



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item # 15
2/07/08

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Gwen Wright, Chief *GW*
Countywide Planning Division
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Environmental Planning
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Environmental Planning, Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: Roundtable Discussion: Briefing on the Water Resources Functional
Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION: Information and Discussion

Statutory Basis and Scope

The Water Resources Element requirement was signed into law on May 2, 2006 as part of State HB 1141.

As mandated in HB 1141, all Maryland counties and municipalities that exercise planning and zoning authority must prepare and adopt a water resources element in their comprehensive plans by October 2009, or October 2010 with extensions.

To meet this State Law, a Water Resources Functional Master Plan (WRFMP) will be developed that will amend the General Plan and serve as a framework for master and sector plans. The plan will address how expected growth will affect and be affected by local water-related limiting factors such as water supply, wastewater, storm water, non-point source pollution, and maintaining water quality standards in receiving water bodies.

This plan will help the County identify methods and strategies to address these limitations to avoid building moratoriums, public health hazards, and adverse environmental impacts. Phasing of growth in master plans or changes in methods may be necessary to address deficiencies if planned growth is limited by water supply, wastewater, or water quality considerations.

Plan Purpose

The WRFMP will address the relationship of planned growth to the area's water resources. The required water resources element is designed to address both the water we take from the natural systems (surface and groundwater) and the materials we discharge to the waters (including stormwater and treated sewage). The creation of a WRFMP will assure that the comprehensive plan fully integrates water resources issues and potential solutions into its overall planning mission.

The WRFMP will show how water supplies, wastewater effluents, and stormwater runoff will be managed to support planned growth provided that existing and future water resources (and any limitations on those resources) are identified through this process. The limitations will include source water supply issues and the wastewater discharge assimilative capacity thresholds of the watersheds. Identifying these limitations (or opportunities) early in the planning process will ensure that comprehensive plans are realistic and environmentally sustainable. The WRFMP will be instrumental in providing a sound foundation to implement Smart Growth throughout the state.

The purposes of the Water Resources Functional Master Plan are:

- To ensure a safe and ample supply of drinking water from both surface and groundwater sources, and adequate treatment of wastewater.
- Minimize the nutrient loading impacts to our groundwater, streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay from the uses we employ on our land.
- To improve data collection and promote the latest watershed planning processes towards the balance of sustainable growth and preservation of the Chesapeake Bay.
- To provide water resources data that can be interpreted to establish growth area boundaries, land-use recommendations, and preservation/conservation areas.

The water resources element of the comprehensive plan should answer the following questions for a county or municipality:

- Is there adequate water supply to meet current and future needs?
- Is there adequate wastewater treatment and on-site sewage disposal capacity to meet current and future needs?

- How will growth management and future land use affect water quality, and the ability of the County to maintain water quality standards?
- How will the land use planning and management process be used as an effective non-point pollution source management tool?
- How will stormwater management practices from existing and future development protect water quality?
- What impacts will meeting these needs have on land use and growth boundaries?
- Do we have sufficient water resources information that can be interpreted to establish growth area boundaries, land-use recommendations, and preservation/conservation areas?

Benefits to the County

The WRFMP will benefit the County by:

- Defining an explicit link between land use recommendations and water quality and water and sewer capacity in the General Plan. This functional master plan will amend the General Plan.
- Establishing environmental policy choices for the Planning Board and implement environmental objectives and strategies of the 1993 General Plan Refinement
- Providing a comprehensive watershed based approach for reviewing planning decisions, and providing guidance to county agencies on policies, priorities, and strategies to achieve and maintain water quality standards and water supply and sewerage capacity.

Planning Process

The common goals for Maryland's water resources are reflected in the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategies, federal and state regulatory programs, and smart growth policies. Most of the planning for the WRE will be on a watershed basis.

Due to the inherent physical and geographic nature of watersheds that cross political boundaries, it is imperative that the water resources element be developed with inter-jurisdictional coordination with a watershed focus. This is true for both counties and municipalities.

Tributary Teams, regional councils of government and watershed-based organizations can assist local governments with this coordination.

Once the current information is established, the status of water supplies and of receiving streams in a jurisdiction should be identified in the context of the local land use plan element of the comprehensive plan as well as any other predictors of growth. Specifically, the WRE should outline the adequacy of water and wastewater resources with respect to future growth. The WRE should act as an early warning system to determine if water resources will be adequate to support growth in a jurisdiction.

