

KERNSTOWN AREA PLAN

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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COMPREHENSIVE PLANS AND PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

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KERNSTOWN AREA PLAN

The Kernstown Area Plan looks to update, renew, and expand the land use and transportation plans for the Kernstown area. The study area is generally located along Route 11, south of the City of Winchester and north of the Town of Stephens City, and west of I-81. The Kernstown Area Plan builds on the Route 11 South Corridor Plan, and the balance of the Southern Frederick Plan which was adopted in 1998, by incorporating the western portion of this plan into the Kernstown Area Plan.

The goal of the plan is to bring the areas within the study boundary into a cohesive and proactive area plan. The Kernstown Area Plan continues to identify opportunities to create new communities, integrate land use and transportation choices, address community infrastructure needs, and expand the County's goals for economic development.

A series of maps have been prepared which identify Future Land Use, Transportation, and Natural, Historical, and Community Facilities within the study area.

In this 2015 update, several changed or enhanced areas of land use focus were envisioned; the Shady Elm Road area continues its economic development emphasis, the Route 11 corridor seeks to capitalize on Interstate Commercial opportunities, the industrial land uses north of Route 37 and east of Route 11 are reinforced, and the Bartonsville and Kernstown historical and cultural areas have been identified with the Developmentally Sensitive Area (DSA) designation.

The Kernstown Area Plan in the vicinity of Route 37 and Interstate 81 feeds directly into the Senseny/Eastern Frederick Urban Area Plan with the Crosspointe Development. Interstate 81 improvements scheduled to commence in 2015 in this location further supports this area plan. Route 11, Valley Pike, links the Kernstown Area Plan with the City of Winchester to the north and the Town of Stephens City to the south.

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The Kernstown Area Plan promotes a new area of new land use focus; the Kernstown Neighborhood Village in the Creekside area, along the west side of Route 11. This area is within the Urban Development Area and seeks to incorporate the new residential communities with new infill residential and commercial opportunities.

An overview to planning in Frederick County.

Planning efforts, such as the Kernstown Area Plan, enable the community to anticipate and deal constructively with changes occurring in the community. Planning helps guide the future growth of the community and is intended to improve the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare of its citizens.

The Plan provides a guide for future land use and was a collaborative effort of the citizens of Frederick County, County Planning Staff, Planning Commissioners, and Board of Supervisors. However, it is the property owners who are the ones who make the decision as to whether or not to implement the Plan as it applies to their property.

Future rezoning is a means of implementing the Plan. Rezonings in Frederick County have historically been initiated by the property owner, or with their consent. There is no reason to expect that this will change in the future.

Therefore, it is important to remember that the Plan is a guide for the future of the community, but that the property owner is ultimately the one who controls the future use of their property.

Land Use.

The goal of this area plan is to integrate the commercial and industrial (C/I) opportunities and the areas of mixed use with future transportation plans and to recognize the historical and natural resources abundant in this area plan.

Shady Elm Economic Development Area

The Shady Elm Economic Development Area is designed to be a significant area of industrial and commercial opportunity that is fully supportive of the County Economic Development Authorities targeted goals and strategies. The intent of the industrial designation is to further enhance the County's commercial and industrial areas and to provide focus to the County's future regional employment centers. In specific areas a mix of flexible uses, with office uses in prominent locations is encouraged. Such areas are supported by substantial areas of industrial and commercial opportunity, and provide for areas that are well designed with high quality architecture and site design. It is the intent of such areas to promote a strong positive community image. Residential land uses are not permitted.

Kernstown Interstate Commercial @ 310

Located at a highly visible location on a prominent interstate interchange, this area of land use both north and south of Route 37 along Route 11, is designed specifically to accommodate and promote highway commercial land uses and commercial uses that continue to promote this area as a regional commercial center.

Particular effort must be made to ensure that access management for the supporting transportation network is a key priority as the function of the interstate and primary road network is of paramount importance. Access to the areas of interstate commercial land uses shall be carefully designed. Access Management is a priority along the Route 11 corridor.

The building and site layout and design of the projects shall be of a high quality. In addition, an enhanced buffer and landscaping area shall be provided adjacent to the Interstate 81 right-of-way, its ramps,

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and along the main arterial road, Route 11, the Valley Pike. A significant corridor appearance buffer is proposed along Route 11 similar to that established for Route 50 West corridor in the Round Hill Land Use Plan which consisted of a 50' buffer area, landscaping, and bike path. The recently developed Kernstown Commons provides an excellent example of an enhanced buffer and landscaping area along Route 11 that also includes a multipurpose trail that serves the area.

Kernstown Creekside Neighborhood Village

Kernstown Creekside Neighborhood Village serves as a focal point to the Kernstown Area and as a gateway feature for this important County location. In addition, the Kernstown Creekside area serves as a gateway into the City of Winchester, and on a broader scale, a gateway feature for this portion of Frederick County as citizens and visitors approach this portion the County from the south. This neighborhood village should promote a strong positive community image. Residential land uses would be permitted only as an accessory component of the neighborhood village commercial land uses.

Defined Rural Areas

The Kernstown Area Plan has sought to further define the boundary between the Rural and Urban Areas of the community. As noted, the above areas of proposed land use combine to frame the western boundary of the County's urban areas. In addition, the rural areas to the west of Shady Elm Road south of the industrial areas further define the County's urban area in this location. The plan provides enhanced recognition of the rural residential land uses, Hedgebrook Farm, and the agricultural areas adjacent to Middle Road. This recognition and the location and boundaries of the proposed land uses further promote a clean separation between the County's rural and urban areas.

