

Commissioners receive town center presentation

Posted by [TBN](#) On 08/28/2013

Perhaps it was the reaction of Calvert County Commissioners' President Pat Nutter [R] that best summarized the reception of a consultant's report on the Prince Frederick Town Center.

"It's a bit overwhelming to picture this over a short period of time," said Nutter. "I like it on paper."

Indeed, a fully built-out Prince Frederick Town Center is only the portfolio filled with the conceptual drawings of consultants right now. The consultants from The Lawrence Group, with the aid of the engineering firm Fuss and O'Neill and county government staff, conducted a week-long charrette in Prince Frederick back in June. The event provided local residents a chance to share their ideas on the town's future and the re-crafting of the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

In his presentation of his company's final report, Craig Lewis of The Lawrence Group reviewed a plan that could increase the county seat's population to 6,500 and accommodate 5,000 high quality jobs by the year 2049.

To accommodate the growth there could be as many as 440 town homes, 360 "mansion" apartments, 1,200 garden and loft apartments; 220 apartments over retail locations, as much as 1,135,000 square feet of office space; and 825,000 square feet of retail space within the town center.

The long-range plan could mandate the mixed-use housing that will be desired for aging baby boomers and spur economic development.

"The competition for jobs, retail dollars and housing is all around," The Lawrence Group's report states. "More than \$460 million in retail sales leaves the county each year. Sixty percent of the population leaves the county each day to work."

"This is an exciting opportunity," Lewis told the commissioners and other individuals who attended the presentation during the board's Tuesday, Aug. 27 meeting. Lewis continually emphasized that the long-range plan's aim was "creating a great place."

The components in the consultant's report adhere to the county's 1983 Comprehensive plan. That document called for the avoidance of scattered/strip commercial development on Route 2/4, expansion of housing choices, reduction of the dependence on vehicles and reduction of growth within agriculture and forest areas.

At least two segments that did not exist when the first Prince F

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