Relationship to other Plans

Area and Sector Master Plans

The Water Resources Functional Master Plan will provide an umbrella for area and sector master plans. The policies and recommendations of the WRFMP will guide revisions and amendments to these more local master plans.

Other Functional Master Plans and Policies

The Water Resources Functional Master Plan will complement other key functional master plans and policies, which will work together to fulfill the vision, goals, and strategies of the General Plan.

Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan

The Green Infrastructure Plan will provide a long-term goal for linking and expanding the size of important natural areas in the County. The Water Resources Plan will consider all existing and projected land uses as they relate to maintaining water quality standards. Consequently, the Water Resources Plan will be able to help refine the prioritization of the large-scale green infrastructure enhancement goals.

Environment and Energy Policy Framework

The countywide assessments provided by the Water Resources Plan and the Green Infrastructure Plan will provide key input to support and inform the Environment and Energy Policy Framework's recommendations and policies regarding the relationships between the environment and economic and social needs, air quality, climate change, public health, and the greening of our urban areas.

10-Year Water and Sewerage Plan

HB 1141 does not explicitly address the relationship of the WRE to County Water and Sewerage Plans (CWSP). However, the County Water and Sewerage Plan statute does require the CWSP to be consistent with local general plans. Because of this consistency requirement, and because it is clear that these two local plans must be closely connected, it is critical that the WRE be drafted in a manner that is coordinated with the County Water and Sewerage Plans.

The technical requirements and information necessary to prepare the WRE substantially overlap with those required to prepare a County Water and Sewerage Plan. The commonality between these plans stems from the reality that both must operate within the context of water resources regulations and the physical capabilities and limitations of water resources. The differences are related to policy and content. The general plan sets out the broad land use and development policies for the jurisdiction, whereas, the County Water and Sewerage Plan must follow and help to implement, not make, local land use policy. The County Water and Sewerage Plan will contain more technical data and analysis than the general plan and it lays out the capital programs for water and sewerage facilities that are necessary to fulfill the general plan.

The local comprehensive plan, including the WRE, and the County Water and Sewerage Plan should address and define this relationship in a manner that clearly fulfills the mandates and processes associated with each planning requirement.

The County Water and Sewerage Plan is a key plan that supports the implementation of both county and municipal comprehensive plans. The fact that the County Water and Sewerage Plan must address all systems (e.g., county, municipal, private) underscores the need for very close inter-jurisdictional coordination for these combined planning processes to be effective.

Next Steps

We are working with an interagency committee to identify the information available to complete the plan, and have begun drafting sections of the plan that are based on currently adopted policy documents. In addition, this group is determining the nature of additional work needed to complete the plan, and a plan of action to complete that work.

We anticipate bringing a Purpose and Outreach Strategy to the Planning Board in May of this year. We will continue to brief the Planning Board at critical stages in the plan and before preparing a public hearing draft in late 2009. See attachment 1 for a more detailed schedule of milestones. Attachment 2 and 3 are the Planning Board approved Program Element and Schedule Chart, respectively.

DRAFT
Water Resources Functional Master Plan
 Plan Preparation Timeline and Milestones

Preliminary Target Date
 (Based on 10/01/10
 Completion)

