

Chapter 2

Executive Summary

The Severna Park Small Area Plan is intended to provide local detail for the implementation of the 1997 General Development Plan. The Plan is a collaborative effort with input from the Office of Planning and Zoning and other County agencies and a diverse citizen committee consisting of sixteen individuals chosen by the County Executive. Public forums have provided opportunities for public input throughout the process. The work of the citizen committee was accomplished through three subcommittees (Environment, Land Use and Development and Peoples' Needs). Each subcommittee made a series of specific recommendations.

The purpose of the Severna Park Small Area Plan is to enhance the quality of life in Severna Park, to help implement the goals and recommendations of the General Development Plan, and to promote citizen, business and County cooperation in the planning and development process.

The citizen committee drafted the following vision statement to describe the Severna Park of the future. "Severna Park is a well-established community bounded by the Severn and Magothy Rivers, with many tree-lined neighborhoods containing a variety of home styles. There is a village center with thriving local businesses, homes, dedicated spaces for social and community activities, attractive well-maintaining landscaping, pedestrian walkways and tasteful signs. Paths, trails and roads provide easy access within and between our neighborhoods and our center."

In order to make this vision a reality, the Plan identifies five primary goals:

1. To work with existing community centers to expand programs and provide a new community center with complementary programs.
2. To establish a community identity consistent with the Village Center in all commercial areas within the greater Severna Park area. (see Village Center description)
3. To support protection, restoration and enhancement of Severna Park's natural environment in a way that ensures high quality community life while providing for the pursuit of productive, sustainable local economy.
4. To allow for mixed use (combined commercial and residential) creating a Village Center concept within the existing commercial center, including Severna Park Mall, Park Plaza, Olde Severna Park Village, and Festival Shopping Center.
5. Present a land use plan that is consistent with the GDP, and that adjusts existing parcels to reflect actual use. In this regard the Committee examined Land Use classifications, and did not make zoning recommendations. The plan will provide a system of safe roadways, pathways and sidewalks that efficiently move citizens throughout the community.

Integral to the Plan is the Village Center concept. “The village square is the focal point, “the park,” of Severna Park’s village center. The village square will contain a landscaped public exterior space, with water and historic Severna Park features, as well as a cultural center (including a 400 seat auditorium), rooms for meetings, presentations and performances. The square will be encompassed by shops, offices, restaurants and living facilities and will have easy access to sidewalks, bicycle paths, streets and parking.”