

The Village of  
**HC Harper's Choice**  
Community Association

**Columbia, Maryland**

**The Harper's Choice Village Community Plan**

*Ensure We Thrive in a Time of Change*



**The Village of Family, Fitness and Fun**

Approved by Harper's Choice Village Board - September 2013

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# HARPER'S CHOICE VILLAGE CENTER COMMUNITY PLAN

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In late 2009, the Harper's Choice Village Board appointed a committee to develop a Village Center Community Plan (VCCP) for the Harper's Choice village center and its surrounding areas. Initially, this committee, known as the Harper's Choice Village Center Community Planning (HCVCCP) Committee established a Steering subcommittee to begin the recruitment of resident volunteers and map out a strategy that would ensure stakeholder participation. The first meeting of the Steering subcommittee was held on September 15, 2009 with the goal to recruit volunteers by January 2010. Volunteers were appointed by the Village Board to serve as members of the HCVCCP. The committee met regularly for approximately three years to study the existing village center and its surrounding area; engage stakeholders; and develop this Village Center Community Plan.

### HCVCCP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- |                      |                 |
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HCCA'S Board of Directors and its representative to the Columbia Association Council are elected by the members of the association to manage the business affairs of HCCA.

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# THE HARPER'S CHOICE INTRODUCTION SECTION 1



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Village Center Community Planning (VCCP) Process

In 2009, Howard County, Maryland amended its development regulations and established a formal village redevelopment process, which is described in Council Bill 29-2009. As part of that process, the zoning regulations allow for the development of customized Village Center Community Plans. This new regulation defines a Village Center as a mixed-use development in New Town District (better known as the town of Columbia) that is designed to be a “community focal point and gathering place for the surrounding village neighborhoods.”

A Village Center Community Plan (VCCP) provides a community vision that is to be used to help evaluate the appropriateness of village center development and/or redevelopment petitions by property owners. A VCCP is defined in the zoning regulations as “an advisory plan that has been developed by the community and endorsed by the Village Board.”

In the Fall of 2009, the Harper’s Choice Village Board created a VCCP subcommittee which was expanded in early 2010 with additional community volunteers. Working for more than three years, the Harper’s Choice VCCP’s intended outcome was to create a community driven plan that establishes the long term vision and goals for the Harper’s Choice Village Center and guides the appropriateness of future village center redevelopment.

[Appendix B](#) shows the community and stakeholder engagement process and activities undertaken as a part of this process. The community survey utilized in this effort is provided in [Appendix A](#). The information gathered from the survey and other community engagement efforts is presented in Appendix A. Community feedback obtained during this process is at the heart of the VCCP Plan.

*Introduction continued on page 3*

#### Community Engagement & Plan Development Process

The following is a summary timeline of the Harper’s Choice Village Center planning and community engagement process:

- Fall 2009 - Village Board sub-committee formed
- Spring 2010 - Full committee formed with volunteers, meets monthly
- Spring & Summer 2010 - Prepared community profile
- September 2010 - Community walkabout
- February 2011 - Merchants meeting
- March 2011 - Community meeting
- June 2011 - Columbia Association meeting
- July 2011 - Kimco and police meeting
- Summer & Fall 2011 - Individual interviews with merchants and stakeholders
- December 2011 - County staff meeting
- Spring 2012 - Draft community plan
- April 2012 - Community survey
- April 2012 - Community poster session
- September 2012 - Post draft plan for community comment
- September 2013 - Deliver plan to Village Board for review
- October 2013 - Deliver plan to Howard County

## The Harper's Choice Village Center

The Harper's Choice Village Center Community Plan (HCVCCP) was approved by the Harper's Choice Community Association Board in September 2013 and will be submitted to the County's Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ). In the future, when a developer submits a redevelopment petition to the county, the DPZ can reference the HCVCCP. The Village Board is permitted to submit a written Community Response Document to comment on the proposal that includes a statement of whether the petition is consistent with the existing HCVCCP.

Included in the HCVCCP introduction is a brief overview of the Harper's Choice Village Center as well as the community vision and goals for the village center. [Section 2](#) contains the entire HCVCCP, which provides the community vision to be used in preparing and evaluating the appropriateness of village center development and/or redevelopment petitions by property owners. Section 3 is the Community Profile, which explores the history of and existing conditions in Harper's Choice. Throughout the document the fundamental principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability are utilized.

In order to plan for the community's future needs, it is critical to understand the history, demographics and existing conditions of the Harper's Choice Village Center. To do this, the HCVCCP Committee found it helpful to answer the following questions:

- Where has the village been?
- Where is it now?
- Where does it want to go?
- How can it get there?

Section 3 of this document, "[The Community Profile](#)" serves to answer the first two questions and creates the foundation from which the last two questions are addressed. The Community Profile seeks to provide a factual common knowledge base for participants and stakeholders in the planning process. Topics included in the profile include a brief history of Harper's Choice, a description of the village center study area, and sections on existing land use, zoning, community character, transportation, and the environment. The Community Profile is presented after the Plan in this document with the expectation that readers will be most interested in the Plan itself and will review the Community Profile for additional context.

Introduction continued on page 4

### What is a Village Center Community Plan (VCCP)?

The Howard County zoning regulation CB-29 outlines what the VCCP "may include but is not limited to:"

- The boundaries of the Village Center;
- Planning and design concepts;
- Specific recommendations related to Village Center Amenity Areas, building heights, bulk requirements, parking, density, and permitted uses;
- Whether the Village Board has architectural review as designated in the village covenants; and
- Identification of any historical or signature aspects of the Village Center.

The zoning regulations state that when the VCCP is completed, it may be submitted to the County's Department of Planning and Zoning.

Introduction continued from page 3

The Harper's Choice Village Center, the second of Columbia's nine village centers was opened to the public in 1971. Situated within the Village of Harper's Choice, the Village Center is located northeast and northwest of the intersection of Harper's Farm Road and Cedar Lane. The Village Center primarily serves the three Harper's Choice neighborhoods - Longfellow, Swansfield and Hobbit's Glen) which are home to more than 8,300 people. The Village Center has always been a unique mixture of retail, offices and residential. The Center has undergone several minor renovations as well as an extensive renovation and refurbishment in the mid 1990's.

Please read the full [Community Profile](#) section for important additional information about the Village of Harper's Choice and its village center.



## Harper's Choice Vision and Goals

### Vision:

#### *Ensure We Thrive in a Time of Change*

The Harper's Choice Village Center is an inviting and attractive community focal point. The village center maintains a balanced, sustainable environment for current and future generations, hosts a strong core of merchants who are part of the community, serves the day-to-day needs of village residents, and also attracts non-residents through comprehensive retail and entertainment offerings. The village center thrives by being an authentic and integral part of the community that adapts to changing needs over time.

### Goals:

#### **Economic Sustainability:**

Provide for the Harper's Choice Village Center visitors' material and service needs and achieve strategically guided long-term development that ensures the center's competitive economic viability.



#### **Social Sustainability:**

Create relationships with the visitors of the Harper's Choice Village Center in order to help it function safely, with civility, and form a vibrant gathering place to promote community cohesion and well-being.



#### **Environmental Sustainability:**

Integrate environmental stewardship into the Harper's Choice Village Center functions and development to enhance awareness of, connection to, and preservation of natural resources.









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# THE VILLAGE CENTER COMMUNITY PLAN SECTION 2

the future  
fu-ture  
come

## SECTION 2: THE VILLAGE CENTER COMMUNITY PLAN (VCCP)

### Village Center Boundaries

When the Harper's Choice VCCP activities began, clear delineated village center boundaries did not exist. As an initial part of the process, the planning committee gave substantive consideration to the selection of constructive boundaries for the VCCP. It was determined that Harper's Farm Road was a clear boundary for the village center on the south, with the inclusion of the pedestrian cross walk and immediately adjacent pathways and bus stop. To the west, the boundary was created between the commercial and recreational property of the village center and the residential property that borders it. To the east, the demarcation was set to include the athletic club and portions of the pathway that connect the village center to the Longfellow neighborhood. The most debated consideration was how far north to set the boundary. Finally, it was determined to include the Columbia Association (CA) SportsPark and The Bain Center and Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House properties, and the middle school and associated fields to maintain community synergies.

### Harper's Choice Village Center Boundaries Map



The Harper's Choice Village Center has therefore been demarcated as shown above and comprises approximately 79 acres.

## Historical or Signature Aspects of the Village Center

The Community Profile briefly presents the history of the Village of Harper's Choice and identifies several historic sites in the broader village. With regard to the Village Center proper (refer to Boundaries map on page 8), the HCVCCP supports and embraces signature aspects of the village center rather than maintenance of particular structures. Joseph Square and Kahler Hall are examples of signature aspects of the Harper's Choice Village Center which because of their "history" and status should remain focal points for community gatherings. Other signature aspects include recreational and athletic facilities including the CA-owned SportsParks and Athletic Club. Looking to the future, these signature aspects of the village center should be retained and enhanced when the Village Center undergoes redevelopment. Interim steps to fully integrate these amenities are highly encouraged.

## Village Architectural Committee Review

The Harper's Choice Architectural Committee (HCAC) maintains architectural control over commercial buildings owned by Kimco<sup>1</sup> and CA. The HCAC does not maintain architectural control over county-owned buildings, which include the Harper's Choice Middle School, the old Cedar Lane School building, The Bain Center, Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House. Future alterations and redevelopment for all other properties will need to adhere to the Harper's Choice covenants and plans will need to be reviewed by the HCAC.

<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, Kimco is the primary commercial property owner in the Harper's Choice Village Center. Other notable property owners include the Columbia Association (CA) and Howard County. References to Kimco are intended to be directed to the owner of the commercial property, should Kimco no longer be the property owner at a later date.

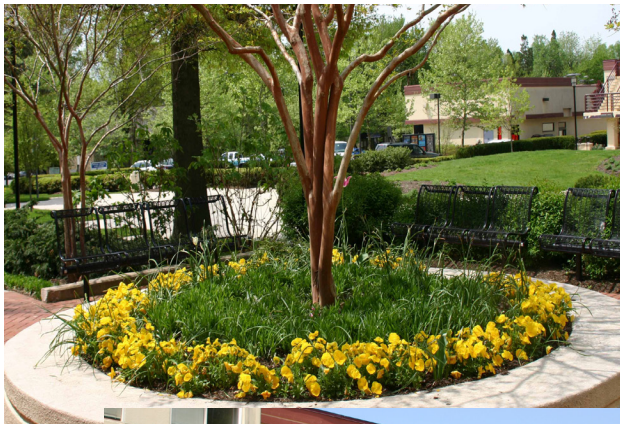


## Planning and Design Concepts

### Howard County zoning regulation CB-29 states that a New Town (Columbia) Village Center should include:

A mixed-use development in the New Town District which is in a location designated on the New Town Preliminary Development Plan as a "Village Center", designed to be a community focal point and gathering place for the surrounding village neighborhoods will include the following items:

- a. An outdoor, public, village green, plaza or square, which has both hardscape and softscape elements. This public space shall be designed to function as an accessible, primarily pedestrian-oriented promenade connecting the various Village Center buildings and shall include public seating features;
- b. Stores, shops, offices or other commercial uses which provide opportunities to fulfill the day-to-day needs of the village residents, such as food stores, specialty stores, service agencies, financial institutions, personal services, medical services, and restaurants;
- c. Space for community uses and/or institutional uses; and
- d. Residential uses, to the extent appropriate to support and enhance, but not overwhelm, other uses in the Village Center.



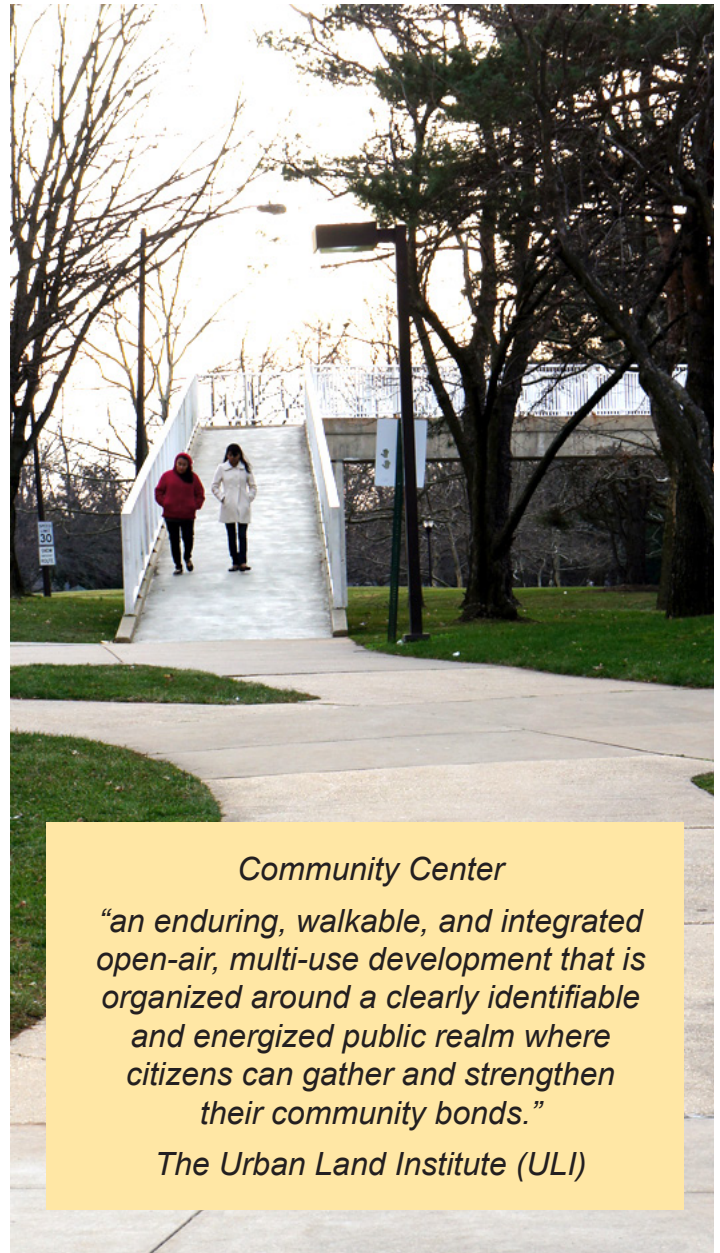
The Urban Land Institute (ULI) defined a community center as “an enduring, walkable, and integrated open-air, multi-use development that is organized around a clearly identifiable and energized public realm where citizens can gather and strengthen their community bonds. It is anchored by retail, dining, and leisure uses, as well as by vertical or horizontal residential uses. At least one other type of development is included in a town center, such as office, hospitality, civic, and cultural centers. Over time, a town center should evolve into the densest, most compact, and most diverse part of a community, with strong connections to its surroundings.” This definition captures the high-level community vision for the Harper’s Choice Village Center.

