

TOWN OF NORTH EAST

2021

ANNUAL PLANNING REPORT



*Prepared By:
Town of North East
Office of Planning and Zoning*



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2021 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN OF NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

In accordance with the provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use. Section 1-207. Annual Report-In general. The Planning Commission shall prepare, adopt and file an annual report for the previous calendar year with the legislative body. The Town of North East Planning Commission hereby adopts the 2021 Annual Report of the North East Planning Commission, filing same with the Mayor and Commissioners and the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning.

North East Planning Commission

Mark T. Dobbins

Mark T. Dobbins, Chairman

June 1, 2022

Date



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MAYOR

Michael Kline
March 2021 to present

Robert F. McKnight
January-March 2021 Retirement

VICE-MAYOR

Hilary Crothers-Moore
April 2021-December 2021

Michael Kline
January – March 2021 (Sworn in as Mayor March 2021)

COMMISSIONERS

Hilary A. Crothers-Moore

Raymond Mitchell

Kelly Benson

Catherine Bernard-Dutton March 2021-present

Cynthia Billig January-February 2021

EX-OFFICIO TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Raymond Mitchell

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Robb Carey

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Ken Natale
(January-July)



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TOWN ELECTION- 2021

Mayor Robert F. McKnight retired in 2021 after serving the Town for over 25 years.. Vice-Mayor Michael Kline ran uncontested for Mayor in February 2021 and was sworn in for a two-year term. Commissioner Cynthia Billig did not run for re-election. Catherine Bernard-Dutton and Kelly Benson ran, uncontested for two year terms as Town Commissioners.



Mayor Mike Kline



Commissioner Catherine Bernard-Dutton



Commissioner Kelly Benson



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Newly elected Mike Kline taking the Oath of Office.



Retired Mayor Robert McKnight passing the gavel to Mayor Mike Kline.



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Planning Commission Members

Mark Dobbins, Chairman

Michael Nair, Vice Chairman

Judy Duffy

Commissioner Raymond Mitchell, Ex-Officio

NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION

The North East Planning Commission, acting under authority granted by the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use which regulates the development of land in the Town of North East. The Planning Commission consists of five members appointed by the Mayor and Commissioners. The Planning Commission's duties are outlined in the North East North East Zoning Ordinance.

When the Planning Commission has business to conduct, they meet on the first Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the North East Town Hall Meeting Room, 106 South Main Street. In addition, special meetings or workshops may be held throughout the year. The Planning Commission meetings are open to the public.



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PLANNING STAFF

Zoning Administrator

Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Director of Planning

Betsy Vennell

Planning and Zoning Assistant

Lisa Rhoades

Secretary to the Planning Commission

Lisa Rhoades

Town Attorney

Dennis S. Clower, Esquire
David Beste, Esquire

Town Engineers

ENgineering
Entech Engineering

Contracted Services

Jodie Shivery, Ecologically Sound Landscapes



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POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

The powers and duties of the North East Planning Commission are found in the North East Zoning Ordinance, Section 9-5. Powers and Duties of the Planning Commission.

1. The Planning Commission may:
 - (a) Make studies and recommendations to the Mayor and Commissioners plans, goals, and objectives relating to the growth, including annexations, development and redevelopment of the Town and develop a comprehensive plan in accordance with the provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use.
 - (b) Develop and recommend to the Mayor and Commissioners policies, ordinances, administrative procedures and other means for carrying out plans in a coordinated and efficient manner.
 - (c) Make recommendations to the Mayor and Commissioners concerning proposed zoning classifications and reclassifications.
 - (d) Hear and decide applications for land development and approve subdivision plats and site development plans.
 - (e) Make recommendations to the Board of Appeals on special exceptions.
 - (f) Prepare and forward to the Mayor and Commissioners an annual report in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use.
 - (g) Exercise any other powers as set forth in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Land Use.
2. The Planning Commission may adopt rules and regulations regarding its governing procedures and operations not inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance.
3. The Planning Commission may delegate authority for review and approval action to the Town Administrator as deemed appropriate.



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NORTH EAST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is the official statement of the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East setting forth policies concerning desirable future growth, which serves as a general guide to public and private development decisions. Once adopted, it becomes the basis for the preparation of specific policies, programs and legislation, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, and other actions, which implement the growth policies set forth in the Plan.

The Plan is comprised of several major elements that are prepared in such a manner that they form an integrated, unified document for guiding future growth and development. As a policy document, it is general, comprehensive, and long range in nature. It is comprehensive in that it encompasses the entire geographic area of the Town and includes all functional elements that bear upon its physical development, such as transportation, land use, and community facilities. It is general in that it summarizes policies and proposals but does not establish detailed regulations. It is long range in that it looks beyond current issues to problems and opportunities related to future growth over the next twenty years.

Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, Land Use. Section 1-416. Plan Revision.
(a). At least once every 10 years, each planning commission shall review the comprehensive plan, and, if necessary, revise or amend the comprehensive plan to include

- (1) The elements required under Part II Comprehensive Plans
- (2) The visions set forth in 1-201

The last review of the North East Comprehensive Plan by the North East Planning Commission occurred in 2010-2012. The Mayor and Commissioners approved Resolution 2012-11-01 and Resolution 2012-11-02, which officially adopted the updated “North East Comprehensive Plan”.

There were no amendments to the North East Comprehensive Plan in 2021.. The Town is currently working with a consultant to update the Municipal Growth Element and the Water Resources Element. An update to the remainder of the North East Comprehensive Plan is expected to be completed by 2024.

