To: Sustainable Growth Commission

From: Derick Berlage, Chairman, Concentrating Growth Workgroup

Subj: Update on Workgroup Activities

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Our Workgroup intends to have recommendations available in time for the Commission's October 11 meeting. (If there is not time to discuss the recommendations on October 11, which is a joint meeting with the Septic Task Force, we will present them at the November 14 meeting.)

Between now and October 11 our three Subcommittees will be distilling a number of important concepts into specific policy recommendations. The following list is tentative, and presented simply to give you a sense of our discussions:

Goal 1: Making Sustainable Growth Centers Attractive Places to Live, Work and Invest

1. How do we implement the "Sustainable Maryland" report?
2. How do we improve "livability" in growth centers, including safety, schools, culture and arts, and recreation?
3. How can we foster civic engagement and draw on social capital to strengthen the attractiveness of centers?
4. Can we identify new tools for funding infrastructure?
5. Can we identify new tools for land assembly to support game-changing projects?
6. Can we alter tax and development fee policies to encourage concentrated growth?
7. What is the best housing policy for our growth centers?

Goal 2: Streamlining Development Approvals in Sustainable Growth Centers

1. Should specific projects (i.e., economic development projects) and/or specific areas (i.e., designated growth areas) receive streamlined entitlement and permit approvals? How are the projects or boundaries to be selected?
2. One streamlining program will not work throughout the State. How can the State and each Local jurisdiction best develop their own program that accounts for the unique regulatory environment in which they work?

3. Should a streamlining program be formal or informal? Formal means a codified/regulatory streamlining program and Informal means an administrative (Executive branch) streamlining program.
4. Over time, the number of regulations that impact the development industry have grown and grown. Should each jurisdiction analyze their existing development regulations to eliminate inconsistencies and redundancies? How best to engage both the development and environmental advocacy communities in these revisions to ensure a balanced approach throughout this process?
5. Who can best lead the streamlining process? Elected officials? Economic development agencies? Planning agencies? Regulatory agencies?
6. Is it possible to integrate streamlining of Federal, State, and Local regulatory programs?
7. If there is a fiscal cost for governments to implement streamlining, how will we pay for it?
8. Should there be a "Models and Guidelines" document to help jurisdictions implement streamlining?

Goal 3: Identify a Sound Approach to Rural Growth Centers

1. How can we best reconcile rural Maryland's right to economic opportunity with statewide goals to concentrate growth?
2. Traditional "growth boundary" approaches used for urban areas may not work as well in rural areas – is there a better approach?
3. Density criteria have not been well received in rural Maryland as a growth management tool – is there a better approach?
4. Can we create a new, rural growth paradigm that focuses instead on infrastructure, transportation corridors, and "sense of place"?
5. What are best practices for creating villages, hamlets and similar rural commercial centers?