



Ellicott City Watershed Master Plan

7/11 Master Plan Advisory Team Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 11, 2017; 5:30 pm

The second Ellicott City Master Plan Advisory Team (MPAT) meeting was held Tuesday, July 11, 2017, at the Center for Ministry & Education (CME), St. John's Episcopal Church and Parish Day School, at 9130 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042.

Consultants present: Steve Brigham, Tom McGilloway, Jeff Dube, Megan Griffith, Lisa Wingate, Kelly Gutshall, Ward Oberholtzer, Stephanie Francis, Stacy Pair, Tripp Muldrow, Ben Muldrow, Jim Burnett, Chris Krupinski

Staff present: Valdis Lazdins (Planning and Zoning), Phil Nichols (County Administration), Kate Bolinger (Planning and Zoning), Mark DeLuca (Public Works)

MPAT present: Allan Shad, Ed Lilley, Gary Maule, Beth Woodruff, Rob Brennan, Debbie Slack Katz, Karen Besson, Ben Barlow, Len Berkowitz, Jean Sedlacko

Absent: Don Reuwer

Steve Brigham, Public Engagement Associates, opened the meeting at 5:30 pm and thanked everyone for coming.

Kate Bolinger asked MPAT members to approve the May 31 meeting minutes. Beth Woodruff motioned to approve and Debbie Slack Katz seconded. The motion unanimously carried.

Tom McGilloway, Mahan Rykiel Associates, asked consultant team members from Mahan Rykiel, Arnett Muldrow, RK&K, LandStudies, South Coast Consulting, and Preservation Consulting to introduce themselves and describe their expertise and project role.

T. McGilloway described the master plan schedule:

- September: "pop-up" event for additional citizen input in a fun, informal setting (to coincide with the Main Street Music Fest)
- Week of October 30: third MPAT meeting to discuss master plan scenarios
- Mid-November: third public workshop

- January: fourth public workshop
- March: public meeting to present the draft plan

MPAT requested rough scenario cost estimates to be presented at the October meeting.

MPAT reviewed the master plan ‘Hopes and Issues’ list from the May 31 meeting minutes and suggested the following:

- Rephrasing “safety and a sense of security that an event like the July 30th, 2016 flood won’t happen again” to “safety and a sense of security that the extent of the loss related to such an event would not occur again.”
- Adding the following to the list:
 - Attaining better flood insurance solutions for businesses and residents.
 - Identifying model communities elsewhere to emulate in some way in Ellicott City.
 - Developing a living and breathing plan that is monitored and able to evolve based on the needs of the community.
 - Creating a scorecard and regular evaluation of plan implementation.
 - Sharing progress on the plan’s implementation so everyone can practically track the scorecard for accountability.
 - Addressing and capitalizing on the Patapsco Valley (history, environment, recreation and culture).
 - Focusing on the historic properties in Historic Ellicott City
 - Retaining affordability so that people can still live in Ellicott City and do business in Ellicott City.

T. McGilloway described the maps showing sample projects and ideas raised through past efforts. He asked MPAT to review the maps and identify any missing projects or ideas. MPAT suggested labeling as historic the St. Luke African Methodist Episcopal Church and other historic sites. Additional MPAT suggestions will be e-mailed to K. Bolinger.

T. McGilloway described the interactive activity for the evening’s workshop. He referenced an Ellicott City map identifying significant opportunity areas - including the Patapsco riverfront, the Courthouse area, parking lots D and F, the West End, the streetscape, and the former Roger Carter site. Attendees will be asked to review the opportunity areas and provide feedback. They will also discuss development in the watershed and a “wildcard” topic (of their choosing).

V. Lazdins provided an update on the courthouse solicitation process. The courthouse will move from its location in downtown Ellicott City to the county-owned Bendix Road property. The existing Thomas Dorsey Building will be demolished, and a new courthouse built at the Bendix property through a public-private partnership. To that end, an industry day was held and a request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) will be issued. The county will identify a shortlist of firms from those who respond to the EOI to compete via a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

V. Lazdins said the county's goal is to have the new courthouse built and in operation by 2021 or 2022. If this schedule is met, the historic courthouse in downtown Ellicott City will be open to new opportunities and reuse options. Lazdins indicated the county could follow a similar future solicitation process for the historic courthouse with an industry day, EOI and RFP. He said the county recently conducted an RFP process for the Long Reach Village Center and used master plan objectives (the Reimagine Plan for Long Reach Village Center) to evaluate responses. T. McGilloway said the Ellicott City master plan would set parameters to guide future use of the historic courthouse.

MPAT members observed that 2022 will mark Ellicott City's the 250-year anniversary.

T. McGilloway described the marketing and branding work Arnett Muldrow and Associates will undertake and that it will build upon existing Ellicott City branding. Tripp Muldrow asked MPAT to describe the role Ellicott City currently plays and envision its future role by describing what Ellicott City means to them, and what it should mean to people in the future.

The following are insights and suggestions:

- Ellicott City is a mixed-use community. It's not just retail. People live here, work here, and play here. The master plan should not myopically focus on businesses, though businesses are very important.
- Ellicott City is a small-town oasis in Howard County suburbia.
- Ellicott City is unique. It looks like some place out of Europe or Austria. It's a town nestled in granite.
- Ellicott City is like coming home. All the businesses have personality that cannot be found in the mall, on the corridors, or in the shopping centers. Come shop at home. That's very different.
- Ellicott City is unique because of its mom and pop shops. Keep the uniqueness and the destination shops. People will return to longtime businesses decades later when they have a positive memory of the experience.
- Geographical constraints prevented the town from growing and sprawling.
- Ellicott City is a terribly unique place with many different stakeholders, all interested in improving the area.
- Annapolis is a good example of success, but has become somewhat generic. How do you keep Ellicott City authentic? Be successful while preserving the community feeling.
- Use Ellicott City as an educational resource in terms of the history, diversity, and inclusiveness. Have field trips through the mill and see what the mill looks like inside.
- Include the people who live on just outside the edge of the watershed boundary line.
- Make Ellicott City feel like home for those who may only live in walking distance, but can't currently safely walk into town due to lack of sidewalks.
- Increase awareness so that people who love Ellicott City also know about its heritage and the regional Patapsco Valley.

T. McGilloway said the watershed boundary is important when planning for stormwater management; however, it is less so for marketing Ellicott City which has different districts, including Main Street, the West End, and the residential communities on the watershed periphery.

The consultants thanked MPAT for their candor and said they will continue a community marketing and branding discussion at future meetings to answer: “What does Ellicott City want to be?”

K. Bolinger described next steps for MPAT:

1. Monday, July 24: Deadline to email additional projects or ideas currently missing from maps and additional thoughts on what makes Ellicott City unique.
2. September 23 pop-up event: once scheduled, MPAT will be asked to promote it and encourage attendance.
3. October 30 week: MPAT meeting - to be scheduled.

MPAT shared information about the July 29-30 flood commemoration weekend and Ellicott City Partnership’s new website (visitoldellicottcity.com). Members appreciate all the work the county has completed over the past year.

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.