

Participants: Duane Yoder, Matt Tingstrom, Derick Berlage, Rob Merritt, Kevin Baynes, Sean Davis, Carol Gilbert, Jon Laria, Candace Donoho, Dru Schmidt-Perkins, Steve Duboyce, Rich Josephson

1. Report Card

Rich Josephson reviewed where we are with the Smart Growth Status Check report card. MDP staff met with NCSG staff on June 6 to review potential indicators that could also be used to report on smart growth progress. Follow up meeting to be held on July 9 to discuss NCSG's comments on indicators and MDPs info on permit data, and see what to report to the Growth Commission at their July 22 meeting.

Discussion:

There was a question about the availability of data for residential and nonresidential permits in and out of PFAs. While many jurisdictions provide this data, some don't due to lack of GIS or staff.

It was noted that having economic data – money flowing into and out of jurisdictions – would be useful as an indicator of economic well being.

Some of the more detailed indicators discussed at the June 6 NCSG meeting were used for analysis of PlanMaryland planning area submittals, and are not necessarily meant to be used for a broader purpose.

There was some discussion as to whether the higher percentage of rental housing in municipalities is the result of State policy encouraging this use. This may not be a bad thing, according to some.

Next Steps:

Meet with NCSG and get feedback from them on possible indicators and provide feedback on permit data. No new reports will be provided prior to the SGC meeting on July 22.

2. Streamlining

Sean Davis reviewed a series of steps for moving the streamlining task forward. These included requesting local jurisdictions to review a list of earlier recommendations regarding streamlining and obtaining feedback on what jurisdictions are doing.

The steps also included working with the Urban Land Institute in follow-up on "Concentrating Growth – Obstacles and Solutions" meeting and recommendations; the Homebuilders Association of Maryland and Maryland National Capital Building Industry Association and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 1000 Friends of Maryland,

and other environmental advocacy groups for recommendations on how locals can streamline their approval processes

Based on the responses from above consider possible next steps for the 2014 Legislative session. Also, consider recognition awards for streamlining best practices through the MSGC and through the ULI – Wavemaker Awards program.

Work with MDE and SHA to understand how their approval processes with locals can be streamlined. Include ways to cut costs for projects in desired areas.

Consider financial assistance by State to locals to staff and maintain local streamlining efforts based on established programs with continuous results.

Discussion:

Need to clarify that we are talking about streamlining in growth areas, not in all areas, area based vs. project based.

MML conducted a survey a few years ago on streamlining/ larger jurisdictions have the resources to do streamlining; smaller ones don't; also smaller jurisdictions don't have a streamlining problem.

Streamlining issue is more evident in central Maryland than rest of the state.

An updated MML survey may be better focused if survey questions are targeted to questions about issues and problems and potential solutions for jurisdictions that are more likely to experience issues with streamlining.

1000 Friends of Maryland has a process underway in Baltimore City to address issue with getting great development going in the city. A diverse group has identified a series of problems and is beginning to find solutions. First up is to address problems with storm water retrofits in an ultra-urban area. Solutions will be brought forward at the Stormwater Solutions Summit September 25th.

It may be good to issue a brief report/paper on this subject – who is doing what; what are some best practices; this report could be provided to the SGC in the November/December period; report could create external discussion and call for action – similar to what the Sustainable Growth 1.0 and 2.0 reports did

With regard to fees and taxes, look at what SHA and MDE are doing; consider a 2 tiered approach to fees./taxes that has lower fees/taxes for growth areas; may also want to consider a regulatory differential as well, not just fees and taxes.

Is there a jurisdiction(s) that can be highlighted as a good example in the use of streamlining? To what extent are counties and municipalities already doing streamlining? Is there enough out there to warrant a separate award category in the coming years?

Next Steps:

Will pull together a list of questions to ask municipalities and counties about streamlining and get feedback on the questions from the workgroup before sending out.

3. Financing

Carol Gilbert reviewed the recommendations on smart growth financing from the Sustainable Maryland 2.0 report as well as the recommendation to create a smart growth investment fund, for which a task force has been appointed and will be making recommendations this year.

Priorities from Sustainable Growth 2.0 Report:

- Establishment of a renewable funding mechanism for specified Smart Growth programs, with the aim of raising at least \$35 million annually.
- Enhancement of legislative authority for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) such that substantial new investment can be made in older existing communities and with State incentives.
- Enhancement of local infrastructure financing in older communities via the Local Government Finance program (LGIF) or a more formal Infrastructure Bank.
- Strengthen nonprofit community investors – Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) – through a State capacity-building program.

Discussion:

Need to pull together CDFIs from around the state with the goal of strengthening them; look at getting seed money to launch a CDFI in western Maryland

Need to increase funding for LGIF.

Need a renewable source of funding for core smart growth programs.

The sustainable communities' tax credit needs to be renewed – this is being worked on now. There is much interest in this program.

Next Steps:

Will continue to advocate for implementation of recommendations in the SM 2.0 report.

4. Rural Economies

Duane Yoder reported on the work of the Rural Economies subgroup. At their last meeting, the group heard and had a discussion about broadband as a way to enhance rural economic development. The group is still trying to understand the role of the SGC in this. They want to get input on different approaches and identify obstacles and solutions that can be presented to the Commission.

Discussion:

There was a question about the impact that broadband could have on development. Would it encourage sprawl by making it easier to do business from any location anywhere? Broadband could be helpful to many existing businesses, including farmers who want to market their products as well as some cottage based industries.

The issue of potential frequency conflicts with broadband was raised, vis-à-vis possible interference with military base operations. More information is needed to determine if there is any possible interference.

Next Steps:

The subgroup will continue to explore the benefits/impacts of broadband in rural areas, as well as further define the role of the SGC in their findings.