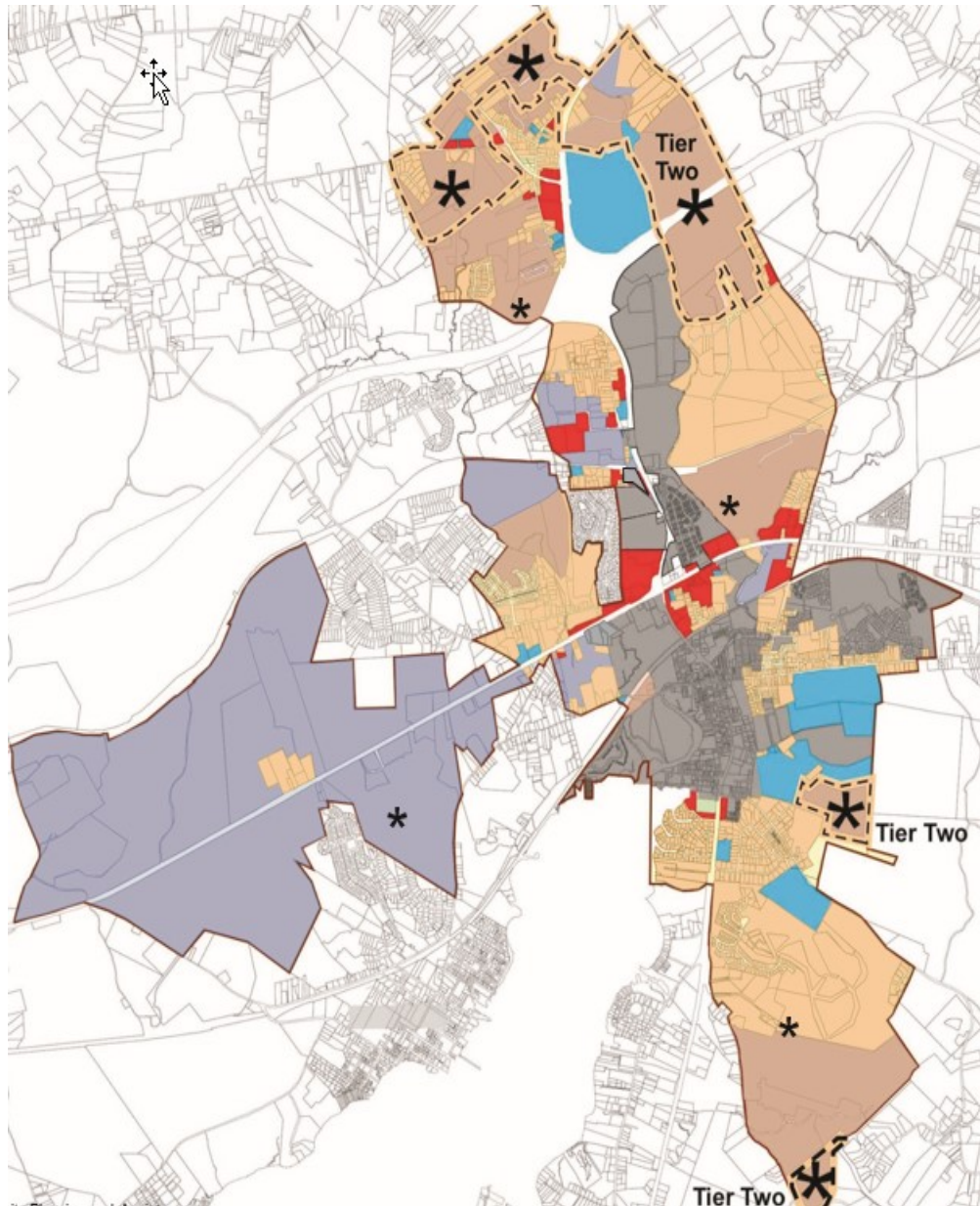


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Changes to Development Patterns in North East

There were no changes to the development patterns in North East in 2021.

Town of North East Growth Area Map





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COVID-19-PANDEMIC

A Proclamation of Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. (the Governor) dated March 5, 2020 proclaimed a state of emergency and a catastrophic health emergency related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In response to the State's recommendation that all employees who can work from home should do so, the North East Town Hall closed to the public and administrative employees worked remotely from March 2020 through, returning to work in the office on July 1, 2021. The Town Hall opened to the public August 1, 2021. The Planning Commission meetings were conducted virtually through December 2021. The Mayor and Commissioners commenced meeting in person for their meetings in May 2021, while guests and the public attended virtually.

PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

North East Zoning Ordinance Amendments

There were no amendments to North East Zoning Ordinance in 2021.

North East Subdivision Regulations

There were no amendments to the Subdivision Regulations in 2021.

Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East: Road Code Standard Specifications and Details

There were no amendments to the Code of Ordinances,
Road Code Standard Specifications and Details in 2021.



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Deeded to the Town in 2021

Ridgely Forest-Phase 2, Honeylocust Court: The public water improvements and the roads, sidewalks, public street lighting and storm drains were deeded to the Town in April 2021. Improvements: \$434,208.78.

North East Gateway: The public water improvements and the roads and storm drains, sidewalks, street lights and the Town of North East monument sign were deeded to the Town of North East November 2021.

Water Utility Improvements: \$312,895.00

Road, Stormdrain, sidewalk and street lighting improvements: \$945,890.00

Monument Sign improvements: \$250,000.00

Ridgely Forest Section 1: The Mayor and Commissioners accepted a deed of conveyance from the Developer for the public water improvements, roads, storm drains, sidewalks and streetlights in December 2021.

Water, Road, sidewalk, stormdrain and street lighting Improvements: \$435,387.00

PROJECT STATISTICS

Annexations: 0

Minor Subdivision: 1

Preliminary Major Subdivisions: 0

Final Major Subdivisions: 2

Rezoning Applications: 0

Special Exception Applications: 0

Modified Site Plans: 0

Concept/Preliminary Site Plans: 0

Final Site Plans: 0

BUDGET

The Town operates on a fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021. The approved operating budget for the Planning Department for the fiscal year 2021 was \$153,668.

