

Community Advisory Group Notes

Thursday, October 6, 2016 from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Community Advisory Group Members

Present

Senator James N. Robey
Frank Durantaye
Andy Hall (conference)
Reverend Joan King
Lori Lilly
Gary Maule
Ken McNaughton
Ron Peters
Don Reuwer
Angela Tersiguel
Beth Woodruff

Not Present

Tammy Beideman
Kevin Bloom
Simon Cortes
Mark Hemmis
Timothy Kendzierski
Debbie Slack Katz
Bruno Reich

County Staff

Jeff Bronow
Kate Bolinger
Jim Caldwell
Lisa Crow
Mark DeLuca
Joseph Herr
Jessie Keller
Raj Kudchadkar
Ryan Miller
Phil Nichols
Karitsa Norman
Kristin O'Connor

Discussion Topics

Welcome – Senator, James N. Robey

- Senator Robey welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- He is back from ankle surgery.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – Senator, James N. Robey

- CAG members had some changes to the notes before approving.
 - Add bullet that some pond owners have them in the back of their property and don't take care of them in the back.

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- Drop item on the Flood Working Group bullet on the \$18 million of Phase I projects.
- Minutes from last week's meeting on 9/29/16 were approved.
- CAG member commented that there is a need to answer the question on 1,000 year storm. This is not in regard to meeting notes, just a comment made for future meetings.

Recovery Strategy, Generation of Ideas – Public Engagement Associates

- Public Engagement Associates (PEA), hired by the Department of Planning and Zoning to facilitate the public's engagement during the recovery process walked the group through a briefing that provided an overview of the entire process.
- PEA addressed that the community would share ideas and give the county input on potential projects.
- This process has already begun as identified on the timeline, County stakeholders, Economic Recovery group, Designers and Engineers have all met
- CAG, FWG, and Preservation group to submit ideas at this point.
- PEA also stated that the community and county have been listening and learning since the onset of the disaster.
- PEA will be building upon the listening and learning that is already occurring but will be moving the conversation out of the immediate response phase to begin to help the county and community determine what Historic Ellicott City should look like.
- Various departments are reaching out to the community, individuals, and so are the groups identified in the briefing.
- CAG is a key element, representing residents and businesses, working in parallel to the public engagement.
- A lot of online information has already been provided through social media, this activity will continue as focus moves to longer-term recovery issues.
- This process acknowledges the fact there are a lot of possible projects that could be done during the recovery process. Some connected to a Master Plan process, others not.
- PEA energy is focused on the public meetings, but helped with guiding the other engagement processes.
- PEA is working with the County to finalize dates of other sessions for public meetings in late October and early November.
- October 18th is looking in a macro way of working with the most significantly affected areas. It will also be an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate what has been done to help with recovery and engage what's going to be done with the Master Plan process.
 - This meeting is also to conduct a final check-in as we move in into the longer term recovery process.
- How can we assist you in being more ready to talk about longer term recovery for economy, preservation, rebuilding, and environment?
- Invites for this meeting will go out first thing tomorrow morning (at the latest).
- For each meeting, conversations will be captured to feed into topics for the next public meeting, Recovery Support Function groups, county executive's office, and building a database of ideas.
- Late Oct-early Nov. public meetings will move into a more purely longer term recovery process.
 - Dates will be definite by next Tuesday.
 - It's important to align these dates with the Executive's and Councilmember's calendar.
- Each meeting will have a slightly different focus. All on a theme of rebuilding, however.

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- Long-term recovery focus will be on the principles of economy, preservation, environment, and rebuilding.
- Still need to sort through the details for the remaining sessions and will inform the CAG once those details are finalized.
- PEA discussed sharing the project priorities list compiled over the last month to look at the projects, critique them, and generate additional ideas.
- PEA will generate a data report after each community meeting.
 - Will share that after each meeting.
- The Final Analysis and Syntheses of Results phase will most likely spill into January.
- Tonight, want CAG to give input into the project compilation process.
- Need to figure out in the next 5-6 weeks right set of online or social activities and methods for people to give feedback.
 - Intent there will be to give opportunities for folks that can't get to the meetings.
- DPZ is in charge of the Master Plan Process which will begin in the early part of 2017.
- Currently, PEA's contract runs into December.
- PEA provided information on their background with facilitation post-disasters.
 - Resume includes facilitating process after 9/11, Gulf Coast of Florida for 2004 Hurricane, Charlotte County supported them in doing half a dozen meetings in the County, and New Orleans after Katrina later in the process a (year after Katrina).
 - Worked with different parties and the public to develop the Unified New Orleans Plan. Plan that the citizens could back to get improved.
- PEA will give a summary report of the data for the project compilation side.
 - Working with OEM, DPZ, and County Exec's Office on this database.
- Community member that works at the World Bank had several questions/comments for PEA.
 - Ellicott City has a number of different communities with unique characteristics, what will you be doing to make sure different voices are heard?
 - Want to identify those who are significantly impacted.
 - Separate discussions for the different audiences.
 - PEA stated they want to give the really impacted time to talk and meet with one other on priorities.
 - Trying to stay away from the line at the microphone type of meeting.
 - Will these be opportunities based on ideas generated on what individuals come up with themselves? Will you bring things to help generate ideas?
 - Each meeting will have some sort of presentation on the flood history, progress made over time, what kinds of projects will make sense in a long-term recovery effort.
 - Really important to inform people to give informed perspectives and views.
 - PEA mentioned handouts will be distributed at each meeting to ground people before they provide input.
- PEA encourages more work in focus group discussions and surveys to capture views.
 - PEA talked about how that might be done to focus on specific topics.
- A lot of flood mitigation case studies.
- Another place where all of the details completely finalized; Master Plan process is going to key.
- There is a lot of pent up energy out there, this process also ensures people can quickly get ideas out there without having to wait for the initiation of the Master Plan process.
- However, there will be many projects that need to wait for the studies, stuff that's pertinent to the Master Plan process.

