

Bay Bridge Monitoring Committee
November 28, 2018
Meeting Summary

The Kent County Bay Bridge Monitoring Committee (BBMC) met on Wednesday, 28 November 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room in the R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Government Center in Chestertown, Maryland. The following committee members attended the meeting: Torr Howell, William Sutton, and Thomas Tontarski. BBMC Kent County staff included Amy Moredock, Person of Contact/Planning Director; and Sandy Adams who clerked the meeting.

The meeting summary for August 22, 2018 was accepted by the Committee as presented.

Sam Shoge, a resident and advocate in support of a third span in Kent County, was today's guest speaker, and he presented "Kent County, Maryland Reimagining the Status Quo: Why Changing Demographics and National Trends Should Make Kent County Residents Reconsider the Meaning of Preservation." Mr. Shoge put forward the following points:

- The County is the third-oldest county in the State; the median age of its citizens is 46.5 years old;
- The County's population below the poverty line is 14% (compared to the State at 9.7%);
- Home prices in the County are down 18%;
- Businesses in the County are on the decline; down 17% since 2005;
- The County's tax base is down 9%;
- The County's student enrollment population is declining;
- The County's farming industry is on the decline due to tariffs and bankruptcies;
- Hunting is on the decline in the County. Mr. Shoge said from a tourism perspective, business is what also attracts hunters to the County;
- The average age of workers in building trades is 50 years of age; only 6% of students are getting into skilled trades;
- Malls and retail stores are in danger of closing by 2022; and
- Hospitals are closing in rural areas due to the decline in population.

Mr. Shoge said, "suburban sprawl is out and mixed-use communities are in, and mixed uses are the name of the game."

Following his presentation, Mr. Shoge welcomed questions.

Committee Business:

- Ms. Moredock informed the members that there have not been any updates from MDOT staff on the release of the Purpose and Need study; she said she hopes to have something to report at the next meeting.
- Committee member Tom Tontarski said he is interested in hearing more about the [Delaware] bypass which is scheduled to open the end of December.
- Ms. Moredock reminded everyone of the Committee's decision, via email correspondence, to cancel the December meeting due to the meeting being scheduled during the holidays.

Next Step(s):

- The Committee will review Queen Anne's County's Corridor Study for obtaining information and discussing the bypass and its impact on Kent County.

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Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

The meeting concluded at 11:15 a.m.