

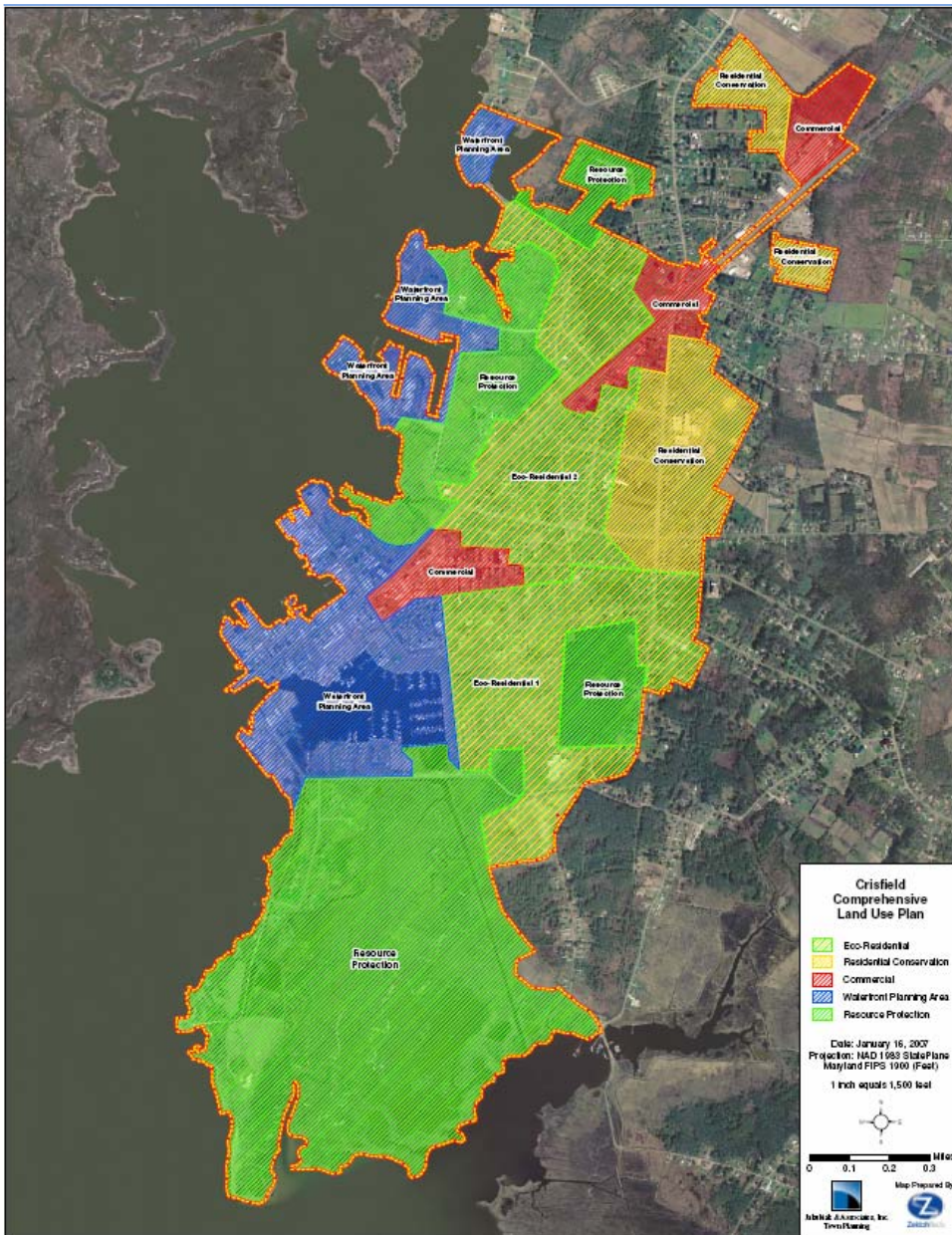


TOWN PLANNING & DESIGN REVIEW

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Crisfield: Finding the Environment in Comprehensive Planning



Excerpt from the Adopted City of Crisfield Comprehensive Plan, Spring 2007

“A profound human dimension and quality takes precedence over the built environment. A community and its aspirations and the individual and his or her aspirations, whether attained or unrealized, are always present. Changes in the built environment affect people’s lives.

Environmental protection and thoughtful development decisions have a direct bearing on the living standards and the quality of life of a city’s residents. Thoughtful planning and development can raise the quality of life for an entire community.”

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Fixing the “Mansionization” Problem in Historic Neighborhoods

Sarah Franklin, *Senior Associate*

The neighborhoods of Montgomery County have a unique and historic character. However, recent infill and tear-down development trends have been changing this character. Mansionization results when large individual structures are constructed in a way that is incompatible with existing neighborhood character.

The impacts of mansionization can include a loss of historic houses; changes in community character; loss of sunlight, open spaces, and mature tree cover; increases in impervious surface area; reduced interaction between neighbors; and a loss of diversity in the appearance of houses and the residents that can afford to live in the community.

