

September 16, 2010

Jan H. Gardner
President, Frederick County, MD
Board of County Commissioners
Winchester Hall
12 E. Church St.
Frederick, MD 21701

Re: New Market Municipal Growth Element
For the Public Record

Dear Ms. Gardner:

We are writing to express our deep concern about the proposed New Market Growth Element (MGE) and the very serious consequences of moving forward with the proposed annexations as laid out in the MGE.

Many of us have been in attendance at a number of the Town Council and Planning and Zoning meetings over the past several years and it is very apparent to us that the Town has every intent of annexing the Smith/Cline, Delaplaine and Ganley properties and that the Town proposes to develop these properties as indicated on the map included in the proposed New Market Municipal Growth Element (http://www.mdp.state.md.us/PDF/OurWork/CompPlans/Frederick/New_Market/10_Draft_MGE_New_Market.pdf)

In response to Mayor Burhan's recent comments in The Gazette (Thursday, September 10, 2010) *Frederick County land preservation group defends flier* in which he is quoted as stating "This is only a plan. They may not be annexed. We recognize they could impact the town, but we wanted it to be part of the plan. It may not come up. Currently, no one has petitioned the town. No one has contacted me". With all due respect, the Smith/Cline properties were annexed into the town several years ago; that annexation was overturned by the residents of New Market by a referendum. Attendance at town meetings over the last several years has made it abundantly clear that the Town fully intends to annex these properties and the fact that Mayor Burhan's states he does not have an "official" request is simply a function of time. The fact that these properties are included in the MGE clearly indicates the Town has every intention of annexing these properties and to suggest otherwise is misleading. It should also be stated that all points noted on the flyer were taken from information found in the proposed MGE.

Our concerns are as follows.

Delaplaine and Ganley Proposed Annexations

The MGE proposes that these two properties be developed for commercial and industrial use. According to the Town's own zoning regulations this development could include warehouses, motels, heavy manufacturing, truck stops, recycling and storage, fast food drive-through's, etc.

Not only would this type of development severely exacerbate an already difficult traffic situation at the intersection of MD 75 and Rt. 144, but the impact to the residents of the Meadows will be tremendous. This development only has two points of egress, one of which is already impacted by traffic from commercial development already in existence at the intersection of MD 75 and Rt. 144. The other point of egress requires that the residents must cross over MD 75 in order to travel south, which is an extremely dangerous proposition.

Smith/Cline Proposed Annexations

The proposed 925 units on these two properties would severely impact traffic and schools, as well as exceeding water/sewer requirements for these dwellings.

Further, adding that many more residential units will exacerbate an overcrowded school system in the New Market area. We would further add that these schools, already over capacity, have not yet felt the impact of those developments within New Market that are already approved but not yet fully completed.

To reiterate the response to the MGE from the Maryland Department of Planning (which can be found at the aforementioned website):

Future Vision (Page 4)

The Maryland Department of Planning clearly expresses concerns about the three parcels of land on the MDP's AgPrint map which are desirable for land preservation but are marked for development in the MGE; these parcels are east of Boyers Mills Road, above the conservation area, and the two parcels southeast of the Conservation area.

The Maryland Department of Planning states "if these parcels were preserved instead of developed, they would adjoin preserved land in the Conservation area to create a greenbelt to prevent future urban sprawl around New Market. In addition, undeveloped parcels east of Route 75 in the Low Density Residential area and in the annexation area designated Mixed Commercial/Industrial could be preserved to form a buffer to the adjoining Eastern County Priority Preservation Area designated by the County. This 46,000-acre PPA is the County's largest, so development pressure near it should be minimized.

Finally, increasing development pressure on agricultural land further would increase the potential for the proposed parkway to generate unintended sprawl".

The Maryland Department of Transportation had this response to the proposed parkway on Page 3 of their letter dated July 20, 2010, to the Maryland Department of Planning:

"SHA does not agree with the notion that a bypass, as presented in the plan, would decrease the demand on MD 144 (Main Street)....etc.

West of New Market, a reconstructed interchange at I-70 and Meadow Road, is identified as Frederick County's #1 priority and is included in the Highway Needs Inventory. The project, when completed, will provide full movement access between I-70 and MD 144/Old National Pike, which will consequently lessen the travel demand on MD 144 (Main Street) through New Market".

Audubon Property

Construction of the proposed parkway would severely impact, if not destroy, the preservation of the Audubon sanctuary. The sanctuary is not only a safe environment (at present) for various species of birds, but many hours of volunteer work has gone into making this sanctuary what it is today. The trails found within the sanctuary are enjoyed by the residents of this area and many school children as well. We find the total disregard for the impact the parkway and surrounding development would have on the sanctuary to be egregious.

Finally, while we support smart growth, we believe the proposed annexations and developments in the MGE contradict any form of sound planning and do not meet the requirement of HB 1141.

Sincerely,

Brenda Chasteen, New Market Farms
Michelle Kinna, New Market
DeDe Pucino, New Market
Frank Pucino, New Market

Ian Riley, New Market West
Monica Riley, New Market West
Sharon L. Riley, New Market Farms

cc: David P. Gray, Vice President
Kai J. Hagan
John L. Thompson, Jr.
Blaine R. Young
Mr. Jim Gugel, Chief, Frederick County Division of Planning
Mr. Eric Soter, Director, Frederick County Division of Planning
Mr. Tim Goodfellow, Principal Planner, Frederick County Division of Planning