

The Big Picture



*A quarterly newsletter presented by the Hagerstown Planning Department
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Planning Department Welcomes New Planner Alex Rohrbaugh

The only thing that is constant is change. Faces have been changing in the Planning Department, and one of those new faces belongs to Alex Rohrbaugh.

Alex started with the City as a Planner I on August 27. He comes on board to take the place of former staffer Melissa Hynes, who moved on to the City of Westminster.

A graduate of Chambersburg Area High School, Alex attended and graduated from Shippensburg State University with a degree in geography and planning. While at “Ship”, Alex earned the school’s “Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)”. GIS is a computer mapping and data management system which is becoming a cornerstone in most planning offices. We consider ourselves fortunate to have Alex on our staff, with the important skill set he brings to his position

His duties will include helping the zoning administrator with plan review, staffing the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Hagerstown Beautification Advisory Committee and assisting the comprehensive planner with long range planning and special projects. Also, with his training in GIS, the Department looks forward to his becoming the GIS guru for us, providing the professional quality data management and mapping that we desire.



Alex also comes with the practical experience of having served two internships with engineering firms in Pennsylvania, performing the same type of plan review on subcontract to township governments as he will be doing for us. This kind of practical experience is rare for a new employee fresh out of college!

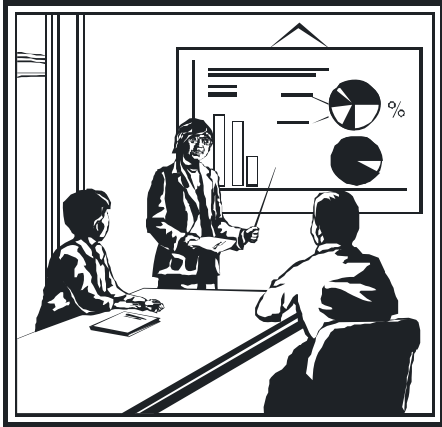
A self described “map geek”, Alex also counts an interest in commercial aviation and hiking among his hobbies and interests. Alex lives in Greene Township in Franklin County.

Welcome Alex!

Hagerstown Planning Department, City Hall, Room 400, 1 East Franklin Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740
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Comprehensive Plan Draft Working Through Hearing Process

After a 60-day review period concluded recently, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan. The hearing was lightly attended, and six persons testified at the hearing, mostly about the treatment of environmental issues within the plan and regarding the proposed land use designations on several parcels.



The Commission met to discuss the comments received by the Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust and other

agencies, as well as comments provided by local agencies and private citizens. The Commission has forwarded comments for changes and corrections to our consultant, ERM. We anticipate the Planning Commission will forward the draft to the Mayor and Council in late September.

The new Comprehensive Plan will be different from the current Plan in that its primary focus will be on growth management and the revitalization and development of underperforming areas of the City. The Plan will also include a water and sewer element for the first time which is intended to be the Plan for the City's water and sewer utilities.

Folks with questions about the Comprehensive Plan should contact Stuart Bass, our Comprehensive Planner, at extension 137.

Beautification Advisory Committee

The newly formed Hagerstown Beautification Advisory Committee revived the Highlight Hagerstown beautification awards program this year. Nominations were invited for residential and commercial properties within the city and 14 were selected for recognition and awards.

On August 28, the Mayor and the Chairman of the HBAC presented the following awards for outstanding landscaping and architectural initiatives:

Residential - North End

1st Place - 236 Mealey Pkwy.
Runner Up - 215 East Irvin Ave.

Residential - East End

1st Place - 331 Radcliffe Ave.
Runner Up - 600 Observatory Dr.

Residential - South End

1st Place - 437 Summit Ave.
Runner Up - 449 Guilford Ave.

Residential - West End

1st Place - 1421 Salem Ave.
Runner Up - 1408 Salem Ave.

New Residential Development - City Wide:

1st Place - Cortland Villas
Runner Up - Gateway Crossing

Commercial Architectural Beautification:

1st Place - 28 South Potomac Street
Runner Up - 41 North Potomac Street

Commercial Landscaping Beautification:

1st Place - The Maryland Theater
Runner Up - Westview Business Center

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“Land Management Code” in Progress; Combines Multiple Ordinances into a Single Document

In the last issue of “The Big Picture” the Planning Department’s efforts to reorganize four of its land development and use ordinances into one new “Land Management Code” was profiled. The concept of a single, unified “Land Management Code” is the current state of land management regulations, and many jurisdictions are moving to this format. The new format will be more “user friendly”.