GRANTS

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Grant \$3,500.00

Maryland Circuit Rider Town Manager Program Grant \$55,000 (shared with Charlestown)



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ANNEXATIONS

In accordance with the North East Zoning Ordinance, Article 9. Section 9-5.1. (a) The North East Planning Commission may make studies and recommendations to the Mayor and Commissioners, regarding plans, goals and objectives relating to annexations. In 2020 the Town did not receive any petitions for annexation.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

The Planning Commission conducted 4 meetings in 2021.

SITE PLANS APPROVALS

The Planning Commission did not review any site plans in 2021.

SUBDIVISIONS

Minor Subdivisions

- 614 South Mauldin Avenue. Subdivide Lot 1

Major Subdivisions

Ridgely Forest

- Section 5A: Final Subdivision Plat Approval for 81 detached single family
- Section 3B Phase 2 Final Subdivision Plat Approval for 40 Duplex lots.

SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS (heard by the Planning Commission)

The Planning Commission did not review any Special Exception cases in 2021.



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ADDITIONAL TOPICS REVIEWED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Maryland Department of Transportation 2021 Priorities Letter: The Planning Department forwarded a letter of priority requests to the Planning Commission for review and consideration, who recommended adoption of the requests to the Mayor and Commissioners. The Mayor and Commissioners sent their priority requests to the Maryland Department of Transportation in May 2021.

2020 Annual Planning Report: The 2020 Annual Planning Report was approved by the Planning Commission in June 2021. The Report was forwarded to the Mayor and Commissioners. Per the requirements of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use, the report was forwarded to the Maryland Department of Planning.

Ridgely Forest Pool and Clubhouse: Ridgely Forest Development. Owner/Developer: WORF, LLC Map 31; Parcel 1355. Zoning District R-4 with Master Planned Community Overlay District. Developer requested an extension to occupancy permit timeframe for the opening of the Ridgely Forest Clubhouse and Pool. The Planning Commission granted conditional approval.



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BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS

Peg Hardin, Chairman
Maurice Tenney, Vice Chairman
S.J. Anderson

BOARD OF APPEALS POWERS AND DUTIES

The Board of Appeals, acting under authority granted by the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use. Subtitle 3. Board of Appeals. Section 4-301. Required. The Board consists of five members and one alternate member, appointed by the Mayor and Commissioners. The Board of Appeals duties are outlined in the North East Zoning Ordinance.

The powers and duties of the Board of Appeals are found in the North East Zoning Ordinance, Section 9-11. Duties of the Board of Appeals:

1. The Board of Appeals shall hear and decide:
 - a. Appeals from any order, decision, requirement or interpretation made by the Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, or Town Administrator.
 - b. Applications for Special Exception Uses.
 - c. Applications for Variances.
 - d. Any other matter the Board is required to act upon by Town Ordinance.

The Board of Appeals has scheduled meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the North East Town Hall Meeting Room, 106 South Main Street, North East. If there are no agenda items, the Chairman of the Board may choose to cancel the meeting. All Board of Appeals meetings are open to the public.

North East Board of Appeals – Cases in 2021

VARIANCES

The Board of Appeals received 0 variance applications in 2021.

SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

The Board of Appeals did not receive any Special Exception applications in 2021.

APPEALS

The Board of Appeals did not receive any appeals applications in 2021.



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WATER SERVICE

The Planning Department administers all inquiries for water allocation.

The Planning Department receives applications for water allocation, processes and invoices for water connection and major facility fees. The Planning Department coordinates with the Cecil County Health Department for projects out of the Corporate Limit to ensure that permits are not released from Cecil County unless water allocation has been obtained and fees have been paid. The Planning Office coordinates with Cecil County Planning Office to upload all new addresses into the utility system in preparation for utility billing.

Water Standards and Specifications:

The Planning Department works directly with the Supervisor of the Water Plant and the Town's Engineer annually to review and update, as needed, the Town of North East North East Standards and Specifications for Water Distribution and Details for Water Service. The current set of Standards are posted on the Town's website.

Town of North East 20-Year Water System Master Plan:

The Mayor and Commissioners adopted the Town of North East 20-Year Water System Master Plan in January 2020. The Town contracted with Entech Engineering to evaluate the Town's existing water system, establish future needs and potential shortcomings. The Plan also identifies the necessary projects over the next 20 years to continue and sustain the Town's water system.

Artesian:

An interconnection Agreement was signed by Artesian and the Mayor and Commissioners in June 2019. The Agreement outlines the terms and conditions for the construction and implementation of Artesian's Route 40 East Interconnection to the Town's water system.



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Water Resources Element:

The Town of North East has a Water Resources Element in the North East Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Annotated Code of Maryland. Land Use. This Element has addressed adequacy of the Town of North East water supply and the suitability of receiving waters for point and non-point discharge. The Element evaluates the adequacy and suitability of water resources on the basis of existing and future land use both within the Town and within the Town's growth area.

Cecil County Master Water and Sewer Plan:

The Planning Office participates in the preparation of documents and maps which outline areas where the Town currently serves water and proposes to serve water. The Cecil County Master Water and Sewer Plan was adopted on July 22, 2019. The Plan facilitates growth in a way that allows sufficient time to develop adequate drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.



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Allocations for Municipal Water

The Planning Office has adopted a written policy for water allocation, entitled “Allocations for Municipal Water-Town of North East, Maryland Policies and Procedures. This Policy is available upon request and can be found on the Town’s website.