To achieve this type of vibrant community center, the ULI identified ten fundamental design principles. Coupled with feedback received from village residents and village center stakeholders, such as property owners and merchants, these principles have formed the Harper’s Choice VCCP planning and design concepts and have been organized into the following three overarching principles for any redevelopment of the Harper’s Choice Village Center:

1. Economic sustainability through design that aesthetically integrates diverse uses, has appropriate density, and ensures access and safety.
2. Social sustainability through design that includes inviting public spaces and ensures connectivity with the community.
3. Environmental sustainability through design that fosters community resilience, highlights natural resources, and encourages environmental stewardship.

The VCCP calls for meaningful redevelopment of substantive aspects of the Harper’s Choice Village Center, but recognizes that large-scale change may be years from actualization. Therefore, in the remainder of this Plan, each of

these principles are discussed broadly in order to present the incremental opportunities for change. A summary of Harper’s Choice Village Center’s current adherence to each of these principles is presented with recommendations for substantive redevelopment and more immediate enhancements to ensure that the village center continues to thrive. The Plan concludes with a table that lists the specific [recommendations](#) presented below, their connection to the design principles, and responsible parties.



### *Community Center*

*“an enduring, walkable, and integrated open-air, multi-use development that is organized around a clearly identifiable and energized public realm where citizens can gather and strengthen their community bonds.”*

*The Urban Land Institute (ULI)*

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## 1. Economic sustainability: diverse uses, density, and safety.

### *Integrate multiple uses while assuring aesthetics*

Historically, town centers or villages served a variety of uses for the broader community. The “work, live, shop” concept was integral to these centers. Uses such as markets, civic buildings, offices, and parks created a vibrant environment that was active during the day and evening. Today, first and foremost, a village center should be a place-based development. A sense of place functions as an anchor and helps distinguish a village center from typical single-use development. The integration of multiple uses with a layered system of streets, sidewalks, and open spaces helps create a memorable, enjoyable, and productive environment for patrons. Therefore, any redevelopment of the Harper’s Choice Village Center must maintain and enhance the existing diversity of uses, as discussed in the Community Profile. For new construction, mixed-use development, in which diverse uses are vertically integrated, should be given preference over multi-use development, in which multiple uses (retail, business, residential) exist, but within different buildings that are within walking distance.

Having a diverse range of physically well connected and attractive uses that meet the day to day needs of area residents is essential for the economic vibrancy of the village center. If people have to get back into their car to use multiple facets of the center’s amenities they are more likely to leave the center to meet different needs or shop in a more consolidated location. The integration of uses also supports an environment that allows for a variety of activities, including working, living, shopping, and leisure. Furthermore, integrating uses help moderate the balance between vehicular traffic and pedestrian flow by creating different traffic peaks throughout the day and week. Residential uses enhance evening and weekend activity and office uses generate activity during the weekday. The combination of well-constructed,

aesthetically pleasing residential, office, retail, and civic uses forms a neighborhood environment that is appealing to and will be sustained by the community.

Current Context: The Harper’s Choice Village Center contains a wide variety of amenities, from grocery shopping, to restaurants, to basic services such as a gas station and banks, to community facilities. Limited residential and office space is also available in the center of the village. Surrounding the core buildings of the village center are sporting facilities, senior facilities, places of education and additional residential buildings.

Given the current design, the Harper’s Choice Village Center already includes multiple uses and for many residents these uses meet important day to day needs. These positive features of the village center should be maintained and enhanced, with a focus on creating a better sense of cohesion and unity throughout the center and ensuring that amenities continue to meet the needs and interests of the community.

However, the amenities that currently exist are spread out over a fairly wide area and are not well connected by easily navigable walkways or clear and ample signage. The residents have identified numerous opportunities for improvement to existing amenities, particularly in the area of food and restaurant retail. The residents would like to see an increase offers in the variety and diversity of amenities, to include some unique businesses. Additionally, the existing buildings are considered to be out of date in terms of exterior aesthetics and design. In both near and long term planning, property owners should prioritize the enhancement of the diversity and quality of amenities and uses that are incorporated into the village center. They should also ensure that any updates to the buildings they own support the authenticity and attractiveness of the village center.



## *Capture the benefits that density offers*

The development of an appealing and vibrant village center requires a well-designed mix of uses at a density high enough to achieve a critical mass of people. This increase density facilitates the creation of a sense of place and generates energy. A successful village center is typically the most densely developed and highly visited part of the community. To keep the whole center thriving, the design must encourage cross-shopping through synergies among its various uses. One story buildings generally do not effectively shape an attractive, constructively dense village center. Two, three and four story buildings are preferable because they are tall enough to define the space but not overwhelm it and create the diverse uses and density desired for the Harper's Choice Village Center.

When designing an appropriately dense village center, pedestrian friendly spaces must be prioritized. In contrast to the automobile's domination of conventional low-density development, higher density makes the human scale possible. Compare a densely developed mixed use center where people can easily walk along broad sidewalks lining attractive storefronts and safely cross narrow streets as they move within the development to a conventional strip center set behind a large parking field and next to a wide road. The former invites people to get out of their cars and stay, perhaps walking from shopping to dining and on to other activities. The latter dissipates the energy of the center by encouraging car-based "laser" shopping – park the car, buy the item, get back in the car, and leave. If cars and parking dominate the village enter it will not achieve the overall livability and pedestrian friendliness that make a village center work. However, it is important that adequate parking be provided and also designed to be shared across uses during different traffic peaks.



*Diverse uses in 2013 include: office rentals and apartments (top); outdoor amenity (center); shops (bottom). Opportunities exist to increase usage and enhance aesthetics, safety and density.*



*Above: 3-story buildings include retail, offices and apartments. Potential for additional stories.*

*Below: Heavy reliance on vehicles with parking congestion. Opportunities to improve walkability.*



All told, higher density creates great places to live by: helping create walkable neighborhoods, supporting housing choices and affordability, expanding transportation choices, supporting community fiscal health, improving security, and protecting the environment. Of course, the level of density of a village center must be appropriately scaled for the community it serves and the infrastructure (roads, schools, health services, etc.) that exist to support it.

Current Situation: The Harper's Choice Village Center is currently situated in a relatively large area that is not well-connected. Most of the buildings in the village center are commercial, one story buildings with a few 2 and 3 story buildings. Just outside the Village Center boundaries, the Harper House at nine stories is the tallest building in the Village. Additionally, the current parking and road infrastructure in the village center struggle to smoothly accommodate the current volume of businesses and residences. Some near-term solutions to these challenges may be feasible, but future development that increases density of the village center will need to address the transportation infrastructure throughout and connecting to the village center. Redevelopment should increase the density and connectivity of the village center, while maintaining a scale that is comfortable for pedestrians and in keeping with the surrounding area. This would help to increase the ease of walking, enable a more efficient use of services and resources, and create a more convenient, enjoyable place to live and patronize.

## *Prioritize Pedestrian Safety and Mobility*

As previously discussed, high volumes of pedestrian traffic are critical to the success of village centers. For people to choose to get out of their cars, walk between center amenities, and linger in shops and public areas they must first and foremost feel that the center is safe and inviting. This includes ensuring effective security given any local safety concerns, ample and effective pedestrian oriented lighting, and a design that provides clear sight lines and limits blind areas. Storefront lighting is particularly effective in creating an attractive and safe nighttime pedestrian experience, including both ground level and upper level windows and signage. Robust and well placed lighting of walkways between amenities is also essential. Pedestrian mobility is enhanced by a safe sidewalk experience that connects the various village center amenities. Well planned walkways are extremely effective in supporting a sense of place and expanding the experience of pedestrian patrons.

Current situation: As can be seen in the responses to the VCCP survey ([Appendix A](#)) safety is the predominant concern for those who are served by the Harper's Choice Village Center. As a result of both safety concerns and design challenges, most people tend to park next to each amenity that they are using and limit the extent to which they walk through the village center. They do not seek the center as a destination where they would spend time apart from meeting a particular need. Loitering, lighting and visibility concerns, generally diminishing aesthetics, and challenges to walking between the various parts of the village center are commonly cited issues that impact patron safety and mobility. More specifically, the existing sidewalks are incomplete, often very narrow, and frequently do not create clear pathways in alignment with the way people would naturally want to walk between village center amenities. For example, there is no pedestrian pathway between many of the main features of the village center, such as between Safeway and the shops on the west. Often the

only direct path from one amenity to another in the Village is through several parking lots. While it is well recognized that lighting is important for safety and it can also add to or detract from the area's attractiveness. Existing lighting in the breezeway area between the two primary Kimco-owned buildings and the stairwells is currently poor and creates a dim, unsafe feeling. While lighting in the shopping center parking lot areas is adequate, it is not pedestrian oriented. Additionally, many of the natural pedestrian pathways, such as between the Athletic Club and the grocery store, require people to walk along poorly lit areas. There are also challenges raised by the need to update buildings and walkways to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Village center enhancement and redevelopment efforts should prioritize steps that will increase the ability for pedestrians to travel safely between all facets of the village center. Areas of particular concern are from west to east and between more peripheral community amenities, and public gathering spaces.



*Sidewalk to “no-where” inhibits active transportation (pedestrian and cycling)*

## 2. Social sustainability: public spaces and connectivity

### *Create an enduring and memorable public realm*

A well-designed public realm functions as an anchor, amenity, and defining element for a village center and is often considered the single most important element in establishing the character and drawing power of a successful village center. A successful public realm:

- Is a compelling central space that people are attracted to for its placement, design, and surrounding uses
- Is a highly visible, easily accessed, and well connected to transit, pathways, and parking
- Allows easy movement between uses and has open sight lines that facilitate way finding and encourage exploration
- Is integrated with adjacent uses that significantly enliven the public space, such as restaurants
- Includes open spaces that are sized and shaped to allow events to be held in them in a way that is inclusive and brings together different segments of the community
- Is a place that helps to restore the human spirit, in part through a connection with community and a connection with the natural world.

These specific attributes point to the overarching idea of a successful public realm, which is to create an authentic space that is the place to be in the village center and will have lasting identity because it remains true to the village center's history and fosters the integration of the people, the place, and the larger community.

Current conditions: The primary public gathering space in the Harper's Choice Village Center is Joseph's Square, which is an outdoor plaza that is behind / interior to several buildings and was last re-designed in 1997 to improve its attractiveness, accessibility and safety. However, the square does not currently draw substantive regular use as it is not visible from or invitingly connected to most of the village center amenities. The square



**Joseph Square (2012)**

*Located in the interior of the Village Center  
Future design: Consider focus of public realm*

includes a mix of paving, pleasant landscaping, and an original fountain which is a historical feature of the village center. However, the fountain rarely operates and is in need of better maintenance and upgrades and there is little in the way of seating or attractions in the square that invites people to pause and spend time there. Other potential outdoor gathering spaces in the Harper's Choice Village Center include the patio at Kahler Hall, which is adjacent to the square, and the benches that are on the street facing side of the two conjoined mixed use buildings. There is a SportsPark just behind the Safeway that has ample outdoor space, but it is largely hidden and not connected to the most commonly used village center amenities. All together, the public space at the Harper's Village Center is quite limited, not easily seen, fragmented, and offers little opportunity for outdoor seating or gathering for activities. The existing public space is also often cited by area residents as feeling unsafe due to frequent loitering, as well as poor lighting and design elements that limit visibility. There is a broad need to create a vibrant public realm that is a focal point for the village center, provides a place to gather while creating connections to the various amenities, and helps to make the center a multi-purpose, family-friendly destination.



*Above: View of Joseph Square from Kahler Hall patio*

*Left: Kahler Hall patio*

### *Connect to the community*

One of the defining characteristics of a village center is that it is very public and has strong connections with the surrounding community. The fact that patrons look on village centers as public centers, not as managed shopping centers or private commercial developments, is an important distinction. Strong connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, commercial areas, and park systems help reinforce the view that the village center is accessible to all users. Connectivity to a village center occurs at a variety of levels. The most obvious connection is through a well-designed series of roads at the arterial, collector, and local scales. Village centers can generate a high volume of vehicular traffic and must be scaled appropriately within the context of the road system that is available to handle and distribute the traffic. Village centers also require an effective balance between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Sidewalks, walkways, and bike pathways are key components that feed into and connect a village center to surrounding neighborhoods and other communities. Effective signage highlighting the village center amenities and connecting the village center to the broader community is also essential.

Current situation: The Harper’s Choice Village Center is designed to primarily serve the three neighborhoods that comprise the Village of Harper’s Choice – Longfellow, Swansfield and Hobbit’s Glen and is centrally located accordingly. There are two primary entrances to the village center and both are located along heavily utilized Harper’s Farm Road with Cedar Lane, another primary local road intersecting Harper’s Farm between the entrances. There is a bus stop directly across from the village center that can be utilized for local buses as well as commuter buses into Baltimore, DC and other destinations surrounding Columbia. In 2013, Howard County studied the efficacy of moving the bus stop into the Village Center and there is a strong possibility that the bus stop will be relocated. There is limited visibility of the village center amenities from Harper’s Farm Road and as a result, there is not an easy way for motorists or pedestrians to ascertain what stores are in the village center. For example, two of the restaurants do not face Harper’s Farm Road or the front of the center. Additionally, once

in the village center, visitors often have a difficult time finding the different stores and amenities, which are widely spread out and many of which have their frontage in a dark breezeway or facing the lightly used interior green space of Joseph Square. The village center is primarily surrounded by residential areas, which are laced with ample sidewalks and pathways. It would be beneficial for the pathways connecting to the village center to do so in a more deliberate manner and for there to be contiguous pathways across the village center (perhaps west to east and north to south) that would allow pedestrians and bicyclists to travel to and through the center. There is also a need for wayfinding signs in the community that direct people to the village center, as well as more substantial wayfinding signs within the village center. Given the redevelopment of neighboring Wilde Lake, the more recently created and/or updated nearby village centers of Hickory Ridge and River Hill, and forthcoming downtown redevelopment, there is an increasing need to ensure a strategic approach to revitalization in the Harper's Choice Village Center becoming a compelling place to visit. This requires that the village continue to meet the day to day needs of local residents and that amenities are of a quality and uniqueness that people choose to visit the Harper's Choice Village Center when they have many other nearby shopping, dining and recreation opportunities.



