

Board of County Commissioner Work Sessions

- On January 15, the BCC held a work session to review commercial uses in the Freedom Planning Area (around Eldersburg). Work sessions are live streamed and recorded and can be accessed through the County's [Meeting Portal](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

Deferrals

- Commissioner Krebs is concerned that the County Code does not address the welfare of citizens in the Freedom area, with respect to provisions governing retirement villages and retirement homes, cluster subdivisions, planned commercial centers, qualified projects, and self-storage. The deferrals will allow the Planning and Zoning Commission to study the zoning code and suggest possible modifications to address these concerns.
- On November 6, the BCC considered a proposal to impose a series of deferrals on the submittal, acceptance, review, processing, application for, approval or decision of any pending site plan, zoning certificate, development plan or application for any of the following projects defined in Ch. 158 of the County Code for the area subject to the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan.
- On November 13, the BCC voted 3-2 to send the above mentioned to public hearing.
- A public hearing is scheduled for 6PM, on December 16, at the South Carroll Senior Center.
- Deferrals were discussed on December 18 in open session.
 - (1) Retirement villages and retirement homes (6 months) - **Dec. 18 decision: approve pass the modified draft ordinance to defer the approval of Retirement Villages and Retirement Homes in the Freedom Designated Growth Area.**
 - (2) Cluster subdivisions (6 months) - **Dec. 18 decision: approve pass the ordinance to defer the processing, review, and approval of Cluster Subdivisions in the Freedom Designated Growth Area but exempt any project that has been submitted for review by the County Development Review Division prior to December 1, 2025.**
 - (3) Planned commercial centers (8 months) - **Dec. 18 decision: approve pass the ordinance to defer the processing, review, and approval of Planned Commercial Centers in the Freedom Designated Growth Area.**
 - (4) Self-storage (3 months) - **Dec. 18 decision: approve pass the modified draft ordinance to defer the approval of Self-Service Storage Facilities in the Freedom Designated Growth Area pending final approval and direct staff to return on January 15, 2025, to review in a work session with the Board the commercial zones, specifically with regard to the uses and their bulk requirements.**

Text Amendments

- The Board of County Commissioners sent a zoning text amendment for the consolidation and relocation of nonconforming Use-Off-the-Premises Signs to the Planning & Zoning Commission for their review and recommendation. The text amendment was introduced to the PZC on October 1, discussed further on December 16, and is set for review and possible recommendation on January 20.

Master Plan update

- In upcoming meetings, the PZC will review Master Plan goals and consider recommendations from the Master Plan Work Group Reports on Housing, the Economy, and Agriculture, along with input gathered through public outreach. This effort is part of a broader process to review, update, and propose changes to the County Master Plan. There will be multiple opportunities for public feedback throughout this process, which is expected to continue through 2026.

Water Resources Element

- A [completed draft of the WRE](#) was sent to the State on November 12 for their review.
- The Planning & Land Management Department (PLM) will accept public comment on behalf of all nine Planning Commissions concurrent to the State review period. PLM staff will collect State and public comments, host a public information meeting, and facilitate a joint public hearing of all nine Planning Commissions. The relevant dates are as follows:
 - November 15, 2025 – begin open review period
 - January 14, 2026 – public information meeting (see [webpage](#) for details)
 - January 15, 2026 – 60-day review period closes
 - February 4, 2026 – Planning Commissions public hearing (see [webpage](#) for details)

Water & Sewer

- Fall 2025 Amendment includes Mount Airy, Taneytown, and Freedom. It was certified by the County PZC on November 18. Planning staff briefed the BCC on December 18, and a public hearing is January 29.

2025 Annual Report

Planning creates and submits to MDP, on behalf of the County and the eight municipalities, the 2025 Annual Report, per Maryland's Land Use Article. In December, municipal staff was sent a worksheet and certification letter template. We request the completed worksheet and planning commission signed certification letter be returned to the County no later than March 13, 2026.

Zoning Code Review and Revision

The Department of Planning & Land Management is seeking consultant support to perform two specific tasks:

- Review and evaluate the relationship between adopted master plans and the County's current zoning and site development regulations.
- Provide expert recommendations for code revisions that will ensure consistency with the County's adopted plans.

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