

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Meeting

May 12, 2014/1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Elmer A. Henderson: A Johns Hopkins Partnership School
2100 Ashland Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland**

Meeting Summary

Members: Jon Laria, Derick Berlage, Diane Chasse, David Costello, Sandy Coyman, Alan Girard, Rich Hall, Don Halligan, Frank Hertsch, Matt Holloway, Gerrit Knaap, Steve Lafferty, Robb Merritt, Sandi Olek, Ursula Powidzki, Dru Schmidt-Perkins, Joan Schaefer on behalf of David Lever, Raymond Skinner, Bryce Turner, Stan Wall, Bruce Williams, Duane Yoder

**Elected
Officials:** Carl Stokes

Attendees: Tom Curtin, Sophie Dagenais, Katrina Foster, Andy Frank, Jongwook Kim, Les Knapp, Brenda McKenzie, Kim Nelson, John Papagni, Christine Shenot, Tom Stosur

MDP Staff: Shelly April, Valerie Berton, Chuck Boyd, Amanda Conn, Peter Conrad, Arabia Davis, Pat Goucher, Rich Josephson, Karen Kennedy, Jenny King, Kristen Mitchell, Pat Russell, Joe Tassone

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairman Jon Laria thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and extended his appreciation to the staff of the Elmer A. Henderson: A Johns Hopkins Partnership School for hosting the Commission meeting in this new facility. He then introduced the guest speakers – Tom Stosur, Director of Baltimore City’s Department of Planning, and Mr. Christopher Shea and Mr. Scott Levitan from East Baltimore Development Initiative.

Overview of the City of Baltimore

Tom Stosur began with a PowerPoint presentation entitled: *Planning for Baltimore Growth & Revitalization*. He provided the Commission with an overview of the various initiatives taking place around the City. Mr. Stosur reiterated Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake’s revitalization goal established in the 2013 State of the City Address - “Our job is to grow this city by 10,000 families over the next 10 years.” He then presented charts showing recent increases in population and job growth, as well as maps of new residential developments in the City. Mr. Stosur noted that the Planning Department as part of the revitalization effort is leading the City’s rewriting of the zoning code (TransForm Baltimore) to streamline the development review and approval process. He also reported that the Planning Department is also updating the housing market typology, which is

used to assist the City to strategically match available public resources to neighborhood housing market conditions. He reviewed several major redevelopment projects that are underway, such as: O'Donnell Heights, Park Heights, Uplands, Madison Park North and Barclay.

Mr. Stosur highlighted a number of City programs/projects that the Planning Department is involved in:

- The Vacant-to-Value Program, which is a comprehensive program to address Baltimore City's vacant and abandoned building stock;
- A new program entitled "The Growing Green Initiative" that focuses on creating innovative greening projects throughout the City;
- Baltimore Food Policy Initiative, which focuses on food access, health and economic development,
- The 21st Century School Construction Program, which is the largest investment to come to Baltimore, and a complementary neighborhood planning effort called "Inspire" (Investing in Neighborhoods & Schools to Promote Improvement, Revitalization & Excellence);
- The Casino Areas Master Plan, which is geared to identifying needed improvements in the vicinity of the new casino;
- The Disaster Preparedness and Planning Project (DP3) that focuses on Hazard identification, Vulnerability assessment, Impacts Assessment, and Plan development;
- A \$52 million initiative known as "CREATES" (Coordinating Resources to Effectively Align and Transform Energy), which will build upon the City's strong foundation of success in aligning energy services and breaking down program silos; and
- The "Red Line" which is a huge item on the agenda; Grow Baltimore - Mayor's hope to have 10,000 more families by the year 2020. The mission is to make the City as attractive as they can.

Mr. Coyman inquired about a project called "Adopt a Lot?" Mr. Stosur responded that when a vacant lot is City-owned a community group can work with the City and use the lot for a community garden or community open space.

For more information, members are encouraged to check out several web sites including:
www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning
[www.facebook.com/Baltimore Planning](https://www.facebook.com/BaltimorePlanning)

Mr. Christopher Shea, President and CEO of East Baltimore Development Initiative (EBDI) and Mr. Scott Levitan, Forest City - New East Baltimore Partnership provided an overview of the EBDI initiative. Copies of their presentations have been posted to the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission website. Their discussion focused on community engagement, the EBDI Master Plan and several new projects in the works.