*2013: Bus Stop on Harper's Farm Rd across from Village Center. Howard County studying to determine if the bus stop should be moved into the Village Center.*



*Photo taken from sidewalk on Harper's Farm Rd. Notice the absence of sidewalks leading into the Village Center*



*Path from Village Center to Harper's Farm Rd and the Swansfield neighborhood*



*This drawing represents the potential pathway connectivity ideas that could be implemented without waiting for full re-development of the Village. These improvements would enhance connectivity and safety of pedestrians and would ease the vehicle traffic burden.*

### 3. Environmental sustainability: community resilience, natural resource awareness, and stewardship.

A sustainable community can persist over generations, enjoying a healthy environment, prosperous economy and vibrant civic life. A classic definition of sustainable development is that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It does not undermine its social or physical systems of support. Rather, it develops with respect to the ecological patterns in which it thrives. The creation of a sustainable community is an ambitious process in which a community develops attitudes and ongoing actions that strengthen its natural environment, economy and social well-being. Benefits include more livable and appealing communities, lower costs and an environment safe for future generations. A growing number of communities across the United States have begun this process, gathering a number of local initiatives under the umbrella of sustainability. They are bringing preventive, integrated strategies to bear on issues ranging from crime, to health, jobs, land use, energy, food, and community values. Sustainable community development maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. An important aspect of community sustainability is community resilience, which can be defined as the capacity of the community to adapt and respond to adversity and external impacts such that they are strengthened and more resourceful. In practical terms, community resilience can be looked at as a design strategy that aims to reduce the vulnerabilities of the systems the community relies upon, often by increasing diversity, flexibility and collaboration, improving redundancy in critical areas, supporting decentralization, and bolstering local capacity. A successful community center embodies environmental sustainability and serves to demonstrate and educate residents and patrons about these critical issues so that best practices can be embodied in the larger community itself.



*An entrance to Village Center from Harper's Farm Road. Sidewalks are absent.*



Current Situation: The following assessment of the current sustainability and resilience of the Village of Harper's Choice, with a focus on the village center, is parsed out into specific facets of a sustainable community, including the built environment, energy, food, and water.

- **Infrastructure Environment:** Sustainable architecture seeks to minimize the negative environmental impact of buildings by enhancing efficiency and moderation in the use of materials, energy efficiency, and development space. The buildings that comprise the Harper's Choice Village Center were not built during a time when approaches to sustainable architecture were as well-known as they are now. It does not appear that any village center buildings apply comprehensive sustainable architecture strategies resulting in significant energy and water consumption associated with their operation.
- **Transportation Energy:** In addition to buildings, transportation is another substantive energy user. While Columbia's unique design and infrastructure has the potential to encourage greater alternative transportation methods, the car is the dominant mode of transportation, even for accessing the local village center.
- **Food:** There is little observable connection between the Harper's Choice Village Center and the local food system, which is critical for community sustainability. The vast majority of the food sold and consumed at the village center appears to be transported to the area from great distances via the industrial-agricultural food system.
- **Water:** There is a lack of integrated awareness of and action regarding water and watershed management in the Village of Harper's Choice and within the Harper's Choice Village Center. The large amount of impervious pavement and building structures also contributes to stormwater runoff that greatly degrades local streams and lakes.



*Left: Columbia Association's Athletic Club parking lot*

*Below: Parking lot in front of Safeway grocery store*

## Recommendations

The following specific recommendations for the Harper’s Choice Village Center are primarily focused on substantive redevelopment. However, for many recommendations interim steps can be taken to ensure that the Harper’s Choice Village Center continues to thrive, and these types of actions are highly encouraged. Each recommendation is given a number for ease of reference, not ranking. The design principles that are supported by the recommendation are noted, with each recommendation appropriately often supporting more than one principle. The primary party(s) with expected responsibility for moving the recommendation forward is also indicated.

# <sup>1</sup>	Recommendation	Economic	Social	Environment	Responsibility
1	New construction should have clear and open flow and sight lines between amenities.	X	X		Kimco <sup>2</sup>
2	New construction should include space for new and additional amenities desired by community <sup>3</sup> .	X	X		Kimco
3	New construction should be ADA compliant.	X	X		Kimco, CA
4	New construction should be certified to ENERGY STAR and/or LEED building standards and include promotional signage and education of the community.	X	X	X	
5	New construction should preferably be two or three stories, but not more than four stories.	X			Kimco
6	Lower levels of new buildings should provide a mix of business space and community space and upper levels should be used for market-rate residential units and office spaces.	X			Kimco
7	Additional residential units should not exceed the ability of community services (roads, schools, hospitals, emergency services, etc.) to meet the additional volume of residents.	X			Kimco, County
8	Building exteriors should have architectural variety, be aesthetically pleasing, and use quality materials.	X	X		Kimco, CA, County
9	Prioritize the preservation and creation of prominent, inviting, and well-connected public green spaces.	X	X	X	Kimco, CA, County
10	Historic buildings, such as Kahler Hall, should be retained due to their intrinsic community value and creation of a sense of place.	X			CA

1 Numbers given to recommendations do not imply priority, rather are given for ease of reference.

2 While the current property owner, Kimco, is specifically referenced here, should the properties owned by Kimco be sold, this note will refer to the current property owner.

3 For example, additional sit down restaurants as well as more residential and office space. Please see the community survey responses in Appendix B for more specific input on community preferences for village center amenities.

# <sup>1</sup>	Recommendation	Economic	Social	Environment	Responsibility
11	Prioritize landscaping with native trees, perennial and annual vegetation, water features, seating, public art, and signage.	X	X	X	CA, Kimco
12	Creating more integration between the SportsPark and the rest of the village center.	X	X		CA, Kimco
13	Create a walkway <sup>2</sup> between Florence Bain and the adjacent buildings to Joseph Square.	X	X		CA, Kimco, County
14	Create a walkway across the Safeway parking lot to connect to the shops on the west.	X	X		Kimco
15	Create a walkway that can be traversed from the shops on the west all the way to the Athletic Club.	X	X		Kimco, CA
16	Redesign / replace the two-story buildings connected by the breezeway to a more modern, open design that doesn't create the dark walkway and hidden interior green space and retail frontage.	X	X		Kimco
17	Ensure that lighting is designed for people in addition to cars, with emphasis on lighting of walkways and storefronts.	X	X		Kimco, CA, County
18	Promote a network of high-quality mass transit options that connect the village center to surrounding neighborhoods and broader community.	X	X	X	CA, Kimco, County
19	Redevelopment should prioritize a pedestrian-friendly design in part by directly connecting to existing community pathways with new pathways that transverse the village center in multiple directions.	X	X	X	Kimco, CA, County
20	Enhance use of land between Harper's Farm Road and the adjacent apartment complex to create a more inviting pathway to village center. <sup>3</sup>			X	CA, private property, County
21	Coordinate with nearby village centers, Wilde Lake and Hickory Ridge in particular, to make sure uses are complementary and don't negatively compete with one-and-other.	X			Kimco, CA
22	Locally owned merchants and/or those that include sustainable best practices in their business model should be actively sought as tenants.	X	X	X	Kimco
23	Stormwater management best practices (e.g., rain gardens and bioretention facilities) should be explored and implemented at every opportunity.			X	Kimco, CA

1 Numbers given to recommendations do not imply priority, rather are given for ease of reference.

2 All walkways should be sized according to their intended use and place in the overall design. Wide sidewalks should exist where restaurants and al fresco dining will be concentrated. Narrower sidewalks can be in place on less intensively used streets, but should be minimized. Pedestrian walkways from parking structures and surrounding areas need to be clearly linked to signature spaces. All walkways should be well lit, be appropriately direct and have clear sight lines.

3 This may be a great location for demonstration gardens showcasing native plants, rain gardens, and edible landscaping.

## Harper's Choice Village Center Community Plan Summary:

A long-term vision is of paramount importance for ensuring that the Harper's Choice Village Center thrives and retains the original goal of being an authentic community center. To bring that vision into reality, a thoughtful and strategic plan is necessary to maintain the integrity and quality of development over time. The role of the community in the long-term vision and planning process is essential because a successful village center is the true heart of the community. Its success depends on the community's continued relationship with the center. It is the intent of this planning document to provide insight into the community's long term vision for their village center, to identify concrete recommendations and design concepts for consideration by the specific parties that own village center land and amenities, and to consider the important connections and relationships between the various enhancements that are desired for the village center.

The three essential design principles that this plan identifies for any substantial redevelopment of the Harper's Choice Village Center are:

1. Economic sustainability through design that aesthetically integrates diverse uses, has appropriate density, and ensures access and safety.
2. Social sustainability through design that includes inviting public spaces and ensures connectivity with the community.
3. Environmental sustainability through design that fosters community resilience, highlights natural resources, and encourages environmental stewardship.

These principles cannot be compromised in the evolution of the Harper's Choice Village Center. With these concepts in mind the community plan for the village center is designed for the future, to endure beyond any of its current tenant's uses, and is the vision that should guide the development process. Hopefully this planning document will encourage near term enhancements that support community vitality, resilience, and sustainability as well as ensure that future redevelopment is completed in a highly sustainable manner, ideally to the extent that it is a model for other community centers.



*Harper's Choice community gathering*



*More lighting needed. Current design is dark and uninviting.*




*Outdoor seating is important for new design*



*Gathering Places in Village*







# THE HARPER'S CHOICE COMMUNITY PROFILE SECTION 3

## SECTION 3: HARPER'S CHOICE COMMUNITY PROFILE

### History of Harper's Choice

In 1702, Charles Carroll secured most of the land that now comprises Harper's Choice under a land grant consisting of more than 7,000 acres along the Middle Patuxent River. The land was originally part of the Carroll family estate known as Doughoregan Manor.<sup>1</sup> The village is also comprised of land that was added to Columbia with the acquisition of William Kahler's 700-acre farm, one of the largest working farms in the area at the time.

Catherine Carroll, the daughter of Charles Carroll (signer of the Declaration of Independence) married Robert Goodloe Harper in 1800. Robert Goodloe Harper was a prominent figure in Maryland during the late 1700s. At the age of fifteen, Harper joined a volunteer Cavalry Corps and served in the American Revolutionary Army. He was a Federalist and served as a Maryland member of the United States Senate.

In the late 1960's, Robert Goodloe Harper Carroll, a descendant of Charles Carroll and Robert Goodloe Harper sold the land that comprises most of Harper's Choice to the Rouse Company. The Village of Harper's Choice derives its name from this family.

In 1963, a time in which Howard County, Maryland was almost entirely rural, the Rouse Company announced that it had purchased over 140 separate Howard Country properties for a total of acquisition of more than 14,000 acres, one-tenth of the County's total land area. The purpose of this large land acquisition was to "build a new city", now known as Columbia. James W. Rouse, Chairman of the Board of Directors of The Rouse Company, described his vision of Columbia as being a planned city that would avoid the problems of urban sprawl and actually enhance its residents' quality of life by providing jobs and recreation,

<sup>1</sup> The Carroll family still resides on Doughoregan Manor and is the only family in the country who still resides on property that was owned by a signer of the Declaration of Independence at the time of the signing.

shopping and health care, and the many other facilities and services people want and need in a city, along with a broad range of housing choices. James Rouse has been quoted as saying that "Columbia would be a garden for growing people."

#### Harper's Choice Historical Landmarks:

- Just off Rushlight Path is a small wrought iron fence surrounding a land marker that predates the Revolutionary War. It designates three original land grants. Carved in the stone, it says: "There stand the beginning trees of Doughoregan (sic), Pushpin and The Girls Portion, 1773".
- Remnants of the past remain in Harper's Choice. A small cemetery is tucked away in a small grove of trees near the intersection of Harper's Farm Road and Eliots Oak Road (just outside the Village Center Community Plan study area). The earliest tombstone is that of Amos Dorsey, born Feb 20, 1789 and died Jan 13, 1851.



*Dorsey-Simpson burial grounds ca. mid 1800s located just off Harper's Farm Road*



Designed with nine villages and a Town Center, construction started on Columbia's first village, Wilde Lake, in 1966, followed by Harper's Choice and Oakland Mills. Columbia opened to the public one year later, drawing international publicity and more than 100,000 visitors to its Exhibit Center during the first summer. In 1967, construction began on the city's second village, Harper's Choice, which also lies in the northwest part of Columbia.

Centrally located within the Village of Harper's Choice, the Harper's Choice Village Center is located northeast and northwest of the intersection of Harper's Farm Road and Cedar Lane in Columbia. The Harper's Choice Village Center opened in 1971 and was originally named Joseph's Square in honor of the first Chairman of the Harper's Choice Village Board, John Joseph, shortly after he had passed away. Established as a unique mixture of retail, offices and residential, it remains so to this day. Joseph's Square was renovated in 1987 and renamed Harper's Choice Village Center. The plaza of the shopping center was designated Joseph's Square. In the mid 1990's, the Village Center underwent an extensive renovation and refurbishment.

