

MD Sustainable Growth Commission-Field Trip

November 4, 2010 /9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Members: Jon Laria, Richard Hall, Don Halligan, Carol Gilbert, Adam Ortiz, Brigid Kenney, Gerrit Knaap, Derick Berlage Karl Brendle, Sandy Coyman, Patricia Langenfelder, Dru Schmidt-Perkins, David Goshorn, Diana Chasse, David Lever, Duane Yoder, Greg Bowen, Frank Hertsch, Robb Merritt, Thomas Liebel, Alan Girard

Attendees: Ryane Necessary, Laura Lodge, Marty Bierbaum, Mary Dolan

MDP Staff: John Coleman, Michele Kemmerzell, Amanda Conn, Rich Josephson, Jenny King, Shannon Marino, Matt Power, Peter Conrad, Andy Ratner, Steve Allan

Presenters: Chris Patusky, *MDOT, Office of Real Estate*
Caroline Moore, *Ekistics*
Pat Keller, *Baltimore County Planning Director*
Wally Lippincott, *Baltimore County Land Preservation Program*
Gail Ensor, *Baltimore County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board*
Steve Horn, *Planning Director, Carroll County*
Brenda Dinne, *Chief of Comprehensive Planning, Carroll County*
Tom Beyard, *Director, Department of Planning, City of Westminster*
Jay Sakai, *Director, Maryland Department of the Environment*

State Center Transit-Oriented Development Project (TOD) Update

Mr. Patusky discussed the redevelopment of Baltimore State Center Complex. The project is public/Private Partnership. In 2009, the Governor issued an executive order authorizing State agencies to locate at TOD's. Mr. Patusky said the Office of Real Estate is now working on 20 or more projects. In addition the State Center Complex is financed and owned by MDOT and the state will have equity in success of the project.

Ms. Moore represents a private partner on the project and has been working on this project for five years. She briefly went over the location of the State Center Complex. The complex consists of 28 acres and the State government is the main anchor tenant in the midst of 9 historic neighborhoods and adjacent to two college campuses. It also sits atop the metro. She emphasized how the State Center Complex will be an ideal place to put more density. The project when completed will include 1,400 residential units, mixed use commercial. The project could be aggressively financed because of the State's credit rating. It is making use of taxable bonds. Ms.

Moore was unsure what will be done with the Armory, however it is a historical structure that would be suitable for some type of athletic facility. It is expected that eventually there will be 3,500 state employees at this Center.

Sustainable Communities Act, Park Heights, & Owings Mills TOD Update

Ms. Gilbert informed the members about the Sustainable Communities legislation, noting that this legislation came about because the heritage tax credit was about to expire. The drive for the legislation was to extend the rehabilitation tax credit as a valuable tool to more communities. Designated Main Streets can now take advantage of these tax credits; and they can now be used with buildings that are not necessarily historic but fall within targeted sustainable communities.

Mr. Conrad discussed Park Heights and explained that the area has suffered from extensive disinvestment and population loss. Park Heights does remain a relatively large part of the City with approximately 30,000 residents. However, abandonment, vacant and foreclosed properties remain major concerns. It has lost population at double the rate of the remainder of the City since the urban riots in the late 1960's. The City has been trying to develop and apply a meaningful stabilization strategy to revitalize this part of the City. The strategy includes a commercial revitalization component by working with the private sector to leverage private sector resources.

Mr. Halligan discussed MDOT's efforts related to the Owings Mills Transit Oriented Development (TOD) site. Owings Mills was designated as a major growth area for Baltimore County. It includes a major Metro site that is comprised of a 46-acre parcel. The Metro site and parking structure is at the heart of the Owings Mills Town Center. The site has experienced difficult times and has not had the economic success initially expected. The Owings Mills site reflects a major suburban challenge for TOD.

Trenton Mills Farm - Baltimore County Protected Farm/Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL)

Pat Keller, Wally Lippincott, Gail Ensor and George Mielke educated everyone on the Trenton Mills Farm. The farm is run by the Mielke Family who has been operating this farm, mostly on leased lands since the late 1960's. The area is protected by the foresight provided by the Urban/Rural Demarcation Line (URDL). It is presumed that if the boundary had not been drawn, the area would have been developed as sprawl and farming would have become impractical. Today there is a range of zoning programs designed to meet different farming needs.

Agricultural economics were also discussed and it was noted that agriculture today is very different from agriculture in the past. It is an operation that is very much affected by global forces. Farmers are tied into rapidly changing prices that are affected by global markets. To survive today, farmers must be more sophisticated about such things than they once were. In 1968, when people in Baltimore County began to talk about these issues, Baltimore County was adding 10,000 people each year to its population. This situation scared the agricultural community in Baltimore County. They perceived the important need for growth management. They enlisted WRT from Philadelphia to help them figure out how to save 2/3 of the county's

lands for agriculture. It was this pace and scale of development that led to the calls for growth management at that time. In the 1960's, demographers were projecting as much as 820,000 people by 1980 in Baltimore County.

