



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: L. Jesse Bane
jbane@belairmd.org
410.638.4550

**Bel Air Planning Commission issues revised decision for
Homestead/Wakefield Elementary School expansion**

On September 1, 2022 at Bel Air Town Hall, the Bel Air Planning Commission completed the comprehensive review of their previous April 7, 2022, decision, regarding Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School (HWES) and issued a revised approval.

The Planning Commission received extensive public comment during their July 28th meeting regarding the connection of East and West MacPhail Road. This road connection has been part of the Bel Air Comprehensive Plan since 1968 and has been confirmed by every subsequent update of the Plan in the 54 years since that time.

The Planning Commission emphasized that they do not desire to hold up progress on the elementary school construction. With that in mind, the Planning Commissioners separated review of HWES from planning and development of the connector road. This separation of review allows HWES engineering and construction to progress while the Town, the Board of Education and, hopefully, the County work through alignment, design, and operation parameters of the connector road.

The Town has never denied a permit related to the HWES expansion. With the revised decision, the HWES project may proceed on a separate development timeline from the timeline for the planning and development of a connector road. Separating the timeline for development of the HWES project from development of a connector road should enable the different public agencies with a stake in the connector road to work together to design a safe and efficient connector road that fulfills the educational needs and the other public needs of the citizens of the Town and the County for years to come.

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