### *Harper's Choice Village Center in development*

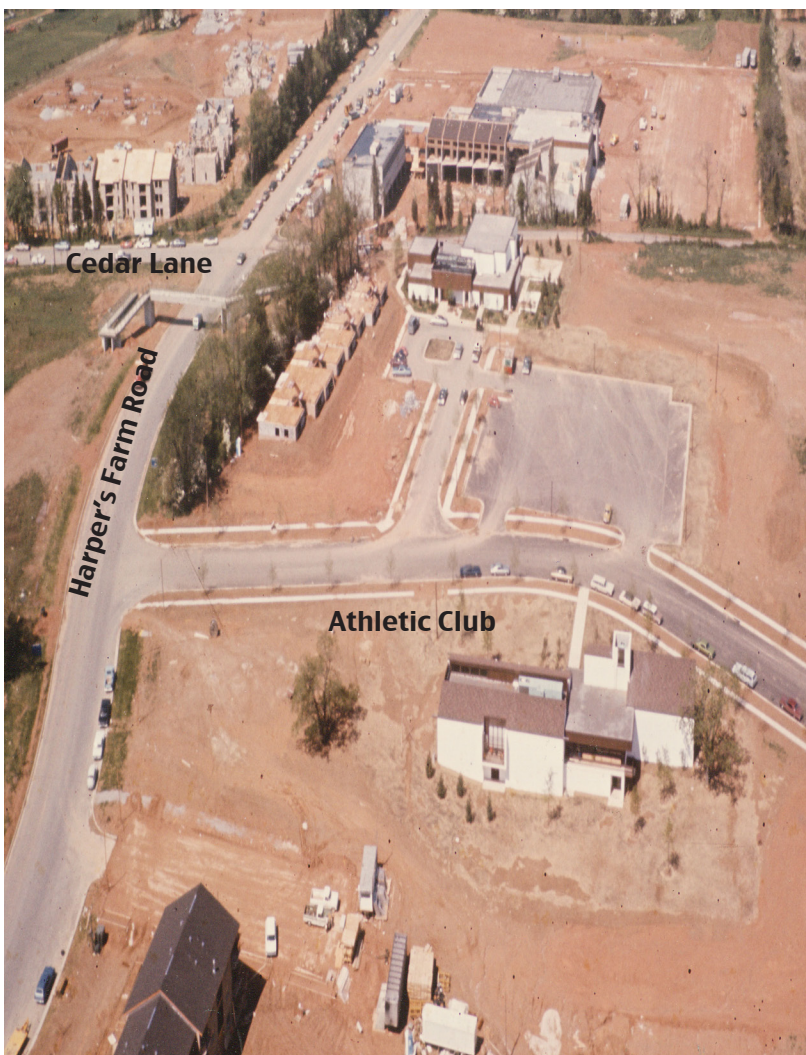


Photo courtesy of Columbia Association's Archives



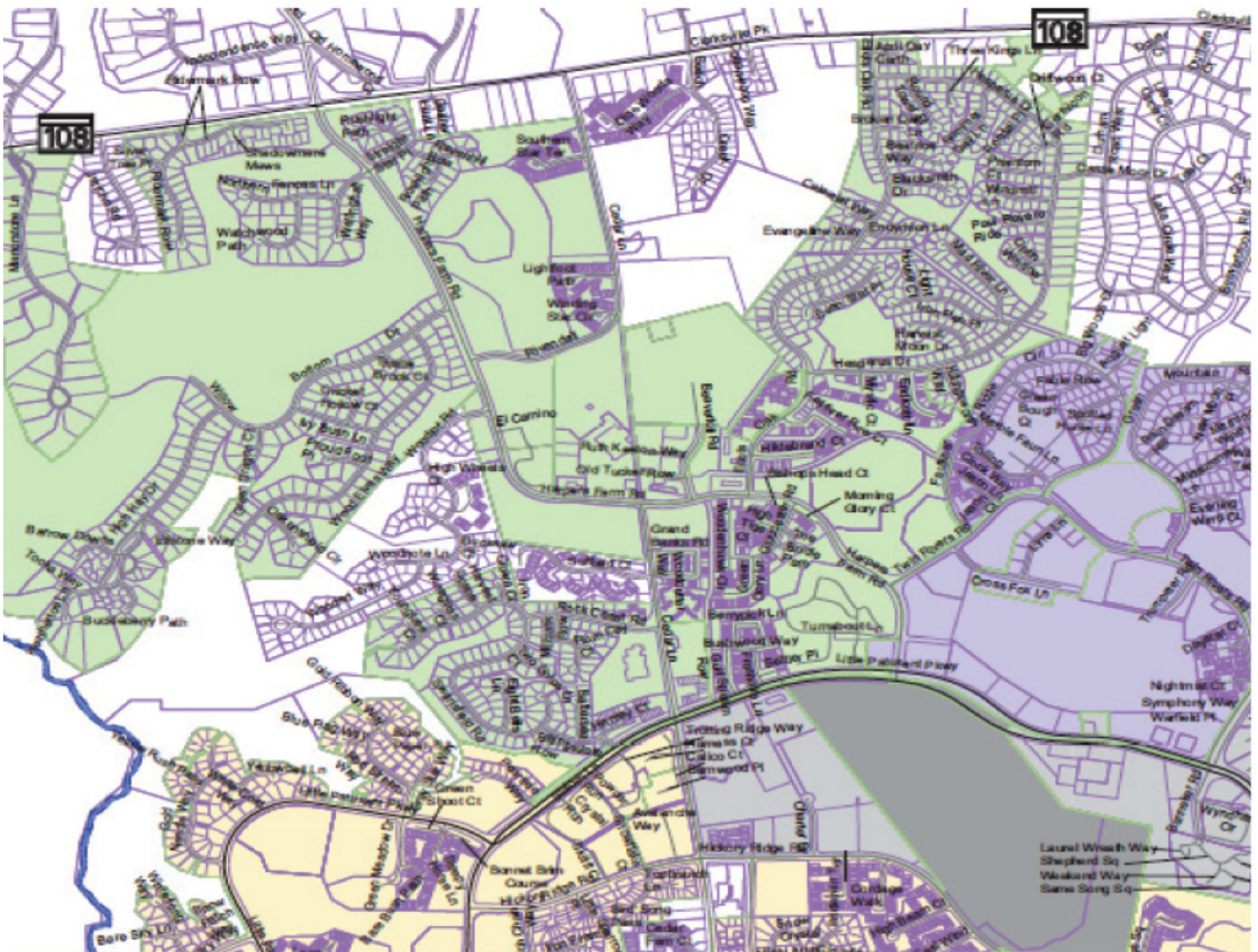
*Plaque describing the eroded stone which marks the intersection of the property owned by the Carroll, Michael Dorsey and Eli Dorsey families in 1773.*

The Village of Harper's Choice consists of three neighborhoods

- Longfellow
- Swansfield
- Hobbit's Glen

Longfellow, the first neighborhood in the village, was named for the American poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The name, Hobbit's Glen was taken from the works of J. R. R. Tolkien. Swansfield's name was inspired by the paintings of James MacNeil Whistler. The three neighborhoods and the Village Center are connected through roads, many miles of pathways, and interconnected natural resources.

The land comprising the Village of Harper's Choice is depicted in green in the map below.





**The Bain Center Groundbreaking**

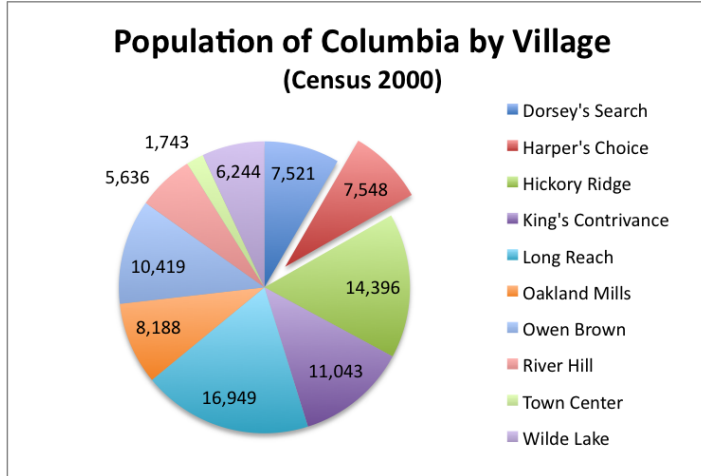
*Liz Bobo and Florence Bain*

*Photo courtesy of Columbia Association Archives*

## Harper's Choice Today: Our Demographics

### Population:

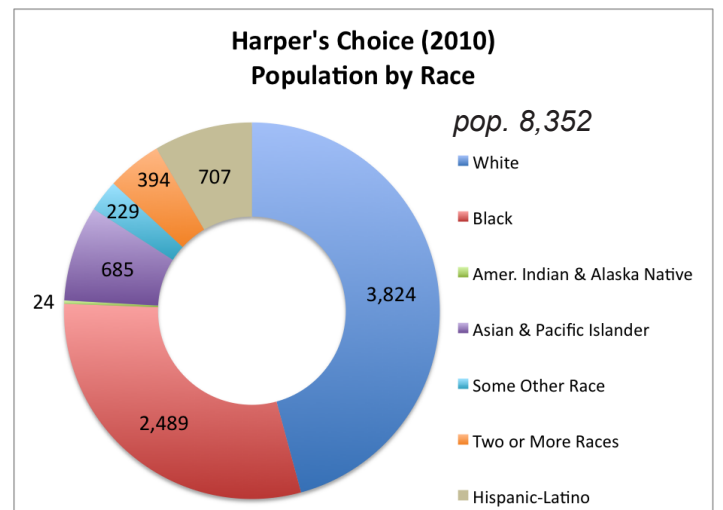
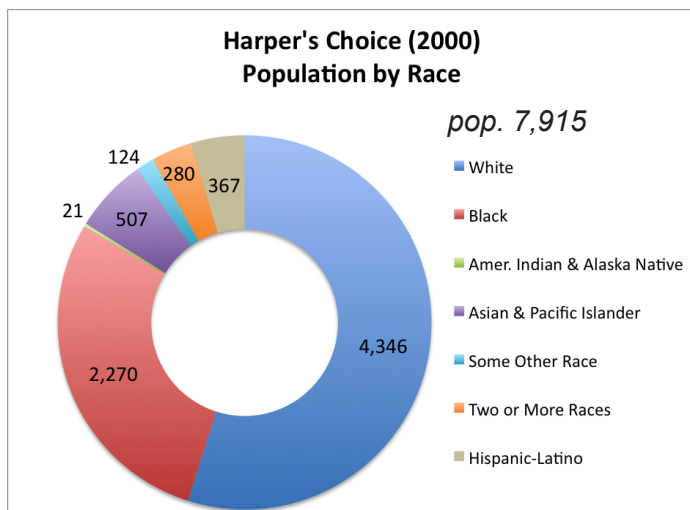
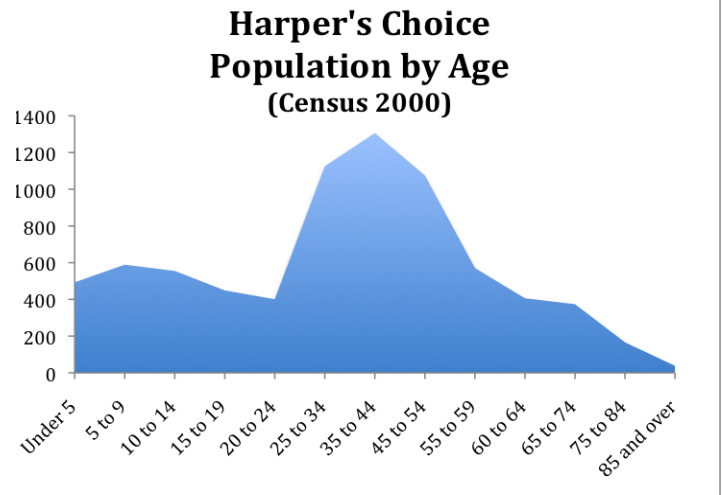
According to a Howard County analysis of the 2000 census, more than 7,900 people called Harper's Choice home. Given Columbia's population of 89,687<sup>1</sup> (in 2000), Harper's Choice represented approximately eight percent of Columbia's total population, making it the sixth largest Columbia village. The 2010 census showed the population grew to over 8,300 residents.



### Diversity:

Harper's Choice is a diverse community with regard to age, race, and household type. Housing units in Harper's Choice vary widely across the village from single-family homes to condominiums, townhomes and apartments. Harper's Choice has both the most expensive housing and the most affordable housing in Columbia, with approximately 37 percent of all housing units being renter occupied. The Columbia villages that were developed first (such as Harper's Choice), tend to have the highest concentration of residents older than 65 years of age. As of the 2000 census, approximately eight percent of Harper's Choice residents were 65 years or older.

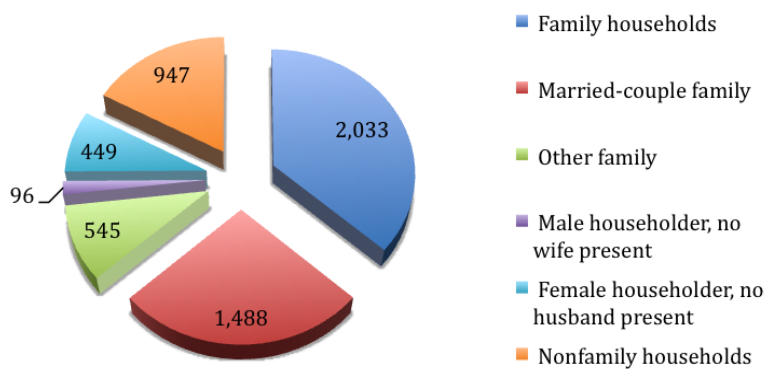
<sup>1</sup> Source: The demographics information in this section is based on Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, Research Report Issue 12, March 2004, "2000 Census, Characteristics of Columbia". Columbia is the largest community in Howard County, Maryland comprising almost one third of the entire county's overall population. As of 2010 the estimated total Columbia population has grown to approximately 100,000 residents.



## Households:

Approximately 68 percent of the households in Harper's Choice are family households, which according to the U.S. Census Bureau, is defined as two or more people living in the same household related by birth, marriage, and/or adoption. This reflects similar ratios as can be seen across the whole of Columbia, which has a higher ratio of high density housing than Howard County at large. While in 2000, Howard

### Harper's Choice Household Type (Census 2000)



County's population was approximately 74 percent white and Columbia's approximately 66 percent white, the Village of Harper's Choice is more diverse with approximately 57 percent of its residents describing themselves as white in the 2000 census, 30 percent describing themselves as black and the remaining 13 percent comprised of a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

As of the 2000 census, slightly more than half of the 2,033 family households in Harper's Choice are occupied by children under the age of 18. Of the non-family households in Harper's Choice, 79 percent of these households are individuals who reside alone and 25 percent of the total households are comprised of single occupants, which is the same percent as Columbia as a whole.

Harper's Choice is a diverse community comprised of many families and individual residents living in a wide variety of different housing accommodations. The VCCP will seek to ensure that opportunities at the Village Center are provided that support diversity and community activities and that engage all social and economic levels in the Village.

## 2010 Household Composition<sup>1</sup>

About one-quarter (25.8 percent) of village households were one-person households. Family households, those comprised of two or more related persons, accounted for 67.9 percent of all households.

Just over one-half (50.8 percent) of all households had no children under 18 in the home. Of those households with children under 18 living with them, 30.4 percent were married-couples, 16.1 percent were headed by females without a spouse and 2.7 percent were male householders without a spouse.

More than one in every five (22.9 percent) of households had someone over 65 years of age living in the home; 7 percent of all households consisted of a person 65 years or older living alone.

Harper's Choice has an estimated 3,204 housing units and a household population of 7,621. Only 26 individuals live in group quarters. The Village's 3,082 households live in about equal thirds of the community's three housing types: single-family detached homes, townhouses and multi-family apartment buildings. An estimated 122 units were vacant, for an overall vacancy rate of 3.8 percent about the same as the rate for Columbia.

Slightly more than a third (36.7 percent) of the households are renters; 63.3 percent of households are owners. The average household size, 2.47 persons per household, is slightly lower than that for Columbia.

The median age of the population is 37.7 years, with the median age for males 35.9 years and that for females 39.4 years.

The number of those 65 years and older is 970 – 12.7 percent of the population. Those approaching traditional retirement age, aged 55 to 64 years, represent a similarly sized cohort: 960. Together, those 55 and over represent more than a quarter (25.3 percent) of the population.

