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Elizabeth Rosborg
Chair, Citizen Advisory Committee

Plan2040
Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Meeting Notes
May 21, 2020 - 5:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

CAC members present: Elizabeth Rosborg (Chair), Cate Bower, Anthony Brent, John Clark, Bill Dodd, Thomas Fahs, Joel Greenwell, Melanie Hartwig-Davis, Patricia Huecker, Caren Karabani, Matthew Korbelak, Amy Leahy, Elizabeth Ysla Leight, Patricia Lynch, Charles Mannion, Gary Mauler, Ellen Moyer, Kristin Pauly, Will Shorter

County staff present: Steve Kaii-Ziegler, Office of Planning and Zoning Officer; Christina Pompa, Deputy Planning and Zoning Officer; Cindy Carrier, Long Range Planning Administrator; Patrick Hughes, Long Range Planner; Michael Stringer, Long Range Planner; Mark Wildonger, Long Range Planner; Matt Power, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Land Use; Lori Rhodes, Assistant Planning and Zoning Officer; Lynn Miller, Assistant Planning and Zoning Officer

Attendees: Early Bradley, Susan Cochran, Kate Fox, Anastasia Hopkinson, Jon Korin

Introduction:
Ms. Rosborg, Chair

Ms. Rosborg called the meeting to order at 5:00. She asked for patience as everyone is adapting to new strategies to conduct business. Work is continuing on the GDP and CAC meetings will continue. She thanked everyone for participating.

Ms. Pompa introduced Matt Power, the new Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Land Use reporting directly to the County Executive. He spent five years as the Vice President of Government Affairs at the Maryland Independent College and University Association, two years as the Director of StateStat in the Governor's Office, and 14 years at the Maryland Department of Planning where the last 6 years he was the Deputy Secretary.

Mr. Power said he was excited to join County Executive Pittman's administration based on his focus on Smart Growth. He noted that he has shared his time between land use and supporting the administration in the COVID-19 response. He thanked the staff and CAC's time and effort on the GDP. The GDP is an important project and will be completed despite COVID-19.

Review Draft Land Use and Climate Change Goals, Policies, and Strategies:

Ms. Carrier, Long Range Planning Administrator
Mr. Hughes, Planner
Mr. Stringer, Planner

Mr. Hughes reviewed the process and steps taken in the CAC's review of the GDP. The CAC has agreed on the Vision and Themes and the Development Policy Area Map. The Planned Land Use Map is currently being developed by staff and will be shared with the CAC shortly. The CAC has also reviewed the background reports and the goals, policies, and strategies for a majority of the GDP. Tonight, the discussion will be focused on Land Use and Sustainability and Climate Resilience. Staff will be drafting a Concurrency Management plan, Implementation plan, and a framework for measuring progress.

Ms. Carrier provided an overview of how the goals, policies, and strategies for land use were developed. The State requires the County to implement the State's 12 Visions through the comprehensive plan. One of the visions relates to growth and development; specifically that the County will focus development to existing employment and population areas, adjacent to those areas, or strategically identified areas. The County is also directed by the State to produce a land use and development element. The County is encouraged to implement flexible development regulations to promote innovative and cost-saving design and to protect the environment. Economic development is encouraged through the use of innovative techniques and the streamlined review of development applications.

She noted that these goals, policies, and strategies are based on what the County heard during the public forums; such as continuing to protect rural areas, limiting development in existing neighborhoods and peninsulas, focusing growth in targeted growth areas, promoting walking, biking, transit options, and promoting redevelopment over greenfield development.

Staff has observed several challenges with the existing planned land use plan. These include higher density development than intended in low density zones, planned unit development and cluster developments not meeting the intent, and the yet realized potential of town centers and mixed-use zones.

Mr. Stringer shared the findings of the land use goals and policies survey. The goal of the survey was to get the general impression of opinions of the CAC on the goals and policies. Goals and policies of Built Environment (BE)1 were focused on the integrity of the Land Use Plan to ensure the codes and process are supported by the GDP. BE2 was focused on rural and agricultural areas. BE3 focused on encouraging public involvement. BE4 was focused on peninsula areas and BE5 was focused targeted growth and revitalization policy areas. All five received general support. BE6 is focused on land use policies around economic drivers, such as Fort Meade and BWI. Some CAC members raised concern about incentives and regulatory flexibility. BE7 focused on promoting growth in town centers. These two goals had less support. BE8 was focused on smaller hubs of commercial areas. This goal was generally supported. BE9 is focused around mixed-use development around transit centers. BE10 is focused on growth management along major corridors. There were concerns about BE9 and BE10.

[The CAC broke out into two groups to discuss the goals, policies, and strategies of the Land Use section of the GDP.]