Milestone/Event

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Sep/Oct, 2007 | Preliminary evaluation of State WRE Guidelines Draft Work Plan/Timeline and Milestones |
| Oct/Dec, 2007 | Begin meetings with stakeholder agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine which State requirements can be fulfilled with current plans, and where additional work is needed - Begin developing tasks to satisfy HB 1141, and who will complete them - Begin collecting the data necessary to prepare the plan Organize Interagency Plan Workgroup - Meet to discuss State WRE Guidance and Draft Work Plan - Identify roles and assign resources - Begin regular meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss State WRE Guidance and Draft Work Plan - Identify preliminary work items that can be started - Assign, schedule and begin preliminary work items |
| Dec 07/Mar, 08 | Continued Interagency Team Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss Draft WR Plan Approach and Methodology - Identify key elements of existing programs and plans - Formulate strategies to link key programs and plans within a functional master plan - Identify programmatic and policy gaps - Formulate gap-closing strategies - Draft Plan Approach and Methodology |
| Mar /May, 2008 | Prepare a Purpose and Outreach type document, covering goals, concepts, guidelines & public participation process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarize background information - Identify WR issues, needs, purpose, etc. - Identify items for the plan to address - Prepare outreach strategy - Write Draft Purpose and Outreach document - Present to Planning Board |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Apr, 2008 | <p>Begin meetings with Municipalities and adjoining Counties, especially those sharing watersheds with Montgomery County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinate WRE efforts and strategies |
| April/June, 2008 | <p>Continued Interagency Workgroup Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin development of programmatic and plan linkages - Begin development of gap-closing policies |
| Apr/Dec, 2008 | <p>Organization of and meetings with Public Stakeholders Focus Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify Public Focus Groups - Identify stakeholders - Schedule Focus Group Meetings and invite stakeholders - Hold Focus Group Meetings and solicit feedback - Continue interagency and interjurisdictional coordination on linkages, modeling, and mapping analyses (ground water, surface water, septic systems, water supply, wastewater, stormwater management, watershed, etc.) |
| Jun-Aug, 2008 | <p>Continue interagency and interjurisdictional coordination on programmatic and policy linkages and gap-closing, modeling, and mapping analyses (ground water, surface water, septic systems, water supply, wastewater, stormwater management, watershed, etc.)</p> |
| Dec,2008 | <p>Preparation of Focus Group input summary</p> |
| March, 2009 | <p>Public Meeting to present Draft Plan recommendations</p> |
| August, 2009 | <p>Request 6-month extension from MDP</p> |
| Sept, 2009 | <p>Present Staff Draft Plan to Planning Board/Authorization to print and distribute for comment</p> |
| Sept 09-Jan 10 | <p>Public Hearing Draft</p> |
| Oct 09-Feb 10 | <p>Planning Board Public Hearing and Work Sessions</p> |
| Nov-Dec 09 | <p>Request 6-month extension from MDP</p> |
| Feb 2010 | <p>Planning Board Draft Water Resources Plan to Executive and County Council</p> |
| Feb 10-Sept 10 | <p>County Executive Review County Council Review Public Hearing Work Sessions Approval (Sept 2010) and Adoption (Oct. 1, 2010)</p> |

COUNTYWIDE WATER RESOURCES FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN

DESCRIPTION/SCOPE

The Water Resources Element (WRE) of HB 1141 requires the county to amend its General Plan to address water resources related planning issues. M-NCPPC will be the lead agency in coordinating and developing a Water Resources Functional Master Plan (WRFMP) that will amend the General Plan and serve as a framework for master and sector plans. The plan will address how expected growth will affect and be affected by local water-related limiting factors such as water supply, wastewater, storm water, non-point source pollution, and water quality of receiving streams. This plan will help the county identify methods and strategies to address these limitations to avoid building moratoriums, public health hazards, and adverse environmental impacts. Phasing of growth in master plans or changes in methods may be necessary to address deficiencies if planned growth is limited by water supply, wastewater, and water quality considerations.

Realizing the goal of achieving and maintain water quality standards, along with planned growth in the County, will require a comprehensive approach that will utilize a variety of planning, stormwater and watershed management tools. Recommendations for this plan will be coordinated with both the Green Infrastructure Master Plan and the Environment and Energy Conservation Policy Framework.

Note: The schedule for this plan is slipping because of delays by the state in providing guidance on developing the water resources plans. The state is working out details of the requirements. When the state's standards are final, it may be necessary to adjust the schedule and resources allocated to the project.

Lead Division: Countywide Planning

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

- Define an explicit link between land use recommendations and water quality and water and sewer capacity in the General Plan. This functional master plan will amend the General Plan.
- Establish environmental policy choices for the Planning Board and implement environmental objectives and strategies of the 1993 General Plan Refinement
- Provide a comprehensive watershed based approach for reviewing planning decisions, and provide guidance to county agencies on policies, priorities, and strategies to achieve and maintain water quality standards and water supply and sewer capacity.

SPECIFIC TASKS/PRODUCTS FOR FY09

- Provide technical analysis and recommendation for the Board and Council during alternative analysis and selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative and development of a Purple Line Functional Master Plan.
- Provide a Staff Draft and Final Draft of a Purple Line FMP to the Planning Board and then County Council. Timing for delivery of a Final Draft Plan is contingent upon the Staff Draft and MDOT Locally Preferred Alternative being largely consistent with respect to alignment and mode. If the LPA is significantly different than Final Draft plan, additional work would be needed to resolve the differences.