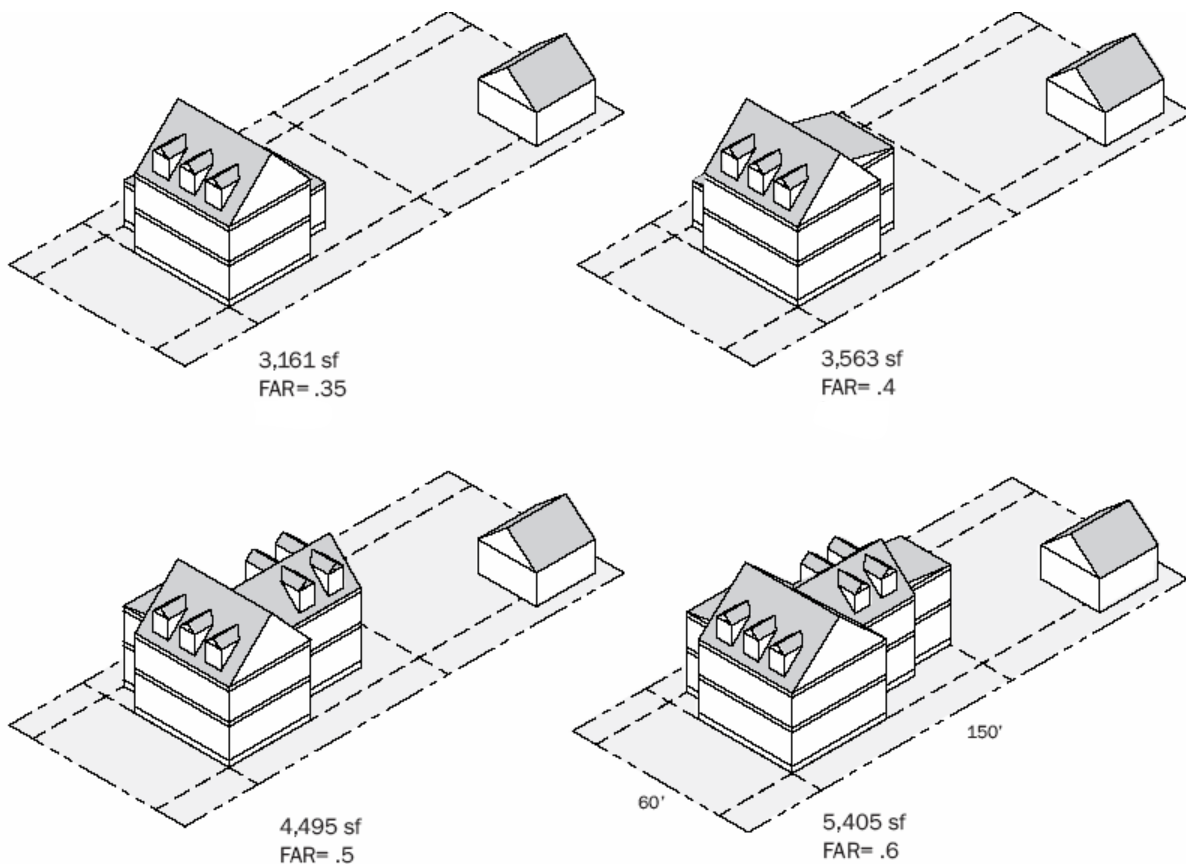
The Maryland General Assembly passed H.B. 1232 in 2006. This law gives municipalities in Montgomery County the authority to regulate height, bulk, massing, design, lot coverage, and impervious surfaces. Using this new authority, Montgomery County’s municipalities can now reduce the effects of mansionization.

With associates from Studio 27 Architecture, Jakubiak town planners are working with the Town of Chevy Chase. As a result, they have developed a flexible set of rules to implement the Town’s new authority and deal with mansionization. The goals of this strategy include a reduction in the impacts of large homes on community character and on their neighbors as well as making it easier to build additions than teardowns.

The strategy uses a combination of new mass and bulk restrictions with a floor area ratio bonus system. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the gross floor area of all buildings as a percentage of the total lot area. Mass and bulk regulations reduce the real and perceived size of new houses. The FAR bonus system allows larger homes to be built, provided certain objective design criteria are met.

For more information, please contact Sarah Franklin, Senior Associate, at 410-263-7776.

Different Floor Area Ratios on a Typical 60' x 150' Lot





Approaching Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements

Sarah Franklin, *Senior Associate*

House Bill 1141, passed in 2006, changed municipal and county planning as well as annexation. This new law requires that all municipal comprehensive plans in Maryland include Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements. Municipalities are given until October 1, 2009 to adopt these elements. Through its practice, Jakubiak & Associates has developed a model approach to creating these new elements.

