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Health Facilities &
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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

July 14, 2009

Carroll County Planning & Zoning Commission
225 North Court Street
Westminster, MD, 21157

Re: Pathways to Carroll's Landscape Draft Report

As representative of District 9B in the Maryland General Assembly and as a concerned citizen, I have been very interested in the draft Carroll County Comprehensive Plan. I appreciate the efforts that the Planning Commission has made to solicit citizen input prior to acting on this draft plan.

I have carefully reviewed the "*Pathways Plan*", attended the public meeting at Century High School, met with Planning Director Steve Horn, and fielded many questions regarding the plan from my constituents. I have also submitted detailed comments through the "*Pathways Feedback Form*" online.

In 2005, I attended a number of initial public work sessions leading up to the "blueprint" for future growth in Carroll County, known as the "*Pathways Plan*". This process became long and arduous and community interest waned after hours and hours of visioning meetings. Months turned into years and in May 2009, I became aware of the Draft Plan.

At first glance, the 175-page report was filled with citizen-generated visions of desired land uses in Carroll County. For the most part, the "*Visions*" and "*Intent & Guiding Principles*" outlined in the report are commendable. The devil lies in the details and specific action items, i.e. re-zonings and ordinance changes, outlined in the report.

The proposed re-zonings in Taylorsville, Woodbine and parts of Mt. Airy are contradictory to the "*Intent and Guiding Principles*" elaborated in the plan. Employment zones should be near existing towns with water, sewer and transportation.

Many questions have not been adequately addressed in the draft. How do the proposed employment zone re-zonings align with the "*Smart Growth*" principles referred to in the Pathways document? How does the draft align with the "*Water Resources Element*" report due to the State by Oct 1st? How does the proposed rezoning of Agricultural & Conversation land to Employment Campus Mixed Use align with the "*Priority Preservation Areas Element*"?

There is no discussion in the draft regarding the needed road improvements to support the impact of the proposed large employment zones. The narrow, winding Route 97 cannot support business traffic without major improvements. How many homes will be impacted to widen

Route 97? How will these needed road improvements be prioritized along with decades old projects currently requested, such as the widening of Route 32 and improvements on Route 26? The “*Transportation Network Element*” needs to be completed prior to adopting a plan.

How will the necessary infrastructure improvements be paid for? Many of the proposed infrastructure improvements listed in the “*2001 Comprehensive Master Plan*” have yet to be completed. Will the promise of new jobs outweigh the burden on existing taxpayers to fund the required infrastructure improvements?

There are no details in the plan to revitalize existing areas and expand in areas that have infrastructure existing or close by. I would like to see additional employment land identified in designated growth areas or adjacent to designated growth areas which include our municipalities. The county should work with the municipalities to identify these potential employment zones.

I am very concerned about the continued expansion of Mixed Use Development in the designated growth areas and the Mixed Use Overlay Zoning District. There are many questions that need to be answered before these uses are expanded. The proposed changes in residential densities in and outside of the designated growth areas are not transparent and very confusing to understand.

The “*Freedom Mini Plan*” should be an important component to this plan- the Freedom Plan is not scheduled to be updated for several years. The proposed amendment to the Freedom growth area boundary has no explanation associated to it and should be considered as part of the Freedom Mini Plan.

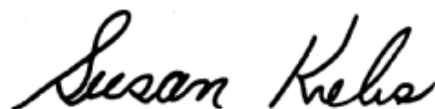
The most important issue that needs to be fully understood is the impact on personal property rights. How do the zoning changes impact the value of property owners’ land? How do the zoning changes impact current development projects that are in the pipeline?

I am confident that the Planning Commission will take all of the comments made by the citizens of Carroll County into consideration before acting on this draft. Given the importance of the Master Plan, I suggest that the timeline for approval be sufficient to allow for a full vetting of the very important issues that have been raised by the public.

The final document submitted to the Board of Carroll County Commissioners for approval must be a consistent, transparent and realistic blueprint for growth in Carroll County.

Thank you for your full attention to the input of the citizens of Carroll County on this very important document.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Krebs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Krebs
Delegate, District 9B