Kernstown and Bartonsville Developmentally Sensitive Areas (DSA's)

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Valley Pike Trail

For the Kernstown Area Plan, it is recommended that a new multi-purpose path be constructed along the length of Valley Pike through the study area connecting areas of land use, in particular those resources identified as DSA's, and providing connections with the City of Winchester and the Town of Stephens City. This pathway should be consistent with that of the path that exists in several locations along the road today. Such a recreational resource would provide an excellent example for other opportunities in the County.

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Residential Development

The only area of urban residential development is located within the Urban Development Area in the location identified as the Kernstown Creekside Neighborhood Village. In recent years, the Woodbrook Village and Cross Creek Village communities have added value to this area. Currently under development is the Doonbeg community which sits adjacent to the existing Plainfield Heights neighborhood. New residential uses should complement the existing residential uses, should be generally of a higher residential density and should include a neighborhood commercial component as described in the Kernstown Creekside Neighborhood Village Land Use.

In this area, slightly higher residential densities that may fall within the 6-12 units per acre range are envisioned (this is generally attached house and may also include multifamily and a mix of other housing types).

These densities are necessary to accommodate the anticipated growth of the County within the urban areas and are consistent with established patterns within the study area and the densities needed to support the future residential land uses envisioned in the Plan.

The residential land uses west of Shady Elm Road within the study area are envisioned to remain rural area residential in character. Shady Elm Road south may generally be considered as the boundary between the urban areas and rural areas within the western part of this study area. This provides a transition area to the Opequon Creek and to the well-established rural character of the Middle Road and Springdale Road area.

Business Development

The business development section of the plan seeks to identify items that would be complementary to the Urban Areas and Residential Development, Transportation and Natural Resources, Historic Resources and Public Facilities portion of the plan.

The business development recommendations are also intended to implement the 2030 Comprehensive Plan by promoting the efficient utilization of existing and planned land areas and transportation networks. Further, the recommendations promote commercial, industrial, and employment land use areas to assure the County's desired taxable value ratio of 25 percent commercial/industrial to 75 percent residential and other land use is achieved.

The Plan provides for new industrial park and employment center areas to match the Economic Development Authorities vision for this portion of Frederick County.

The Plan identifies a prime area for industrial land uses, the Shady Elm Economic Development Area, to capitalize on future industrial and commercial employment opportunities. Regional Commercial development opportunities are reinforced in the Kernstown Interstate commercial area. In addition, an area is identified for neighborhood village commercial use, including retail, to accommodate existing residential communities and to build upon the successful Creekside commercial project.

The improvements to the Exit 310 Interchange on interstate 81 at Route 37 provides a significant commercial opportunity that the Plan seeks to take advantage of by identifying the Kernstown Interstate Commercial @ 310 area of land use.

The business development recommendations identified desirable business types to draw to the area. Including, but not limited to;

- Light Industrial/High Tech targeted businesses.
- Lodging / Event / Dining along the Route 11 corridor and at the interstate.
- Fast-Casual Dining (e.g. Panera, Chipotle)

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- Higher-end dining (Chain and Local businesses) as well as casual Pub's and Cafes.
- Premium Grocery & Retail.

The business development group also provided the following general comments:

1. All areas should be designed to promote/support pedestrian and bike access, making this a walkable environment. In particular in the Kernstown Creekside Neighborhood Village which should be a highly walkable community. This will decrease reliance on cars and enable residents to more readily access business and employment centers.
 - a. To expand the pedestrian & bike access the undeveloped land identified with the DSA's. These areas of cultural, natural, and recreational resources should include walking/biking trails.
2. Promote development of small parcels of land that already contain residential structures along transportation corridors for business purposes, examples of which may include doctors, dentist offices, and other professional offices. Promotion could be in the form of incentives or credits to offset the cost of site improvements and transportation improvements required by the site development.
3. Restaurants and community based businesses such as Dry Cleaners, Convenience Stores, and the like, should be located close to and easily accessible by car or by foot to the areas targeted as industrial, commercial and office uses. This could also be within the Neighborhood village commercial areas which are located within accessible distances from these areas.
4. The Kernstown area would be a natural fit for various outdoor events and festivals, especially associated with the Kernstown Battlefield Area DSA and once the road and walking path networks have been enhanced and more lodging and dining options are available. This type of business has a low impact on the environment and provides an external infusion of revenue.

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Specific Implementation Steps have been identified which would further promote business development opportunities in the Kernstown Area Plan and Frederick County in general. This is consistent with those identified in the Senseny/Eastern Frederick County Urban Area Plan and the Southern Frederick Area Plan. These include:

- The creation of a Future Land Use Revenue Incentive Program that provides property owners with the ability to sell residential density rights to keep their property available for future employment, commercial, or industrial land use as recommended by the Comprehensive Policy Plan. This program would incentivize the property owner by providing a revenue income source in the near term and future revenue income when the property is zoned for employment, commercial or industrial land use.
- Incentivize the property owner with automatic placement of the property into the Sewer and Water Service Area (SWSA) if a rezoning application is processed for future employment, commercial, or industrial land use.
- Incentivize the property owner with County endorsement of Economic Development Access (EDA) funds and/or Revenue Sharing Funds to assist in the financing of major road infrastructure needed to serve the development project. Additionally, provide for County-managed support of the major road infrastructure projects to streamline the approval process for project design and construction management.
- Incentivize the property owner through the implementation of expedited rezoning processes for future employment, commercial, or industrial land use as recommended by the Comprehensive Policy Plan.
- The County should support and partner with various athletic organizations to sponsor regional or state tournaments and events using existing facilities to promote tourism in support of existing hotels, restaurants, and attractions.

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