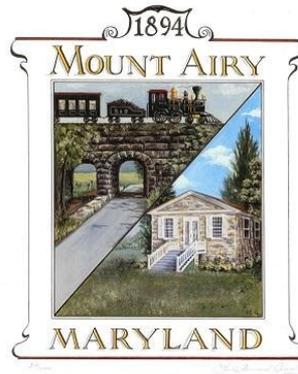


Growth and Development Task Force



Town of Mount Airy 2020 Community Survey ***SURVEY RESULTS AND REPORT***

**Presentation to Mount Airy Town Council
November 2, 2020**

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Survey Design & Top-Level Results

Design

- 23 questions. All responses anonymous. Five thematic areas:



- 20% of questions similar to 2007 survey.
- Many questions asked for choices to be ranked or rated.
- Demographic information / written comments encouraged.

Results

- A positive Survey response rate of 26%. For context, survey research literature indicates typical survey response rates of 5 – 30%.
- Good representation of views for neighborhoods spanning the town of Mt. Airy.
- 933 surveys (49%) contained detailed, thoughtful written comments.
- Summary results are presented here. Refer to the [Survey Results Report](#) for the full presentation of all results and written comments; comparisons to 2007.

Views on Mount Airy Quality of Life & Attributes

- Ninety-Nine percent viewed overall quality of life in Mount Airy as *Good, Very Good, or Excellent*.
- Respondents expressed a strong sentiment for Mount Airy’s small town environment (ranked #1), and value the importance of safety (ranked #2).

Summary: Top Five Most Liked Attributes of Mount Airy		
Relative Ranking	Town Attribute	Total Number Selected
1	Small Town	1042
2	Sense of Safety	916
3	Family Oriented	770
4	Quiet Community	745
5	Location	702

Summary: Top Five Most Disliked Attributes of Mount Airy		
Relative Ranking	Town Attribute	Total Number Selected
1	Shopping	982
2	Employment Opportunities	870
3	Traffic	771
4	Recreational Facilities	676
5	Municipal Services	235

Top Mount Airy Issues and Needs

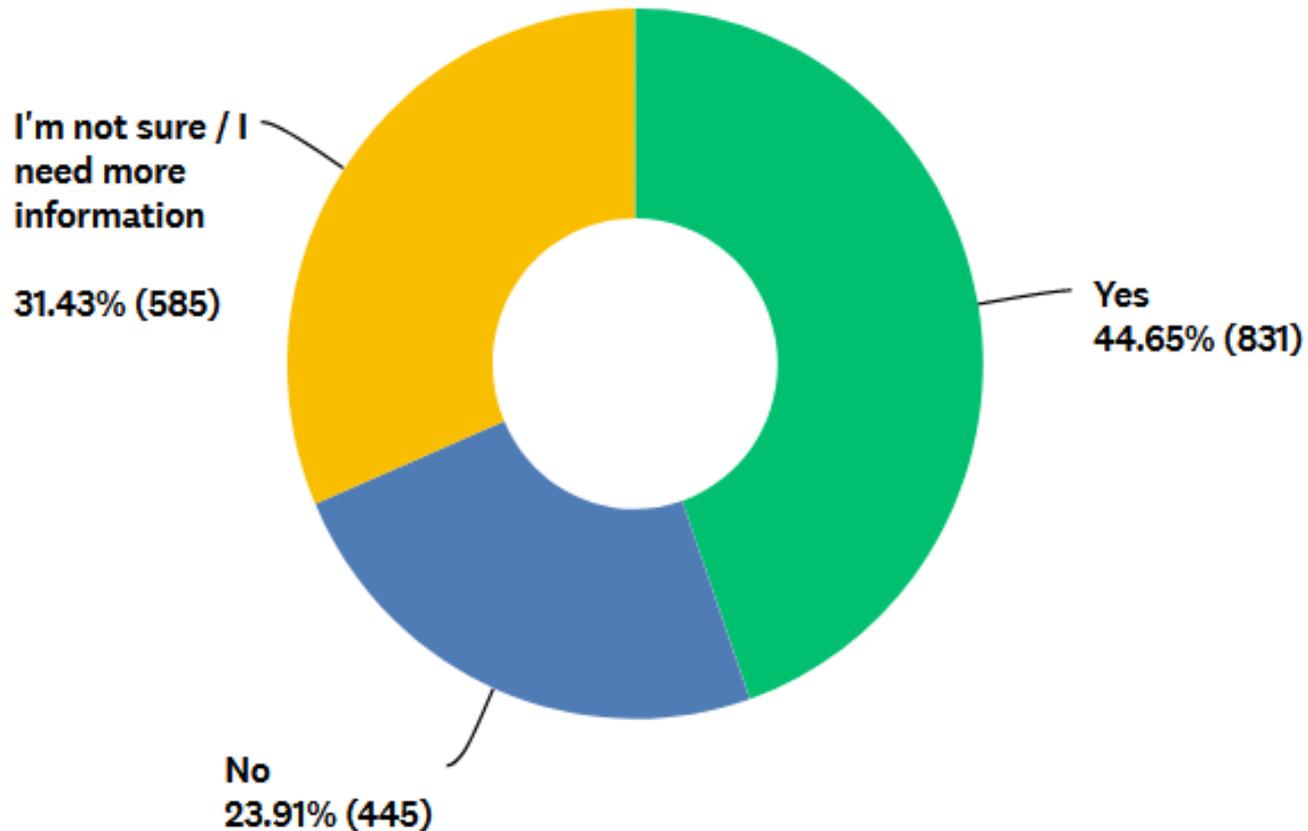
Issue or Need	Degree of Need
Lack of commercial growth & improvements in downtown district	#1 Major concern / urgent action needed
Traffic safety on Main Street	#2 Major concern / urgent action needed
Vandalism of personal property / crime / drugs	#1 Needs improvement / some action needed
Overall strength of Mount Airy's commercial district economy	#2 Needs improvement / some action needed
Lack of affordable housing	#1 Not an issue / no action needed
Existing level and pace of residential growth	#2 Not an issue / no action needed

