

Mount Airy Environs

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Newsletter #2

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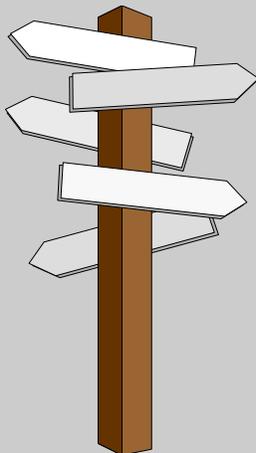
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Vision and Goals for the Future of the Mount Airy Community

While the community comprehensive plans within Carroll County support and implement the County Master Plan, it also is recognized that each individual community holds different values and cherishes characteristics unique to that community. Each community has its own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. While these characteristics may also be found in other Carroll communities, each area may choose to address these issues in its own way and within its own set of priorities. Therefore, each community also develops its own vision statement.

The Mount Airy Environs community is a vibrant community exhibiting strong neighborhood cohesiveness. The community promotes open space and landscaping that enhances the visual aesthetics of the area and development design that is in harmony with the surrounding built and natural environment, preserving rural character. The Gillis Falls Reservoir Watershed is a functional and recreational asset

to the community, providing both passive and active uses. The community has adequate public facilities and services that meet the needs of the residents. The community has sufficient activities for area youth. The transportation network provides fluid traffic movement on major arterial and collector roads throughout the environs and maximizes the potential brought about by its unique proximity to the I-70 corridor and surrounding regions. The Environs looks to the Town of Mount Airy as the center for local commercial and social activities.

The **draft** vision statement above represents what the community involvement participants felt to be the preferred future for their community. Future decisions and activities of the community should be consistent with this vision. Members of the community should strive to bring about the changes that will make this vision attainable.

A set of goals is developed that is distinct to the needs of the

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community and that is more specific than the county-wide Goals. The participants in this planning process identified the following priorities for the Mount Airy community. These **draft** goals are presented by topic or category.

Growth Management & Land Use...

- ☞ To concentrate development in and around the existing town.
- ☞ To promote a more compact development design in all new subdivision and site plans.

Transportation...

- ☞ To improve the safety and efficiency of the MD 27 corridor.
- ☞ To utilize and improve the existing road network to help alleviate congestion along the MD 27 corridor.
- ☞ To provide pedestrian/bicycle facilities to link neighborhoods to the town as an alternative to automobiles.
- ☞ To provide a bicycle/pedestrian link from Watkins Park to the Gillis Falls Reservoir recreation area.
- ☞ To provide commuter service between the Mount Airy community and the Washington metro area.

Community Facilities...

- ☞ To secure land for the future provision of additional recreational facilities within the community.
- ☞ To ensure an adequate public water supply for the region.
- ☞ To provide appropriate recreational opportunities at the Gillis Falls Reservoir site.
- ☞ To ensure that growth does not outpace the community's ability to provide facilities and services.

Natural Resources...

- ☞ To protect environmentally sensitive areas and preserve open spaces.
- ☞ To preserve the scenic views and natural landscapes of the area.
- ☞ To preserve agricultural land around the community to provide distinction between the built environment and the rural landscape.
- ☞ To foster alternative agricultural uses to help insure sustainability of agriculture within the area.

Economic Development...

- ☞ To explore opportunities that are available with the close proximity of the I-70 corridor.
- ☞ To attract industrial development that enhances the character of the community and provides living wage local employment opportunities.
- ☞ To create a better balance between the residential, commercial, and industrial tax base.

Historic/Cultural Resources...

- ☞ To protect historical sites and resources located within the community.
- ☞ To promote activities and events that symbolize the atmosphere of the community and are unique to the area.
- ☞ To protect the historic character of the community through adaptive reuse.
- ☞ To protect the historic character of the community through an architectural style of new development that is historically consistent.

Community Involvement...

- ☞ To increase citizen awareness of, and participation in planning

issues, processes, and development decisions.

- ☞ To increase public participation in government processes.

Interjurisdictional Coordination...

- ☞ To increase communication between the County and Town on development plans and community facility issues.
- ☞ To foster greater coordination between Carroll County and Frederick County regarding the concerns of the Mount Airy community.
- ☞ To build rapport with surrounding counties and State government as a legitimate stakeholder within the region.

Housing & Community Design...