Allocations for municipal water Preliminary Requests – Appendix C

Date	Development	Appendix C (attached)
04/06/2021	313 Baron Road	31,410 GPD/ 126 ERU

Allocations for municipal water Water Allocation Requests – Appendix B Water Service Agreements Executed

Date	Address	Map/Parcel	Number of ERU/GPD
1/27/2021	Bedrock Phase 3 (31) Single Family Homes	23/56	31 ERU/7,750 GPD
04/14/2021	800 Red Toad Road	24/64	13 ERU/3,250 GPD
06/10/2021	208 Marysville Road	25E/332	1 ERU/250 GPD
06/10/2021	76 Old Bay View Road	25/41	1 ERU/250 GPD
07/15/2021	24 Old Bay View Road	25/598	1 ERU/250 GPD
11/24/2021	256 Old Bayview Road	25/287	1 ERU/250 GPD

Water Account Statistics

Water Service Agreements Executed in 2021	6
Total number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) added to Ready to Serve Accounts in 2021	48
Total number of Ready to Serve customers in 2021	233
Total Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) on the Town Ready to Serve Billing in 2021	659
Total number of water customers billed each quarter in 2021	3180
Total number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) billed quarterly in 2021	5200



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PERMITS AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Planning Department process town permits and code violation letters and tracks statistics using a permit and code enforcement module software. The software has been utilized for tracking statistics and has proven to be effective in keeping statistics by keeping track of permits, notices of violations and implementing reminder inspections. During the last year the software has been updated on occasion to refine the program to our permit and code enforcement processes and better track our activity within the software.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Town of North East Planning Office is charged with code enforcement for the Town of North East. Weekly inspections are performed for the purpose of inspecting for compliance with approved construction and use authorizations. The Code Enforcement officer also inspects for violations of the North East Zoning Ordinance and nuisance violations of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East.

Permit processing during COVID-19

The processing of the construction authorizations changed drastically during the COVID-19 pandemic, commencing March 17, 2020. The Town Hall was closed to the public during the pandemic and worked remotely June 2021. While working from home, employees received permits via email and US Mail, and utilized the Town's drop box at the Town Hall. Permit approvals were handled electronically or mailed. The Planning Office worked closely with Cecil County Permits and Inspection office throughout this process.

Code Enforcement during COVID-19

Weekly code enforcement inspections continued during COVID-19 in 2021, while following the CDC guidelines.

2021 CODE ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Friendly Reminder Door Tags, Friendly Reminder Letters	217
Code Enforcement Letters sent by Staff (first, second, third notices)	95
Citations Issued	8
Court Appearances	8
Illegal Signs Removed	196



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CONSTRUCTION AND USE AUTHORIZATION STATISTICS

PROJECT	ZONING/CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATIONS; PERMITS AND LICENSES
New Dwelling Units	104
Single Family dwelling – new 58	
Duplex Dwelling - new 46	
Commercial building – new	0
Occupancy Permits- Residential	85
Occupancy Permits - Commercial	11
Demolition-Commercial	0
Demolition-Residential	0
Demolition and Rebuild Residential	0
Demolition Accessory Building	1
Grading	0
Renovation/Addition-Residential	8
Renovation/Addition-Commercial	5
Cell Tower-Renovation	1
Utility Building	8
Accessory Building- Residential	0
Pavilion	1
Tree Cutting Permits (w/in Critical Area Only)	4
Deck	35
Fence	53
Pool	4
Sign	25
Solar Panels	13
Driveway	1
Road Access Permit	0
Utility Access Permit	0
Liquor License	0
Commercial Occupation License	11
Mobile Vendor License	1
Home Occupancy Business License	1
Total number of applications	276



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NEW BUSINESSES-2021

COVID-19 provided many challenges to our small businesses in 2021. Small business owners pulled together and came up with innovative ways to keep the Main Street Commercial District a vibrant place to enjoy restaurants and to shop. The Town is very pleased to welcome several new businesses into North East during this challenging year.

The Town of North East Planning Office has approved 13 Commercial, Home and Mobile Vendor Occupation Licenses in 2021:

Business Name	Address
B.O.B. Photography (moved to a new suite)	32 South Main Street
Treats by Zeets (relocated)	13 South Main Street
North East Chocolates and Chocolate Therapy Suite	16 South Main Street
Maryland Recycled Creations (relocated)	114 South Main Street
Glitter and Gamers (relocated)	32 South Main Street, Ste. 12
Brookbend (added an additional suite to existing business)	32 South Main Street, Ste. 5
Deep South Posh (relocated)	112 South Main Street
Bella & Canvas / Alo Yoga	200 Gateway Drive
Zero Degrees Frozen Yogurt (relocated)	131 South Main Street
Singh Liquors (renamed and relocated)	2540A Pulaski Highway
CC's Kitsch & Such	32 South Main Street, Ste. 9
Mobile Vendor – Kona Ice	Mobile on Town Streets
Home Occupation-Ruts to Racelines LLC	105 Mahogany Drive



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New Business: ALO Yoga and Bella-Canvas



Mayor Mike Kline - Alo Yoga/Bella & Canvas ribbon cutting.



Photos by Jane Bellmyer



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tom Lofland, Chairman

Kelly Benson, Ex-Officio

Sandra Edwards

Kerry Doordan Famularo

Brian Morgan

Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Economic Development Committee met, virtually via Zoom, seven times in 2021.

Section 2-504. Powers and Duties of the Commission

The Commission may:

1. Investigate and assemble information pertinent to the Economic resources and industrial opportunities of the Town.
2. Encourage location of new industrial enterprises in the Town and the expansions of present enterprises.
3. Encourage development of recreational areas and encourage tourist business in the Town.
4. Advise the Mayor and Commissioners on any and all matters related to the economic conditions, growth and development of the Town.
5. Review and make recommendations when requested concerning any businesses before the Mayor and Commissioners or any other Town Boards and Commissions which would have an impact upon economic development.
6. Seek and identify any Federal, State or other funds, grants or loans that may be available to encourage and assist the revitalization of the Commercial and Residential Districts of the Town of North East. They shall also recommend to the Mayor and Commissioners uses for all such funds acquired.