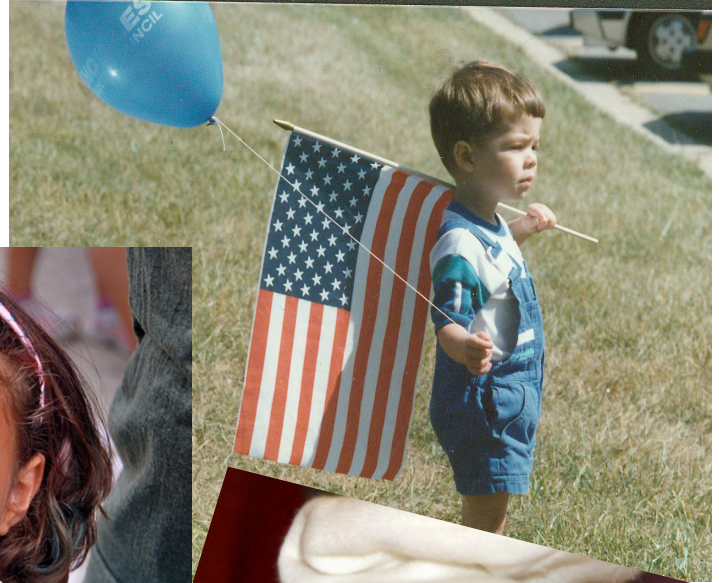
The population of Harper's Choice is relatively young. Over 22 percent of those living in the village are children under 18 years of age. The number of school age children, those 5 to 17 years old, is 1,238, or 16.2 percent of the total.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Characteristics of Columbia, MD: A Demographic and Socio-economic Profile*, dated December 2012 and based on the 2010 Census for Howard County.

## Educational Attainment

A high percentage of Harper's Choice residents are college graduates. Nearly six out of ten (59.6 percent) persons 25 years or older reported having earned at least a Bachelor's degree; 30.3 percent had attained a graduate or professional degree. For those over 25, 94.1 percent had obtained at least a high school diploma

*Longfellow 4th of July Parade circa 1970s  
photo courtesy Columbia Association's Archives*



*Children attending  
Longfellow Parade,  
National Night Out,  
and other Village  
sponsored events*

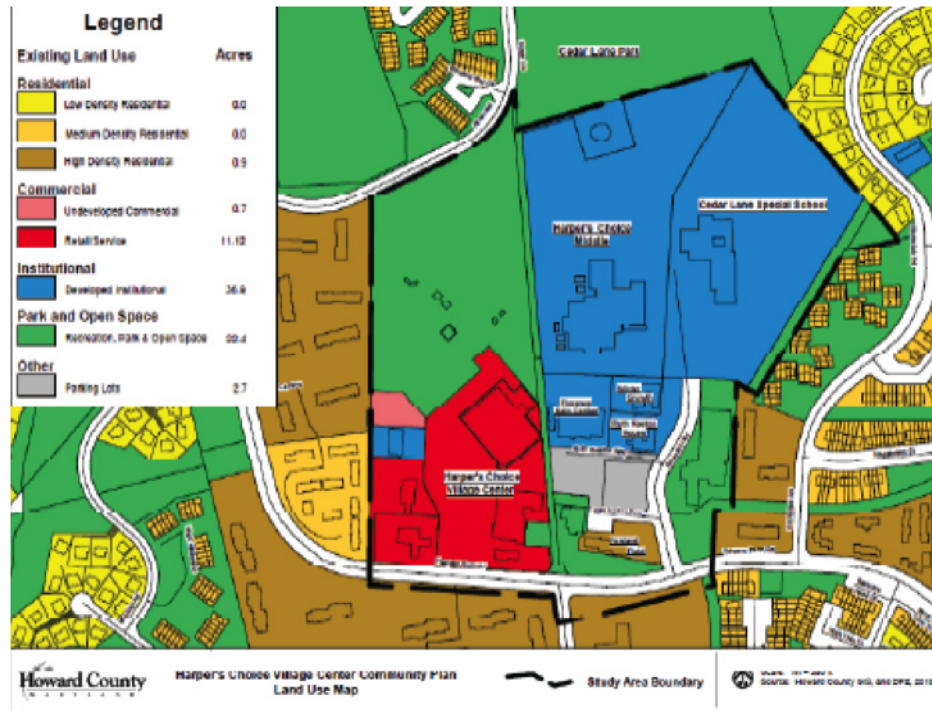


## Economic Sustainability: Land Use and Zoning

### Current Land Uses:

The Existing Land Use Map below shows that the lands within the village center study area comprise a mix of uses. Forty-seven percent (47%) is developed as “institutional uses” such as the Harper’s Choice Middle School and Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House senior care facility, twenty-eight percent (28%) of the land is devoted to recreational purposes or is parkland or open space, fourteen percent (14%) is comprised of retail uses, parking lots comprise three percent (3%) of the land and high density, market rate residential comprise one percent (1%) of the land use.

### Existing Land Use Map



Focusing on the red retail area of the Village Center, the anchor of the Village Center is a 55,000 square foot Safeway Food Store, which can be seen in the top right portion of the red space. In addition, there are 17 other retail/service businesses housed in three buildings owned and currently operated by Kimco Realty Corporation. Two of these buildings are shown as the larger building right below Safeway on the map, which backs onto a courtyard that serves as a community gathering place. These buildings house a number of retail stores on the lower level including: an ice cream store, a local bank, a coffee shop, a liquor store, a Chinese restaurant, a takeout pizza store, a Mexican restaurant, a sandwich shop, a hair salon and a nail salon. There is also a community action center for the Howard County Police located in the first floor of these buildings. The second floor connects to two buildings, which are separate on the lower level and include, nine residential loft apartments and a number of businesses, such as a ballet studio and the office of a local homebuilder. The free standing building in red below the Kimco property described above is a drive-through fast food restaurant.

Working up from the bottom of the western side of the shopping center is a service station, which has been in continual operation and owned by the same family for over 40 years. Directly above that is a small strip center, owned by Kimco, which includes a national bank, dry cleaner, and an Afghani

restaurant. The building in blue at the top of this section of the center is a free-standing building that currently houses a consignment store. This is the only land parcel in the study area that is an out-parcel and is not subject to the Village covenants or CA annual assessment, according to a 2008 title search conducted at the request of the Village Board. However, this property still falls under New Town zoning.

In addition to the core shopping center, the Village Center Study Area includes destination uses and services for a wide range of activities. Kahler Hall, a Columbia Association<sup>1</sup> (CA) facility, is the community center for Harper's Choice but also services residents from across Columbia. Kahler Hall hosts meetings, classes and is a rental venue for celebrating many of life's events. The Columbia Association has three other facilities surrounding the shopping center. There is the SportsPark with batting cages and mini-golf, the SkatePark for skate boarding; and the Athletic Club, one of Columbia's three indoor gyms, which includes a full range of athletic facilities and a hot water therapy pool. A proposed Dog Park and indoor tennis facility may be added in the near future. Howard County facilities add to the mix of uses in the study area. County facilities include Harper's Choice Middle School, The Bain Senior Activity Center; as well as the Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House, a senior day care program and a 16-bed assisted living facility. The former Cedar Lane School, on the campus with the middle school, has been converted into an activity center. As shown on the existing zoning map below, all lands within the study area are zoned New Town (NT) zoning. The shopping center and adjacent lands are also designed as a New Town Village Center.

The Existing Land Use Map illustrates that much

<sup>1</sup> Homeowners pay assessment fees to CA, which operates under the Maryland Home Owner's Association Act. CA provides many amenities to the residents of Columbia, including 96 miles of pathways, open space maintenance, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, athletic clubs, golf courses, tennis courts and more. Columbia has no city council and no mayor. Columbia does not have control over zoning regulations, road improvements, public utilities, police, fire, emergency services or any other public resources that are funded by tax dollars. Columbia residents pay taxes to Howard County for these services.

of the existing impervious surface in the Village Center is dedicated to grass fields, with a few small and fragmented patches of wooded areas that are not proximal to any of the actively used amenities of the Village Center.



Columbia Association Sports Park (Mini Golf)



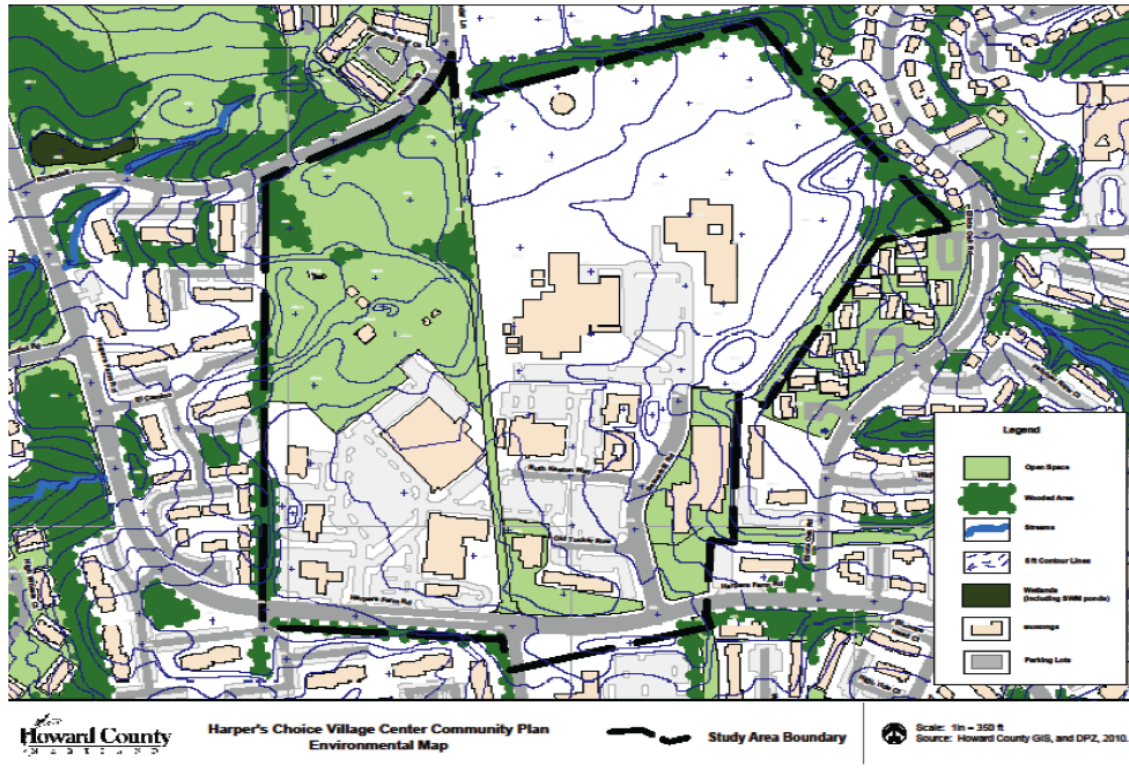
Future site of Columbia Association Dog Park



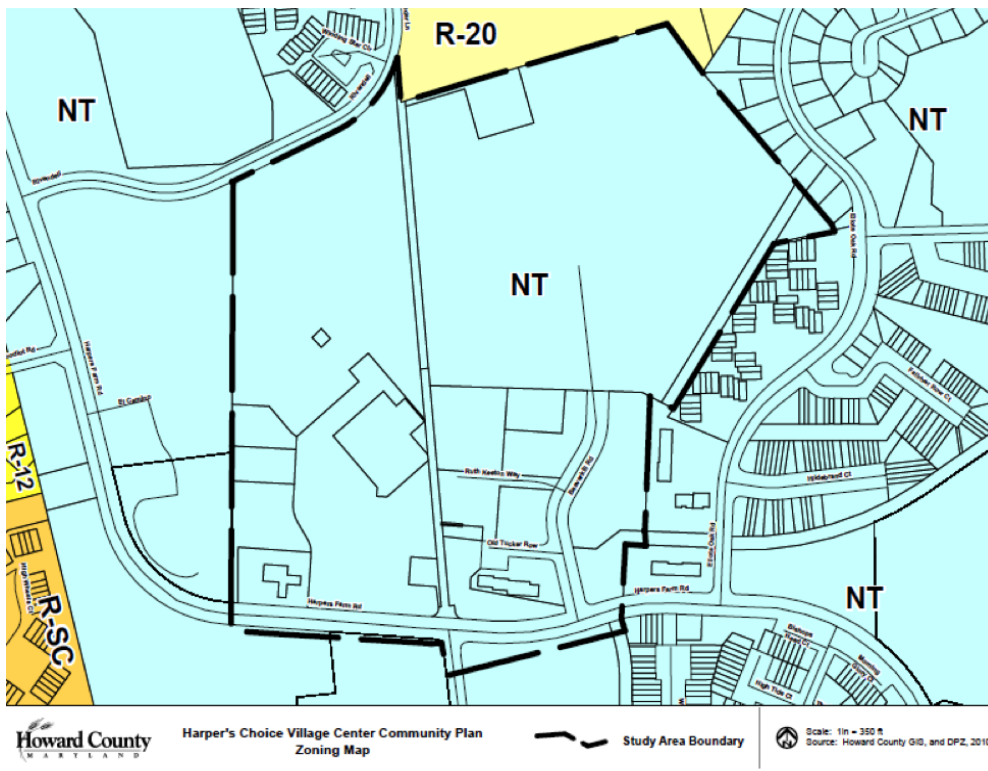
Columbia Association Skate Park



## Harper's Choice Environmental Map



## Existing Harper's Choice Zoning Map



As discussed in the introduction, a “New Town” village center is defined in the zoning regulations as follows:

A mixed-use development in the New Town District which is in a location designated on the New Town Preliminary Development Plan as a “Village Center”, which is designed to be a community focal point and gathering place for the surrounding village neighborhoods.

## Social Sustainability: Connectivity and Circulation

The Harper's Choice Village Center is located at the intersection of Cedar Lane and Harper's Farm Road, both of which are classified as minor arterials by Howard County. Minor arterials provide interconnection between intermediate arterials such as Rt. 108 and Little Patuxent Parkway. Based on the county's classification system, minor arterials are designed to provide a balance between travel mobility and access to land uses and provide the primary access to or through communities with access to residential concentrations and commercial, retail or industrial land uses. The retail uses at the Village Center benefit from this location.

In suburban localities, the viability and health of retail businesses is based on a mix of elements including the strength of the trade area, automobile traffic counts, visibility and signage, physical attractiveness of the area, parking and pedestrian facilities, and mix of uses. Other factors include nearby competition, which also ties into the strength of the trade area. Nearly all sectors of retail businesses in suburban areas require a location with enough drive-by traffic to make the location attractive and successful. The Village Center is centrally located within Harper's Choice and is in close proximity to nearby community destinations and institutions.