Commercial Business Growth Preferences

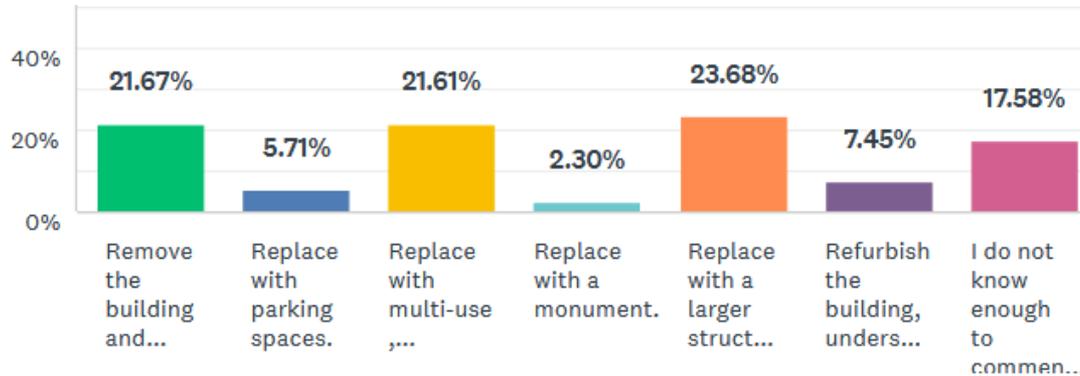
	1	2	3	TOTAL
▼ Concentrate in Existing Commercial Areas	76.10% 1,216	21.09% 337	2.82% 45	1,598
▼ Identify New Areas	22.26% 295	51.47% 682	26.26% 348	1,325
▼ No Additional Businesses Needed	20.18% 253	21.93% 275	57.89% 726	1,254

- A preference to concentrate growth in existing commercial areas. In a separate question, respondents selected **small retail stores** and **restaurants** as their top two choices for the most desired types of businesses needed. Hotels received the least amount of interest.
- Respondents expressed a strong belief (92%) that Mount Airy businesses should be participating in the Town's recycling program.

