

MINUTES

URBAN GROWTH AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE December 4, 2008

The Urban Growth Area Advisory Committee held a meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Conference Room 1, Hagerstown.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phoebus called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The following members of the Advisory Committee and Washington County Planning Staff were present:

- Richard Phoebus
- Mike Armel
- Hank Livelsberger
- Jerry Ditto
- John Shank
- Harry Reynolds
- Linda Irvin-Craig
- Dennis Miller
- Mike Thompson
- Debra Eckard
- Jennifer Kinzer
- Meghan Hammond
- Bob Mandley, EDC

MINUTES

Mr. Armel made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2008 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Reynolds. Unanimously approved.

Mr. Reynolds made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2008 meeting as amended. Seconded by Mr. Armel. Unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Thompson began by giving members of the Committee an update on the Eastern By-pass, which was briefly discussed during the November 20th meeting. Mr. Thompson stated that the Eastern By-pass has not been approved for inclusion in the County's Comprehensive Plan by the Board of County Commissioners. Currently, a transportation plan for the County, which is separate from the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long Range Transportation Plan, is being developed. The by-pass would be considered a 50-year project. Mr. Thompson noted there is significant opposition to the by-pass by some City of Hagerstown representatives.

Mr. Thompson clarified the question raised during the November 20th meeting regarding Prosperity Lane. He noted that Prosperity Lane at the food distribution warehouse (east of the railroad) is a County road, but the lane north of Kendle Road is a private drive.

Members continued their previous discussion regarding Site 15 (property located south of Sterling Road and north of Kendle Road), which is proposed for RS (Residential Suburban) and PI (Planned Industrial)

zoning. Currently, the portion of property proposed for PI zoning only has access from Kendle Road. Public utility accessibility, specifically water and sewer, was discussed for properties along the railroad. Public water and sewer services are available along Kendle Road that ends just east of the Elmwood subdivision. It was noted that there is no access to the railroad on the east side of the tracks. Members discussed the density of RS zoning, which is 4 units per acre; and, if a PUD (Planned Unit Development) is used a developer could get as many as 16 units per acres.

- **Consensus:** The committee recommends RS (Residential Suburban) zoning for Site 15.

Members then focused their discussion on the property immediately north of Site 15 (south of Kendle Road), south of Site 15 (south of Kendle Road), adjoining Site 15 to the east, and north of Sterling Road, which will be designated as Site 16. All of these properties are currently proposed for RT (Residential Transitional) or RS zoning classifications. There was a brief discussion regarding PUD's and regulations that a developer follows for a PUD. Mr. Thompson noted that Staff is currently considering changes to the PUD zoning requirements, such as incorporating open space, school sites, and multiple housing types.

- **Consensus:** The committee recommends RS (Residential Suburban) zoning for Site 16.

Mr. Ditto asked how many of the properties bordering Site 16 outside the UGA boundary are agriculturally preserved. Mr. Shank does not believe any of these properties are preserved in ag easements. There were inquiries made concerning the placement of the growth area boundary. Ms. Kinzer noted that the growth area was "pulled in" due to an ag easement. Mr. Ditto suggested that RT zoning may be more appropriate next to the agricultural preserved land. He believes a buffer should be provided next to the agricultural land so that development is not right on top of the farm land. It was noted that the density can be controlled through the planning and subdivision process. Mr. Thompson noted that the Zoning Ordinance states, "side yards that are contiguous to parcels with permanent easements or parcels in areas designated as priority ag preservation areas or transfer development rights sending areas shall have a setback of 50-feet. The Planning Commission may increase minimum setbacks to 50-feet for properties adjacent to parcels that are being actively farmed or parcels with agricultural district designation on them." After this discussion, the committee did not change their previous recommendation for Site 16.

Mr. Thompson presented a map delineating all areas zoned RM (Residential Multi-family), County Commuter routes and small commercial areas. He noted that only two of the areas zoned RM are currently not developed. The maps also showed properties where PUD's could be established in and around the growth area. There is approximately 2,600 acres of land available. Staff has discussed revising the text of the PUD zoning designation to require a certain percentage of multi-family residential units within a PUD. Another option could be the recommendation of a higher residential zoning classification on specific properties rather than waiting for a developer to request the higher zoning. This would eliminate some of the additional processes needed to develop a PUD. Ms. Irvin-Craig stated that "multi-family" needs to be defined and needs to be more than duplexes. PUD's should include townhouses, two or three story buildings with 15 to 20 units per building and condominiums as well as single-family homes. Members discussed the amenities needed for certain types of housing, such as senior housing. It was noted that often the amenities follow the development. Transportation is one of the most important amenities that are needed, especially for senior housing developments.

Members discussed Staff's suggestion to require a variety of housing types in PUD's. Some members believe this requirement could reduce the marketability of the housing units within the PUD. Members also questioned if the requirement would be a deterrent for developers to use the PUD and thereby increased density would not be achieved. Mr. Phoebus suggested restricting the requirement to certain PUD's. Mr. Thompson stated it may be possible to divide the PUD's using different mechanisms such as acreage to determine when multi-family units would be required. Members discussed the amount of acreage they believe would be appropriate on which to place a multi-family requirement. Staff will provide the committee with an update as they move forward with their work on the text for the PUD zoning designation.

Members began a discussion on properties surrounding the Friendship Technology Park, which are currently zoned A (Agriculture) and proposed for ORT (Office, Research and Technology) zoning. For purposes of these minutes, the site will be designated as Site 17. Mr. Thompson stated that the Department of Water Quality recently announced there is a problem with sewer service in this area and upgrades will be needed. The land use designated in the Comprehensive Plan for this area is Industrial Flex. There was a brief discussion regarding the relocation of Rensch Road. Mr. Thompson noted that Staff has been reviewing the zoning of properties south of Rensch Road that are currently zoned Agriculture and proposed for ORT zoning. Staff has considered the RT (Rural Transitional) zoning for this property also. Members discussed the uses of the surrounding properties and the location of sewer and water services in close proximity to the site. Mr. Ditto expressed his opinion that the UGA boundary should be "shrunk" back in this area because there are more than 9,000 acres of existing agricultural land in the UGA. Members discussed the proposed ORT zoning for the property. Some members expressed their opinions that a mixed use zoning with residential and businesses would be appropriate on the property.

- **Consensus:** The committee recommends a mixed use zoning consisting of residential and ORT uses on Site 17.

The Committee reviewed the property owned by the Review and Herald Publishing Company and a vacant parcel next to it, which we will designate as Site 18. Mr. Thompson noted that Staff is considering the ORT zoning designation on this property due to its visibility and proximity to the interstate. Mr. Armel expressed his concern that a printing facility is not a principle permitted use in the ORT zoning district and if allowed in this particular area, would it also be allowed on other ORT zoned properties. Members believe that a printing facility is more closely related to light manufacturing uses. Mr. Mandley expressed his opinion that ORT is not the most appropriate zoning. The EDC recommends more areas for light industrial uses. Members discussed the IR (Industrial Restricted) zoning classification for this property. The Committee cited the following reasons that this might be a good area for IR zoning: it is not "up against" any residential development, it is an area where light manufacturing would be appropriate, and there is good access to the site.

- **Consensus:** The committee recommends IR (industrial Restricted) zoning for Site 18.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for December 18th at 9:00 a.m. at the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown. The Committee also scheduled meeting dates for January 8 and 22, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the same location.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Phoebus adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Phoebus, Chairman