



To: Jon Laria, Chair, Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission
Maryland Sustainable Growth Commissioners

From: Gerrit Knaap, PlanMaryland Workgroup Chair

Subject: Status Report on PlanMaryland Workgroup

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission PlanMaryland Workgroup met on August 29th with several representatives from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to get an overview of the Department's progress on its PlanMaryland implementation strategies.

A number of different items were discussed regarding DNR's operations. Please refer to the attached summary notes from the meeting.

The Workgroup continued its discussion from the July meeting on use of the PlanMaryland Planning Areas Map to inform state agencies and improve coordination of state investment/resources with local interests and needs. Members of the Workgroup urged for more public outreach and awareness of the PlanMaryland Map and discussion with local governments on how the PlanMaryland Map is being used to inform state agencies as they administer their various programs. It was recommended that mapping process should be clarified. MDP staff indicated that they would investigate this issue and report back to the Workgroup.

The Workgroup also discussed generally what its role should be monitoring PlanMaryland's implementation. It was noted that the Workgroup has made recommendations regarding a PlanMaryland economic development strategy that is more comprehensive than the individual strategies of DBED and DLLR. However, specific Workgroup assessments and recommendations were not always completed for each State agency on its implementation strategies. One member suggested that for future Workgroup meetings a more structured review process occur - with (1) an agency overview; (2) a Workgroup assessment of the agency's PlanMaryland Implementation Strategies; and (3) Workgroup recommendations on changes or additions to the implementation strategies.

The Workgroup's next meeting will be scheduled for September 26 with representatives from the Maryland Department of Transportation reporting on their PlanMaryland Implementation Strategies.

Participants:

Workgroup: Gerrit Knaap, David Goshorn, Todd Lang, Dru Schmidt-Perkins, Michael Sanderson, Brian O'Malley, Marty Baker, and John Papagni

Other State Staff: Sandra Olek, Zoe Johnson, Christine Conn, Tony Prochaska, and Chuck Boyd

I. Discussion with Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on their PlanMaryland Implementation Strategies.

Sandi Olek facilitated the discussion of DNR's implementation of PlanMaryland with the agency. She and other representatives of DNR highlighted the following efforts:

- DNR completed an outreach effort to orient local governments on the availability and use of on-line mapping tools for conservation areas. DNR hosted a series of five regional workshops in November/ December 2012 across the state that were attended by representatives from every county, Baltimore City and numerous municipalities, and advocates. These workshops included information on GreenPrint and Climate Mapping tools and were an opportunity for local representatives to hear directly from the scientist and technical staff involved in developing tools.
- As part of this outreach effort, introduced the Climate Change Impact Areas Mapping Tool that brings together multiple data layers from different sources to illustrate land areas in Maryland that are projected to be the most sensitive to anticipated changes in climate. The layers include areas vulnerable to sea level rise, storm surge, flooding, drought, and rising temperatures.
- The GreenPrint and the Climate Mapping tools have been incorporated into the review process for natural resource protection and climate-induced hazards for Sustainable Communities designations, DHCD grant review applications (such as the Smart Growth Infrastructure Fund and Community Legacy), and proposed PlanMaryland Planning Areas. As a result of this review process, many projects and boundaries were refined based on avoiding critical resource lands and climate vulnerable areas. These tools have also allowed DNR to further our coordination with local governments on trails and eco-tourism connections and identify potential habitat enhancements, corridor connections and increased tree canopy opportunities.
- In December 2012, Governor Martin O'Malley has signed a landmark initiative to increase the State's long term resiliency to storm related flooding and sea level rise. The Climate Change and Coast Smart Construction Executive Order, directing that all new and reconstructed state structures, as well as other infrastructure improvements, be planned and constructed to avoid or minimize future flood damage. The Executive Order enacts a number of policy directives, including directing all State agencies to consider the risk of coastal flooding and sea level rise when they design capital budget projects and charging the Department of General Services with updating its architecture and engineering guidelines to require new and rebuilt State structures to be elevated two or more feet above the 100-year base flood level.
- As part of the Maryland Forest Preservation Act of 2013, Maryland communities will now have enhanced tools to plan for, protect and establish regional and urban forestry resources. The Act which calls for no net loss of forestry resources requires DNR to provide on a five year cycle detailed forestry data to aid in local government long range planning. The Act also encourages smart growth by allowing for exemption of redevelopment projects within the Priority Funding Area. DNR will deliver the statewide forest inventory by October 2013 to local governments.