The Connection of Center Street Enabling Direct Passage from Route 27 to Main Street



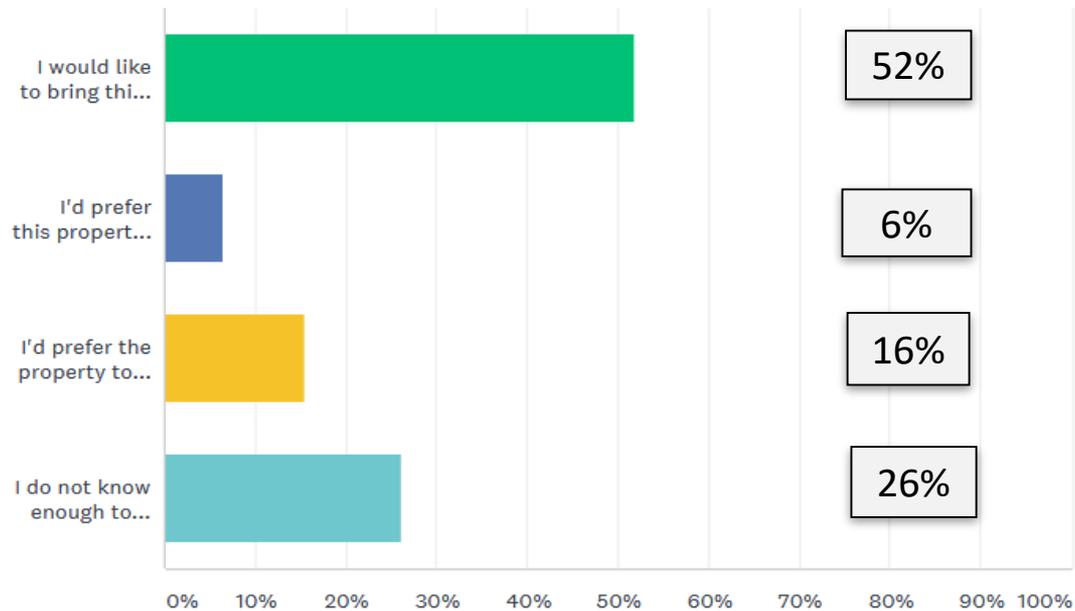
How Do You Want Your Tax Dollars Spent on the Future Use of the Flat Iron Building Property?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Remove the building and stabilize the land; fill in with grass, shrubs, trees (least cost).	21.67% 387
Replace with parking spaces.	5.71% 102
Replace with multi-use, park-like, benches, small plaza with no building structure.	21.61% 386
Replace with a monument.	2.30% 41
Replace with a larger structure as recommended by the consultant with the benefits noted in the description. Since it is set back, no Main Street closures would be required (most expensive option).	23.68% 423
Refurbish the building, understanding the high cost and limited uses (e.g., bathrooms; elevator for mobility impaired).	7.45% 133
I do not know enough to comment. I look forward lo the public hearing should this move forward.	17.58% 314
TOTAL	1,786

Opinions on the Harrison-Leishear Property

Answered: 1,799 Skipped: 102



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I would like to bring this into town with the pros as noted.	51.86% 933
▼ I'd prefer this property be developed under county control.	6.39% 115
▼ I'd prefer the property to remain as is and do not believe it will develop in the county.	15.56% 280
▼ I do not know enough to comment. I look forward to the public hearings should this move forward.	26.18% 471
TOTAL	1,799

