1.25.24 Port Towns Sector Plan and SMA Update - Steering Committee Meeting #1

1 PERCEPTIONS

What are your current perceptions of the Port Towns study area? What do you believe are the major, and most pressing, issues to be addressed?

- Blight
- capital (funding/ financing)
- need for funds or incentives to support economic development
- where are the banks and other entities that can guide investment?
- zoning could support enhanced economic development activity
- Persistent Vacant Properties
- had a lot of work done in early 2000s and had hoped investment would follow, but it didn't
- environmental preservation
- Environmental Justice and Health
- Flooding
- have not been able to leverage waterways/ proximity to rivers as a way to drive economic growth
- I think that the area lacks growth that's relevant to the history. All the other towns West are growing more than Port Towns
- Transportation bottlenecks
- We expected that growth would come out of the zoning process. There is a lot of automobile businesses that are taking up too much space
- how to create a sense of destination and place
- Would the study include a parking master plan, i.e a parking demand study. If we are discussing economic development it is essential to take into consideration parking needs.
- Economic growth is stagnant
- the area is currently a "travel through" rather than "stop at"
- Transportation Flow and Safety/ as well as pedestrian safety

2 HOPES FOR CHANGE

How would you like to see the area change in the next 5-10 years? What changes would you consider to be positive impacts for the area?

- idea for Port Towns Eco-District
- aging industrial parks - opp for more eco-businesses
- Bostwick House - opp for community, commercial, housing, or other use
- Benefiting from network of historic sites in port towns/ connectivity/ celebrating culture, history, community
- We're bound by the river and the railroad. And the roads also make it difficult to traverse space, especially without a car.
- presence of Eco-City Farms, Community Forklift
- more restaurants / destinations
- route 1 corridor as example
- getting more business opps into the area
- connectivity for residents - ped & bike, not just car
- Port Towns is an inviting destination that brings economic benefits.

3 UPCOMING PROJECTS

Are you aware of any proposed or upcoming projects that might respond to current community needs and/or might be a catalyst for positive change in the study area and/or immediate surroundings?

- colmar Manor - received a grant to redo most of their streets

Source: Prince George's County Planning Department

4 REGIONAL COLLABORATION

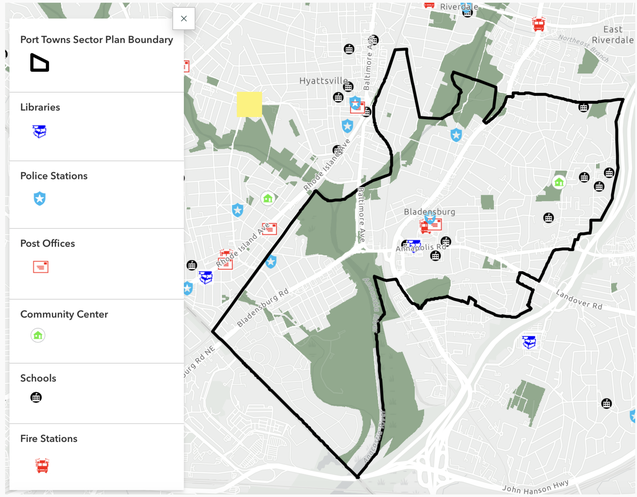
How well are Port Towns communities working together? How can we maintain the individuality of the 4 towns while also creating a cohesive region that collaborates well together?

- Not sure; not apparent;. Is the Port Towns connectivity known beyond some signs?
- Turnover among elected officials is hurting the towns
- need something to keep cohesion together now that the CDC is not functional
- local administrators have been meeting to understand budgets, expenses
- having 4 towns can make it difficult to get things done/ decided on
- Port Towns was thought up as a collaborative idea. We got the Waterfront, the Railroad overpass... other things through collaboration
- how can we think regionally about affordable housing, retail?
- desire for the collective group of towns to work togehter to make us stronger while still maintaining individual identities
- each town as the ability to make their own mark - individuality
- what are the truly unifying factors across the 4 towns?
- Colmar Manor just received a grant to redo street signs
- branding across the 4 towns used to exist - not sure if it should come back the way it was previously
- no active CDC currently...

5 INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Who are the most vulnerable or hard to reach constituents of the study area? How can we build trust within this community to ensure our outreach is thorough and inclusive? As a member of the steering committee, who can you commit to inviting into this process?

6 OTHER KEY VOICES

Do you have any additional contacts that we should reach out to in order to get additional information regarding the overall vision for Port Towns, or on a specific topic?

- business owners
- elected officials
- opportunity to ask these questions at the Port Towns administrators quarterly meetings?