



Growth Action Network

of Anne Arundel County, Inc.

P.O. Box 748 • Arnold, MD 21012

Summary of GAN Member meeting with the Office of Planning and Zoning



Three topics were on the Agenda for the Feb 22 GAN virtual meeting with Steve Kaii-Ziegler, Christine Pompa, Cindy Carrier and other staff from the Office of Planning and Zoning:

- (1) Concerns about the survey process used by the Regional Area Plans,
- (2) Fundamental problems with Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances for Transportation,
- (3) High density development in Parole without road upgrades.

OPZ comments on these topics are summarized below:

Surveys recently used to gather community input for Regions 2, 4, and 7 did not incorporate any means for preventing respondents from submitting multiple responses, verifying that they actually lived in the Region, or were even adults. Consequently, GAN expressed concerns that the surveys could be hijacked by special interest groups, diluted by responses from other Regions, counties, or even states, or could become assigned projects for children in groups like middle school civics classes or Boy Scout troops. GAN suggested required entry of a driver's license or id number as a means for minimizing these problems. OPZ staff responded that they didn't think there was evidence these things were happening, and that children under 16 should not be discriminated against. There was also concern about people who were elderly or disabled or didn't drive. This response seems inadequate, and GAN remains in doubt about the credibility of the survey data.

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances for Transportation have been in place for many years, but traffic congestion continues to grow. GAN asked OPZ staff to explain why large increases in traffic around developments are observed if the current system of traffic studies before developments are approved is working. The OPZ staff response was that traffic changes with many variables and confirmed that it does not perform any follow-up analysis on traffic volumes generated versus what is predicted in traffic studies.

Roadway improvements to provide congestion relief are mentioned in the draft Parole Master Plan and it acknowledges that that road upgrades are badly needed. Another high-density development has been approved along Riva Road, and GAN questioned whether road upgrades shouldn't be planned, approved, funded and constructed prior to the completion of these new developments. OPZ explained that the

new several hundred unit development currently underway might only increase Riva Road traffic by a few percent and that Town Center areas should be thought of differently from other areas of the County.

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Growth Action Network | 5545 Nicole Drive, Arnold, MD 21012 410-544-1454

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