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- This process is also about continuing to give places for the public to engage.

Process for Generating Ideas

- The initial step for generating ideas is to hear from the County and community leaders in order to give some context before the community weighs in.
- Bringing in different community leaders first (Engineers/designers, Economic Recovery Group, Flood Work Group, CAG Members, Historic Preservation) will generate a wide range of idea types.
- The process also seeks to organize and categorize around some of the key pillars.
- However, we will see if there are other categories that emerge.
- Part of analysis will elicit those project ideas that would need to belong in a Master Plan process.
- CAG comment, frustrated with the process.
 - There are already ongoing ideas. Why do we need to start all over again?
 - Intent is not to start from scratch, but to build off what flood working group has already done.
 - Additionally, other groups had ideas already in the works so this process ensures those are harnessed as well.
 - Senator Robey brought up the point the flood working group looked at flood mitigation, this group is tasked with looking at all aspects of recovery. For example, CAG needs to examine business recovery ideas.
 - This process also ensures we are touching with key groups in the community; it has to come from many different sources.
 - Question on how this tracts together?
 - It's not going to be a perfect process, there will be more details that are finalized along the way as more things are discovered.
 - Recovery Manager brought up the point that there has to be a start point somewhere.
 - This process also includes stakeholders before we start the Master Plan process.
 - Need to answer the question: Why is Ellicott City important to Howard County?
 - Recovery Manager also commented that the planning process can't be done in a vacuum. It would look skewed so this needs to be all encompassing.
 - There is a starting and end point. CAG has a lot of opportunities in between the start and end.
- CAG member commented that we need to create some silos of overarching areas of what we are trying to achieve.
 - You get ideas out there.
 - Before public meeting you begin to organize.
 - You are framing the questions for the public.
 - This helps the design process and people begin to connect the dots.
- This list will be fairly lengthy and so the County will need to make sense of it.
- That's why the process entails categorizing ideas so they can fall into the four major buckets or recovery pillars.
- When public is looking at it and digesting different ideas, they will begin to make sense of it.
 - Will ask for their feedback.
- Public meetings will have to be revised along the way.
- They will be reformulated based on what the public has told us.
- CAG is a really important sounding board and reality check of the process.
- Make Ellicott City a better place, not just flood proofed and resistant.

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- Emphasized again, we aren't starting over that we are adding to ideas.
- We need recommendations out of all of the input.
- PEA and County will work on method for summarizing ideas submitted from the public to note duplications or popular ideas.

Generating Ideas

- PEA walked the CAG members through the generating ideas form.
- The forms will also be sent to the CAG electronically.
- Some CAG members shared their ideas:
 - Preservation Commission process- should be reviewed in order to improve the approval process (see Don's rec.).
 - DPZ staff commented that they are modifying the code so minor changes can go straight to staff.
 - Short-term project, West End Hudson Creek has most of water came out of there. Have nothing planned to restructure the Creek. Banks are raw. Sediments flying into the Chesapeake Bay. Something needs to be done here before the study.
 - West End folks will have issues again.
 - Senator spoke with Allan this morning and he wants to do something that will make a difference. Executive will be announcing a project that they are moving forward on next week.
 - Cheapest project, less than 5k access to stream in the downtown historic district could be a ladder by the Fudge Shop.
 - Ladder could be flood proofed and attached to the building.
 - This would be an access point since right now it's extremely difficult to get into the stream.
 - Easy access to the channel.
 - Short-term activity.
 - Home is demolished- rebuild a pedestal home (mushroom) cost 200k or more.
 - Like at the beach.
 - Almost bought Berkley Springs.
 - Look at Indian Run Village.

Sub-committee Discussion

- CAG is a community leader group tasked with looking at all aspects of recovery.
- CAG member brought up the discussion point.
- Does it make sense to have different subcommittees?
- The group could divide and conquer and come back.
- There may be groups that are exploring things already.
- Frustration traveling over the same ground.
- Senator Robey would ask group to sleep on this and talk about making a group working on preservation, economy, flood mitigation, etc.
- It was brought up that one CAG member had a great idea earlier on regarding NFIP for the community that was also an idea at the Designers/Engineers meeting.
- West End has looked into this option.
- Residents have been in contact with an individual certified with FEMA to work on flooding issues to look into a sole package as a town for insurance. Not just individuals.

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- It was suggested they could work with Lloyds of London or an individual insurance company in order to protect the brand of Historic Ellicott City.
- Important to make a difference in catastrophic. Or they won't insure Historic EC.

Recovery Video Presentation

- The Community Advisory Group watched the video after the Public Information Office made several edits to the video in order to present it in a more positive light. This video also included new footage from the flooding event.
- Senator Robey suggested removing a comparison that a member of the National Weather Service made to San Andreas.
- Group members also provided other suggestions on ways to improve the video.
- Phil Nichols will communicate the suggestions to the Public Information Office, in order to continue to improve the video.

Closing – Senator, James N. Robey