Municipal Growth Element

The Municipal Growth Element requires that municipalities target land areas to accommodate projected growth. Municipalities are also responsible for targeting areas for infrastructure needs and conservation. This element is meant to guide the annexation process for the municipality. Here are five suggestions for developing a Municipal Growth Element:

1. Develop reasonable population and household projections.
2. Designate areas for growth that are close to the existing infrastructure—look for infill areas as well as areas outside current municipal limits.

3. Identify suitable and acceptable densities for these areas—ensure that projected growth can be accommodated in these areas—do not target land for development if population projections do not show a need.

4. Do not forget to designate areas for open-space conservation, especially areas that provide water quality and long-term recreational benefits.

5. Develop a thoughtful annexation process that ensures maximum community benefits from annexation and ensures existing residents do not bear disproportionate costs for new infrastructure.

Water Resources Element

The Water Resources Element requires that municipalities identify drinking water resources to meet the needs that arise from projected growth. Receiving waters and wastewater treatment areas must be identified. This element is also concerned with water resource protection, ground-water resources, water quality standards, and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). TMDLs are the amounts of nutrients that are permitted to be discharged into water bodies. The Maryland Department of the

Environment (MDE) is in the process of completing TMDL reports for all water resources. Here are five suggestions for your Water Resources Element:

1. Develop reasonable population and household projections.
2. Identify the long-term capacity of major drinking and receiving water resources—understand the quality and yields of underlying aquifers.
3. Ensure that future development bear at least a proportional share of the cost of additional water resources.
4. Know your watershed. While technical analyses are not complete for every water source, general information about your watershed from MDE and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources can guide water quality policy decisions.
5. Understand the impacts that surrounding jurisdictions have on shared water resources and natural areas.

For more information, please contact Christopher Jakubiak, AICP at 410-263-7776.

Not Everything *Has* to be Planned

Brenda Niemeyer, *Planning Assistant*

What do you want to be when you grow up?

That single question is one of the toughest to answer. We live our lives and gain an education, all the while reveling in our experiences. Then what? In this day and age, an individual embarking on the rest of her life after numerous years of education can only *hope* to find the career that best suits her. I have found with some perseverance and persistence, you can flourish in a suitable career that might not have been a previous consideration.

When I was hired by Jakubiak & Associ-

ates, I did not really know what town planning entailed. I have learned that we have the opportunity to enhance a number of towns/cities—not only with the expertise of highly educated associates, but with the opinions/needs/wants of the *citizens* living in the town/city. It is fulfilling to make such a constructive difference in the lives of others, and I look forward to growing with Jakubiak & Associates.

I would like to join the ranks as a fellow planner. In addition, I want to go back to school and get a master's degree in either town or urban planning—which I had not

considered before, but can be attributed to the meaningful experience I have had by working for this firm.

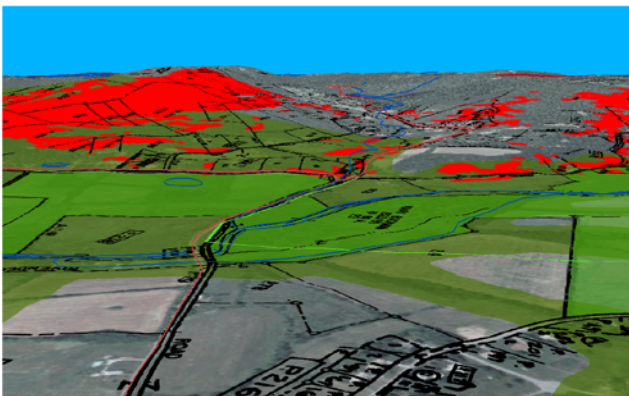
I came to Jakubiak & Associates after a difficult period of self-discovery. The experiences I had after graduation tested my limitations and strength. However, I was willing to keep my options open in an effort to find what was truly satisfying; little did I know that answering an ad in the newspaper would make all the difference.

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The Strength of GIS Mapping

Brenda Niemeyer, *Planning Assistant*



Jakubiak & Associates provides the most advanced, geo-spatial mapping capabilities to its clients through its ongoing relationship with Zekiah Technologies. Eric Mahaffey, GIS Engineer, explains that the process of map-making starts with a regional overview map of an area of interest. Next, maps are created using aerial photographs of the area. Then, a series of thematic maps are created using data gathered on natural and built features (transportation, floodplains, land use, elevation, etc.).

Finally, the emerging Plan's themes and recommendations are mapped. Mahaffey states, "We view the GIS portion of [town planning] as a life cycle of cartographic products illustrating each of the key components that make up the plan."

This map displays part of the Emmitsburg, Maryland Planned Growth Boundary. It is illustrated in 3-dimensional perspective. The areas indicated in red have a topographic slope of 25% or greater. The areas indicated in green are natural areas targeted for conservation. For more information on Zekiah, visit www.zekiah.com.

JAKUBIAK & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Jakubiak & Associates, Inc. provides clients with the information, tools, and advice needed to make better decisions in town planning and development. We provide a full range of services in Town Planning, Economic Analysis, Policy Analysis, and Development Negotiation.

Christopher Jakubiak, AICP
 President

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