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7. The Commission shall have the power to:
- a. Recommend establishment of the boundaries of Commercial, Industrial and Residential Districts; of designated zones within any Districts; and the appropriation of sums for each zone.
 - b. However, any of said appropriation by zone shall be in equal amounts.
 - c. The Commission shall have the power to monitor and collect, on behalf of the Town, all loans previously granted by the Downtown Revitalization Commission.
 - d. The Commission shall draft a set of Regulations recommending the qualifications and requirements for the obtainment of funds by property and business owners in the designated Industrial, Commercial and Residential Districts. Specifically, these Regulations shall set forth the conditions for repayment, including, but not limited to: interest rate, time for repayment and any required security. These regulations shall be drafted to be non-discriminatory in nature and have a non-discriminatory impact in application. After approval by the Mayor and Commissioners, copies of the Regulations shall be kept on file at the Town Office and shall be made available to the public upon request.
 - e. The Financial Committee of the Economic Development Commission shall recommend specific loans, applying the Rules and Regulations established above, and subject to the approval of the Town Board.

MARYLAND CIRCUIT RIDER

The Town received a grant for the “Maryland Circuit Rider Town Manager Program” for FY22. Partnering with the Town of Charlestown for this grant, this position splits thirty hours each week between both towns. The Circuit Rider works from a project list compiled by the Town. The majority of the Circuit Rider’s position is to research available funding for the projects, applying for grants and administering the grants.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Planning Department is a member of the Town of North East Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee, which was adopted November 7, 2005. The Plan identifies potential hazard, both natural and manmade, which could cause human, social or economic loss to the citizens and business of the Town of North East. The Plan identifies steps that could be taken to minimize the impact of these hazards to the community.



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EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The Planning Department is a member of the North East Emergency Response Plan Committee, adopted November 7, 2005 and revised August 24, 2011. The Plan directs departments, agencies, offices and employees of the Town of North East, affected by the Plan, to review the document and identify their responsibilities during times of emergencies or disasters.

Hurricane Ida

Hurricane Ida, impacted the Town of North East on September 1, 2021. The roads impacted included the South side of Russell Street, the South Side of Washington Street and the North Side of West Cecil Avenue. There did not appear to be any flooding on the first floor of living space. The North East Police department assisted with evacuations of approximately 20 dwelling units. The Town Maintenance Department performed special bulk trash pick up for residents who had items damaged from flooding.





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Flooding of the North East Creek and surrounding properties during hurricane IDA





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NORTH EAST COMMUNITY PARK

The Planning Department maintains a Master Park Plan for the North East Community Park. The Plan provides opportunities for potential donations from the public or from civic organizations to actively participate with landscape, trails, benches, and picnic tables.

Rain Garden Expansion: Volunteers from Cecil Cares, Watershed Stewards Academy, Elk and North East Watershed Association, Cecil County Public Works and the Town of North East staff worked together to extend an existing rain garden by 1100 square feet. The purpose of the project was to repair and replenish the existing rain garden and to provide a remedy for standing stormwater/water drainage problem. This was done by preparing the area with a layers of stone, pea gravel, bio-soil and mulch. Then a combination of 200 plants and bushes were planted throughout the new and existing rain garden, completing this successful project.





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MS-4 PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

In conjunction with the requirements from the Maryland Department of the Environment, for the Town to obtain an MS-4 permit, the Town put out a request for proposals for a Stormwater Management Study. The contract was awarded to Soltesz LLC, and work on the proposal commenced in 2018 and was completed and presented to the Mayor and Commissioners in March 2019. The report outlined possible projects including shoreline management, stream restoration and stormwater pond retrofits. The Mayor and Commissioners conducted a Public Hearing on April 10, 2019 on the final Municipality Separate Storm Water Sstem (MS4) General Permit Baseline Establishment for the Town of North East Report. The Town of North East FY2021 budget included funding of the expenses associated with the Town's MS4 Permit.

CECIL COUNTY GOVERNMENT – AGENCY SUPPORT

Stormwater Management

The Cecil County Department of Public Works administers and enforces the Cecil County Stormwater Management Ordinance within the Town of North East. Authority is provided in the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East. Article 7. Stormwater Management Ordinance.

Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance

The Cecil County Department of Public Works administers and enforces erosion and sediment control regulations within the Town of North East. Authority is provided in the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East. Article 6. Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance.

Cecil Soil Conservation District

The mission of the Cecil Soil Conservation District provides information, technical assistance, and education in conserving the County's natural resources. The District is responsible for all of Cecil County projects and coordinates with the Cecil County Department of Public Works and with the Maryland Department of the Environment in conjunction with erosion and sediment control and grading plans.



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Forest Conservation Act

In 1991, the State of Maryland required all municipalities with planning and zoning authority to establish their own local forest conservation program or to participate in such a program jointly with another entity with such jurisdiction.

Section 5-1063 (a) (4) of Title 5 of the Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes a municipality to assign to the County its forest conservation program obligations, provided the County concurs. The Town of North East exercised its rights pursuant to Title 5 and in January of 2000, the Board of Commissioners of Cecil County accepted its obligations. The Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning shall have the right and authority to enforce fully the forest conservation program of the Town of North East within the corporate limits of the Town. All applications must be submitted to the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning and any and all applicable County fees must be paid by the applicant.

The Town of North East coordinates its development approval activities for building permits, site plan approvals, subdivision plat approvals, and any grading and sediment control permits with the requirements of Cecil County's forest conservation program.

No building permit, final site plan, final subdivision plat, grading or sediment control permit shall be initiated or approved until the applicant has demonstrated compliance with the provisions of Cecil County's Forest Conservation Program and received approval from the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning.

Cecil County Health Department

The Cecil County Health Department coordinates with the Town of North East for permits, projects and subdivisions. The Health Department verifies with the Town Planning Department that adequate water has been allocated from the Town for each building or use permit that has been received by Cecil County Cecil County Department of Permits and Inspections. Their department is concerned with adequacy of public water allocation for specific projects and for water allocation associated with minor and major subdivisions and site plans. The Health Department also coordinates with the Town Planning Department regarding procedures for well abandonment and interim well permits.

