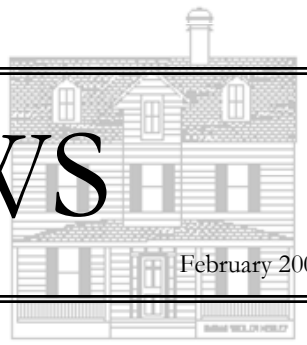


WEST END NEWS

Email: weca@cambridgemd.org

Web Site: www.cambridgemd.org

February 2006



AT WHAT COST?

My it feels strange to be compiling a newsletter again after such a long lapse. The Board and I realize the importance of the West End News to disseminate information to the membership of current activities, both Association and community related; unfortunately the Newsletter has fallen off schedule. Your Board of Directors has been extremely burdened this past year with expanded tasks and limited volunteers.

The main topic of conversation lately is the potential growth from residential development within the city and the issues that we, as a community, will be facing. I thought it would be appropriate to draft a Special Edition of the Newsletter to clarify the concerns that we, on behalf of the membership, have expressed to our elected officials regarding residential development in general.

In 2004 the West End News carried a listing of proposed residential projects that were currently on the record at the Cambridge Planning and Zoning Department, at that time the number was 6000+. You will see that I have included the most current listing (January 2006) which substantiates the fact that there are currently 7100+ housing units proposed for development within the City of Cambridge. As you drive the community, there is evidence of what the future holds. Unfortunately, there have been no financial impact studies done at the City level to verify that the fees recovered offset the costs to be expended.

Will existing and proposed new residential subdivisions generate sufficient property tax revenue, impact fees and permit fees to pay for the services the City of Cambridge must provide them? Or will a property tax rate increase be required in the near future to close the gap? No analysis or estimates exist.

We all read about proposed new residential developments, but not about new commercial or industrial projects to bring desperately needed new employment to Cambridge.

Statistics have proven commercial/industrial projects are not a drain on city services. A good balance between residential and commercial/industrial development will ensure job creation keeps up with residential growth and that the need to raise property tax rates is minimized.

At the current "burn rate", Growth Allocation for Critical Area development will soon be exhausted, mostly all on residential. Should we not reserve some percentage of Growth Allocation for job-creating commercial and industrial projects?

The Blackwater Resorts project on Egypt Road is an issue that we addressed at the Growth Allocation hearing the other evening before the City Council (see page 3). We have not, as a few have stated, taken a position in either support or opposition. We have monitored many of the meetings to date and have yet to see a cost/revenue analysis for this project. We must be cognizant of the fact that this project is estimated to be valued, at completion, in the neighborhood of \$800 million to \$1 billion dollars; a massive undertaking with far reaching effects. The request to the City was that prior to any approval of the Growth Allocation a financial impact study be completed.

Thus far the Board has been primarily concerned with property tax rates and non-compliance of a code issue. Members who have other concerns, please contact your elected representatives. The City Council Public Hearing record for the Growth Allocation will remain open until February 24 at 4:00 p.m.

Why has the Board involved ourselves in a development clear across town? This development could have an impact on future property tax rates for us all.

RESIDENTIAL PROJECT LIST

(based on information received from Planning & Zoning Department)

(UNITS)

(203) Cattail Crossing Phase I & II - single family 95, townhomes 108 –Route 343

(384) Deep Harbour – townhomes 92, condominiums 292, also retail and lodging – Trenton & Green Street

(28) Cambridge Point – condominiums 28 – Commerce Street

(109) Pintail – townhomes 109 – Route 16 & Stone Boundary Road

(640) Hyatt Regency – single family 94, townhomes 162, condominiums 384 – Shoal Creek

(11) Rev. Green's Crusade – single family 11 – Maces Lane

(166) Longboat LLC. – single family 166 – Jenkins Creek Road

(18) Dockside Cove – condominiums 18 – Muir Street

(16) James Court – single family 16 – Park Avenue

(185) Blackwater Landing, LLC – single family 185 – Race Street

(33) Waterside – townhomes 5, condominiums 28 – Muir Street & Cherry Street

(64) Maces Village – single family 64 – Maces Lane

(114) Heron Point – single family 42, townhomes 72 – Washington Street & Rt. 343

(76) Woods Road Apartments – apartments 76 – Woods Road

(420) Waterford – single family 300, townhomes 120 – Jenkins Creek Rd. to Rt. 343

(3200) Blackwater Resort Communities – single family 1700, townhomes 600, condominiums 900 –Egypt Road

(21) Ocean Estates – single family 21 – between Atlantic Avenue & Pacific Avenue

(793) Blackwater Crossing – single family 21, townhomes 442, condominiums 330 – Stone Boundary & Maple Dam Road

