



Rural Economies Workgroup

March 26, 2018

To: Susan Summers, Chairman, Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

From: Greg Bowen, Rural Economies Workgroup Chair

Subj: Status Report on Rural Economies Workgroup Activities

Date: March 26, 2018

The Rural Economies Workgroup met on January 12th and March 9th to review the progress of its subcommittees (Sustainable Food and Food Production, Sustainable Forestry, Land Preservation and Protected Open Space, Rural Development and Recreation, and Sustainable Fisheries). See below the “Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document” that summarizes the status of each subcommittees’ efforts. The Workgroup also endorsed the Rural Development & Recreation Subcommittee’s letter to the Growth Commission recommending implementation strategies to improve rural reinvestment opportunities. Please see have attached letter from Subcommittee Chair, Deborah Carpenter. The next meeting of the full Workgroup is May 11.

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document	
Meeting Notes For:	Rural Economies Workgroup
Date and time:	January 12, 2018 @ 3 pm
Called by: Chuck Boyd	Facilitator’s Name: Chuck Boyd
Attendance:	Chuck Boyd, Deborah Carpenter, Jason Dubow, Joe Griffiths, Les Knapp, Steve McHenry, John Papagni, Dan Rider, Dan Rosen
Notes Taken By:	Chuck Boyd
Agenda and Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance – 9 members attended in person or by conference call. 2. Mr. Boyd briefed the Workgroup on the status of Growth Commission and its upcoming scheduled meeting in Crownsville, MD on January 22. 3. Status Report on the five (5) Subcommittees by each facilitator highlighting items discussed and future actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Sustainable Food and Food Production Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator) Dan Rosen reported the Subcommittee met on January 3 to discuss (1) a prototype brochure on slaughterhouses/processors; and (2) an Excel table of places offering shared commercial kitchen space. The subcommittee is continuing to work on economic development agricultural processing. See attached summary minutes. 	

- B. Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee (Jason Dubow/Elliott Campbell facilitators)
 Dan Rider reported that DNR’s Forest Service met with MDE staff regarding forest harvesting BMPs. DNR would provide technical assistance to property owners wanted to harvest forested areas. Forest Services is working on an Memorandum of Understanding between staffs at MDE and DNR to provide this technical assistance. This MOU may also include the soil conservation districts. They are looking to pilot this effort in Charles County.
 - C. Land Preservation and Protected Open Space Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator)
 Dan Rosen reported the Land Preservation Subcommittee has not met recently and has no tasks on its agenda. Staff will notify them of relevant bills in the 2018 session of the General Assembly and evaluate the need to reconvene afterward.
 - D. Rural Development and Recreation Subcommittee (Deborah Carpenter facilitator)
 Deborah Carpenter reported that the Subcommittee met three times since the last Workgroup meeting, the last being on January 11 and began its efforts to implement the Reinvest Maryland 2.0 recommendations, specifically dealing with local Permit Tracking Systems, Fast Track Permitting Tips & Tricks/Best Practices, Regional Approvals, and more certainty and greater transparency.
 - E. Sustainable Fisheries Subcommittee (Chuck Boyd facilitator). Mr. Boyd reported that no Subcommittee efforts took place.
4. Next Workgroup meeting is March 9, 2018 at 3 pm at MDP’s Olmsted Conference Room in Baltimore.

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document	
Meeting Notes For:	Rural Economies Workgroup
Date and time:	March 9, 2018 @ 3 pm
Called by: Chuck Boyd	Facilitator’s Name: Chuck Boyd
Attendance:	Chuck Boyd, Deborah Carpenter, Debra Celnik, Colby Ferguson, Jason Dubow, Steve McHenry, John Papagni, Dan Rosen
Notes Taken By:	Chuck Boyd
Agenda and Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance – 9 members attended in person or by conference call. 2. Mr. Boyd briefed the Workgroup on the status of Growth Commission and its upcoming scheduled meeting in Crownsville, MD on March 26. 3. Status Report on the five (5) Subcommittees by each facilitator highlighting items discussed and future actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Rural Development and Recreation Subcommittee (Deborah Carpenter facilitator) Deborah Carpenter reported that the Subcommittee met once on March 8 where they reviewed the draft letter to the SGC re. REG 1 recommendations. Those in attendance agreed on the content of the letter. The letter will be sent to Les for his final review. Once complete, Debbie will sign it and send it on to the SGC. See attached notes for more details. 	

B. Sustainable Food and Food Production Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator)

Dan Rosen reported the Subcommittee met on February 16. Dan reported that Planning's graphics department is finishing its production of the flyer promoting meat processors in Maryland. One side features a map showing the location of processing facilities and the other a table of information about them. The Subcommittee will review the text for the cover panel of the flyer. The flyer will appear on the web and can be downloaded for hard copies. We will ask MDA about hosting the flyer; MARBIDCO is willing to post it on its website if MDA declines.