Land Use and Development Services

The Land Use and Development Services Department has combined the former Office of Planning & Zoning, Office of Permits & inspections, and the Plans Review Branch of the Department of Public Works into one Department. Cecil County's Geographic



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Information Systems (GIS) program is also administered by the Department of Land Use and Development Services.

Flow Chart for Site Plans/Change of Use

Cecil County Department of Land Use and Development Services coordinated with the Town of North East in 2019 for the creation of flow charts to outline the site plan approval process and change of use process. The Town and County continue to utilize the flow chart to offer guidance and insight to a Developer regarding the processes that will be required.

Cecil County Green Infrastructure Plan

Cecil County Department of Land Use and Development Services was awarded funding from the Department of Natural Resources Community Resilience grant to develop a county-wide Green Infrastructure Network and Plan. Along with other towns, the Town of North East was invited to participate in the steering committee meetings. The Cecil County Green Infrastructure Plan was adopted at the County Council of Cecil County, Maryland Legislative Session 2019-15, Resolution No. 46-2019, August 20, 2019. The adopted Plan has five (5) maps which identify road segments in North East which are prone to flooding during hurricanes. (See the attached maps)

Department of Permits and Inspections

In 1986, the Town of North East signed an agreement which authorizes the Cecil County Department of Permits and Inspections to:

- review all construction plans
- condemnation of property and posting of unsafe structures
- enforcement of the Cecil County Rental Housing/Livability Code
- enforcement of International Building Code
- inspection
- licensing and issuance of Hawkers and Peddlers licenses
- enforcement of the codes related to plumbing, electrical and mechanical installations.

In addition, inspections for compliance with the International Building Codes are conducted by the Department of Permits and Inspections.



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Technical Advisory Committee

The Cecil County Planning Office conducts Technical Advisory Committee meetings each month, bringing together County and State agencies to review new development projects. As a courtesy to the Town, the Committee reviews projects within the Town of North East corporate limit, when requested.

Cecil County Economic Development

The Cecil County Office of Economic Development seeks to stimulate economic growth and job creation through the expansion of existing business; the attraction of new businesses and the advancement of tourism and the promotion of agriculture. The Economic Development office often coordinates with the Town of North East Planning Office when inquiries come to their attention concerning possible uses on vacant land.

Enterprise Zone Expansion

The Enterprise Zone is an important incentive for the Town of North East to encourage existing businesses to expand and attract new businesses to locate within the Town of North East. The Town of North East Enterprise Zone includes all land within the Town's Corporate Limit, approximately 221.927 acres.

STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program

In 1984 the Maryland General Assembly passed the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program. The Town of North East adopted its Critical Area Program June 26, 1988. The intent of the Critical Area Program is to provide special regulatory protection for the resources located within the Town of North East Critical Area and to foster more sensitive development activity for shoreline areas. The Town has adopted Critical Area Regulations and Critical Area maps.

Development activity, including but not limited to grading, clearing, sediment and erosion control, tree cutting violations and requests, and shall not be permitted until the Town of North East makes specific findings that the proposed development or activity is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Critical Area Program.



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The Town of North East has applied for and received grant funding from the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area for the last several years. In conjunction with the grant funding, the Planning Department provides a quarterly report to the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

In December 2019, the Critical Area Commission, Department of Natural Resources and the Town conducted site visits throughout Town in preparation of the remapping of the Critical Area Boundary. A summary draft map was prepared and delivered to the town, in July 2020, for formal adoption. Property owners who were affected by the changes to the Critical Area map were notified by the Critical Area Commission and due to the COVID19 Pandemic a virtual meeting was conducted by the Commission. The maps are due for adoption in 2022.

The Town expanded one of the rain gardens at the North East Community Park in October 2021, to accommodate standing water after rain storm events. The Town partnered with Cecil County Public Works, The Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy, Elk and North East Rivers Watershed Association, Cecil Cares, the Town Maintenance Department, local vendors, and many volunteers to accomplish the project. The project was successful to rectify the standing water in this area.

Maryland Department of the Environment

The Maryland Department of the Environment assists the Town with inspections, projects and permitting of applicable projects in the Town of North East.

In cooperation with the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Town of North East has adopted Floodplain Management Regulations. The purpose of the Regulations is to protect human life and health, minimize property damage, encourage appropriate construction practices to minimize future damage, protect individuals from unwittingly buying land subject to flood hazards, and to protect water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, and natural drainage. The prevention of unwise development in areas subject to flooding will reduce financial burdens to the community and the State, and will prevent future displacement and suffering of its residents. Floodplain protection is achieved through the review of all activities proposed within identified floodplains and by the issuance of permits for those activities that comply with the objectives of the Ordinance.



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Maryland Department of Planning

The Maryland Department of Planning has enacted a new state development plan entitled, “*A Better Maryland*”. Proposed strategies in this Plan include:

- Tackling the Economic Development Needs of the Next Century
- Sustaining the Environment into the Future
- Preserving Land
- Improving Economic Growth and Development in Existing Communities
- Meeting Renewable Energy Goals
- Addressing Maryland’s Transportation, Infrastructure, and Technology Challenges and Opportunities
- Creating Workforce/Affordable Housing
- Building Capacity in Communities
- Protecting Historic and Cultural Resources
- Creating Quality Places
- Coordinating State Agencies in Planning Processes
- Adapting and Becoming Resilient to Climate Change
- Respecting Regional Distinctions
- Improving the Delivery of Programs and Services to Local Jurisdictions

To learn more about the new plan, please visit <https://abetter.maryland.gov/>.

The Maryland Department of Planning also provides land use planning and implementation guidance to support and assist local governments, communities, businesses, and organizations. Mr. David Dahlstrom, Regional Planner for the Maryland Department of Planning has provided the Town of North East assistance through various projects.