Ms. Hartwig-Davis provided a summary of her group's discussion. The concerns focused on growth. The discussion acknowledged there will be growth, the importance in planning for it, being consistent in the codes, and being thoughtful in goals to achieve good high-quality growth in the targeted growth areas. The group agreed to not focus on acreage constraints, but to rather recommend building up rather than out. A variety of housing types and densities throughout the County was supported. The group also discussed whether density is a factor in COVID-19 transmission. For example, European cities with dense cities have been able to keep the number of COVID-19 cases relatively low. Better HVAC systems and architecture could mitigate transmission as well. The group was also concerned that the incentives and flexibility could be at the discretion of leadership, and thus the need for strong and transparent leadership. Ms. Rosborg said the group also discussed how town center plans have not come to fruition and that the adequate public facilities ordinance needs to apply to all developments. Ms. Hartwig-Davis said the group wants high-quality developments across the County.

Mr. Dodd said it was hard to encapsulate where the group stands because there is a diversity of opinion and as a result consensus was not reached. It was evident that everyone wants to keep a high quality of life, but how to accomplish that is difficult. Everyone likes where they are, but do not want change or have it happen in their backyard. The group agreed that development should happen near transit, but how it is accomplished was not decided. There was a good debate over incentives and flexibility and that it boils down to trust of the leadership and whether someone can game the system. Flexibility can also allow for better design or allows a good development to occur. He noted that it is hard to codify good design. For example, Annapolis could not be built due to current codes. There is a need for workforce housing, but there was concern that the current bill does not need to abide by the adequate public facilities ordinance. The group agreed that development should not move forward without the facilities to support it. Like group one, the group agreed that the Odenton Town Center has not come to fruition and wondered how it could achieve the vision, despite surrounding development and the difficulty in redevelopment in the town centers. He observed that the Zoom boxes are a metaphor for how he feels about the GDP process where everyone has their own box and people don't want anyone else in their box. He emphasized that this is a vision for the County and the need for members to break out of their box. Ms. Pauly said that the word "planned" needs to be removed from areas where development should occur.

Ms. Rosborg agreed that plans must be able to adapt to future conditions, in the event there is another pandemic. She said her group benefited by having Ms. Rhodes note that the County is interested in rewriting Article 17 and 18 of the Code. She added that recommendations by CAC members for Code changes are encouraged.

Mr. Stringer said staff will make edits to the goals, policies, and strategies based on the comments heard tonight. For the sustainability section, he said the term sustainable development is a broad concept and that it is woven throughout the document. There will not be a standalone chapter with specific goals, policies, and strategies because these can be found in the other chapters. Staff conducted an audit on sustainable concepts within the existing goals, policies, and strategies. They used a framework called "STAR" which was developed by a group that is now part of the United States Green Building Council. The framework looks at the range of concepts – like the triple bottom line of equity, environment, and the economy; that should be considered in sustainable development for communities. This has been used by the American Planning Association in their guidance documents for local governments on how to integrate sustainability into comprehensive plans. The analysis was a semi-quantitative effort that used the STAR categories: Equity and

Empowerment; Education, Arts, and Community; Health and Safety; Targeted Economic Development; Quality Jobs and Training; Climate and Energy; Natural Systems; and the Built Environment. The summary counted the number the ideas are referenced within the goals, policies, and strategies. The majority of policies are focused on the natural environment. On the equity side, there is a focus to equity and thought around the aging population. In regards to the economy, the wedge is relatively small due to the stable and strong economy. One interesting note is the impact of COVID-19 and how it may impact the economy in the future. Regarding equity, strategies may need to be strengthened. On climate, the County has heard the residents are interested in proactively planning for climate change and sea level rise. The County currently has a variety of plans that can be built on, such as a Sea Level Rise Assessment conducted in 2011. In 2013, there was an Energy Efficiency and Renewables Programs plan and the County just started a coastal resiliency program in partnership with the University of Maryland. In the draft goals, policies, and strategies, stitching these together in an overarching climate strategy for the County as well as policies and strategies that focus on those areas preparing to adapt to future conditions as well as achieving the State's goals on reducing emissions and push to the use of renewable energy. Mr. Stringer shared the survey results of which the CAC was generally supportive.

Administrative items: Adopt March 4, 2020 meeting notes; Next steps

Ms. Rosborg, Chair

Mr. Brent motioned to adopt the minutes. Ms. Leahy seconded the motion and the minutes were adopted 19-0. The next meeting is June 3, 2020. Staff will be sending additional details shortly. Ms. Rosborg requested the CAC provide comments on the Zoom meeting. A majority of the members were supportive of the format. Ms. Bower asked what the status is of the land use change applications. Ms. Rosborg said staff is still working on the decision. Ms. Carrier said the public comment period ended in March and that the land use plan will be presented to the CAC. Mr. Shorter motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Pauly seconded the motion and the motion was approved 19-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.