



EastportCivic.org  
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October 31, 2017

Planning Commissioners  
City of Annapolis  
145 Gorman Street, 3rd Floor  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Reference: Planning Commission Work Session - November 2, 2017

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The Eastport Civic Association (ECA) has been following the Forest Drive/Eastport Corridor Study with great interest. A number of the ECA's Board of Directors, ECA members, and other residents of Eastport attended the September 27, 2017 open house hosted by the Planning and Zoning at the Pip Moyer Recreation Center.

We understand the Planning Commission has scheduled a work session on November 2, 2017 to discuss the study. The purpose of this letter is to share some observations with the Planning Commission in advance of the meeting. Representative of ECA plan to attend the Work Session.

We hope that the Planning Commission will incorporate these questions into their discussion on November 2, and will also consider a future Planning Commission meeting in which the public can ask questions and present testimony.

Thank your attention to this very important study.

Vic Pascoe  
President

Enclosure

cc: Pete Gutwald, Director, Planning & Zoning  
Sally Nash, Planning & Zoning  
Jacquie Rouse, Planning & Zoning  
Mayor Mike Pantelides  
Alderman Ross Arnett

**Observations and Questions for Consideration by the Planning Commissioners**  
**Work Session on November 2 Regarding the City's Forest Drive/Eastport Corridor**

***Background and Context***

1. The Office of Law issued an opinion that the 2009 Comprehensive Plan has the force of law, but the City has not produced the regulations and further guidance required by that Plan. We understand that the Forest Drive/Eastport Corridor Study's recommendations will be utilized to guide the City's land use planning and zoning:
  - Are the 2009 Comprehensive Plan's existing guidelines being applied to this Study?
  - What are the City's guidelines on development? What has changed?
  - Has the City obtained an opinion on "nexus to a development" so that the nexus between traffic impacts and developments can be established for determining all of the developers who will contribute funds towards required improvements? [Note that the Planning Commission can ask for and hire its own consultants and legal advisors to provide such an opinion to the Planning Commission]
2. The City's contract with the Faux Group was awarded prior to the City's decision to include Eastport in the study area, and in what we believe was the final budget, only ~14% of the labor hours was for a traffic planner (low relative to the importance of the traffic dimensions to the work to be done):
  - What adjustments to the contract scope were made following the addition of Eastport?
  - Why does the City believe that 14% of the hours for a traffic planner is sufficient time to complete the traffic analysis, modeling and forecasting aspects of this study?
  - What is the objective of the traffic analysis aspect of the study?
  - What is the methodology to be used for analyzing and modeling vehicular traffic? What are the assumptions to be used for the current and future years' scenarios?
  - Will the study assess level of service (at various intersections) as required in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, including both the current state as well as the impact of future aggregate growth of population and housing and commercial development?
  - In addition to the City, what other entities will provide the data to the Study (e.g., State Highway Authority, County, regional organizations, etc.)? Does the City have memoranda of understanding in place with these entities to define the responsibilities of each party?
  - Will new traffic data be collected, and if so by what means? How will the traffic counts be done, and by whom?
  - What traffic-modeling program will be used? Does the City own this modeling program? Do the City staff have the capability to use the program?

***Study Team's Vision and Priorities***

The "Current Priorities to Date" list (posted on the P&Z web site prior to the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting) included a vision statement and priority groups:

1. Vision Statement
  - Shouldn't there be separate lists of priorities and resulting vision statements for each of the four areas (one each for: the SOFO corridor; the Parole Community Areas; Edgewood; and Eastport)?



- Currently, the City proposes to combine Edgewood and Eastport, which are two very different corridors/communities with distinct issues and needs, and should not be combined into one. With separate lists and visions for each unique community/corridor, the priorities and/or rank, as well as vision, will be different for each one.
- Once separate lists and vision statements are developed, we would like the opportunity to review and comment on those revised documents.

## 2. Priority Areas

- Mobility
  - How does the City plan to “ensure near and long term mobility” and “plan for adequate corridor capacity”?
  - How will the City “add local street connections and grid network for more route options”?
  - How will the City “approve low scale infill” in mixed use neighborhoods while still “ensuring near and long term mobility” and “planning for adequate corridor capacity”?
- Land use and community design
  - Since there are virtually no requirements in the Code as to mixed use projects and all are negotiated from zero, what improvements to the City Code will be made as to mixed use projects before “converting all commercial areas to mixed use”?
  - How will the City “convert all commercial areas to mixed use” while still “ensuring near and long term mobility” and “planning for adequate corridor capacity”?
- Zoning and development review process
  - How will the City “convert all commercial areas to mixed use” while still “ensuring near and long term mobility” and “planning for adequate corridor capacity”?
  - How will the City “speed up the review process and use ‘by right’ approvals for more things” while still “ensuring near and long term mobility” and “planning for adequate corridor capacity”?

### ***Next Phases of the Work***

We understand there is a second public session scheduled on December 12 at the Pip Moyer Recreation Center:

- We suggest that the Planning & Zoning Department make a slide and verbal presentation to the public, with opportunity for the public to ask questions and get answers in a group setting at that meeting. The September open house held at the Pip Moyer Center did not allow the public to hear the City representative nor the questions or feedback from the public.
- We suggest that the City ask for feedback on the value of the online surveys used to date. The tool is viewed by some as poorly written (lacking in context, offering uninformed choices, etc.) and often dismissed as a public relations move.
- We suggest that the Planning Commission hold a public work session in the future when members of the public will be given the opportunity to ask questions, participate in the discussion, and present testimony.