

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager

SUBJECT: *Status Report*

DATE: May 15, 2014

1. City NWF Wildlife Habitat Sites Certified and Monarch Waystation Installed

On May 3rd and May 10th, a total of 33 volunteers helped to create a Monarch Waystation between City Hall and Bowie Town Center Pond. Creating the Monarch Waystation will help support monarch butterfly populations in the area and was part of the Green Team's effort to certify three City properties as National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Wildlife Habitats. Bowie Town Center Pond, the Senior Center, and Allen Pond Park have all been certified and certification signs have been displayed at each site. The City of Bowie is currently trying to become a Certified Community Wildlife Habitat and must meet education and community project requirements and have a minimum of 200 homes, six community sites (government buildings, offices, parks, places of worship, homeowner associations, etc.), and five schools certified by NWF. Currently, Bowie has about 130 homes, five community sites, and five schools certified.

2. Approved County General Plan Amendment (CR-26-2014)

On Tuesday, May 6th the Prince George's County Council, sitting as the District Council, approved "Plan Prince George's 2035". The City Council conducted a public hearing on the Preliminary General Plan on October 21, 2013, voting to recommend approval of the Plan with several specific revisions. Some of the City's recommendations to strengthen neighborhood conservation rules were incorporated into Policy 8. None of the other changes recommended by the City, including a proposed strategy advocating a greater municipal role in land use administration, were included in Plan 2035. Two property-specific amendments in the Bowie area (the Jesuit Property on MD 450 and the Storch property at US 301/Mill Branch Road) were requested as part of the County's public hearing record. During the County Planning Board worksessions held earlier this year, the Planning Board made it clear that it would not consider property-specific amendments because the General Plan update was intended to be a broad policy plan and not a detailed land use plan. The District Council conducted worksessions in March and April and voted to support amendments for the Jesuit Property and the Storch property in Revisions #24 and #25 to CR-26-2014. Pertinent information relating to these amendments is as follows:

Jesuit Property – Revise the Growth Boundary in the Prince George’s County Growth Policy Map (Map 1 shown in the Preliminary General Plan) and the Generalized Land Use Map (Map 9) and Prince George’s County Growth Policy Map (Map 11), both shown in the Planning Board’s Adopted Plan, and remove 120 acres zoned R-A (Residential Agriculture) located at the southwest quadrant of MD Route 450 and MD Route 3, from the Rural and Agricultural Area, Septic Tier 3 and Approved Priority Preservation Area and designate within the Established Communities Area.

Storch Property – Revise the Growth Boundary in the Prince George’s County Growth Policy Map (Map 1 shown in the Preliminary General Plan) and Maps 9 and 11 in the Planning Board’s Adopted Plan, to reflect approximately 18.04 acres zoned R-A (Residential Agriculture) located at the southeast quadrant of US 301 and Mill Branch Road, being removed from the Rural and Agricultural Area and Septic Tier 3 and designate within the Established Communities Area.

3. **CSX Report on Train Derailment**

At the City’s request, CSX has provided an incident summary report on their train derailment, which occurred here on May 1, 2014. As you know trains on the Pope’s Creek line only carry coal. In this incident ten of the coal cars and three locomotives derailed. According to the report, the spilled coal has not yet been removed.

After track repairs and cleanup, CSX plans to restore any areas that were impacted by their equipment and the cleanup. The Maryland Department of the Environment and the US Army Corps of Engineers are working with CSX on this incident. There is a draft letter to CSX on your agenda for Monday night, which asks CSX to provide us with an explanation as to why this derailment occurred, why there have been two other derailments on this same stretch of track in the past, and what steps CSX is taking to prevent future derailments from happening here.

The CSX summary report is attached.

Attachment



Bowie Incident Information Summary Prepared May 9, 2014

Current Status and Incident Background

On the morning of May 1, 2014, a CSX Transportation coal train derailed in Bowie, Maryland. No injuries were reported and no evacuations were necessary. Three locomotives and 10 coal cars derailed at the site. Two of the derailed coal cars came to rest alongside a flood-swollen unnamed tributary to Collington Branch. CSX crews worked in close coordination with on-site safety personnel, first responders, the Olde Stage neighborhood Home Owners Association, and Washington Gas during the response to identify sensitive receptors and reduce the potential impact to the environment. CSX safely removed the locomotives and rail cars from site and tributary and restored the site by the morning of May 5. Trains began moving through the site that morning. The three locomotives were removed from the site and the rail cars are currently staged for removal. Recovered coal is also staged for removal.

During the derailment, one of the rail cars came into contact with a Washington Gas natural gas mainline pipe running parallel to CSX tracks. Employees of Washington Gas removed a section of pipe from service and rendered it safe so that CSX crews could safely remove the rail car. The collaboration with Washington Gas resulted in no loss of service to any gas customers. CSX continues to work in close coordination with Washington Gas to provide access to the pipeline right-of-way while the company prepares to restore the cut section of pipe to normal conditions.

Comprehensive Environmental Response

CSX continues to work with the Maryland Department of the Environment and the United States Army Corps of Engineers to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impact at the site. Biologists assessed the site and concluded that there was no impact to natural resources. A restoration plan, which includes using native species from the area, is currently being developed to return the site to its pre-incident condition once all cleanup efforts are completed.

Continued Community Coordination

CSX appreciates the patience of the Olde Stage neighborhood and the Bowie community during the response and cleanup. Over the coming days and weeks, CSX will continue to restore the site, including bolstering the railroad line in the area of the derailment. Neighbors may hear the sounds of work trains during the day as CSX adds and compacts ballast under the railroad tracks. Once all of the site work has been completed, CSX anticipates restoring any damaged grassy areas, sidewalks, and curbs that were impacted as a result of equipment and personnel deployment during the response.