(25) Watervail Subdivision – single family 25 – S side of Jenkins Creek Road

(10) Ames Court Subdivision – single family 10 – Boundary Avenue ext. Maces Lane

(96) Lee's Apartment – apartments 96 – SE intersection Engle Drive Oak Hill

(150) The Meadows – townhomes 150 – Woods Road south of Route 16

(45) Sheppard Village – single family 7, townhomes 38 – Shepherd Avenue

(62) CCS Investors – townhomes 62 – NW side of Leonard Lane

(154) Palmer Farm – townhomes 70, apartments 84 – N side of Route 343, W of Leonard Lane

(164) Robbins Ridge – single family 164 – Route 343

You Are The Association

- **Join A Committee**
- **Attend Meetings**
- **Share Your Views**
- **We Need YOU To Exist**

**Meetings Held 3rd Tuesday Of
Every Month In The Library**

February 9, 2006

Mayor and City Commissioners
307 Gay Street
Cambridge, Maryland

Re: Blackwater Resorts/Growth Allocation/Public Hearing

I have been in attendance at many of the meetings, mostly City, some County and I have yet to hear a discussion of the cost that will be incurred by the City for additional services required for 3200 homes. Before the Growth Allocation is approved would it not be appropriate to have a professional analysis that would prove or disprove the projects ability to pay for itself without tax increases. Where is the analysis? Will residential development pay for itself?

I have witnessed much discussion on infrastructure issues, traffic flow, environmentally sensitive development, design elements, cost of units to be built and the list of community benefits as promised by the developer. I have not heard a discussion of the potential expansion of all City Departments and at what stage these expansions will be needed. This evening we are discussing the largest project to date to be brought before the City and County. Our Association is extremely alarmed that the City has not analyzed the cost to the taxpayers of the obvious future needs.

At what point will the City need to develop a professional fire department? What will be the cost?

At what stage will we need additional City workers to handle the increase in volume of their individual jobs? Will it be after 500 houses or 1000 houses? What will be the cost?

How many additional pieces of equipment are anticipated: fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, garbage trucks ... the list is long.

I have repeatedly heard of the Egypt Road Project and/or Blackwater Resorts. To our small City, this is not a subdivision. It is the adding of at least 2 additional wards to the city's existing 5 wards; an increase that will require much capital expenditure.

There is a finite amount of Growth Allocation available in this county. The rather large amount needed by this residential project may leave insufficient Growth Allocation available for future job-creating commercial and industrial projects. As with the nonexistent cost/revenue analysis, no analysis exists to tell us how much Growth Allocation should be saved for commercial and industrial purposes. We all read about proposed new residential developments, but not about new commercial or industrial projects to bring desperately needed new employment to Cambridge. Does this signal Cambridge becoming a bedroom/retirement community?

The existing Comprehensive Plan does not support growth in this location as stated in the City of Cambridge Planning and Zoning Staff Report prepared for the meeting on October 13, 2005.

The Council has just, this day, received the City Planning and Zoning Commission Finding of Fact for the Growth Allocation.

Therefore, the City Council does not have sufficient facts to make a knowledgeable decision in the immediate future.

The Request For Proposal for drafting of a new Comprehensive Plan is expected to be posted in March. The Association has requested a cost/revenue analysis for development in general to be a component.

I, on behalf of the 400 members of the West End Citizens Association respectfully request that the Council, entrusted with the duty of fiscal management, do not proceed with a decision on the Growth Allocation until additional facts are gathered and reviewed as to the economic impact to the community, specifically the existing property owners, by this development.

Sincerely,

Jane Devlin
President



WECA Membership
P.O. Box 13 Cambridge, MD 21613
www.cambridgemd.org

Family - \$12.00

Individual - \$6.00

Name(s) 1. _____

2. _____

Address _____

Telephone # _____ Email Address _____

Amount Paid _____ Date Paid _____



WEST END CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

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Email: weca@cambridgemd.org

Web Site: www.cambridgemd.org

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IMPORTANT!

*Next WECA Meeting - Tuesday
February 21st*

***YOUR
MEMEBERSHIP RENEWAL
FORM IS ENCLOSED
Please Renew Today***

Our Annual Membership Drive will begin this April. Beat the rush and renew today!

Material from this newsletter may not be reprinted or reproduced without written permission from the West End Citizens Association, Inc.
Direct Inquiries to Editor.

A Home for WECA

The Association has recently entered into a lease agreement with the Dorchester County Public Library Board of Directors for the Wallace Office Building at 301 Gay Street. A great deal of work must be done to make the familiar building next to the library useable. The intent is to restore the structure dating from 1852 and use it for community activities as well as the headquarters for the organization.

We are expecting this project to bring the efforts of many people together as we work to preserve a valuable part of the city's history and architecture. The task will take a few years and much work.

Individuals or organizations that wish to contribute to the restoration effort and associated costs should contact Jane Devlin at 410-221-6082. WECA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization; therefore, your donation is deductible to the full extent allowable by law.