Views on Need for Affordable Housing

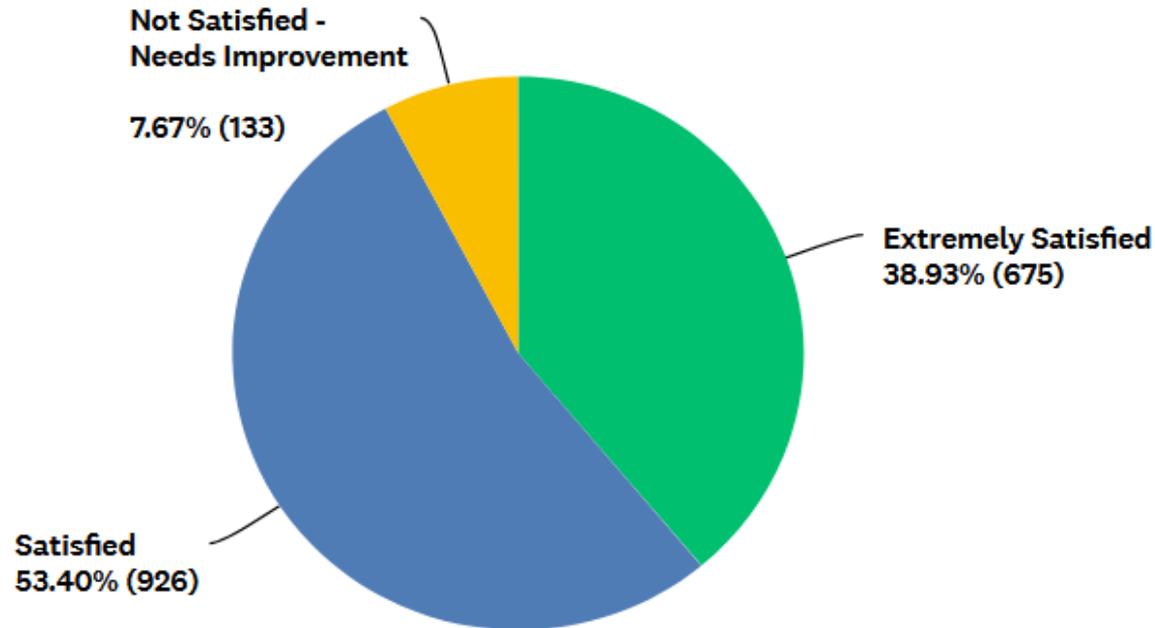
	1	2	3	TOTAL
▼ Apartment Complexes	39.04% 114	25.34% 74	35.62% 104	292
▼ Single Family Homes	58.49% 503	28.95% 249	12.56% 108	860
▼ Townhouses	25.06% 199	53.40% 424	21.54% 171	794
▼ Condominiums	30.19% 160	30.57% 162	39.25% 208	530
▼ I do not support any additional affordable housing options	88.46% 843	6.09% 58	5.46% 52	953

- Responses in rank order were: (1) no additional affordable housing needed, (2) single family homes, (3) townhouses, (4) condominiums, (5) apartments.
- Of those who selected no additional affordable housing needed, they did so strongly, ranking it #1 88% of the time.
- Reinforced by earlier questions indicating lack of affordable housing, and existing pace of residential growth were the top two choices NOT being an issue or needing any action.

A Clear Choice for Recreational Facilities that offer Leisure Activities in the Natural Environment

	1	2	3	TOTAL
Rollerblading / Skateboarding Park	23.62% 47	39.70% 79	36.68% 73	199
Basketball / Tennis Courts	24.77% 53	43.93% 94	31.31% 67	214
Ball Fields	42.93% 176	32.20% 132	24.88% 102	410
Playground Equipment	27.36% 116	33.49% 142	39.15% 166	424
■ Picnic Facilities	13.76% 83	31.01% 187	55.22% 333	603
■ Wooded Areas/ Natural Open Space	33.03% 331	45.31% 454	21.66% 217	1,002
■ Nature Trails/ Walking, Bicycling, and Jogging Paths	61.57% 889	27.70% 400	10.73% 155	1,444

Top Safety Concerns & Police Performance



- Very positive (92%) overall level of satisfaction. Eight percent *Not Satisfied*.
- Of those who selected *Not Satisfied*, a higher percentage (16%) of them were from the Twin Ridge neighborhood.

Top Safety Concerns & Police Performance (cont'd)

- Respondents selected **drug violations/activity** as their most serious safety concern, ranking it #1 or #2 collectively 70% of the time relative to all other choices (e.g., theft; burglary & assault; traffic safety).
- **Traffic safety** was a frequent concern.
- Respondents expressed a clear choice for **neighborhood watch information/assistance** (ranked #1), and **crime prevention strategies** (ranked #2) as being the most beneficial services that could be offered to citizens by the Mount Airy Police Department's (MAPD) Community Services Unit.
- There was a noticeable theme regarding safety, MAPD in written comments; further review & analysis of these and all safety-related questions in a holistic manner may yield additional insights.

