

Builders for the Bay



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Environmentally-Sensitive Site Design Recommendations released by Baltimore County Roundtable

ELLCOTT CITY, MD– Communities in Baltimore County will now have guidance for protecting their region’s natural resources as they continue to develop. Representatives from Baltimore County, local development community, environmental groups, community associations and local utilities recently released the *Recommended Model Development Principles for Baltimore County, Maryland*. This guidance document is the result of a year’s worth of work by planning groups to revise local development regulations and promote sustainable development.

Starting in June 2005, 60 roundtable members reviewed a series of recommended changes in development codes and zoning regulations that addressed issues such as redevelopment, parking lot usage, and open space management. The Roundtable provided the expertise needed to recommend changes to Baltimore County’s codes, policies and processes with an eye to promoting more environmentally-sensitive and economically viable development. At the final meeting held June 15, 2006, County Executive Jim Smith asserted that “we are committed to moving ahead with these consensus recommendations that emphasize environmental benefits, while promoting common-sense measures that address issues faced by homeowners and builders.”

The *Recommended Model Development Principles for Baltimore County, Maryland* is the result of the latest in a series of roundtable efforts called *Builders for the Bay*. Established in 2001 by the Center for Watershed Protection, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, and the National Association of Home Builders, *Builders for the Bay* roundtables are designed to promote sound land use development throughout the Bay watershed. The recommended code changes are based on the Better Site Design Principles developed at a National Site Planning Roundtable by the Center for Watershed Protection in 1996. Other roundtables have been held in James City County, VA; the Lancaster, PA area; and five other localities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. For the Baltimore County roundtable, Baltimore County Government joined on as a full partner and has incorporated the roundtable process into the County’s larger Green Renaissance Initiative.

In some instances, the process of creating such a guidance document can net additional benefits. In Baltimore County’s case, Center for Watershed Protection’s Rebecca Winer-Skonovd says, “the process has been just as important as the outcome.” She feels that the

roundtable “resulted not only in fostering environmentally-sensitive site design, but has connected people and created relationships between members of government, private industry, and community groups that may have not otherwise had the opportunity to work together to discuss changes that will benefit Baltimore County.” The Center for Watershed Protection provided technical support and facilitated group-wide and subcommittee meetings, with assistance from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

The Baltimore County Roundtable was made possible by the generous support of the Abell Foundation, Baltimore County, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Constellation Energy, EPA Chesapeake Bay Program, National Association of Home Builders, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Rauch Foundation.

Recommended Model Development Principles for Baltimore County, Maryland can be downloaded at <http://www.cwp.org/BaltimoreCoBFBDocument.pdf>. Copies of the document can also be obtained by contacting the Center for Watershed Protection, 8390 Main Street, 2nd floor, Ellicott City, Maryland 21043, phone (410) 461-8323, fax (410) 410-461-8324, email center@cwp.org, www.cwp.org.

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