

Committee Updates

Commercial Zoning Committee

Report by Nick Deoudes...

Commercial and Business Tax Revenue in Queen Anne's County is on the decline. No Maryland County can sustain a healthy economy when commercial revenues drop from 11 percent to 8 percent in three years. We are continuing on a downward spiral and the following goals should be adopted and are necessary to reverse this trend and return Queen Anne's County to a balanced Economy.

County Goals; 2008

- Set goal of increasing commercial and business tax revenues (which equates to an overall increase in County taxes collected) from the existing 8 % to 16 % by 2015
- Commission a study, which compares Q.A commercial and business tax base to, other Eastern Shore communities with similar geographic and population base and the services provided by each.
- Task Economic Development Commission with putting in place a template of business categories, examples of typical business existing in other communities, which the County wishes to attract. Seek out these desirable businesses and encourage their movement to Queen Anne's County.
- Direct Economic Development Commission and related departments within the County to put in place incentives for attracting commercial desirable commercial business. Establish a County wide map, detailing where these desirable Businesses can locate and monitoring to see that we are accomplishing our goals.

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Chesapeake College CAC

Report by Janet Boldyga...

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting was held on April 21, 2008 at the QAC Planning Office in Centreville. Helen Spinelli, Chief Community & Environmental Planner from QAC Planning Office, provided members with a summary of the previous meeting and was present for technical guidance. The Facilitator, JoAnn Ellison set the agenda to: give an overview, lay out the vision of members, and to grade the vision.

The committee had previously been given a homework assignment that consisted of what each individual perceived their vision to be. JoAnn Ellison had collected this evaluation prior to the meeting and grouped, on individual charts, all individual committee members' recommendations (visions) under the following criteria:

- Natural Environment
- Environmental & Economic Activity
- Land Use Type
- Visual & Aesthetic
- Transportation & Circulation
- Regional Impact
- Historical Character
- Quality of Life

JoAnn Ellison asked members to take "orange stickers" and place up to 3 stickers on each chart so it could be determined what areas had the largest impact vision. After this was accomplished (very time consuming and difficult task), the group would start to work to finalize and come to an agreement.

This process was an extremely drawn out process and they are far away from successful results.

At this time, we are waiting for the next meeting to be scheduled.

Commercial Zoning continued...

- Establish a business advisory board to assist the County with business attraction and retention.
- Review the existing Commercial zoning to be sure we have adequate supply of suitable land to accomplish our goal.
- Come up with a plan to provide proper infrastructure with the least costs to the Taxpayer.
- Put in place reasonable Architectural, Signage, and Landscaping standards, which all newly commercial building must adhere to.
- Establish a streamlined process of permitting for all new and existing business expansions which is timely, consistent, and fair.
- Take annual pulse of each existing county business generating at least 10 jobs, and or \$5K taxes to assess their needs, and create pathway to assist with their vitality and expansion.

Master Water & Sewer Fee Plan Committee

Report by Bob Waterman...

Mr. Waterman reported that the Commissioners have put out a formal RFP “seeking technical proposals from qualified firms for the purpose of preparing a study to assess the existing sewerage transmission system serving the Kent Island - Grasonville service area.”

On another note...

Several board members from Business Queen Anne’s spoke at the Commissioners meeting regarding the ordinance which will require citizen to pump their septic every five years.

As an alternative, Mr. Waterman proposed tax credits for citizens as an incentive to pump their septic. He also suggested how compliance could be monitored in a cost effective way.

Despite public outcry, the county ordinance requiring mandatory pump out was passed.

Special Report from Mike Katinas on Kent Narrows Development

BQA Board Member, Mike Katinas reports that the Queen Anne’s County Department of Land Use, Growth Management and Environment has put together a draft of proposed Zoning Amendments for the Kent Narrows area. They have also drafted a Parking Study/Management Plan. In an email to the board he stated,

“These two documents are critical to small businesses in the Narrows. They must be thoroughly studied and reviewed. If the zoning ordinance is changed to make all lot owners have all parking required on their prospective properties, then there will be no more build out on now undeveloped lots in the Narrows and the value of these commercial properties remaining will plummet. Many of us have put forth years of hard work and realize that parking is an issue in the Narrows.

Trying to legislate the problem opposed to finding the solution will only serve those already entrenched. The remaining property owners will be left with nothing but dirt in their hands. I personally have been fighting these issues for years. Not only for me, but for future development within an area that has seen growth through the successes of good solid businesses.

Now we are being penalized for that growth. There are many opinions that direct this project to where it is going; some favorable winds and others as unpredictable as the climate. I encourage you to fight this battle and stand behind those businesses that deserve your support. Please contact the appropriate offices to get the proposed zoning changes and parking study.”

Mr. Michael J. Katinas, President
Annie's Paramount Steak & Seafood House, Inc.
500 Kent Narrows Way North
Grasonville, MD 21638

Letters from the Chairman

The following letters went out in the month of April from Business Queen Anne's Chair, Mareen Waterman, on behalf of the board.

April 3rd, 2008

To: Queen Anne's County Commissioners

Re: UMMS Emergency Medical Facility

Dear Commissioners:

Business Queen Anne's Board of Directors enthusiastically supports your efforts to get the UMMS Emergency Medical facility built at the earliest possible moment.

Although finances will be stressed for the coming budget year, this project is of such importance to the County that you must fund it as is necessary.

Congratulations on your reaching agreement on the site purchase and the commitment to extend utility lines to the site.

We look forward to the facility becoming operational in the near future.

April 17th, 2008

To: Queen Anne's County Commissioners

Re: Highway Safety

Dear Commissioners:

You are aware of the multiple accidents, injuries and deaths occurring on these roads, principally at intersections. .

We believe it will be years before funding becomes available for the interchanges which State Highway Administration has planned to be built.

It may be decades before there's an interchange at all the major intersections which need them, but which S.H.A. hasn't considered.

We believe a significant reduction in accidents, injuries and deaths could result from relatively inexpensive "rumble strips" placed on the highways at reasonable distances from intersections.

Rumble strips will cause vehicles to slow down and thus reduce accidents.

As I'm sure you're aware, the 55 m.p.h. speed limit is largely ignored and my guess is that 70 - 75 m.p.h. is typical on these roads.

We plan to petition the S.H.A. to make these relatively inexpensive improvements believing they could be done in the next year or so.

Obviously, getting these installed will require your support of this effort and we ask you to consider it.

We will be developing a "priority system" to identify those intersections most in need, as S.H.A. is unlikely to agree to install them at every location we suggest.

Once we have our "priority list", we will submit to you for comment prior to formal submission to S.H.A.

Hopefully, we can count on your support.

Both letters are signed by the BQA Chairman...



Mareen D. Waterman



BUSINESS *Queen Anne's*
2008 Board Members

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Please welcome Camille O'Donnell
to the BQA Board of Directors!



Check in next month for more information on Camille.
We are excited about her joining us and believe that she
will be a great asset!



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Business Queen Anne's Website lately?**

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