



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

8/30/2024

Chairman Joel Rensberger
Frederick County Planning Commission
30 North Market Street
Frederick, MD 21701

Re: 2024 Myersville Comprehensive Plan Reconciliation - An Update of the Livable Frederick Master Plan

Dear Chair Joel Rensberger,

Thank you for requesting Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) comments on the above referenced amendment to the Livable Frederick Master Plan (LFMP). MDP appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft amendment in preparation for the Planning Board hearing(s). These comments are offered to guide the County in ways to improve the draft comprehensive plan and better address the statutory requirements of the Land Use Article.

The Department forwarded a copy of the draft amendment to state agencies for review including the Maryland Historic Trust, the Departments of Transportation, Environment, Natural Resources, Commerce, Disabilities, and Housing and Community Development. To date, we have not received comments from any referral agencies. Any plan review comments received after the date of this letter will be forwarded upon receipt.

Summary of the Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment

This update to the LFMP follows the recent adoption of the Town of Myersville Comprehensive Plan 2022 – 2042 adopted on January 10, 2023. The purpose of the amendment reflects the LFMP strategy to “Maintain consistency between municipal comprehensive plans and the County’s Comprehensive Plan.” (p. 5). Specifically, this relates to the county’s desire to reconcile the growth areas outlined in the LFMP with those of the recently adopted Myersville Municipal Growth Element, sorted into three categories as stated on page 7 of the draft amendment:

- “1. Parcels that have been annexed into Myersville, but are not in the current County-designated growth area;
- “2. Parcels that are in the County-designated growth area, but not in the Myersville growth area;
- and
- “3. Parcels that are in the Myersville growth area, but are not in the County-designated growth area.”

Growth Area Related Comments

- Parcels in the County-Designated Growth Area / Not in the Myersville Growth Area (p. 9) - It is unfortunate that three of the four parcels included in the draft amendment are currently shown on the county land use map as low density residential but are proposed to be recategorized to agricultural lands, as this reduces the possibility for future residential subdivisions. If this is due to a lack of water and/or sewer, or other infrastructure availability, then MDP recommends the inclusion of a justification on page 9. This recategorization would conflict with the goal of the county and the state to provide adequate and fair housing to accommodate the current housing crisis. This reduction of residential land use may also conflict with the anticipated increases in population noted in the LFMP.

General Comments

- Transportation Alignments (p. 13) - MDP notes that the proposed on-street bikeway on US 40 through the Town of Myersville identified on [the Frederick County Bikeways & Trails Plan Map \(part of the Frederick County Comprehensive Plan Map\)](#) is not included on the Open Space & Trails Plan Map (page 48) of [the current Myersville Comprehensive Plan](#). The other recommended changes to the LFMP due to the reconciliations on Priority Funding Area Map, Zoning Map, and Comprehensive Plan Map will not affect transportation planning issues.
- Growth Tier Impacts - According to [MDP records](#), Frederick County adopted a growth tier map on February 26, 2013. If not already completed, Frederick County should review its tier map against the Proposed County Community Growth Area (Map 3, Page 12) and other designations that affect growth tiers and, if needed, make any updates required to ensure conformance to the statutory mapping criteria in Section 1-508 of the Land Use Article.

Under Section 1-504 of the Land Use Article, if Frederick County amends its Growth Tier Map, then Frederick County must notify and provide MDP with all information necessary to allow for the department's detailed review required under Section 1-505 of the Land Use Article. If requested, MDP can complete a detailed review of any proposed tier map amendment before the plan is adopted. Guidance for revising tier designations may be found in MDP's [Implementation Guidance for The Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012](#). Also, MDP notes that the county can adopt an updated growth tier map after they have reconciled all the municipal growth updates with the Livable Frederick Master Plan.

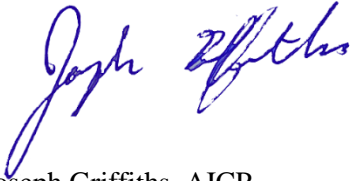
If the county modifies its established zoning or subdivision requirements or its Tier IV boundaries in the future, MDP will review these modifications, first for consistency with statutory rules for growth tier delineation, and second to re-evaluate the county's Tier IV exemption. Please advise MDP and the Maryland Department of the Environment if such changes are contemplated in the future.

- The recently adopted Town of Myersville comprehensive plan included an updated Water Resources Element (WRE), which MDP reviewed and on which we provided comments. This reconciliation addresses a parcel-level alignment of town versus county growth areas, zoning maps, and water and sewer designations, but does not address capacity/demand, stormwater

impact, and climate change analyses. Therefore, MDP's comments regarding the Myersville Comprehensive Plan WRE submitted in 2022 still apply. Frederick County may want to consider reviewing those comments to ensure that continued growth collaboration with Myersville effectively addresses water resources, particularly as the county is also in the process of updating its own WRE.

MDP recognizes the significant and thoughtful effort that Frederick County staff and the Town of Myersville applied to the development of the draft amendment and looks forward to coordinating with the county and the town on any assistance it seeks for plan adoption and implementation.

Sincerely,



Joseph Griffiths, AICP
Director, Planning Best Practices

cc: Deborah Carpenter, Director Frederick County Planning and Permitting
Kimberly Gaines, Livable Frederick Director, Division of Planning and Permitting
Brandon Boldyga, Town of Myersville, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Susan Llareus, Planning Supervisor, Maryland Department of Planning