Town Government Services and Engagement

- Three areas were presented for opinion: (1) I receive good value for Town of Mount Airy taxes I pay; (2) Town government welcomes citizen involvement and opinions; and (3) Town government cares about what people like me think.
- Most respondents agreed with these statements (65-70% chose *agree* and 15-20% chose *strongly agree*).
- The area “Town government cares about what people like me think” received **the highest negative opinion**, selecting disagree or strongly disagree 18% of the time when evaluating this area.
- Twenty percent of respondents had experiences involving the review and resolution of Town Code and Zoning requirements / violations. **Of these that did, 58% were satisfied or very satisfied with the resolution of their issues; 42% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.**

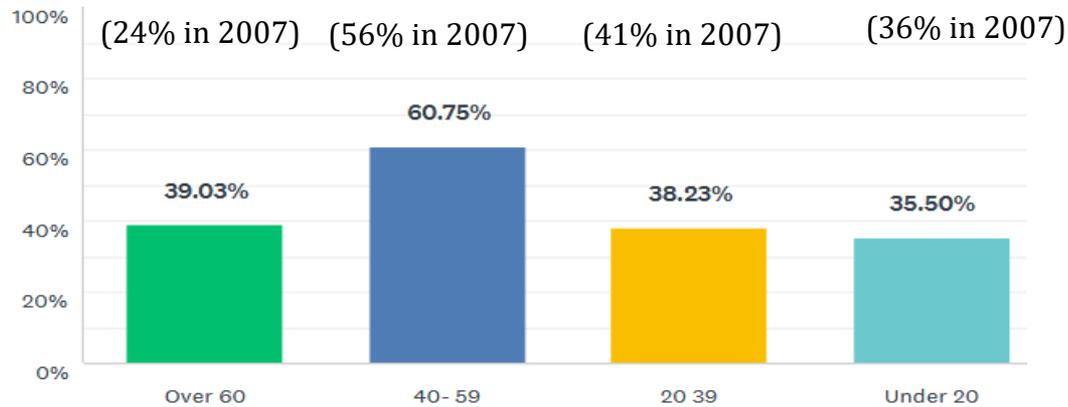
Performance of Town Council and Commissions

	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT	NOT FAMILIAR ENOUGH TO OFFER AN OPINION	TOTAL
Economic Development	12.79% 218	30.38% 518	15.89% 271	4.22% 72	36.72% 626	1,705
Planning and Zoning	11.67% 199	30.26% 516	18.24% 311	4.57% 78	35.25% 601	1,705
Recreation and Parks Board	5.23% 89	25.10% 427	29.75% 506	10.58% 180	29.34% 499	1,701
Recycling and Sanitation	2.46% 42	21.64% 370	36.43% 623	14.62% 250	24.85% 425	1,710
Streets and Roads	6.31% 108	28.86% 494	28.21% 483	11.74% 201	24.88% 426	1,712
Sustainability	4.34% 72	23.73% 394	21.14% 351	6.02% 100	44.76% 743	1,660
Town Council	4.22% 71	28.86% 486	25.24% 425	9.32% 157	32.36% 545	1,684
Water and Sewer	3.63% 62	24.97% 427	30.76% 526	11.81% 202	28.83% 493	1,710

- Survey respondents selected *Average*, *Very Good*, and *Not Familiar Enough to Offer an Opinion* most frequently.
- Results suggest that roughly one-third of Survey respondents may not be fully aware of the responsibilities and associated performance of the Town's government organizations.

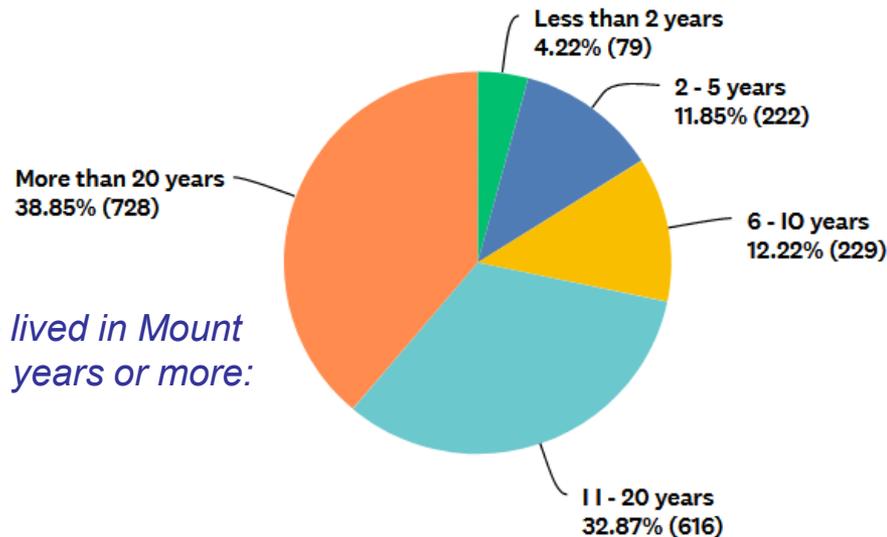
Selected Demographic Results

What Age Groups Live In Your Residences?



