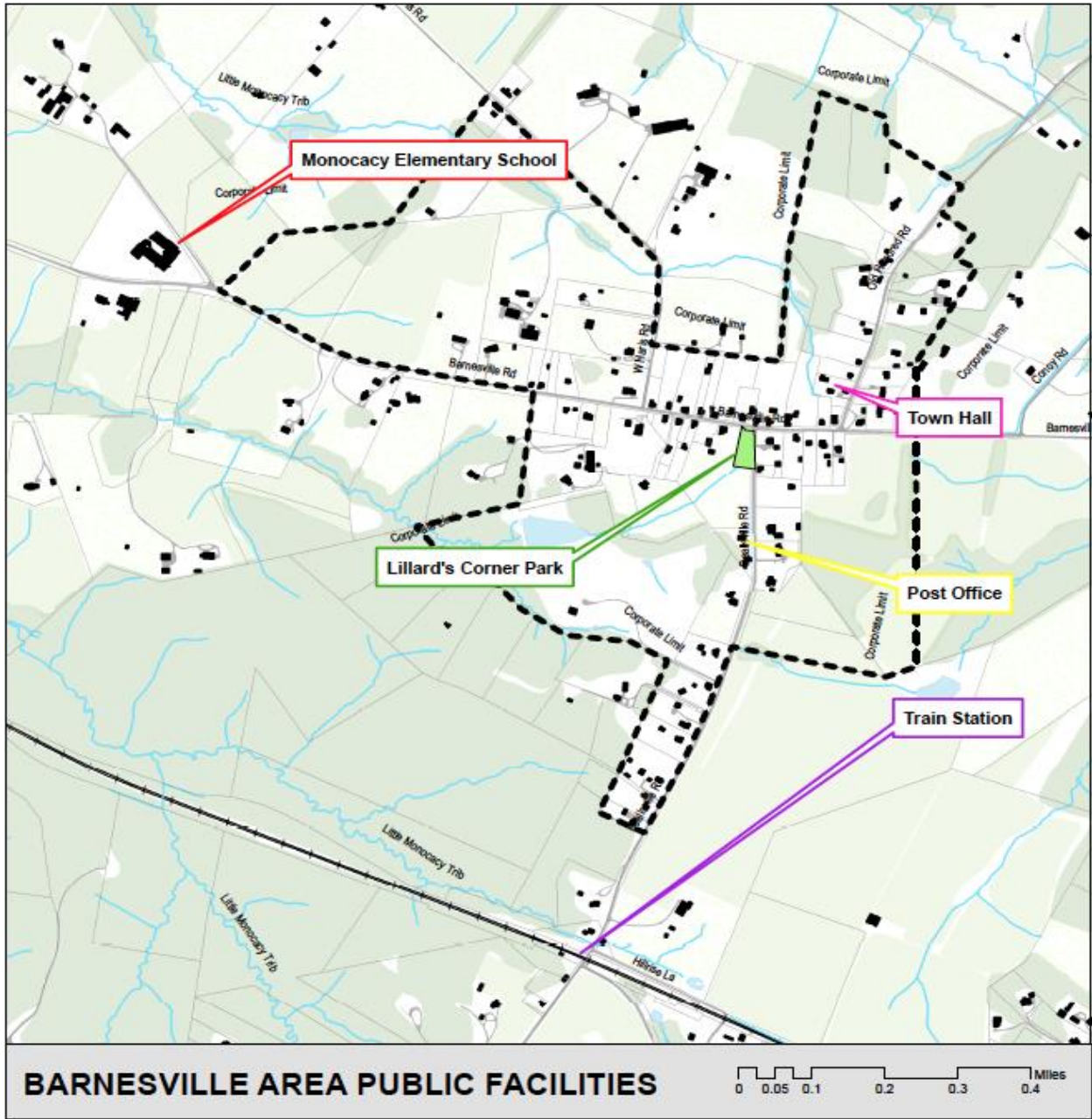


## Legend

-  Rural - Agricultural R-A
-  Barnesville Rural Density Transfer BRDT

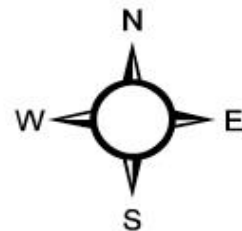


# Public Facilities

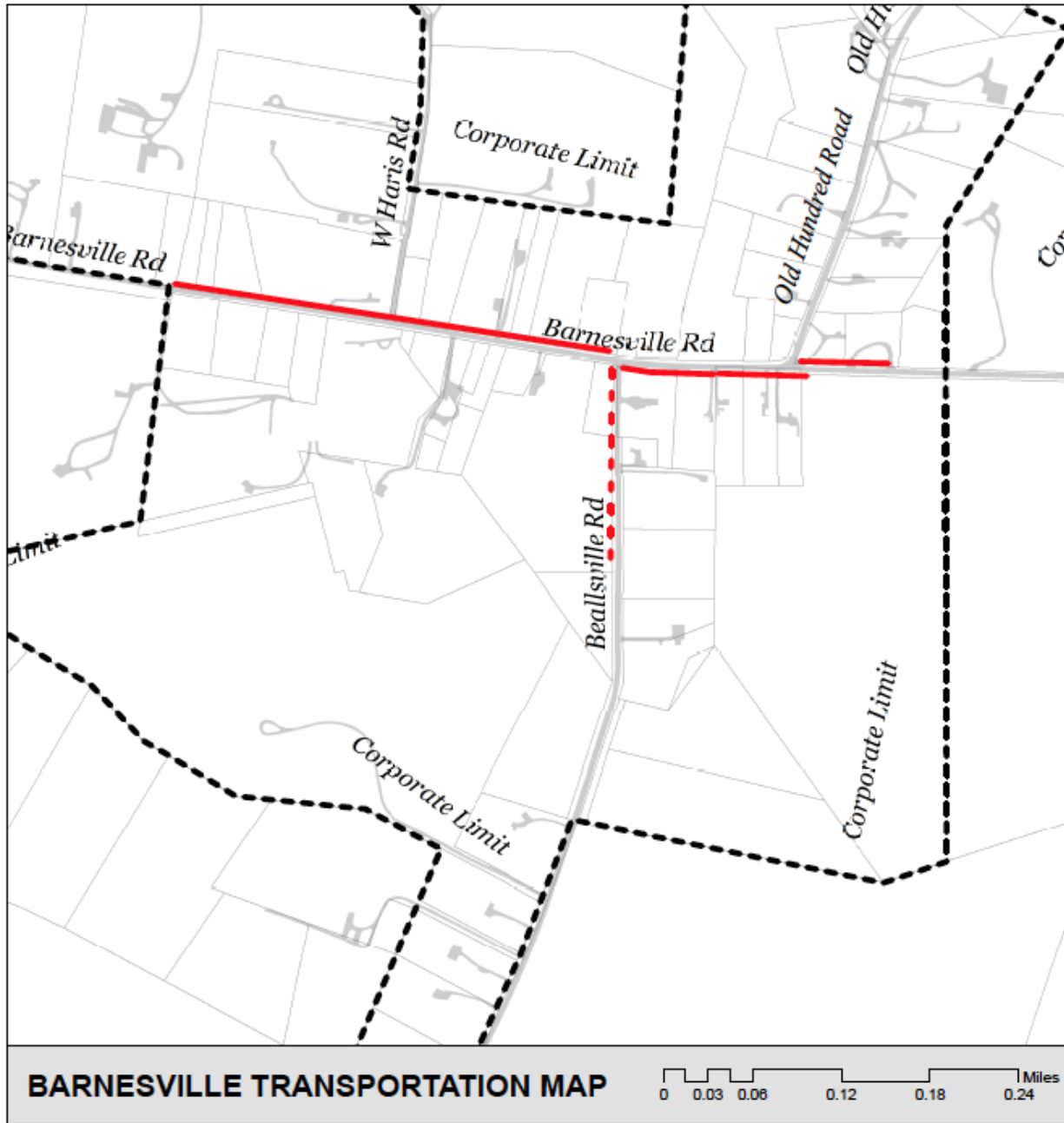


## Legend

- Monocacy Elementary School
- Post Office
- Town Hall
- Train Station
- Lillard's Corner Park



# Transportation



## Legend

- Roadways
- Existing Sidewalks
- - - Proposed Sidewalks