Traffic counts for Cedar Lane and Harper's Farm Road near the Village Center are available but are more than ten years old. However, there are a few more recent counts for the nearby intersections and these show a general upward trend in traffic volumes. In any case, there is a significant level of drive-by traffic in this area. This base level of traffic flow on Harper's Farm Road and Cedar Lane contributes to the success of the shopping center now and in the future.

The Village Center is served by a number of surface parking lots, many of which are used as shared parking resources. The parking lots are grouped in six distinct areas: the lot in front of the Safeway, the lot in front of the village shops with direct right in/right out access from Harper's Farm

Road; the lot that serves the Columbia Skate Park/SportsPark facility; the shared lots between the back of Safeway and the Columbia Athletic Club that serve Kahler Hall, The Bain Center, the Columbia Association Athletic Club and retail customers; and the Harper's Choice Middle School Parking lot. Not including the middle school parking lots, there are an estimated total of 685 spaces that serve Village Center uses. There are also approximately 55 on-street parking spaces along Beaverkill Road.

In addition to vehicle parking, the Harper's Choice Village Center is served by facilities for pedestrians and cyclists including sidewalks, crosswalks, pathways, bicycle parking, pedestrian signals and signage, and pedestrian lighting. The Transportation Map below shows the location of sidewalks and pathways in the Village Center study area. Sidewalks are located on both sides of Harper's Farm Road. These sidewalks shift away from the street right of way as they meet the elevated pedestrian bridge landings at the northeastern and southeastern quadrants of the intersection of Harper's Farm Road and Cedar Lane. There is a marked crosswalk and pedestrian signal at the Cedar Lane intersection. Sidewalks are also present along both sides of Beaverkill Road and there are two marked crosswalks and pedestrian signals at the intersection with Harper's Farm Road.

There is a pedestrian-activated signal located at the main vehicular entrance to the Village Center on Harper's Farm Road. This intersection is marked with two cross walks – one across Harper's Farm Road and one across the entrance road to the Village Center. At this crossing, the northwest quadrant adjacent to the service station does not have a sidewalk along the Village Center entrance road. Internal to the Village Center, there are several marked crosswalks that connect the parking areas to the sidewalks/entrance plazas that line the storefronts. However, direct sidewalks between many of the Village Center features are lacking or incomplete, such as to the SportsPark,

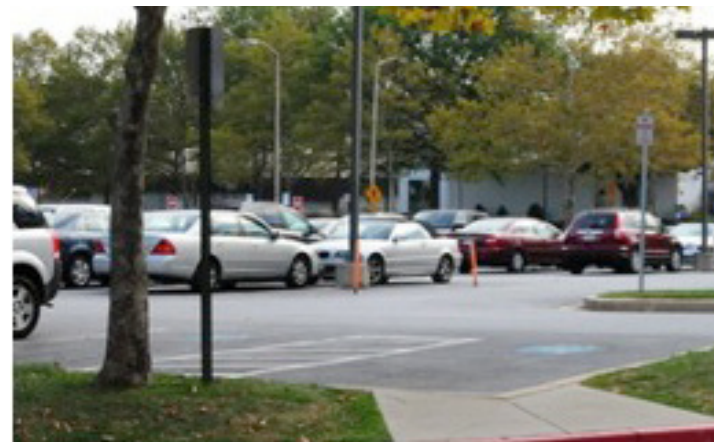
between the strip of shops to the West and any of the other buildings, and sidewalks connecting the Athletic Club and amenities to the East with the rest of the center.

There are no bicycle racks within the retail portion of the Village Center, The Bain Center or the bus stop on Harper’s Farm Road. However, there are bicycle racks at the east-facing entrance to Kahler Hall and at the entrance to the Athletic Club. Columbia Association owned and other pathways connect the Village Center to Harper’s Choice Middle School, Cedar Lane Park, Athletic Club, The Bain Center and Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House to surrounding residential neighborhoods. For those who are not able to drive, walk or bike to the Village Center, there is a variety of bus transit options. Howard County Transit provides local circulator service to the Harper’s Choice Village Center via the Green Route. The Green Route connects the Village Center to Wilde Lake Village Center, the Columbia Mall, Howard Community College, Howard County General Hospital, and Clary’s Forest. Regional Commuter Bus Service to Washington and Baltimore is provided by the Maryland Transit Administration. These routes run during weekday morning and evening rush hour periods. Bus stops that serve the Village Center are located on both sides of Harper’s Farm Road west of the intersection with Cedar Lane. The location of these bus stops is shown on the Transportation Map.

## Harper’s Choice Public Auto Parking Lot Spaces

Parking Lot Area	Current Vehicle Spaces (Approx.)
In front of and west of Safeway	260
SportsPark / SkatePark	100
Village Shops – lot with access to Harper’s Farm Rd	65
Joint Use – between Safeway and Athletic Club	185
Parking Behind The Bain Center	75
Subtotal without Harper’s Choice MS	685
Harper’s Choice Middle School	185
<b>Total</b>	<b>870</b>

Source: Estimate of parking spaces via visual examination of aerial map

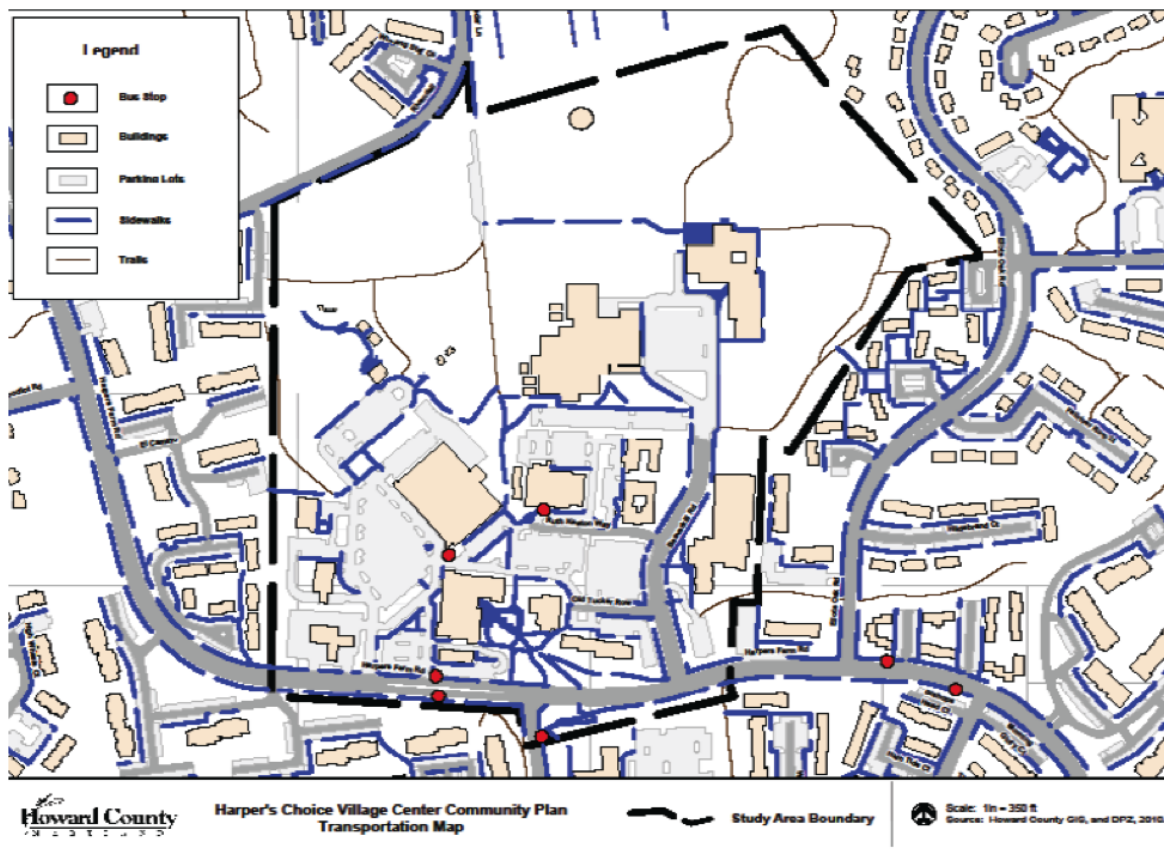


### 2010 Commuting Characteristics<sup>1</sup>

Automobile ownership was not quite universal; the sample data suggests about five percent of households did not own their own auto. However, nearly 60 percent of all households own two or more vehicles. For commuting to work, driving alone by auto was reported by 82 percent of households. All other means of commuting to work – carpooling, transit, walking or working at home – had margins of error too great to report with confidence. The mean travel time to work was 28.3 minutes.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from “Characteristics of Columbia, MD: A Demographic and Socio-economic Profile”, dated December 2012 and based on the 2010 Census for Howard County.

## Harper's Choice Transportation Map

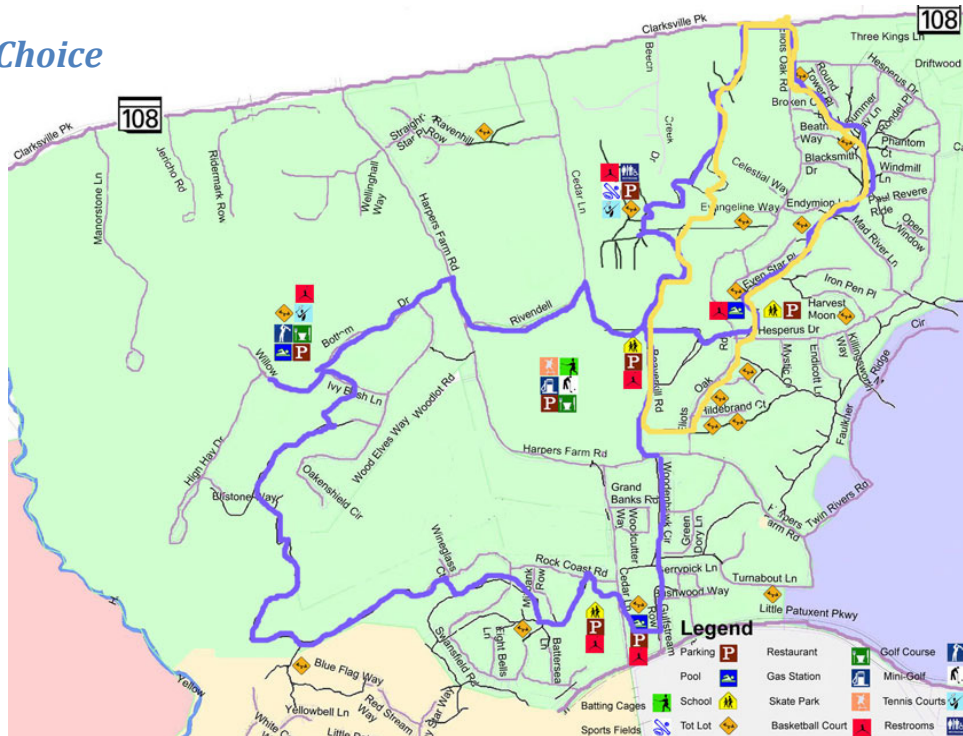


### What's Close By?

**WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE** (within one-half mile radius of Cedar Lane and Harpe's Farm Road intersection): Howard County General Hospital (a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine), Howard Community College (chosen in 2011 as one of the top 50 fastest growing public two-year colleges), Swansfield and Longfellow Elementary Schools; Harper's Choice Middle School; Longfellow Pool and Neighborhood Center; Wilde Lake Village Center, and Swansfield Pool (mini water park) and Neighborhood Center, The Bain Senior Center, Columbia Association Athletic Club, Columbia Association Sports Park, Howard County's Cedar Lane Park, Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House (adult day programs). Pending construction: Columbia Association Dog Park and Indoor Tennis Facility.

**WITHIN 5-15 MINUTES BY CAR and or BIKE** (within two miles): Hobbit's Glen Golf Club, Central Library, The Columbia Mall, Symphony Woods Park, Merriweather Post Pavilion, several outdoor pools and tennis courts, Wilde Lake, Lake Kittamaqundi, Centennial Park, Clark's Elioak Farm, Toby's Dinner Theatre, Robinson Nature Center, Columbia Archives, Town Center, River Hill Village and Hickory Ridge Village Centers

# Bike Trails in Harper's Choice



**Harper's Choice Village Center**  
 Columbia Association Property



*Potential Paths to Enhance Harper's Choice Village Connectivity*

## Environmental Sustainability: Practices and Considerations

The following assessment of the current environmental practices in the Village of Harper's Choice, with a focus on the village center, is parsed out into specific facets of a sustainable community, including food, water, energy, biocultural diversity, and green economy.

**Food:** There is little observable connection between the Harper's Choice Village Center and the local food system, which is critical for community sustainability. The grocery store is a standard local chain and has a rather small natural foods section, none of which is labeled as being from the mid-Atlantic region, let alone truly local sources. The restaurants are primarily chains (McDonalds, Papa Johns, Subway, Dunkin Donuts) as well as several local offerings including a Chinese restaurant, a Mexican restaurant, and an Afghani restaurant that do not have evident local food purchasing. While there are three community gardens in the town of Columbia, there are none within Harper's Choice, or any village center. Additionally, there is not a farmers market located within the village, although in 2011 a small farmers market began in the parking lot of Howard County hospital, which borders the village and is less than a mile from the village center. Howard County itself is largely agricultural to the west of Columbia, so there are farms in the immediate vicinity that could potentially provide produce both for a Harper's Choice farmer's market and community supported agriculture (CSA) offering. The sustainability of Harper's Choice from a food perspective is that it is not unlike many communities. The vast majority of the food sold and consumed is transported to the area from great distances via the industrial-agricultural food system and that there is little connection to the local food system.

**Water:** The Harper's Choice Village Center falls within the Wilde Lake sub-watershed of the larger Upper Middle Patuxent watershed and the even larger Chesapeake Bay watershed. The 1.9 square mile Wilde Lake watershed is approximately 32 percent impervious cover and based on zoning

is fully built, most of the construction occurring in the 1970s without consideration for stormwater management. The Harper's Choice Village Center is a particularly developed portion of this land, with approximately 72 percent impervious cover according to the 2009 Columbia Association Watershed Management Report. These impervious cover levels have a considerable effect on the conditions in the streams in the watershed, which were determined to be in poor condition in recent studies. Although a number of recommendations have been made for minimizing stormwater runoff from the village center, most have not yet been addressed. From a water supply perspective, Harper's Choice businesses and residents get their water from Baltimore City. Three reservoirs that collect water from rainfall and snowmelt and one river provide raw water to the city's water filtration plants. Except for rare circumstances of extreme drought, there is little proactive, substantive engagement on water conservation approaches for local business or citizens. The current water sustainability situation in Harper's Choice is not unique in its lack of integrated awareness of and action regarding both watershed and water conservation. However, there are some promising signs of future improvements in this area, such as the encouragement of rain gardens and rain



*More bike racks are needed in the village*

barrels, which will be galvanized into action by a forthcoming property tax based on impervious surface area.