Agricultural Preservation Update

Ms. Langenfelder gave an update on agricultural preservation. Maryland has 500,000 acres of preserved farmland statewide. She discussed how there are numerous challenges, e.g., farmland/farmer viability; subsequent owners' issues, allowable uses, taxable concerns, and TDR issues.

Carroll County Government Office Building - Water Resources- County/Municipal Coordination on the Water Resources Element

Mr. Horn briefly addressed water resource issues in Carroll County. Ms. Dinne went through "A Collaborative Water Resource Element Process" PowerPoint. She educated everyone that the County and 8 municipalities developed a Water Resources element to coincide with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Plan reflects both the opportunities and constraints of local and regional water resource needs and supply. Factors considered included water quantity, quality, impaired waters, and the TMDL now under consideration for the Chesapeake Bay. Most municipalities own and operate their own water systems. There are designated growth areas or DGA's – 7 center on municipalities. One is located in unincorporated areas but includes parts of different municipalities. Watersheds do not necessarily coincide with jurisdictional boundaries which is one of the significant challenges. Much of the growth takes place in the municipalities, which is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.

The Water Resources Coordinating Council was used as a forum for collaboration and completion of the county-wide Water Resources Element. It held monthly public meetings and reviewed and commented on technical studies. The process was facilitated by the County to completion. This process worked well. For the most part there was helpful cooperation. A GIS-based model was developed that took into account both water and wastewater demand and capacity. A water budget/balance assessment was completed. Guidance documents were also developed. MDE/MDP was both important and helpful to this process. Water supply as well as the amounts of nutrient pollutants, e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus, became important concerns. Ms. Dinne discussed the storm water regulations have been moving away from structural BMP's for some time. It has tried to maximize infiltration. Nevertheless, there are concerns about ways that the storm water regulations and smart growth will be reconciled in the future.

Lunch- Harry's Main Street Grille - 65 West Main Street, Westminster, MD 21157

City of Westminster Walking Tour

Mr. Beyard did a walking tour of the City of Westminster, focusing on the concentration of growth and development in small towns. The Carroll Center for the Arts was visited which was an adaptively reused older theater. It was reduced in size and transformed into art gallery and a smaller theater that puts on over 100 acts a year. The Center is an excellent example of how to leverage State and local funds.

Affordable Housing Project: Union Crossing

The members visited the Tri-Street Housing project in the City of Westminster. In 2008, Episcopal Housing became involved in developing affordable town homes as infill housing. In order to accomplish getting the units built an overlay zone was used. These homes are consistent with 2009 Westminster Comprehensive Plan. The project worked economically. The City and Carroll County both made local contributions to the project. The State also participated. The project did not require additional services or facilities. Union Crossing will offer nine affordably priced townhomes and are on average 1,450 square feet on three levels, plus a full basement. Every home will be Energy Star certified with all appliances included, and the homeowner will have the ability to select floor and countertop colors. The homes will be priced in the low \$200,000s.

Development and Water Quality/Protection

Mr. Sakai discussed Water Resources/Water Supply Planning in Maryland. He noted that Maryland is fortunate to receive large amounts of rainwater throughout the year, yet the State still has water supply issues, especially in terms of where the water is and where it is needed. Maryland is split into two geologic areas – the piedmont and the coastal plain. Water behaves differently in these two areas. In the piedmont, contamination from septic systems, underground storage tanks and spills are more likely to cause serious and longer lasting contamination. In addition, from a regulatory perspective, ground water is not so well understood on a regional basis. The fundamental problem often remains that at time when we have the highest demand is when we have the least supply, e.g., droughts. This makes meeting water supply demand difficult and technically complicated. The State requires municipal usage permits to address these concerns. These permits are based on testing that is at times difficult and technically complex. The testing process needs to start early and be consistent. In addition to testing wells, municipalities need to show that they are contemplating a “reasonable use” of the resource. The State is concerned that it not appropriate more water than it has to allocate.

Stream flow is another concern related to sustainability and water resources. Allocating too much water for a current use will reduce stream flow, depleting the resource and also destroying habitat and affecting wildlife. For this reason we need to think about reasonable yields and margins of safety to determine safe yields. This work requires constant monitoring and ongoing studies. MDE works closely with Maryland Geological Survey and the United States Geological Survey. Septic management is a major concern as eventually that effluent seeps into ground water and works its way to the Chesapeake Bay.

Wrap-Up

Deputy Secretary, Matt Power, concluded the day with a short wrap-up tying together the events of the day. An excerpt of his wrap-up can be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/MarylandPlanning> .

Mr. Laria, also gave closing remarks and thanked everyone for braving the weather.

Returned to State Office Complex at 4:00pm.