Subcommittee staff has completed its on-line research and created a spreadsheet of community kitchens and private business that make facilities available for the use of small value-added processors and caterers. A Subcommittee member will vet this information with, and seek additional entries from, county agricultural marketing staff. For counties that do not have such dedicated staff, we'll check with economic development staff. The Subcommittee believes that in addition to supporting agriculture, this effort is a boost to community economic development.

C. Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee (Jason Dubow/Elliott Campbell facilitators)

Jason Dubow reported that staff for the Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee, including staff from DNR and MDP, met on 1/19 and on 2/6 to discuss possible work items for a 2018 workplan for the Subcommittee. Using the Subcommittee's Priority Action Items document, which was approved in 2015, staff identified the following potential projects. First, staff identified several projects that focus on increasing the market for Maryland wood, such as adding Maryland wood to the state's existing "Buy Local" and "Maryland's Best" programs or developing a brochure to market Maryland's high-quality forest products (e.g., southern yellow pine) and Maryland's sawmills. Staff also identified some projects related to supporting commercial-scale wood energy in Maryland, such as considering a policy change to add biomass to the types of renewable energy sources that architects must examine as part of the Public School Construction Program. Lastly, the staff recommended that one meeting in 2018 of the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission focus on rural economies issues."

D. Land Preservation and Protected Open Space Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator)

Dan Rosen reported the Land Preservation Subcommittee has not met recently and has no tasks on its agenda. Staff will notify them of relevant bills in the 2018 session of the General Assembly and evaluate the need to reconvene afterward.

E. Sustainable Fisheries Subcommittee (Chuck Boyd facilitator). Mr. Boyd reported that no Subcommittee efforts took place.

4. Next Workgroup meeting is May 11, 2018 at 1 pm at MDP's Olmsted Conference Room in Baltimore.

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document

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Meeting Notes For:		Subcommittee on Sustainable Food and Food Production
Date and time: January 3, 2018, 3:00 - 4:00 PM		
Called by: Daniel Rosen		Facilitator's Name: Daniel Rosen
Attendance:	Chuck Boyd, Nevin Dawson, Colby Ferguson, Steve McHenry, Jim Mullin, Daniel Rosen	
Notes Taken By: Daniel Rosen		
<p>Agenda and Notes:</p> <p><u>Topic:</u> Prototype brochure on slaughterhouses/processors. The subcommittee looked at three versions of a brochure. They decided that “slaughterhouse” was problematic and the brochure should be called “Meat Processing Facilities in Maryland.” Also, the 11” x 17” format was more readable than the 8½” x 11”. The final brochure will have the processor information table on the front and the map on the back, though one of the back panels would contain introductory information to serve as the top panel of the brochure when it’s folded into place. As for a web version, the subcommittee needs to find an agency to post and update it.</p> <p><u>Topic:</u> The Excel table of places offering shared commercial kitchen space. Dan presented his spreadsheet of three dozen commercial-grade kitchens that are available to farmers and others who want to add value to local agricultural products. Some facilities exist solely to serve budding entrepreneurs while most belong to private businesses but are available for others to use as well. The spreadsheet does not yet contain all the facilities that Dan’s research found.</p> <p>Subcommittee members emphasized that in addition to supporting agriculture, these facilities can also play a large role in community- and economic development. Perhaps the state Department of Housing and Community Development would be interested in the findings of this effort. Most of the kitchens on the table are in the Baltimore or Washington metropolitan areas. To find others, including those in VFW halls or firehouses, subcommittee members recommended talking to county agricultural marketing professionals (AMPs) where they exist or to economic development officials in the counties that do not have AMPs on staff. They also recommended that the list be reviewed by AMPs to ensure that the facilities provide enough services to the public to be included.</p>		
Key Actions, who has agreed take on	Describe action and indicate when action is due	
1. Finalize brochure	Dan will write and Chuck will approve introductory language. Dan will work with the graphics division to produce a draft final brochure for the subcommittee’s review and approval.	
2. Finalize web posting for brochure	Dan will work with GIS staff to complete the interactive processor map. Chuck will talk to state partners about hosting and updating a website.	
3. Continue populating spreadsheet of shared commercial kitchens	Dan will continue working on the spreadsheet and contact county AMPs /economic development staff to find other facilities.	