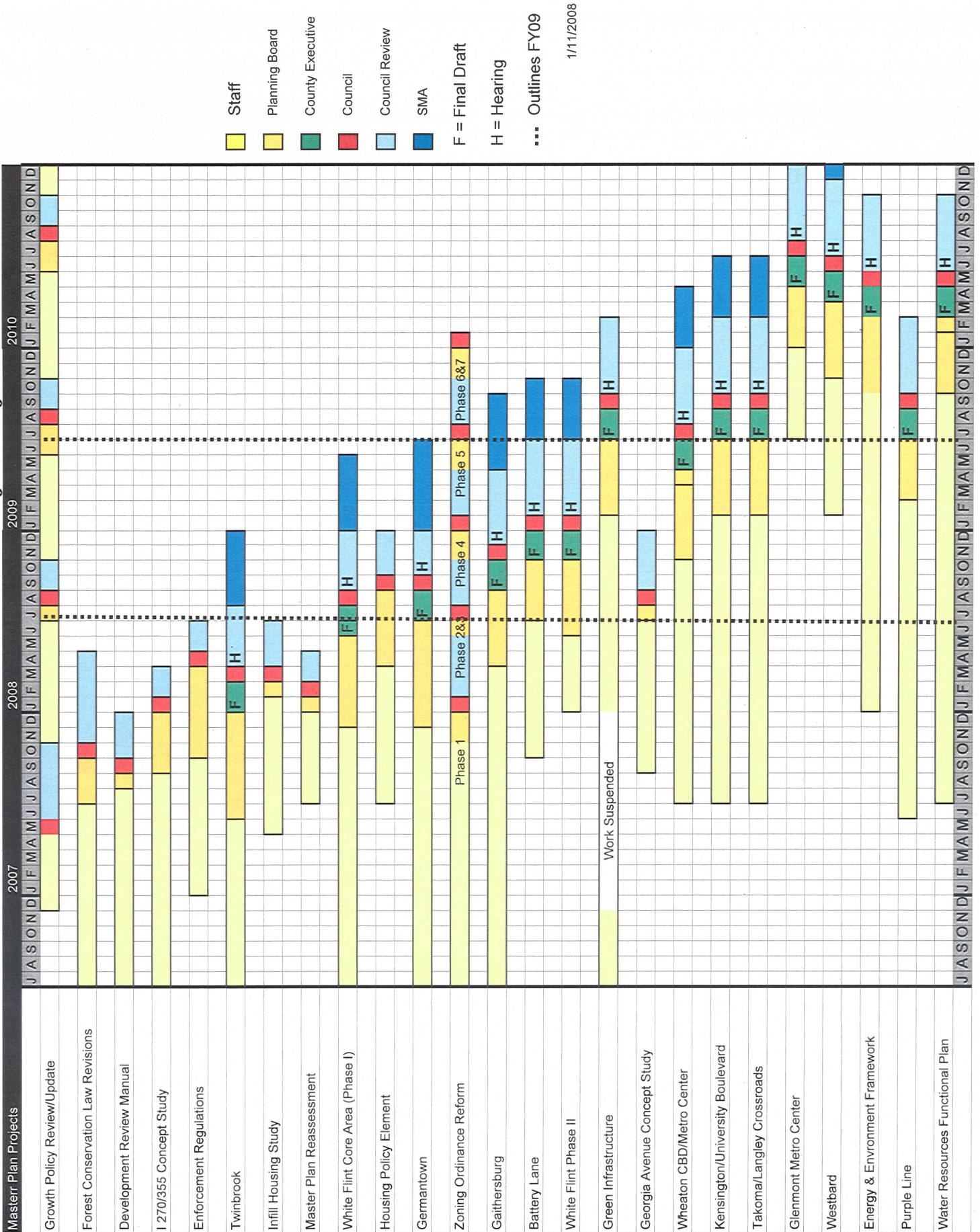
PERFORMANCE OUTPUTS AND BASELINE INDICATORS

- Locally preferred alternative contains Board priority elements

| Budgeted Resources | FY08 | | FY09 | |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
| | WY | \$ | WY | \$ |
| Personnel | 1.55 | \$144,430 | 1.65 | \$175,200 |
| Professional Services | | | | \$200,000 |
| Publications | | | | |
| Other Operating Expenses | | \$20,135 | | \$22,700 |
| Chargebacks | | | | |
| Total | | \$164,565 | | \$397,900 |

Revenue Source: Administration Fund

Schedule: Master Plans and Major Projects



1/11/2008