



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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County Executive

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING
Livable Frederick Planning & Design Office

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Green Infrastructure Advisory Group Meeting #6 July 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes

I. Meeting Details

Meeting date and time: July 24, 2025, at 2:00 PM

Meeting location: 30 North Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701

II. Attendance

Advisory Group members present: Jim Humerick, Karen Russell, Justin Corey (for Troy Kitch), Amy Rembold, David Lillard (Virtual), Karen Cannon (Virtual), Mike Spurrier, Scott Burrall

Advisory Group members absent: Benjamin Friton, Lindsey Donaldson, Abraham Olsson, Barry Salisbury, Denny Remsburg

County staff: Kimberly Gaines, Andrew Stine, Denis Superczynski

III. Call to Order

Mr. Stine brought the meeting to order at 2:02 PM, welcomed the advisory group members, and provided instructions for accessing meeting materials and contacting staff via the Green Infrastructure Plan website.

IV. Review of Community Meetings/Open Houses

Mr. Stine provided a quick summary of the Frederick Futures Open Houses that were held at the libraries in Thurmont, Middletown, and Urbana in March and April 2025. He stated that attendees were able to learn about the Green Infrastructure Plan, the Housing Element, and the upcoming Historic Preservation Plan update. Attendees were also able to complete modified versions of the same exercises the Advisory Group completed in earlier meetings. Results of outreach efforts are available for review and download on the Green Infrastructure Plan website.

V. Discussion – Green Infrastructure Network Mapping

Mr. Stine provided an overview of the green infrastructure mapping methodology and framework. The overview focused, mostly, on five mapping sub-sectors that have been developed to help organize information and to clearly present in the plan. Staff mentioned that a separate meeting was held with Barry Salisbury due to a scheduling conflict, and that her feedback had already been received for the maps focused on trails and bicycle/pedestrian connectivity.

Members inquired about the “Equity of Access” subsector map and why regions in southwestern Frederick County were highlighted so prominently. Staff explained that this was a result of census tracts meeting the definition of “overburdened” communities, as outlined in state statutes, and as mapped by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Overburdened communities are identified by the number poor air quality days they experience in a year and/or proximity to industrial or disposal sites, among other factors. In southern and western Frederick County, particulate matter borne on the wind from industries in neighboring states contributes to the identification of census tracts as overburdened.

The group also inquired about the effects future park development on parkland accessibility, as it is considered in the Equity of Access subsector. Staff indicated that the park facilities considered in the current mapping are based on the current Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation Plan (LPRP). The current LPRP includes facilities from most recently adopted Frederick County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP). Work on an update to both the state LPRP and the County’s LPPRP are slated to begin later this year, with a target of 2027 for the completion of work. Any new planned or constructed park facilities would be captured and incorporated into park accessibility assessments following adoption of the state’s LPRP and the County’s LPPRP.

Finally, the environmental benefits of grasslands were discussed, particularly their role as carbon sinks. This led to a broader conversation about regenerative agriculture and its potential to enhance ecological resilience in the County and carbon sequestration on local land. A question was also raised about the timeline for completing the overall green infrastructure network map, which is yet to be developed. Staff responded that it should be finalized within a couple of months—once the five subsector maps have been substantially completed.

VI. Discussion – Green Infrastructure Plan Outline

Mr. Stine provided a summary of the expanded Green Infrastructure Plan outline and asked for questions and comments from the Advisory Group.

Members inquired about implementation tracking, as it is discussed in the outline. Specifically, there were questions about the frequency at which implementation metrics would be revisited. Staff suggested a 5-year evaluation window, as this would conceivably coincide with updates to the Chesapeake Bay Program’s LULC data that evaluates land use and land cover changes in the County.

Bird populations were as a possible indicator for tracking implementation progress. It was noted that the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership has nearly completed updates to the 3rd update of the Breeding Bird Atlas. Atlas data would be available for use after state review, which could take about six months. Since the atlas is updated every 20 years, it offers a long-term perspective on bird population trends.

The group also explored broader planning concepts that will be addressed in the Green Infrastructure Plan. The State of Maryland’s newly adopted, eight planning principles were mentioned as foundational guidelines for local comprehensive plans. The concept of managed retreat was illustrated through examples in Point of Rocks, where flood-prone structures were removed after repeated replacement became untenable. Another green infrastructure concept, the 3-30-300 rule, was explained as a goal for urban greening: residents should be able to see

three trees from within their residence, have 30% tree canopy coverage in their neighborhood, and access to public green space within 300 meters of their residence.

Economic benefits of green infrastructure were also discussed. A report from Montgomery County, PA was cited, showing how environmental assets can boost property values and it was noted that other economic benefits of the outdoor economy could be considered for both active (biking) and passive (birdwatching, ecotourism) recreation. The designation of the City of Brunswick and the Town of Boonsboro (Washington County) as the first Appalachian Trail Towns in the state was discussed. The pursuit of the AT Trail Town designation by more municipalities in the County was noted as a potential recommendation. Agritourism and ecotourism (birding, fishing, etc.) were also noted as topics the plan should consider. Local examples of value-added processing for agricultural products, including ice cream and straight to consumer sales, as well as other mechanisms to support rural property owners were highlighted as topics for discussion when considering rural land conservation and the interface between working lands and green infrastructure.

VII. Next Steps for the Green Infrastructure Plan

Mr. Stine stated that the Plan will be workshopped with the Planning Commission in three sections (Chapters 1 and 2, Chapters 3 and 4, Chapter 5 and Appendices). The first workshop is anticipated for August 20, 2025. Draft chapters will be shared with the Advisory Group when published with Planning Commission meeting materials. The first two chapters should be released with the August 20, 2025, Planning Commission meeting agenda. Subsequent workshop dates have not been set at this time. Comments on the draft chapters are welcome and appreciated!

X. Adjournment

With no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.