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup – Rural Development & Recreation Subcommittee Minutes	
Meeting Notes For:	Rural Development & Recreation Subcommittee
Date and time:	January 11, 2018
Called by: D. Carpenter	Facilitator’s Name: Deborah Carpenter
Attendance:	Deborah Carpenter, Joe Rogers, Meredith Donaho (for Charlotte Davis), Les Knapp, Jim Mullin, Michael Bayer, and Chuck Boyd
Notes Taken By:	Deborah Carpenter
Minutes:	
<p>1. The meeting began with a review of old business, specifically a review of previous discussion items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Permit Tracking System – The group agreed that this is a good recommendation, but acknowledged that the complexities of getting reviewers from multiple divisions, agencies and government levels are likely to make this very difficult. It was also agreed that the merits of such a system were obvious and well worth the attempt to overcome the obstacles. Such a system would benefit more than just rural counties, but the expertise needed to create implementation strategies for this recommendation goes beyond that which existed in our group. It was decided that this recommendation needed to be forwarded to the Sustainable Growth Commission (SGC), so that one of their Workgroups can get the appropriate experts at the table. b. Fast Track Permitting Tips & Tricks/Best Practices – The group agreed that this needs to take an educational focus, rather than suggesting Fast Track Permitting be established for all reinvestment projects. This type of system exists in some jurisdictions, for various reasons, using varying criteria for qualifying projects and with varied success. It would be best to gather information on who does it, how they do it, and lessons learned, both positive and negative. The gathering and dissemination of such data could be a useful tool for jurisdictions to use. It was decided to also forward this recommendation to the SGC. c. Regional Approvals – It was acknowledged that this is a potentially complicated issue but stressed that it is worth investigation. Two problems tend to arise in relation to allowing regional approvals from state agencies. (1) Regional staff often don’t have the authority needed. (2) Regional offices are understaffed. It was decided that we need an investigation of processes to determine which cause the most delay and consternation, followed by a specific review of that process with an eye to whether a regional approval would improve that problem. This recommendation is being forwarded to the SGC. d. More certainty and greater transparency – This recommendation will most likely be an educational issue, as it revolves around pre-application and application processes that allow for more predictability in the process. While not all aspects of review can be controlled, it is possible to increase certainty through effective communication of expectations and needs. It was suggested that if national and local best practices were compiled and shared with local jurisdictions, it may aid the situation. This recommendation is being forwarded to the SGC. <p>2. A new business item for discussion was the suggestion that rural jurisdiction success stories be compiled and shared with other rural jurisdictions. It was noted that perhaps rural summits would be a good additional way to disseminate such information.</p> <p>3. The next meeting will be held February 8, 2018.</p>	
Key Actions to be taken prior to next meeting	
Describe action and indicate when action is due	
1. Debbie will create and distribute minutes and summary from this meeting and the agenda for next meeting.	
2. Debbie will draft a letter forwarding these recommendations to the SGC.	
Resource Materials used and draft documents Agenda and Reg 1, links to Regulatory Reform Commission’s 2016 Report, STAR Report and the ULI Report	

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup – Rural Development & Recreation Subcommittee Minutes	
Meeting Notes For:	Rural Development & Recreation Subcommittee
Date and time:	March 8, 2018
Called by: D. Carpenter	Facilitator’s Name: Deborah Carpenter
Attendance:	Deborah Carpenter, Joe Rogers, Meredith Donaho (for Charlotte Davis), Joe Griffiths, and Chuck Boyd
Notes Taken By:	Deborah Carpenter
Minutes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The meeting began with a review of the upcoming meeting for the Sustainable Growth Commission (SGC) and an update on the progress of the State Development Plan. 2. The group reviewed the draft letter to the SGC re. REG 1 recommendations. Those in attendance agreed on the content of the letter. The letter will be sent to Les for his final review. Once complete, Debbie will sign it and send it on to the SGC. 3. Discussion was held regarding how to best present rural best practices, case studies and success stories as per Les’s suggestion at the last meeting. Debbie had concern about duplicating effort with MDP as they provide case studies on their website. Chuck shared some frustration with having pertinent information submitted to share. Debbie noted that most local jurisdictions are busy doing their day to day jobs and aren’t likely to (a) make special note of successes unless given an incentive to pay special attention or (b) recognize a best practice, even when they have participated in one. 4. Debbie suggested that the approach may be wrong, noting that perhaps if we start with a specific problem and then present examples of creative solutions employed elsewhere in the state, jurisdictions are more likely to use such a resource. She gave a couple examples – what to do with vacant properties and how to use MHT tax credits to advance revitalization efforts. It may be possible to create a short list of such issues through conversations with MML. 5. Joe mentioned some projects he’s been working on as well as a program to aid with sprinkler installation that has had some success. Chuck encouraged him to share Frostburg’s success stories with the group and he agreed to send them along. 6. It was decided to give this issue more thought and revisit at the next meeting. We will also discuss any other issues the group would like to tackle, including but not limited to other recommendations about REG 1, REG 5, MET 1 and EQ 6. 7. The next meeting will be held April 12, 2018. 	
Key Actions to be taken prior to next meeting	Describe action and indicate when action is due
1.	Debbie will create and distribute minutes and summary from this meeting and the agenda for next meeting.
2.	Debbie will contact Les to ensure his agreement with the SGC letter.
3.	Joe will forward Frostburg’s success stories with certain projects and programs.
Resource Materials used and draft documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda and Reg 1, links to Regulatory Reform Commission’s 2016 Report, STAR Report and the ULI Report - Draft letter to the SGC re. REG 1 recommendations