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Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development **Sustainable Community Plan**

The Town received the Sustainable Community status in October 2015 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, which is effective for five years. As a result of this designation, the Town and other stakeholders will be eligible to apply for resources from the Department of Housing and Community Development to revitalize and attract growth and development in Town. In 2020, the Town Planning Office re-applied for the Sustainable Community status and North East was re-awarded the status of Sustainable Community.

In conjunction with the Sustainable Community application, the North East Planning Department outlined the following project improvements:

TURNER PARK

Turner Park was obtained with project Open Space money several years ago. Turner Park borders the North East Middle School. Currently, Turner Park contains one chain link backstop and one bench, and tennis courts in need of rehabilitation. Improvements at Turner Park are needed to utilize this property to its fullest potential for our Community. The Town has had numerous conversations with the Boys and Girls Club and the Cecil County School System regarding upgrades to Turner Park. The improvements outlined in the Sustainable Community Designation application included:

- Architect/Engineering Firm to prepare a site plan
- Lighting for the park
- Bring the ball field to little league standards
- Sign to advertise the Turner Town Park
- Dug outs designed and installed
- Revitalize the tennis courts
- Revitalize the basketball court
- Utility shed for storage of the equipment
- Prepare handicap accessibility for use by the County Sunshine League
- Adjacent to the North East Middle School and the Boys and Girls Club



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Turner Park

HERRING SNATCHERS PARK

The Herring Snatchers Park is located at the northern entry into downtown North East. This park is underutilized, as it has not been improved in several years. Improvements outlined in the Sustainability Community Designation application included:

- Architect to prepare improvement plans for Herring Snatchers Park
- Improvements should include hardscape and landscape
- Improvements should include re-construction of steps down to the park



Herring Snatchers Park



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WILMAPCO

The Town of North East has been partnering with the Wilmington Area Planning Council, also known as WILMAPCO, with several transportation planning projects for several years. WILMAPCO provides the Town with technical assistance as well as monetary assistance for projects including updates to the North East Comprehensive Plan, North East Zoning Regulations, Subdivision Regulations and the Town's Road Code. WILMAPCO also provides financial assistance for consultants, mapping, and transportation planning opportunities.

Transit Oriented Development Plan (TOD)

WILMAPCO provided funding to hire a Consultant to create a Transit Oriented Development Concept Plan for the Town of North East. The process commenced in 2012 and was completed and approved by the Mayor and Commissioners in 2014. To move forward with the next step of the TOD, the Planning Department identified in the Sustainable Community Designation application, a project to receive funding to hire a consultant who will work to develop a TOD Overlay District with guidelines and Zoning Regulations, so the Transit Oriented Development Plan can move past concept.

U.S. ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers assists the Town Planning Department with inspections, projects and permitting of applicable projects within the Town of North East. The Town coordinates all Corp of Engineer projects with the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and Maryland Department of the Environment.

TRANSPORTATION

State Highway Administration Maryland Transportation Authority

The Town of North East has major routes serving the Town: US Route 40, MD 272 and MD 7, with Interstate 95 located adjacent to the Town's northern boundary.

The State Highway Administration coordinates with the Town regarding proposed projects in the Town's Corporate Limit and proposed projects outside of the Corporate Limit which will have an impact to the transportation system. In addition, the Town is provided the opportunity, annually, to outline to the Maryland Transportation Authority and the State Highway Administration, a "capital projects" list, both short term and long



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term, to identify improvements within North East and the North East growth area. This list is provided to Cecil County Department of Land Services to assist with coordination.

Maryland Department of Transportation - Annual Tour Meeting: The Town of North East is invited annually to participate with the Maryland Department of Transportation annual Capital Program Tour Meeting. The meeting is conducted with all Towns in Cecil County for the purpose of reviewing the Draft Consolidated Transportation Program (CPT). In anticipation of that meeting, the Mayor and Commissioners of North East sent the Town of North East transportation priority letter to the Secretary for the Maryland Department of Transportation in June 2021. Items outlined as priorities included:

- Widen Route 7 (West Cecil Avenue), west of Route 272. Elevate and widen the State Highway Bridge over the North East Creek on Route 7. Install pedestrian sidewalk, bicycle lane and pedestrian lighting between North East Isles Drive and Catherine Street.

Interim Plan: Installation of a pedestrian activated signal on both sides of the North East Creek Bridge on Route 7 which pedestrians would press when they desire to walk across the bridge. The signal would stop eastbound and westbound vehicles on Route 7 while pedestrians travel over the bridge.

- Installation of a pedestrian sidewalk linkage along Route 40 between Sycamore drive (off of Route 40) and the intersection of Route 272 and Route 40, linking to the sidewalk project which currently underway Contract No. CE3395176). Note: Sycamore Drive is the road which leads into the Timberbrook Development, a 350+ Townhome Community.
- Installation on Route 7, East Cecil Avenue: Two traffic reduction devices with intermitting signaling lights, with timers for school opening and dismissal. To be positioned on Route 7, approximately 50 yards before the North East Middle School from both east and west directions.
- Installation of sidewalk from the existing sidewalk on Route 7 (East Cecil Avenue) to Mechanics Valley Road.
- Installation of bicycle/walking/share the road pavement markings along Route 7 from Mechanics Valley Road to Ridgely Forest Drive.
- Review impacts of rail service to State Highway systems in North East.
- Marc Train Service in North East.
- Implement a new I-95 interchange in the area of Belvidere Road near Principio Business Park.



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Improvements

Route 272 and Gateway Drive/Rogers Road: Pursuant to a subdivision and a construction project to build a cross dock facility at North East Gateway, formally known as North East Commons/Nazarene Camp, a four way traffic signal with turn lanes was installed at the intersection of Route 272 and Gateway Drive/Rogers Road in Fall 2019. The light became functional in 2020 and the intersection was completed in 2021.

Route 272 and Route 40 intersection: The State Highway Administration project has a contractor who has continued to work in 2020 on the Route 272 and Route 40 pedestrian crossing improvements. Improvements will include stormwater management, grading, pedestrian sidewalks, and signalized crosswalks at Route 272 and Route 40. This project was completed in 2021.

