

**CITY OF LAUREL
MASTER PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES- MARCH 25, 2025**

The meeting convened in the Council Chambers of the Laurel Municipal Center at 6:05 P.M., with The Honorable Chairman G. Rick Wilson presiding. Committee Members Present: The Honorable Frederick Smalls, Mr. Garrett Jackson, Mr. Calvin Burns, Maria Gonzales-Jackson, Mr. Sophady Uong and Mr. Mark Plazinski, Deputy Chief of Laurel Police. Staff support in attendance from the Department of Economic & Community Development were Mr. Monta Burrough, Director, Mr. Sam Braden IV, Deputy Director, Ms. Taylor Harvey, Planner II and Ms. Brooke Quillen, Community Development Coordinator, serving as Secretary to the Master Plan Review Committee. Also in attendance, Ms. Christina Cornwell, Director/Emergency Manager of Community Resources and Emergency Management. There was approximately one (1) member of the public in attendance.

Mr. Smalls arrived at 6:10 p.m. and Mr. Burns arrived at 6:11 p.m.

The Committee, on motion by Mr. Smalls, seconded by Mr. Uong, and all members present, voted to approve the minutes from February 25, 2025 minutes as written.

The Committee shared their homework assignments, most members brought up locations that provided mixed use buildings, specialty stores, fine dining and community events. Some locations in discussion were the Merriweather District in Columbia, Maryland, which provides luxury apartments, shopping and live entertainment. Their layout connects surrounding neighborhoods to their downtown area. Another location mentioned was Frederick, Maryland. They have a vibrant Historic District, large park, local brewery/distillery, all which is pedestrian oriented. Additionally, they have live entertainment events and a winter boat show along Carroll creek.

Mr. Jackson arrived at the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Braden gave a presentation with the SWOT analysis results. For the **strengths**: increased diversity, Marc train, great location, small community feel, and the City has its own zoning authority. The **weaknesses**: community identity (what is Laurel known for), traffic management and affordable housing options. For **opportunities**: redevelopment of Main Street, attracting companies that offer bilingual workforce and re-branding of the City (such as art, music, culture and food). The **threats**: residents moving away due to federal job cuts, high property taxes and lack of entertainment.

Mr. Braden and explained the activity for this meeting, he stated the Committee will break into (3) three - (4) four groups and review our current zoning map with transparent paper, each group will have a different section of the zoning map. Committee members were also provided with the current use tables. They will mark their changes as they see fit, noting if the zoning should change and what they would like to see in the future. Once each group completed their task, they shared their results with staff

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Approved: *Brooke Quillen*

Date: 4/29/2025