

THE ALLIANCE FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES - UPDATE

By Mike Lofton



The Alliance for Livable Communities, born out of last fall's CEPA Forum on Unsustainable Growth, <http://www.cepaonline.org/forums.htm> is beginning to have an impact and is refining a plan for its next steps.

A resolution calling on the County Executive to begin planning now for the General Development Plan (GDP), <http://www.aacounty.org/departments/county-council/legislation/bills-and-resolutions/Resolution%20No.%2018-17%20FINAL2.pdf> , was supported by Growth Action Network (GAN) and the Alliance for Livable Communities(ALC) with emails, phone calls and testimony and the resolution passed 7 to 0!! The first introduction of the Alliance for Livable Communities (ALC) to the County Council was its submission of a letter to the County Council in support of starting the GDP now.

A very good discussion of the reasons to begin the plan immediately resulted from the resolution. The biggest reason given for starting now was because lots of piece meal pieces of legislation (Example: the Rural Conservation Line) were being put forward and a comprehensive view was needed. The other major reason the Council was in full support was that their constituents are eager to plan for the best future for the County before all the land is used up! There are several major rezonings that have been granted or are pending that will make huge changes without the benefit of a GDP process.

Looking ahead the ALC will produce "white papers" to guide policy discussions and decision-making. Topics identified include: Economics of Growth, Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances (shortcomings of), Ecosystems Services, and Sewers vs. Septic.

In addition, a series of County Charter amendments intended to eliminate serious flaws in the comprehensive zoning process, institutionalize public notice requirements, create a planning commission and an office of legislative services to analyze/draft legislation will be drafted.

Take a look at Calvert County's public engagement website: . <http://www.co.cal.md.us/futureCalvert>. It could be a good source of ideas. Are you willing to help? Contact Ann Fligsten, Executive Director, Growth Action Network, annfligsten@gmail.com.