A 15% increase in "Over 60" age group.

How Long Have You Lived in Mount Airy?



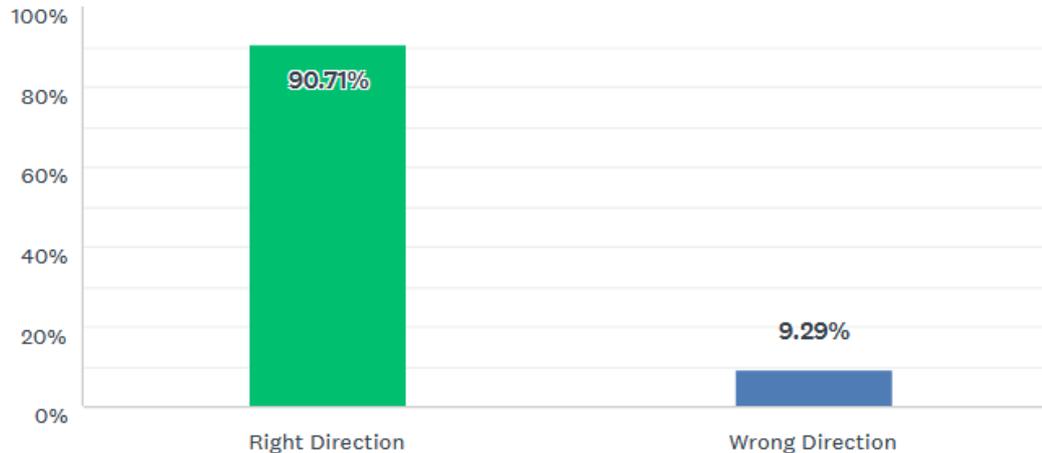
72% have lived in Mount Airy for 11 years or more:

Extensive and Thoughtful Written Comments

- Written comments were provided by Survey Respondents in 933 (49%) of surveys. An initial key word search was done; some themes found are highlighted below:

Results of Customized Word Search on Key Words and Phrases	
Key Words	Number of Comments Containing Key Words
Development	140
Housing / Affordable Housing	143
Residential	34
Businesses	123
Growth	88
Downtown	122
Bank / Old Bank Building / Blight / Vacant	160
Community Center	20
Main Street	87
Flat Iron	77
Harrison Leishear	24
Center Street	26
Traffic	170
Mayor / Town Council	44
Safety / Crime / Drugs / Police	207
Caboose / Train / Museum	40

Respondents Expressed A Clear View (91%) that Mount Airy is Headed in the Right Direction



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Right Direction	90.71%	1,435
▼ Wrong Direction	9.29%	147
TOTAL		1,582

- Main Street (19%), Park Avenue (20%), and Mount Airy East (21%) each had relatively higher percentages of respondents who selected wrong direction compared to other locations.
- A review of written comments of respondents who selected wrong direction may provide additional insights.

Products, Recommendations, & Path Forward

■ *Stakeholder Outreach*

- ✓ Make Survey Results Report available to the public via Town Web Site.
- ✓ Presentations to Town Council, and Commissions as requested, in public settings.
- ✓ Information exchanges with stakeholder/community groups where there is interest.

■ *Products*

- ✓ **Survey Results Report** presenting all results and written comments.
- ✓ **Survey Monkey** software user license; contains results.
- ✓ **Excel Database** of results to facilitate data analysis.



■ *Further Analysis to Gain More Insights and Support Town Decision Making*

- ✓ Additional “analytical lenses” to gain deeper understanding of all written comments and question-specific results by location and other demographic information.
- ✓ Tailored topic-specific profiles or dashboards (e.g., growth and development; safety) looking at the information above in a holistic manner.
- ✓ Perform analysis “on demand” to help inform Town government as issues arise.

Thank You!

Our Great Citizens of Mount Airy!

Mayor Patrick Rockinberg

Mount Airy Town Council

Wendy Rimbey – Our Task Force Chairperson