Cecil Transit

Cecil Transit plays a valuable role to our residents in North East, with bus service from several locations within the Town's Corporate Limit, providing transportation to shopping centers, hospitals and physician offices throughout Cecil County as well as providing service just over the line into Delaware. Cecil Transit has been very successful in obtaining grant funding from the Maryland Transit Administration for the Statewide Special Assistance Program which is targeted with services to the elderly, disabled and general public in Cecil County. The Town's Planning Department participates in the quarterly Coordination Council/Advisory Board Meetings.

The new County library now has transit pick up/drop off within their vicinity and a new transit bus stop has also been installed on Gateway Drive.

Elk and North East Rivers Watershed Association (ENERWA)

The Elk and North East River Watershed Association (ENERWA) was established in 2014. The Planning Department attends the monthly meetings, conducted at the North East Town Hall. The Planning Department also participates in projects and events with the Association.

Although ENERWA is involved with educational programs COVID-19 Pandemic and CDC regulations did not provide for group gatherings in 2020 and a portion of 2021. Typically, within a year, ENERWA provides assistance to the local schools with rain garden installation, after school programs, and library programs. ENERWA however did participate in the annual Cecil County "Annual Wade In" August 2021, the annual "Coastal Clean Up" and several "Project Clean Stream" programs.

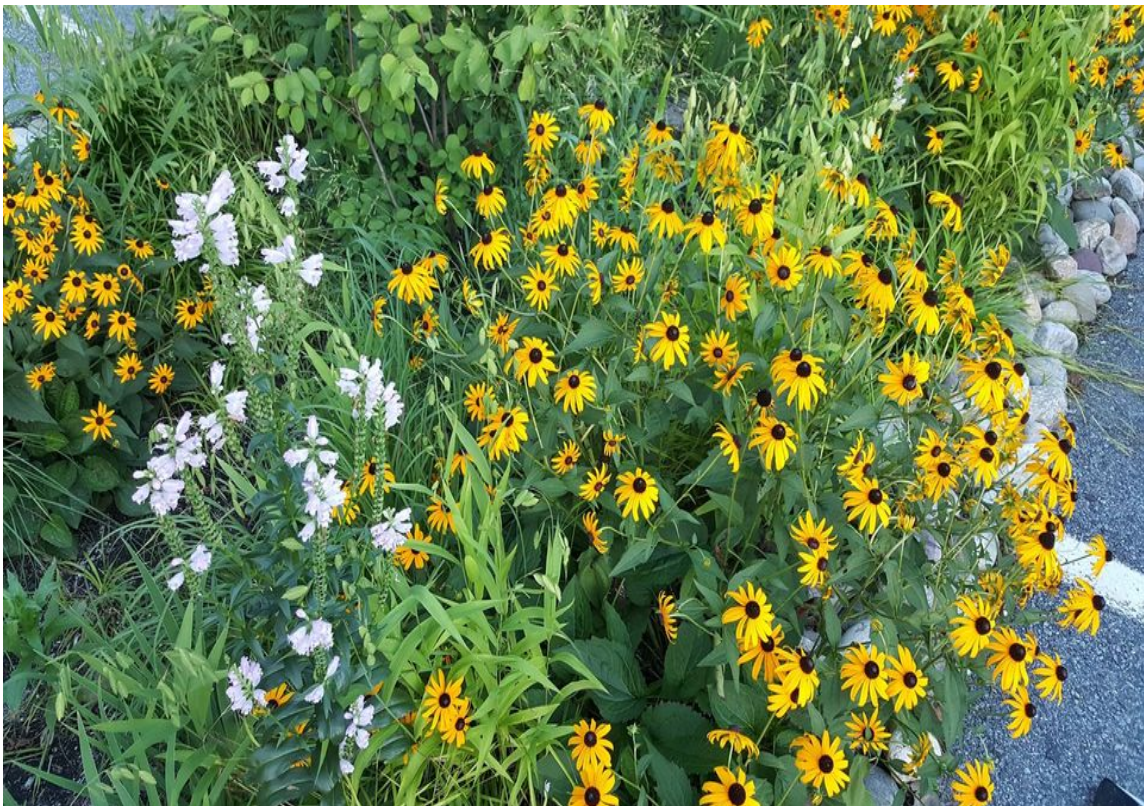


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The Association has several volunteers who participate in several Water Sampling sites throughout the North East Watershed, sending samples to an off-site location for testing. This year, the first report card was released by ENERWA, with a mailing to several thousand residents. ENERWA'S website: <https://www.elkandnortheastrivers.org/>

Town Hall Parking Lot Rain Garden:

ENERWA, in partnership with Cecil County Watershed Association, established a rain garden within the North East Town Hall parking lot in 2016. The project brought together several volunteers including those from the Master Gardeners Association who assisted with the planting of the garden. The garden is now fully established and maintained by the Town Maintenance Department. The Cecil County Department of Public Works uses this garden as an example of the effectiveness of capturing stormwater.





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Events Held Throughout the Year

The Town of North East hosts many events throughout each year in conjunction with various Agencies including Cecil County Tourism, The North East Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, volunteers and residents, Town of North East Boards and Town Employees.

In 2021, there was a reduced number of events due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the CDC requirements. Events in 2021 included the Winter Lights Cecil Nights, Wayback Winter Weekend, Sweethearts on Main, Easter Eggstravaganza, 1st Annual Blessing of the Boats, Salute to Cecil County Veterans Celebration, Unicorn Quest, Crab Crawl, Town Halloween Party, Shipwrecked and Trick or Treating on Main Street, Tree Lighting, North East Santa House, Cecil County Christmas Parade, Festival of Trees 2021 and the Decorating Contest.





1st Annual Blessings of the Boats



Photos by Karen Schaeffer









2021 Cecil County Christmas Parade