2014 Legislative Wrap-Up

Mr. Richard Hall noted that the Sustainable Communities Tax Credit Bill (HB 510) reauthorizes the Sustainable Communities Tax Credit for three additional years, and creates a Small Commercial Tax credit similar to the owner-occupied residential tax credit; the new credit is limited to historic rehabilitations in Sustainable Communities, and is capped at \$50,000 per project, for projects with total rehabilitation expenditures of less than \$500,000. This small

business credit will be available in Fiscal years 2016 & 2017, and will be capped at \$4 million over 2 years of the program. In addition, amendments added by the House changed the percentage of commercial tax credits that can be awarded to any single jurisdiction from 75% to 60%, and added language requiring MDP and MHT to conduct outreach within jurisdictions where the tax credit has not been widely used.

Mr. Raymond Skinner noted that the 2015 session was good for the Department of Housing and Community Development on the legislative and budgetary side. He referred everyone to the matrix in today's packet if additional information was needed. He also mentioned that there were three (3) departmental bills for his agency and all three passed.

Ms. Ursula Powidzki stated that the Senate Bill 600/House Bill 742, which establishes the Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) Zone Program had passed.

Mr. David Costello briefly discussed the following three (3) departmental bills for the Maryland Department of the Environment that passed: SB0101- Environment - Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund - Use of Funds; HB0011- Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Authorized Uses; HB0012- Bay Restoration Fund - Authorized Uses - Local Entities

Ms. Dru Schmidt-Perkins directed the members to the summary from the Maryland Department of Agriculture on the three (3) bills of interest that passed. Those bills included: SB71 - Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation - Value of Easement (MDA Department Bill); HB451 Neighborhood Business Development Program - Financial Assistance for Food Deserts; HB861/SB 259 Agricultural Easements - Renewable Energy Generation Facilities

Mr. Halligan provided a brief overview status of legislation that impacted the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Discussion of Infill, Redevelopment and Revitalization (IRR) Initiative

Mr. Laria began the discussion on Infill, Redevelopment and Revitalization by commending the Department of Planning's staff on their hard-work on this effort. He thanked all of the Secretaries represented on the Commission for supplying a great deal of knowledge and information. He also mentioned that there is more work to be completed on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

Mr. Laria advised the members that the Urban Land Institute has been focusing on TOD and has agreed to provide technical assistance to the Commission on this particular topic. The Commission will continue work with the Maryland Department of Transportation to ensure that sustainable recommendations on TOD are formulated. Mr. Laria referred the Commissioners to the work plan that was included in today's packet.

Mr. Laria acknowledged Councilman Carl Stokes presence at the meeting.

He then introduced Ms. Kristen Mitchell and asked that she provide an update to the Commission on the Infill, Redevelopment, Revitalization efforts. Ms. Mitchell greeted the Commission and provided them with an update on the I/R/R case study interviews that had taken place. She noted that nine (9) communities were selected throughout the State to serve as case studies. Three to six people were interviewed to gather insight into their different perspectives. Ms. Mitchell assured the members that by no means has the work on the case studies been completed. She said that

some of the key components of the case study interviews include questions related to market forces, particularly when there is no demand; and asking interviewees to identify themes and ideas from outside of Maryland that we should consider, as well as identifying the best I/R/R practices out there.

Mr. Hall said that there has been a lot of material generated. The work plan highlights what the different pieces consist of. Mr. Hall asked members to give feedback on the work plan so that a good report would be generated by August. State agency representatives will continue to reach out to other stakeholders in the coming months to ensure that their input is incorporated into the overall process.

Mr. Costello suggested that the Commission identify what people think are the most effective tools.

Mr. Steve Lafferty recommended that the Commission invited neighborhood organizations, and lending institutions to be a part of the discussion.

Mr. Turner said we need all of the right tools to get this completed.

Mr. Hall said leadership changes can be critical to having successful projects. With regard to boards posted around the room, this is an opportunity for you to get up from your seats and take a deeper dive on the subset of the issues that can influence infill, redevelopment and revitalization.

Mr. Turner agreed that leadership is very important.

The Commission broke into several focus groups to discuss and identify what was deemed as having higher priority in promoting infill, redevelopment and revitalization. The overall consensus of this exercise was that one size does not fit all.

Briefing on the Sustainable Growth and Conservation Indicators for use in the statewide Smart Growth Status Check efforts

Mr. Joe Tassone asked members to look over the memo provided in today's packet from Derick Berlage, which provided an update on the work of the Indicators Workgroup. Mr. Tassone envisions that at the conclusion of the workgroup process, the information gathered will be made available to all stakeholders.

Workgroup Updates

Update reports included in today's materials.

Public Comments

None

Chairman Laria adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.