

Public Hearing Comments

Miriam Gboll on behalf of Keep Calvert Country-Grow Responsibly

I'd like to incorporate all of the comments that KCC has submitted in writing and verbally up to this point. Especially our concerns about the inaccurate population projections being used that don't take into account all the expansions proposed. We believe accurate analysis should be done and included in the Plan before adoption.

I have two other important issues that need to be addressed prior to the adoption of the Plan.

1. First, I want to thank you for listening to the Dunkirk citizens and keeping Dunkirk a minor Town Center. And thank you for listening to the Huntingtown citizens and voting to not allow the expansion of their Town Center. But we believe you should extend the same courtesy to Owings, Prince Frederick, Lusby and Solomons, and vote to not include maps that draw specific boundaries in the Plan. This also includes the residential areas surrounding the major Town Centers.

The reason is this: If the expanded Town Center and Residential boundary lines are adopted as part of the new Plan, citizens of those Town Centers will have no legal grounds to oppose those boundaries during the Master Plan and zoning map amendment processes. Since State law requires consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance and Maps, there will be no legal argument against them and no way to "undo" those boundaries once adopted in this Plan.

The maps in the Plan are zoning maps that do not belong there. The Plan should call for the consideration of expansion of Town Centers and then leave it to the Master Planning process for the citizens to determine whether and where the towns should be expanded. The Master Planning process, for those of you who have not been through one, involves the citizens who live in and around the Town Centers and/or have businesses there and is much more detailed.

Along those same lines, base densities in the Major Town Centers are suddenly being increased from one to three units per acre in this Plan. Density is a zoning regulation that does not belong in the Comprehensive Plan either. Not to mention that you're giving away at least 2 units before TDRs are required, further whittling away at the Program.

Just as you listened to Dunkirk and Huntingtown, we are asking you to do the same for the other Town Centers.

2. The second issue is whether it is staff's or the Planning Commission's intention to remove the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) for roads and schools from the Zoning Ordinance.

As you are aware, the new Plan eliminates Action Item #1 from the current Plan which states: *"Continue to support policies that link the amount, location and rate of residential growth to County land use objectives, including highway, school, and aquifer capacities."*

This question may be one for your attorney: If the intent is to retain the APFO, will it still be enforceable without that language being in the Plan?

If the intent is to remove the APFO, an explanation should be in the Plan stating why this zoning tool, that has been used for decades, is no longer going to be required.

What controls will replace the APFO?

Lastly, I want to say this:

I have read through the 1000+ pages of comments submitted by individual citizens, including a petition that was signed by over 1200 residents, many of whom also included comments. Yet the only requests that have been granted, besides the Dunkirk and Huntingtown victories, are the following: (1) To define the Town Center boundaries precisely in the Plan; (2) to allow water and sewer outside the Town Centers; (3) to not downzone Rural Commercial properties; (4) to increase the base density in the Town Centers; (5) to not call the Minor Town Centers villages; and (6) to include 3 specific properties in the expanded Prince Frederick Town Center, also granting higher density residential for those properties.

And who made those requests? They were included in just six letters from members of the development community.

Added as verbal testimony: Jason Scaggs testified that there has been enough compromise and it's time to adopt the Plan. There has been NO compromise between what the citizens want and what the developers want.

The pressure is off to rush this Plan through. We still have just under 2 years to adopt a new one. We're asking you to please listen to the citizens and consider all of their requests before adopting the Plan.

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