A draft was presented to the Planning Commission in July, and they will be conducting a workshop meeting in September to review the proposed reorganization, and some select new content amendments.

Once this revised structure is adopted and the Comprehensive Plan is adopted later this year, this new “Code” and its easier to use format will be used to more effectively and efficiently review and revise existing regulations to implement the policies of the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The second phase dealing with new content will begin in early 2008, and will roughly parallel a separate initiative to review and implement zoning map amendments also needed to implement the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



Owners of Six Tracts of Land On Broadfording Road Apply for Annexation

A small pocket of six residential properties located to the north of the new Uniwest shopping center on Garland Groh Boulevard was recently purchased by two corporate entities. In order to obtain city water service, the owners have applied to annex the land into the City. The application seeks to assign a C-2 (Commercial General) zoning classification to these properties, which is consistent with the zoning of the adjacent shopping center, and an unimproved tract to the north along Salem Avenue. There are no specific plans for development of these parcels available at this time.

Adding these commercial properties to the City will expand the City’s tax base, and is an excellent example of the value of the City’s Annexation Policy which requires applicants outside of City limits to apply for annexation in order to receive certain City utilities. Also, since these properties are surrounded on three sides by the corporate limits of the City, annexing these properties will clean up a section of the zoning and city boundaries maps which are irregular in this area.

Housing Development On Track for Completion and Getting Under Way

With the recent housing boom in the City, a number of multi-year projects are nearing completion, while others are just beginning to go to construction.

At this time there are approximately 2,294 lots or units in the development pipeline in various stages of completion.

For those interested in where the housing development will be occurring in the City over the next few years, we provide data on this issue on

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Hagerstown Residential Development Projects

Development	Units Remaining w/ Final Plats or Site Plans	Units Under Construction	Vacant Units	Units Not Built	Units Without Final Plat
Hager's Crossing	S.1B - 15 TWN S.2 - 35 SFR S.3 - 240 APT Condos TOTAL - 290	S.1B - 9 TWN S.2 - 2 SFR TOTAL - 11	S.2 - 8 SFR	S.1B - 6 TWN S.2 - 25 SFR S.3 - 240 APT Condos TOTAL - 271	S.2 - 233 SFR
Cortland	S.1 - 34 TWN S.2 - 32 DUP S.3 - 360 APT TOTAL - 426	S.1 - 12 TWN S.3 - 144 APT TOTAL - 156	S.1 - 16 TWN S.2 - 10 DUP TOTAL - 26	S.1 - 6 TWN S.2 - 22 DUP S.3 - 216 APT TOTAL - 244	0
Collegiate Acres	S.1A - 3 SFR, 22 TWN S.1B - 42 SFR, 46 TWN S.2A - 75 TWN TOTAL - 188	S.1B - 2 SFR, 11 TWN S.2A - 18 TOTAL - 31	S.1B - 1 SFR, 1 TWN TOTAL - 2	S.1A - 3 SFR, 22 TWN S.1B - 39 SFR, 34 TWN S.2A - 57 TWN TOTAL - 155	S.1C - 41 SFR S.1D - 72 TWN S.3 - APFO S.4 - APFO TOTAL - 113
Cleveland Commons	14 TWN, 2 DUP TOTAL - 16	0	14 TWN, 2 DUP TOTAL - 16	0	0
Kensington Villas	42 DUP	8 DUP	-	34 DUP	0
Fairchild Heights	16 TWN	0	6 TWN	10 TWN	0
Hillside Manor	69 SFR	5 SFR	6 SFR	58 SFR	0
Greenwich Park	98 DUP	0	6 DUP	92 DUP	0
Scarlet Hills	36 APT	0	-	36 APT	0
Deerfield Knolls (35 units per year)	83 TWN	0	-	83 TWN	0
Potomac Manor, Sec. H	44 SFR & DUP	2 SFR	1 SFR	41 SFR & DUP	0
Old Trail Estates	13 SFR	5 SFR	-	8 SFR	0
Potomac Square	47 TWN condos	0	-	47 TWN	0
Linwood Hollow	35 TWN	0	-	35 TWN	169 TWN
New Haven (25 units per year in Annexation Agreement)	0	0	-	0	376 SFR, DUP, TWN, APT

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TOTALS	1,403	218	71	1,114	891
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Site survey made on July 26, 2007
Hagerstown Planning Department, July 27, 2007

SFR - Single Family Residence

DUP - Duplexes

TWN - Townhouses (fee simple lot ownership and condominium)

APT - Multi-Family Dwellings (condo and apartment)

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