

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**  
**Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission**

**Special Meeting**

**April 28, 2009**

Location: Carroll County Office Building

Members Present: David L. Brauning, Chairman  
Dennis Wertz, Vice Chair  
Melvin E. Baile, Jr.  
Wayne Schuster  
Charles M. Chadwick  
Alec Yeo  
Robert B. Slade, Alternate

The meeting opened at 10:00 a.m. Present with the Commission were the following persons: Julia W. Gouge and Michael D. Zimmer, Board of County Commissioners; Steven D. Powell and Cindy Parr, Commissioners Office; Steve Horn, Tom Devilbiss, Ralph Robertson, Jeff Everett, and Kelly Martin, Department of Planning; Terri Jones and Kim Millender, Department of the County Attorney; Clay Black, Jeanne Joiner, Kim Brandt, and Pat Varga, Bureau of Development Review; Gale Engles, Janet Doody, and Hugh Murphy, Bureau of Resource Management; Brenda Dinne, Daphne Daly, Bobbi Moser, Barb Lilly, Andrea Gerhard, Tom Groft, Mike Roberts, Sandy Baber, and Scott Graf, Bureau of Comprehensive Planning; Vivian Laxton, Office of Public Information; Chris Swam, Audio/Video Production; Ted Zaleski, Department of Management and Budget; Joe Kuhn; and members of the press.

**WELCOME AND OVERVIEW**

Mr. Brauning welcomed everyone and noted that this was an informational and educational meeting with regard to the Pathways Plan.

Mr. Horn indicated he was presenting the staff draft of the County's Pathways Plan to the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning and Zoning Commission. He noted that he had recently held five regional meetings throughout the County to bring citizens up to date on the Pathways Plan. Mr. Horn provided a history of the agricultural zone in the County and discussed the increase in allowable residential density in the agricultural zone over the years. He noted that the draft plan takes a critical look at the development practices in the agricultural and conservation districts. Mr. Horn explained that the agricultural district is yielding much higher ratios than 1 lot per 20 acres. He noted the Plan has three major focuses: agricultural land and agricultural economy; employment base; and, residential growth. Mr. Horn thanked the County Planning staff, County Attorney's Office, Management and Budget staff, Economic Development staff, Vivian Laxton, and Chris Swam and staff for their assistance.

**VIDEO PRESENTATION**

Mr. Swam showed a video that had been developed by staff with regard to the Plan.

## **PRESENTATION OF STAFF DRAFT: PATHWAYS TO CARROLL'S FUTURE LANDSCAPE**

Mr. Horn reviewed the history of the Pathways Plan to date. His presentation centered on each of the three focuses of the plan, beginning with the agricultural land preservation program. He reviewed the recommendations, implementation, and benefits for each focus. Some of the major points covered included: providing incentive lots to owners of remainders of 25 acres or more to put the property in permanent preservation; adding 3,500 acres of land designated for employment; and, reducing the number of potential new residential lots from 30,000 to 20,000.

Commissioner Zimmer questioned the impact of streams and wetlands on industrially zoned land.

Mr. Horn indicated there are strict environmental rules and regulations that apply to make sure things like runoff and pollutants don't escape the site. He noted that the Builders for the Bay report showed that Carroll County is doing an excellent job with the rules and regulations in place. This plan provides a great opportunity for industrial growth in an environmentally sensitive way.

Mr. Schuster questioned whether any fiscal analysis was done or would be done to determine the savings that could be realized in providing services to less residential lots, incorporating any offset of any increases.

Mr. Horn indicated the County worked with the Institute for Governmental Services and County Management and Budget staff to perform a solid fiscal analysis of the plan.

Commissioner Zimmer questioned how long the Conservation district has been zoned with a one lot per three acre ratio.

Mr. Horn indicated 1:3 has been the ratio for the Conservation district since its inception. He noted that prior to 1978, the Conservation zone was the most restrictive zone in the County.

Commissioner Zimmer indicated the opportunity for development has been available to landowners for over 40 years.

Commissioner Gouge noted that the increase in the agricultural zone residential density is due to subdivision practices, not irresponsible actions on the part of the Commissioners or Planning staff.

Mr. Horn indicated the Commission will be meeting on Monday, May 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Winters Mill High School auditorium regarding a request from staff to send the Plan out for 60-day review. A public hearing for the Planning Commission will be held in July, with the Plan being forwarded to the Commissioners with recommendations as early as August.

Mr. Brauning noted that many of the recommendations in the Pathways Plan parallel the recommendations that have been carried through the years from as early as 1965 and the original Future of Agriculture Committee.

**NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Horn explained that the Commission would be requested to release the plan for 60-day review at a special meeting on Monday, May 4, 2009. During May and June there will be a series of public open houses scheduled to allow citizens an opportunity to talk with staff about their property and provide guidance on how to get additional information. He noted that the Pathways Assistance Center will be open in Room 205 of the County Office Building from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. A 1-800 number has been established and will be manned from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Zoning maps and the proposed ordinances can be viewed at the County Office Building and on the website. A zoning query has been developed to allow citizens to enter their address and determine the existing zoning and proposed zoning for their property. The Commission will be holding several public information meetings in June. The Commission will review comments received at the public hearing, during the 60-day review process, from the website, etc., before forwarding a plan to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption.

Mr. Brauning noted that the Commission's public information sessions have been scheduled as follows: June 11 at Francis Scott Key High School, June 15 at Century High School, and June 23 at North Carroll High School. He indicated all the meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m.

There being no public comments, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

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Secretary

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Approved