

**WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
February 28, 2022**

the Washington County Planning Commission held a workshop meeting on Monday, February 28, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Washington County Administration Building, 100 W. Washington Street, Room 2000, Hagerstown, MD.

Planning Commission members present were: Clint Wiley, Chairman, David Kline, Denny Reeder, Jeff Semler, and Terrie Shank. Staff members present were: Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning: Jill Baker, Director; Jennifer Kinzer, Deputy Director; Travis Allen, Comprehensive Planner; and Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant.

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

Ms. Baker began with a brief history of the Comprehensive Plan, which was originally developed and adopted in the 1970s. Members were given several maps showing the growth areas that were established and refined over the years. Ms. Baker then discussed the development capacity that we currently have and how much is projected we will need in the future. Staff began with an analysis of vacant land by zoning category in each of the five growth areas in the County. We then used those numbers to calculate the number of units possible using that acreage. According to Staff's calculations, approximately 32,338 dwelling units could be developed. In addition, redevelopment of the former Fort Ritchie military base is proposing 500 new dwelling units over the next 10 to 20 years.

Staff then developed population projections based on statistics from the 2020 Census. In 2020, Washington County's population was 154,705. Using a moderate growth scenario, we projected an increase of approximately 30,800 new people by 2040. We then calculated the number of households over the next 20 years. An increase of 11,682 new households by 2040 was calculated; this is an average of 584 new households per year.

Historically over the past 30 years, new residential development has favored the growth areas at an 80%/20% ratio. The County is averaging a 36%/64% incorporated vs. unincorporated growth rate, which means that 36% of the growth is happening in the incorporated towns around the County. Assuming 11,682 new households by 2040, 9,346 are projected in the growth areas, 4,205 are projected in the municipalities, and 5,141 are projected in the County's growth areas outside of municipal boundaries.

Ms. Baker noted that nearly all non-residential development locates within the growth area boundaries due to the need for public water and sewer facilities. She briefly reviewed the development capacity analysis for non-residential development in the current growth area. The City of Hagerstown projects 25% of their water supply is used by non-residential uses.

Staff is projecting approximately 5,300 EDUs (equivalent dwelling units) will be needed for future development. The City of Hagerstown operates through a permit from the State which allows the City's water treatment plant to pull 15 million gallons of water per day (equivalent to 75,000 EDUs) from the Potomac River. The City of Hagerstown is the only water supply source in the Urban Growth Area. Ms. Baker stated that another source of water for the City was the Edgemont Reservoir. The Reservoir produced 75 million gallons per day, which equates to 3500 EDUs per day. This plant was taken off-line by MDE about 5 years ago.

Currently, the City of Hagerstown is using approximately 13 million gallons (or 61,000 EDUs) of water per day during peak times. The City is predicting 4,837 EDUs for residential development and 1,612 EDUs for non-residential development over the next 30 years. The City of Hagerstown also provides water to the Towns of Smithsburg, Williamsport and Funkstown. The Towns are predicting approximately 3,000 EDUs (total for all 3 towns) for their growth. Pre-annexation agreements constitute approximately 500 EDUs.

The City's water treatment plant is capable of handling and treating 20 million gallons per day. However, the transmission lines and the hydraulics at the plant are not capable of handling this capacity. The estimates to replace the transmission lines from the Potomac River to the treatment plant is \$100 million, plus additional funds for the hydraulics and lines to carry the water back out into the system.


Ms. Baker stated that the County has sewer capacity available. The City of Hagerstown has a permit to run a treatment facility for 8 million gallons per day; they are currently running 6.5 million gallons per day. The City of Hagerstown serves much of the north end; however, there are plans for the County to take over and serve the Maugansville area and part of the joint service area north of Hagerstown.

Ms. Baker briefly discussed Staff's proposal to reduce the growth area where public water and sewer are not currently available.

Staff at both the City and County level have been considering many options, such as the following: 1) televising manholes to determine where there are leaks; 2) considering ways to sunset unused EDUs; and 3) acknowledging (acknowledge there is a problem and allowing developers to have wells and septic systems within the growth area).

Members discussed the downside of having wells and septic areas in the growth area and the effects on the water table, the possibility of sinkholes developing, and how it can affect neighboring property owners.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clint Wiley', written over a horizontal line.

Clint Wiley, Chairman