**Energy:** The buildings in the village center as well as homes in the broader village were constructed between the late 1960s and 1990s, a time during which there was little thought given to energy efficient construction. Fortunately, the Columbia Association has been increasing its focus on improving the energy efficiency of their buildings, of which there are several in the village center. Looking beyond energy consumption in the built environment, transportation is a key consideration when assessing energy use in Columbia and Harper's Choice. As previously noted, the community was designed with a substantial pathway system that connects each neighborhood to the village center and neighborhoods to one another. However, as big box stores have been constructed along the perimeter of Columbia, many people are tending to drive to these larger shopping centers rather than patronizing the village centers, either by car (a short drive) or by foot or bike. For those that do use the village centers, the pathway system seems to be an infrequent transportation choice. CA has recently launched a "Connecting Columbia" campaign that is focused on revitalizing the pathway system to make it more of a viable transportation choice. This has the potential to be very constructive from the perspective of local travel. All told on the energy front, Columbia has valuable infrastructure to help address energy use from a transportation perspective. From the perspective of energy consumption via the built environment, real progress may be seen quite soon with regard to retrofit opportunities and future redevelopment of the village center provides an opportunity to incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies at the time of construction.

**Biocultural Diversity:** Biocultural diversity is defined by UNESCO as a diversity of life in all its manifestations, biological, cultural, and linguistic, which are interrelated within a complex socio-ecological adaptive system. Columbia was



*Columbia Association's pathways are a key component in Connecting Columbia initiative.*

intentionally designed to honor and cultivate cultural diversity. Today, Harper's Choice is a particularly diverse community within Columbia from an economic as well as cultural perspective. For example, within this village we have the most expensive housing in Columbia as well as the most income assisted housing in Columbia. From a biological perspective, although Columbia has large quantities of open space, much of which is still natural woodland, a great deal of it is also mowed grass. This is particularly true in the Village of Harper's Choice, which has almost no natural vegetative space. From a residential perspective, properties are governed by Village level residential architectural committees, which have historically frowned on anything but traditional grass and flower garden landscaping. However, the residential architectural committee with encouragement is supportive of the implementation of rain barrels and native vegetation. The CA is taking on a tree

planting campaign to help offset some of their responsibility for watershed preservation and hopefully they will be very conscientious of the trees they select and have a diversity of types, including trees that provide edible fruits on appropriate locations. Additionally, open space management has been talking about converting substantial portions of their mowed lands back to natural grasslands, which would be a cost and energy saving change. Hopefully they too will conscientiously cultivate appropriate and aesthetically pleasing natural spaces that will be educational and enjoyable for the community. Last but not least, the fauna in Columbia seems to be on a relative come back with a diverse number of species being commonly sighted.

**Green Economy:** A green economy is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks (or preferably improving the conditions of the environment) and is based on sustainable development approaches and ecological economics strategies. Said differently, a green economy is one in which the economy is understood to be a component of the ecosystem in which it resides. Many experts in the sustainability field eloquently argue that for an economy to be green and a community to be sustainable, it must be as localized as possible. In general, Columbia and Harper's Choice are in keeping with the national trend away from locally owned businesses and towards larger, regionally, nationally, or internationally owned businesses. There do not seem to be organized efforts to actively create a local green economy - at the county, city, or village level. However, conversations are taking place both in Howard County and Columbia governance about sustainability. To create sustainable environments in the County, Columbia and Harper's Choice, the catalyst will need to come from from all levels of private and public governance. Changes will be most successful if the general public embraces and adopts sustainability as a way of life.



*Harper's Choice community event outside Zapatas Restaurant in Joseph Square*





*Harper's Choice Annual Night Out Event in 2011*





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# THE CITIZEN SURVEY & RESULTS APPENDIX A

# Appendix A: Citizen Survey

For the past three years a committee of residents has been working to develop a plan for the Harper's Choice Village Center that will help guide any future development. A number of opportunities have been created for community input in this process and this survey is another chance to have your voice heard as the preparation of the village center plan comes to a close this year.

1. How important are the following issues to you with regard to the Harper's Choice Village Center (1 = low importance, 5 = high importance)?

Issue	1	2	3	4	5
Safety (lighting, layout, loitering, etc)					
Architecture and aesthetics					
Integration of environmentally sustainable features					
Ability to walk between different parts of center					
Access (parking, biking, etc.)					
Vibrancy (gathering space, events, outdoor seating, etc.)					
Selection of businesses					
Variety of uses (housing, business, retail, civic)					

2. Are there other issues that are important to you that are not listed above?

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3. What specific features would encourage you visit the Village Center more frequently (e.g., transportation options, amenities, businesses?) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What are three big things (if you could waive your magic wand) would you most like to change about the Harper's Choice Village Center?

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5. What three things do you like most about the Harper's Choice Village Center?

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6. Do you have any other thoughts about the future of the Village Center to share?

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Name (optional):

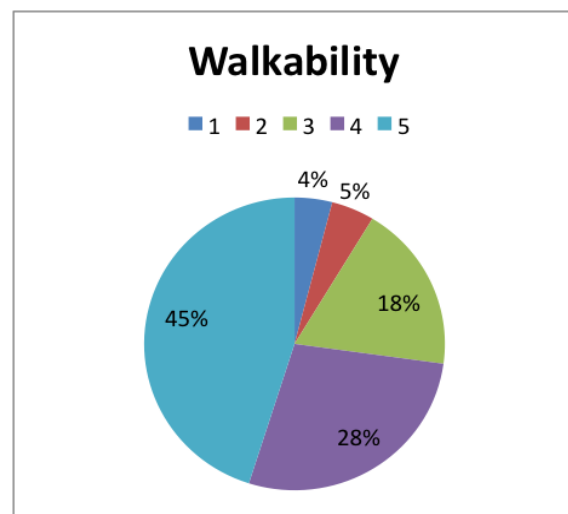
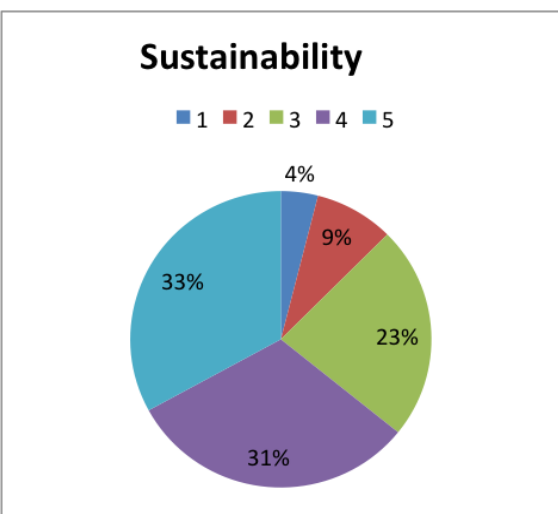
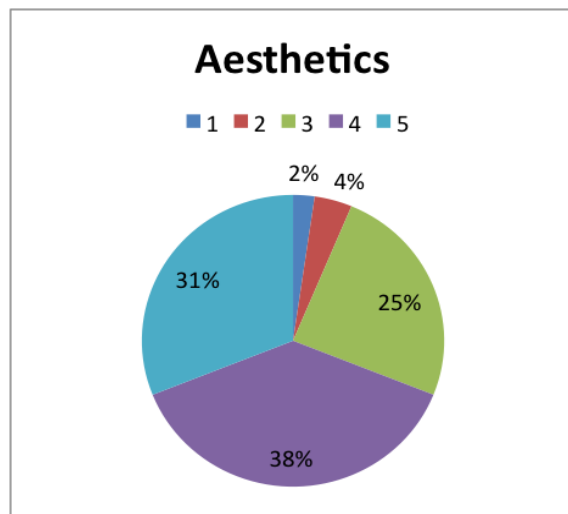
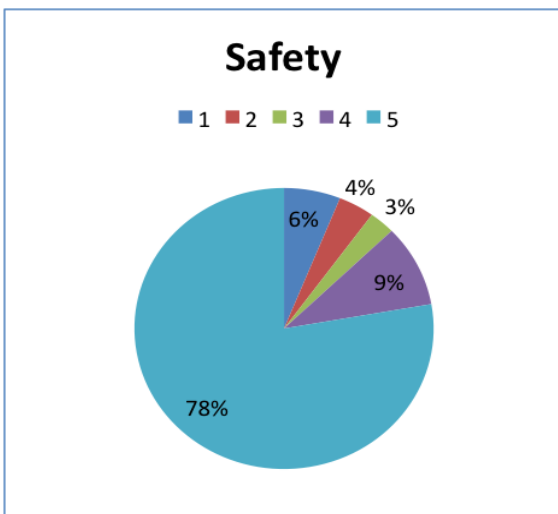
Email address (optional):

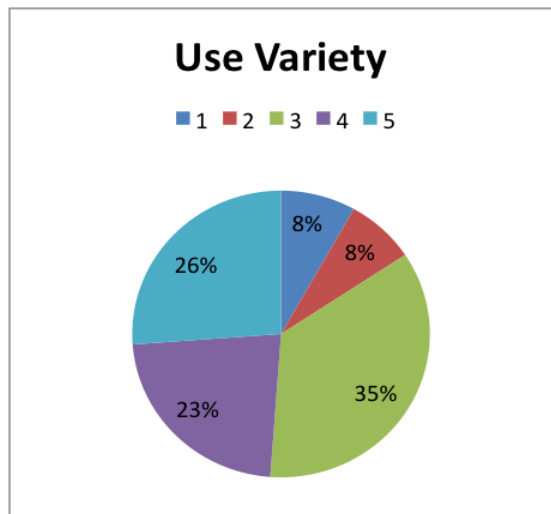
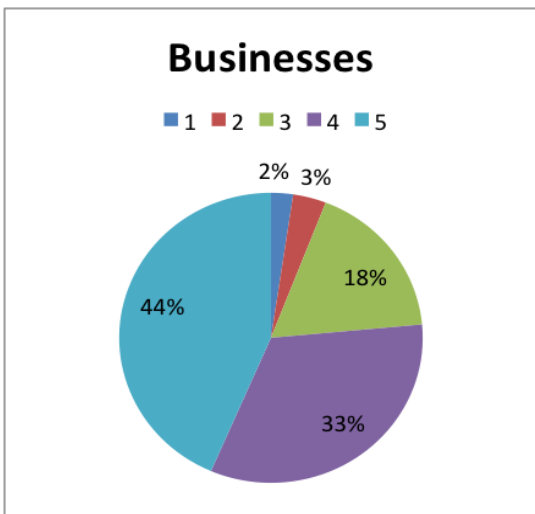
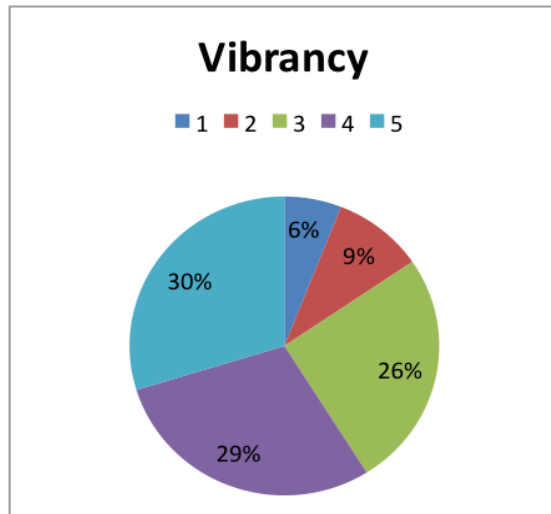
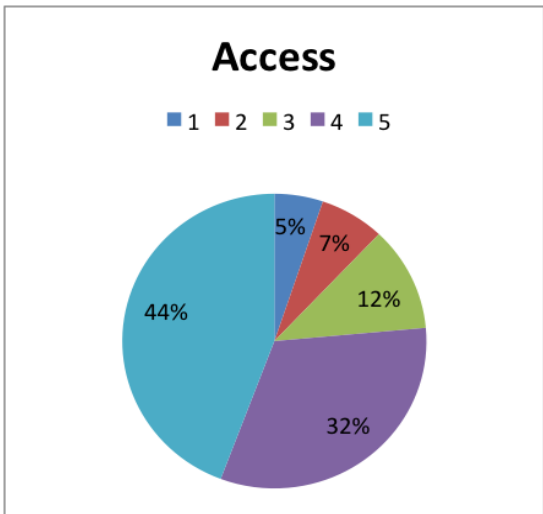
# Appendix A: Feedback from Community Engagement

Throughout the planning process community engagement was a top priority. As shown in the above list, numerous individual and group meetings were held with a variety of stakeholders associated with the Harper’s Choice Village Center. In addition to these meetings, a community survey was completed by approximately 200 people (please see Appendix A for the complete survey). The themes that came out of the survey echoed the themes that came out of stakeholder meetings, therefore, the survey results are provided here as a way to highlight community feedback into the plan development process.

## Question #1:

The first question in the survey asked people to indicate how important the following issues are to them with regard to the Harper’s Choice Village Center (1 = low importance, 5 = high importance): safety; architecture and aesthetics; integration of environmentally sustainable features; ability to walk between different parts of the center; access; vibrancy; selection of businesses; and variety of uses. The following graphs show the responses to this question.





Safety, by a large majority was the issue most important to respondents. Walkability, access and the selection of businesses were essentially tied for receiving the second greatest number of #1 rankings. More detailed insight into the responses to prompts related to these broad categories can be found in the responses to the subsequent questions, as described below.

#### Question #2:

Question two of the survey asked whether there were other issues not captured above that were of particular importance to the respondent. Approximately 60 people responded to this question. The most common themes among the responses were:

1. Reiterating safety as the number one concern for the village center. An emphasis was placed on the need to mitigate loitering, crude language and behavior, and petty crime, in part with a more meaningful police presence.
2. A desire for a clean facility, with concerns noted about the need for better litter and trash removal and recycling options.
3. The need for improved traffic patterns, with concerns noted about the current existence of many dangerous and congested areas.

