

QAC Broadband Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting

November 29, 2018 | 4 pm - 6 pm
Helen Spinelli, Planning and Zoning/Small Cell (4-5)
Jean Fabi QAC Economics Development (5-6)

Attendees

BAC/QAC

- Ben Schaffle
- Ed Cummins
- Alison Davis
- Megan DelGaudio
- Joyce Jones
- Jacob Wargotz

- Scott Seaborne
- Andrew Costello

QAC Guests

- Helen Spinelli
- Jean Fabi

I. Helen Spinelli - QAC Comprehensive Plan (including Small Cell capabilities information)

1. QAC Comprehensive Plan (CP)

- State requires 10-year planning for counties and municipalities
- Previous plan was 2010
- How many lots, GIS-parcel maps contribute
- North County – 2010 plan – business area plan did not go over well; thus will need to happen at municipality level not county level

For next CP - put broadband layer onto comprehensive plan; BAC will facilitate

- Begin with existing conditions study – will begin early 2019
 - Assesses land records, soil quality, sewer capability
 - Still have undeveloped projects remaining from last CP that were thwarted by the recession; these can be resurrected with new sewer plan/other requirements
 - Infrastructure important – main driver and what population is
 - Not driven by market analysis
 - Commissioners choose which outreach to do
 - Always get a lot of pushback about height (over 45 feet)
- Need voice of the farm community (Farm Bureau, Tom Jackson is chair); engage him/them with the BAC
 - Farming is high tech – need broadband to keep pace and stay viable

Map shows generalized zone areas

- 80% of QZC is agricultural (largest soybean, corn producer in state – avg farm size = 350 acres)

- 2 units per acre is general density in whole county
- “Planning” areas:
 - Incorporated future-growth areas (based on infrastructure) - Chester, Stevensville, Queenstown, Centreville (No hotel in Centreville area)
 - Not a lot of other future-growth areas
 - Future annexation areas – 6 of these in QAC – since 1992, county required to designate these to support growth
- Municipalities – County has no jurisdiction over them

Middletown 301 bypass

- Will increase truck traffic on 301
- Opportunities related to 301 corridor/expansion – none available zoning along that corridor; soil issues restrict some infrastructure needs
- Will worsen situation with 405/301, 19/301 intersections that are currently very dangerous

2. Small Cell

- 20 states have passed law or regs to allow small cells
- QAC has been meeting with industry – universal coverage not viable; industry claims if county doesn’t do this now it will be left behind related to 5G

Legislation

- Senate bill 1188 was terrible – wanted to usurp zoning authority and to usurp QAC rights of way – county would then lose franchise fees
- HoCo – only county with wireless legislation
- Now on 7th draft of legislation (more “enabling” than HoCo’s legislation, which is prescriptive)
- Contains digital inclusion fund – collects surcharge for every small-cell facility (key provision demanded by QAC Commissioners)
- QAC Commissioners requirements – legislation:
 - Must charge for right of way, state is not charging for right of way
 - Must honor local zoning
- FCC rules contain a “shot clock” – any application requires response within 30 days, this is the first time FCC has gotten involved (3 applications have come in - haven’t gone anywhere)
- Lot of residents don’t want small-cell boxes for aesthetic reasons

II. Jean Fabi (QAC Economic Development)

- Broadband – hot topic for Economic Development group; considers broadband a utility
 - Infrastructure – broadband access is key part
- Farming is top industry in QAC

- Advises that BAC engages with Farm Bureau (JF will facilitate)
- Sudlersville – working with Cambio
- Early 2019 – will start meeting with the towns
- Also will work with comprehensive plan
- “Opportunity Zones”- private investments in social projects to counter capital gains tax (example: Church Hill) – e.g., PNC bank – are there other companies who might leverage investments in this way?
- Community re-investment – can be used for broadband
- Broadband needs to be designated a tangible asset
- Cell towers prioritized for emergency services – in heavy traffic; can 301 expansion/bypass facilitate better cell coverage for everyone?
- Telehealth – another opportunity to underscore importance of widespread broadband in rural areas
- Consider reaching out to Upper Shore Economic Council - consider broadband access a social justice issue; QAC has an aging community – can’t age in place without this critical access
- Broadband access is truly an across-the-lifespan issue

ACTION ITEMS

- Invite Farm Bureau representative to speak to/be a member of the BAC
- Populate spreadsheet of BAC provider discussions to date toward developing a recommendation to the QAC Commissioners (develop template and put in Google Docs prior to next (Dec 20) BAC meeting
- Put e-copies of QAC maps from Helen Spinelli in Google Drive folder
- Establish broadband as key part of comprehensive plan – as a criterion; ensure that Comp Plan map has broadband layer
- Poll Farm Bureau – what are you using now? (Jean Fabi)