

I hope everyone is enjoying the Holidays. In the Holiday spirit, I wanted to start out this month's newsletter with some fun stuff. I spoke with Clay Edwards from Lake Linganore Assoc. a few weeks ago. We both agreed that the "working" name for the new East County High School just isn't appropriate for the historic nature of the area. We thought our two communities could demonstrate a little solidarity by coming up with a new name. Therefore, in that regard, I am asking for your suggestions. Please fill out the Holiday survey at the end of the newsletter with your suggestions. I'll ask the Town Council to pick one to be forwarded for consideration.

Our annual audit was completed in November. Our total operational income was \$26,880.00. This was nearly \$12,000.00 more than we anticipated. We've worked hard keeping the Town operating in the black under tough times. This clearly demonstrates that our efforts are paying off.

When I was elected mayor 3 1/2 years ago, I promised to do the following things.

- Find a solution for bringing public water to town.
- Provide more flexible permitted uses in the Residential Antique District (RAD).
- Change the leadership on the Town boards in order to be more responsive to you.
- Complete the "streetscape" project.
- Establish a bypass to reduce traffic in town.

To date, we have signed a water agreement with the county to bring affordable supply public water into town. We are simply waiting for streetscape construction to begin in order to run the actual water lines in town.

In April we passed a zoning text amendment that provided for greater number business uses in the RAD. This eliminated many non conformities both by use and lot size.

We have reorganized the Town's boards to be more responsive to your needs. As a result, for example, the HDC/ARC is working on developing a system for administrative approvals. This will help eliminate long waiting time for approvals when you have someone ready to do work for you.

We have completed "mini" streetscape projects on Wicomico Ct., Dorchester and Wicomico Drs. These projects has kept us on top of street maintenance. It has allowed us to replace the costly Bradford Pear trees with a more cost efficient Aristocrat Pear tree. Lastly, these projects implemented traffic calming devices.

In late summer the HDC granted permission to allow the demolition of a blighted building on Main St. In spring, it will be rebuilt in the spirit of the Historic District.

In December 2002, we adopted a concept plan for streetscape. In May 2004 for the Town received \$4.5m funding for engineering and construction for streetscape. This program will solve our drainage issues and help with traffic calming. Construction for streetscape is scheduled to begin at the end of FY '06.

Lastly, we are now working towards a bypass to reduce the volume of traffic on Main St. I would like to take the last part of this message to explain our efforts to reduce traffic as well as show how all fits together.

Below, please see some pictures of Main St. starting from 1972, when we were experiencing only 1450 vehicles per day (vpd). That's me walking in the Orioles hat walking to school. Note that there is no Sponseller's Addition or Post Office in the back ground.



Now look below to see pictures of accidents on Main St. since I've been mayor.





Today, we are experiencing over 8,300vpd. By 2020, we will have 16,000vpd. What do you think traffic will be like then, if this is what it looks like now?

We are working on several fronts to deal with this. First, we are spending more money on the FCSD extra duty hour's program than at any other time. We are trying to work with Oak Hill Properties in order to connect Royal Oaks Dr. to Royal Oaks subdivision in order to get the PUD traffic out through the back of town. We are working with state and local officials to encourage the completion of the Meadow Rd. interchange to I-70. Streetscape will incorporate mini roundabouts to slow traffic down. It will also have pedestrian nodes in order that one may look out past the parked cars safely before crossing the street. The nodes will push parked cars further away from the intersections and act as traffic calming devices as well. Lastly, we would like some day to replace the extra duty hour's program with a community deputy program that will increase our police coverage for speed enforcement.

Unfortunately, all these things cost money. The community deputy program cost up to \$80,000/yr. Taking over Main St. as required by the terms of streetscape will cost the Town \$13,536.00 annually. Moreover, non cash expenses not shown on our budget such as road overlay and storm drainage amortizations cost the Town an additional \$11,602.00 annually.¹ Thus, our \$26,880.00 operating profit only translates into a \$1,742.00 economic profit. This margin is way too small for the Town to survive on.

¹ Amortization is the amount of money the Town must save from its annual profit to pay for road repaving and replacing capital assets such as storm drainage systems. Since the Town operates on a cash budget, these non cash items are not included in the budget but should be planned for in the CIP.

This is the reason the Town annexed Royal Oaks, Brinkley Manor and the Orchard properties. Enclosed in this newsletter is a financial impact study of those projects. This study shows the additional revenues and expenses from each project annually at completion. Note that the total estimated annual benefit is \$213,790.00. This cash benefit will cover all the amortization costs of roads and other capital assets. The study also provides for a Town Manager to work along side of Patty to over see projects, implement policies and procedures (such as HDC administrative approvals) and coordinate between Town boards. This will keep elected Town officials and board members focused on long term goals while the hired employees can run day to day operation of the Town. Lastly, the total benefit will provide enough income for a community deputy and other discretionary expenditures such as developing and maintaining a park in our 100 acre woods and ultimately our survival as a Town.

We realize that these projects will have a small impact on schools. However, we have the tough decision on whether we act on our need for a safe Main St. or wait until the County builds more schools. Neither is an attractive alternative. However, I believe that public safety comes first. It is possible that the new East County High School and renovations to local middle and elementary schools could be completed simultaneously with these projects keeping schools under state rated capacities. The Town through its Master Plan process will continue to work with the county in resolving school, roads and other issues that affect our quality of life in New Market.

Lastly and finally for this month, I would like the Town to demonstrate its commitment to our schools and children. I have talked to several PTA moms in town about sponsoring programs at NMES. We have identified classroom libraries, computers and accelerated reading books as areas to lend a hand. The Town will receive a \$1000.00 impact fee for each home built in Brinkley Manor and the Orchard. I would propose that we offer \$100.00 from each new home to fund one or all of these programs. This would add up to \$20,900.00 over a five year period. This is not a lot, but it's a start. Please indicate whether you would support this in the enclosed Holiday survey.

Wishing you a safe and prosperous new year,

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2004 Holiday Survey

Please write in your suggested name for the new East County High School.

Do you support contributing a portion of the Town's impact fees to fund a program @ NMES? (Circle one)

YES

NO

If you answered yes, what amount do you think would be appropriate? \$ _____

Comments or suggestions:

Please return to:

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