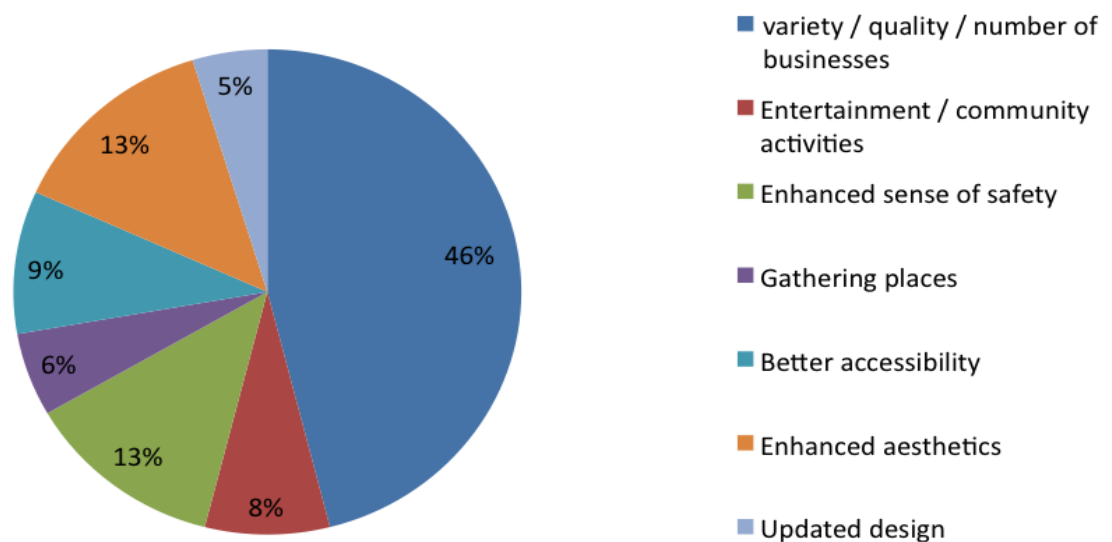
4. The need for increased safe walking options between parking and amenities and between amenities themselves.
5. A desire for an increased / different mix of business options. Specific frequent mentions were replacement or dramatic improvement of Safeway, the need for a drug store, the desire for more full-service restaurants. Locally owned businesses were mentioned as being desirable.
6. Better transportation options to and within the village center, such as bus routes and greater connection to the larger pathway system in Columbia.
7. More public gathering spaces, both outside and affordable, rentable interior spaces.
8. A general concern that the village center feels like it is aging and not being well tended. Specific mentions of the need for updated architecture, improvements to Joseph Square (such as the fountain area), and better lighting and signage.
9. Catering to a diversity of residents, both young and old alike. The desire for affordable family activities and the presence of a tot lot was emphasized.
10. Improved management of natural resources, such as tree maintenance and having attractive and inviting landscaping.

### Question #3:

Question three of the survey asked “What specific features would encourage you visit the Village Center more frequently (e.g., transportation options, amenities, businesses?)” Approximately 105 people provided responses to this question, and these responses can be grouped into the following primary categories.

For the most common response, improved variety and quality as well as an increased number of businesses, reoccurring requests included: a higher quality grocery store, a full service pharmacy, more sit down restaurants – preferably with outdoor seating, a farmer’s market, and a greater emphasis on small and/or local businesses. The request for an enhanced sense of safety often focused on decreasing loitering in the Village Center, improving the security presence, and improving visibility through better lighting and overall design. The request for enhanced aesthetics also focused on improved lighting, as well as on updating the exterior of the buildings, and improving the landscaping through water features and more vegetation. The request for better accessibility had reoccurring themes of improved access for disabled persons, better signage, improved pedestrian pathways, improved parking, bike racks, and greater connectivity to public transportation and the area pathway systems. The request for greater entertainment and community activities often specified more outdoor events, such as music in the summer as well as activities specifically focused on youth and families. The request for greater gathering places often highlighted the desire for outdoor seating and opportunities for families to enjoy, such as a play ground. And finally, the updated design request often focused on improving traffic patterns, including some interior street closures, getting rid of the “breezeway” between the two largest Kimco owned buildings, and creating a more integrated and well connected layout among all of the Village Center amenities.

### What specific features would encourage you visit the Village Center more frequently



#### Question #4:

The fourth survey question asked “What are three big things (if you could waive your magic wand) would you most like to change about the Harper’s Choice Village Center?” Approximately 110 people replied to this question, and the feedback can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Address safety concerns** (60 related comments), which specifically emphasized a greater police presence, more visible security, reducing the amount of loitering, the need for better lighting, and greater lines of sight (fewer corners, dark walkways, etc.)
- 2. Update the design to be more inviting, attractive, and current** (54 related comments) which included more attractive building exteriors, having more outdoor seating, improving walkability through the center, having more attractive landscaping, creating more spaces for people to gather, improved parking, incorporating green features, improved cleanliness, and adding better signage.
- 3. Better variety and quality of stores and a great number of stores** (36 related comments), many of which focused on improving the quality of the grocery store, adding more sit down restaurants, and having more local and/or unique shops.



### Question #5:

The fifth survey question asked “What three things do you like most about the Harper’s Choice Village Center?” Approximately 102 people responded to this question, and the feedback can be summarized as follows:

1. Convenience and accessibility (*62 related comments*), which focused on the proximal location of the village center and the ample parking.
2. Having a large grocery store (*27 related comments*)
3. The existence of the Athletic Club and SportsPark (*23 related comments*)
4. Having a good variety of shops (*22 related comments*).
5. A general pleasant environment (*12 related comments*).

In addition to the general comments about shop diversity, a substantive number of people also cast their “vote” for specific restaurants, businesses or services. Top ranking amenities included: Maiwand Kabob, Rita’s, Zapatas, Kahler Hall, and the Bain Center.

### Question #6:

The sixth and final question of the survey asked “Do you have any other thoughts about the future of the Village Center to share?” Approximately 45 people responded to this question, and feedback can be summarized as follows:

- Enhance the sense of safety.
- Upgrade the cleanliness.
- Improve interior and exterior signage.
- Update the layout to make it more connected and to have more gathering space.
- Hold more community events and activities.
- Add specific amenities such as a drug store, farmer’s market, and higher quality restaurants.
- Make sure it stays current and competitive.



*Photo courtesy of Columbia Association Archives (circa late 1960s or early 1970s)*



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# THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS APPENDIX B



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The community engagement process was designed to ensure inclusion of all stakeholders and champions in the Village Center planning process. To that end, the HCVCCP endeavored to seek input by holding meetings with the community, merchants, champions and other stakeholders. The first of these community meetings was a Walkabout to help the community visualize the Village Center proposed boundaries, community amenities, open space, and property lines (CA, County and Kimko, outparcels).

Those who attended were told the purpose of the meeting, given an introduction to the planning process, and asked to help the committee identify community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Additional discussions were facilitated to identify potential creative solutions.

The intent of each meeting was to:

- Continue to engage the Harper's Choice community and stakeholders in the Village Center Plan development process
- Share the committee's planning process and what had been learned to date
- Discuss ideas for the future of the village center
- Provide information on how the community can get involved

Questions that were critical to these meetings and discussion were:

- What brings you to the village center?
- What amenities and services do you most value?
- What do you wish the village center included or provided that it currently does not?
- What are issues that need to be addressed?
- What is our Village Center brand?
- What would set it apart and draw people in?

## Meeting Dates:

### Community Walkabout

- September 25, 2010
- Key take away: Need for better connectivity

### Merchants Meeting

- February 8, 2011
- Key take away: Need for better signage

### Community Meeting

- March 26, 2011
- Key take away: Confirmation of previous meetings' input.

*Note: The community meetings were advertised in the Harper's Choice Village newsletters, press releases, the Village website and by posting signage in the Village Center shopping area.*

*Columbia's Village Centers risk becoming "endangered" without a strong core of merchants, who are part of the community, and who adapt to the changing needs of residents and non-residents. We know that you share our desire for the Harper's Choice Village Center to thrive, so we are reaching out to you for comment on the draft Community Plan.*

*We thank you, in advance, for your input, and we look forward to seeing you at the date and time listed below.*



## *The Harper's Choice Village Center Community Plan Committee*

*invites you to a Stakeholders Meeting to  
contribute to a vision plan  
for the Village Center*

*Tuesday, February 8, 2011  
6:00 pm  
Kahler Hall*

*A light dinner will be served.*

RSVP: Wendy Tzucker, Village Manager  
410-730-0770 or  
email: [harperschoice@columbiavillages.org](mailto:harperschoice@columbiavillages.org)

## HARPER'S CHOICE STEERING COMMITTEE INVITES RESIDENTS, CA PLANNER, ON "WALKABOUT" OF VILLAGE CENTER

### News Release

(Columbia, MD) Residents of Harper's Choice will have the opportunity to share their concerns and aspirations for their Village Center in a "walkabout" tour with Columbia Association planning official Jane Dembner on September 25, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. The encounter is an initiative of the Harper's Choice Village Board's Village Center Steering Committee, a group of citizens organized to help frame the long term vision and goals for the Harper's Village Center.

"This encounter has two chief goals: first, to hear from the community on what they most value and what concerns they may have about the Village Center, and second, to facilitate this important contact between the Harper's Village community and Ms. Dembner, whose expertise in planning will be an asset as we continue to develop ideas for the future of this essential resource," said John Smith, the committee chairman.

The intended outcome of this committee's effort is the development of a community driven master plan that addresses issues such as economic viability, safety, community engagement, and sustainability. Resident involvement at various stages is a key element in achieving that goal. The "walk about" coincides with the first phase, during which the Committee is seeking to assess residents' needs, concerns and vision for the Village Center's future.

"I'm greatly looking forward to the opportunity to meet with the residents of Harper's Choice and hearing from them directly about what's important to them about their Village Center: how it meets their day-to-day needs and how it could better enrich the life of the community," stated Jane Dembner, Director of Community Planning of the Columbia Association.

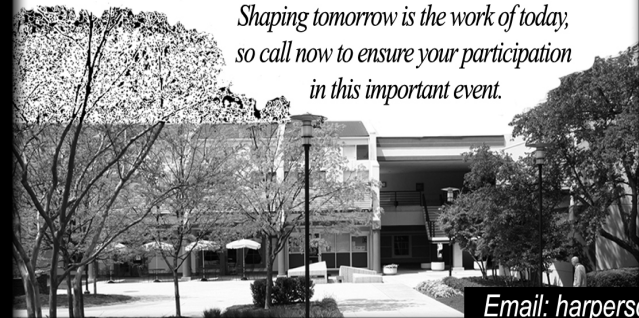
Residents, committee members and Ms. Dembner will meet in front of Kahler Hall at 10:00 on the morning of Saturday, September 25. Those interested in participating are asked to confirm their presence with Ms. Wendy Tzucker, Village Manager, at (410) 730-0770.



### SHARE TODAY TO SHAPE TOMORROW

Harper's Village Residents – Come join us for an informal tour around the Village Center with Jane Dembner, CA's new Director of Community Planning. We will share with Ms. Dembner our ideas about the heart of our village—how it serves our needs and how it might be made even better in the years ahead. This walkabout, and others like it throughout Columbia, will tie into current and future planning efforts.

*Shaping tomorrow is the work of today,  
so call now to ensure your participation  
in this important event.*



**Join Us!  
VILLAGE CENTER  
"WALK-ABOUT"**

**Saturday  
September 25, 2010  
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

In front of Kahler Hall  
5440 Old Tucker Row  
Columbia, MD 21044

RSVP: Village Manager  
Wendy Tzucker  
410-730-0770

Email: [harperschoice@columbiavillages.org](mailto:harperschoice@columbiavillages.org)

## STAKEHOLDERS-MERCHANTS

Bank of America  
 Columbia Association  
 Dunkin' Donuts  
 Harper's Choice Cleaners  
 Harper's Choice Liquors  
 Harper's Farm BP  
 Hunan Diamond  
 Maiwand Kabob  
 McDonald's  
 Misako Ballet Studio  
 Nail Center  
 Papa John's Pizza  
 Rita's Ice  
 Safeway Food Store  
 Subway  
 Strands Hair Studio II  
 StyleFinds Consignment Shop  
 The Bain Center  
 The Columbia Bank  
 Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House  
 Zapata's Restaurant



## COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Organization	Name of Contact
Columbia Association - Athletic Club	Leslie Flynn
Columbia Association - Sports Park	Christopher Lucas, Manager
County Council	Mary Kay Sigaty
County Executive	Ken Ulman
Ghanian Seventh Day Adventist	Emmanuel Nimarko
Harper's Choice Middle School	Susan Brown, Principal
Harper's Choice Swim Team	Betsy Rotolo
House Of Refuge Church	Nicole Jean
Iglesia Del Nazarano	Mabel Rodriguez
Kings Ministry	Mr. Lewis
Lighthouse Chapel International	Alexander Yeboah
Little Stars Learning Center	Katie Tran, Director
Longfellow Elementary PTA	Leslie Sands, PTA President
Longfellow Nursery School	Kristen Johnson, Director
Lyris People Tree List ~100	
Scout Troops	David Balthis, Cub Scouts Clarissa Ferraris, Girl Scouts
Swansfield Elementary PTA	Iriana Nelson Brooks, PTA President
The Bain Center	Linda Ethridge, Director
Winter Growth Ruth Keeton House	Carrie Grafton, Director



# Initial Implementation Schedule

Harper's Choice Village Center Community Plan      Anticipated Schedule      Updated Dec 6, 2010																
Months	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apl	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
<b>Phase 1   Listening and Learning</b>																
Define Civic Engagement Process																
Define Communications Strategy																
Undertake Stakeholder Interviews																
Define Study Area and Complete Base Mapping																
Hold Village Center Walkabout			*													
Prepare Village Center Community Profile																
Describe Village Demographics																
Describe Existing Land Use, Design Elements & Character																
Describe Existing Public Facilities & Community Services																
Describe Existing Connectivity & Circulation																
Describe Open Space & Environmental Features																
<b>Phase 2   Vision and Values</b>																
Define Draft Goals or Guiding Themes																
Hold Community Workshop																
Refine Goals																
<b>Phase 3   Drafting the Village Center Community Plan</b>																
Develop Outline for the Plan																
Document Draft Community Plan																
Hold Community Workshop on Draft Plan																
Revise the Draft Plan																
<b>Phase 4   Finalizing the Plan</b>																
Village Board Review and Approval																
Finalize and Submit to County																
Celebration Event with Community																
<b>Civic Engagement</b>																
Listening Session / Walkabout			*													
Community Workshop / Meeting				*					*							*
Committee Meetings		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Assumptions:</b>	Phases and tasks overlap in time.															
	Plan Committee provides regular updates to Village Board															





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# IMPLEMENTATION APPENDIX C

# CB-29-2009 VCCP Approval Process Flow Chart

