

60-Day Comment RA-05

QAC 2010 Comp Plan
60 Day Review Comment
RA-05
June 21, 2010

Route 213 /50 Intersection

The Routes 50/213 intersection is one of the most dangerous in Queen Anne's County. It is in the state long-range plans for grade separation as Route 50 is "6-laned", but no design or construction funds have been allocated and it is now yet in the 20-year capital plan. Route 213 provides access to Chesapeake College and is one of 4 routes to the Village of Wye Mills (pop. 354) in Talbot County. The current traffic congestion is associated with regional traffic and seasonally with the "Reach the Beach" migration. At peak times, the long signal cycle time and the high signal time priority given Route 50 traffic often holds route 213 traffic for several minutes each cycle. The very short green time given 213 can require two or more cycles to permit traffic to cross or turn left onto Route 50.

The only existing wastewater infrastructure in the area is a small, 15,000-gpd-treatment plant discharging into the impaired waters of the East Wye River. The plant and discharge permit belong to the five county consortium that founded and funds Chesapeake College. The treatment capacity uses old technology and is not fully utilized. By converting the plant to higher quality treatment technology (ENR), capacity could be increased. However, it is prudent to reserve this additional capacity for campus expansion and the Board of Trustees have never proposed to do otherwise.

Yet, with these serious roadway deficiencies, no State plans to fund the multi-millions improvements needed for at least the next 20 + years this cornfield crossroads has been repeatedly proposed by the some members of the QAC business community and certain County Commissioners as a major business park location. The area has not been designated a "priority funding area" and further has failed to demonstrate market support for knowledge based business development envisioned by supporters.

The latest of several failed attempts to force this into the County plan occurred in July of 2009 with the preparation of the so-called Wye Mills Community Plan.

The Planning Commission sent this ill-advised plan for 60-day review on July 9, 2009 and on October 8, 2009 after a public hearing convincingly rejected a motion to send it forward to the Commissioners with a favorable recommendation.¹

¹ The minutes of the October 8, 2009 state:

Draft Wye Mills Area Community Plan: Prior to consideration of this matter, Mr. Clark recused himself from the meeting citing personal reasons. Ms. Helen Spinelli, Chief of Community and Environmental Planning, led a review and discussion of the Public Comments received during the 60-Day Review period. [*Continued page 2*]

60-Day Comment RA-05

Reports from the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Topic Committees recommended against this plan until current and proposed more suitable locations were built out and the infrastructure was made adequate. Their recommendations directed employment center growth to business and mixed-use land use areas in Town planning areas, particularly Centreville, Queenstown and Sudlersville.

In spite of this strong and unambiguous direction provided eight months prior the release of the Queen Anne's County Comprehensive Plan 60-Day Draft, the Staff and Consultant have continued to infuse the Draft Plan with many direct and numerous tangential references to the Wye Mills Plan and the Business Park as though it was settled policy.² This failure to take direction from the Planning Commission and the public's designated representatives is intolerable and must be corrected.

Wye Mills Commercial and Residential development is embedded the text and several tables referenced in the Plan's Elements and Appendixes.³ The Priority Preservation Element includes the lands proposed for intensive development in the recommended Priority Preservation Area⁴ Any responsible reader of the Draft Plan clearly concludes that the County will direct business and employment Center growth to the Existing towns and established growth centers. Plans to do otherwise must not be permitted to lurk in an Appendix, to later be presented as fact.

Recommended insertion locations:

A) Modify Element 1.0>§1.8>Goal 1>Objective9>Recommendation 3, p. 1-26.

[Continuation of footnote 1] Upon extensive review, the following motion was made by Ms. Schmidt, seconded by Mr. Thomas and **failed** with Mr. Howard, Ms. Kerr, Mr. Richardson and Mr. Frohn in opposition. [Emphasis supplied].

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission makes a favorable recommendation to the Queen Anne's County Commissioners for adoption of the **Wye Mills Area Community Plan** as presented and amended.

² See Appendix 5, Maximum Capacity Build-Out Maps 2 and 2B (Attached as Exhibits 1 & 2).

³ Appendix 5, Table 4, page 14; Appendix 5, page 19; Appendix 5, Table 7A, page 22

⁴ See Map ESA-10.