- ☞ To support infill development that blends with and respects the surrounding built environment.
- ☞ To encourage residential growth that meets the needs of those in all income levels.
- ☞ To promote new development design that conveys a sense of place.
- ☞ To provide connected paths/trails/greenways throughout the community which offer recreational opportunities. ☆



The Survey Results Are In....

Participation in the survey process in January of this year was very much appreciated! The following is a summary of some of the interesting results from the surveys.

- ❖ Approximately 86 percent of the respondents perceive their quality of life in the community to be high or very high.
- ❖ Many of the respondents choose to live in the Mount Airy community for its rural atmosphere (23%), small-town atmosphere (18%), feeling of safety, and the affordability of homes.
- ❖ The rural setting (23%) and atmosphere (15%) were also the most common things that people like most about living in the Mount Airy community.
- ❖ Participants were asked to share those things that they liked least about the area. Too much development (24%) seemed to be

a primary concern, as was loss of rural land (21%).

- ❖ The largest percentage of employed respondents work in Montgomery County (25%), Carroll County (15%), and Howard County.
- ❖ A notable percentage of participants commute 31-45 minutes (26%) or 46-60 minutes (25%) to get to work. Conversely, 14 percent of those responding have a commute of less than 15 minutes.
- ❖ Regarding recreational facilities, participants indicated that bicycle and pedestrian trails (18%), and wooded areas (18%) were most needed.
- ❖ Preservation of agricultural land through permanent easement (74%) and downzoning land (23%) were supported as the most desirable means of controlling residential growth outside of the Town boundaries.
- ❖ About 27 percent of

respondents had attended a public meeting held by County or Town elected/appointed officials within the last year.

- ❖ Participants felt that a community newspaper (28%), mail flyer (16%), the Carroll County Times, and word of mouth were the most effective sources for getting information on public decisions, meetings, and participation opportunities.
- ❖ Participants were asked what areas they would like to see new businesses locate. Many of those responding (43%) wanted to see new business concentrate in existing areas while a much smaller group (16%) wanted to see new areas identified. Thirty-four percent felt that no additional business was needed.

Complete results from the survey can be viewed at <http://ccgov.carr.org/plan-d/mtairy/index.html>. ☆

Series of Community Workshops Held

As indicated in the last newsletter, a series of community workshops was held as an additional form of input and direction from the Mount Airy Environs community regarding its future. Several different exercises were given throughout these workshops. A synopsis of some of the results of those meetings is presented here.

Preferred Future:

Specific ideas of things people wanted to see or have addressed in terms of the area's future included: strengthening the

downtown area, preserving farmland and open space, providing additional parkland and recreational areas, expanding employment opportunities, greater community cohesiveness, protecting the area's water resources, and providing adequate pedestrian facilities.

Direction on Specific Issues:

Participants suggested additional direction to be taken on major issues that will be explored in the plan...

- MD 27 should be improved with additional through lanes and/

or turn lanes to accommodate traffic volumes.

- Bike and pedestrian facilities should be located along roads like MD 27, Watersville Road, Gillis Falls Road and Buffalo Road, and should connect neighborhoods with the downtown area.
- Future bike and pedestrian facilities, parks, and recreational facilities should be provided by a combination of County purchase and developer contribution.
- A wider variety of style and pricing should be made available in new construction to enhance

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Series of Community Workshops Held...

the appearance of new developments within the community.

- A greater priority should be placed on open space and a more compact development design.
- Joint Town/County workshops, meetings, and greater use of local

publications should also be utilized to foster communication and cooperation among the local government entities. ☆



For more information...

If you have questions regarding anything you have read in this newsletter or about the process in general, please feel free to contact the project managers for the Mount Airy Environs Plan, Scott Graf, or the area planner, Bill Caine. They can be contacted at the following address, phone number, and e-mail address:

Scott Graf or Bill Caine
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The Next Steps in the Process

We will shortly be moving into Phase 3: Draft Recommendations. Based on the Phase 1 background work and the direction for the future provided by the community, County staff will work together to develop a list of potential recommendations or activities that could be undertaken to achieve the draft goals. Any proposed land use designation changes or additions needed to accomplish these goals will be mapped at that time.

Phase 4 is the second Community participation Phase. A newsletter, which includes all the

potential text recommendations, will be prepared and sent out to give the community the opportunity to review the recommendations prior to the next set of workshops. These workshops will allow the community to give feedback on these recommendations, make additional suggestions, and identify which recommendations would receive the highest priority before a draft plan is put together for review. The workshops will also allow the community to view and comment on the proposed maps that will accompany the plan. ☆

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