

Letters and Commentary

Hopeful about progress with the GCAC and city

I've been reading the letters in your newspaper about the plans of the Greater Crisfield Action Coalition. I was born and raised in Crisfield. Because I maintain a vacation house there, I have been following the GCAC activities from a distance and I came home especially to attend the August City Council meeting (even though it was on my birthday).

First of all, let me applaud City Council for the improvements they have been able to make. I often bring friends home with me, and they are always impressed with the marina/depot area, the new library, the Tawes Museum and the great restaurants. The newly paved streets and sidewalks also look very nice.

When I saw the huge turnout for the Aug. 24 Council meeting, I thought it was a further sign of pride and hopefulness that things were turning around in Crisfield,

and that citizens were eager to move ahead with GCAC plans. I, too, was hopeful, but unfortunately, I wasn't all that surprised that City Council turned down the group's request for a letter of support.

I have watched Crisfield die a slow and painful death since the '60s and have also watched the previous plans for improvement die right along with it. One question looms large in my mind. Crisfield is a small town, and two people who are very intimately involved with the GCAC are on City Council. If other Council members didn't think they were being given an ample opportunity to participate in discussions and/or decisions made by the GCAC, why didn't they just say so, person to person? Why didn't they suggest up front that the City Manager be a non-voting member of the Board? Why did they have to wait for a formal Council meeting, in front of a group of citizens who have "seen it all before", to refuse

to even sign a letter of support for the process?

Everyone would have looked better if issues had been worked out in advance, with the Council being able to express their confidence in the people and the process of the GCAC. Speaking only for myself, that action just reinforced my fear that nothing big is ever going to happen in Crisfield.

But then again, I see groups like It Takes A Village, and individuals like Mr. Paden and the Crisfield Story Project, and I think that maybe, just maybe... So, I hope that there will be fruitful meetings now between GCAC and City Council, and I hope I am able to come home for the meeting where Council finally agrees to accept the help that this exceptional group of people is eager to provide. I guess I'm not giving up hope just yet. Sincerely,

Vicki Windsor Conner
Morgantown, W. Va.

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