



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item #1
5/18/09

May 15, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Acting Chief, Vision Division
Sue Edwards, Team Leader, North Central Transit Corridor, Vision Division

FROM: Nancy Sturgeon, Planner Coordinator, Vision Division (301-495-1308) *NS*

SUBJECT: Public Hearing Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan: Planning Board
Worksession #3 – Life Sciences Center (LSC) Districts

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Continuation of Issues from Worksession #2 (May 14):
LSC Belward and LSC West (Public Safety Training
Academy-PSTA)

I. SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE WORKSESSIONS

Worksession #4	May 28, 2009	Transportation Issues, Environment, Economic Analysis, Staging and Implementation
Worksession #5	June 11, 2009	Continuation of Economic Analysis, Staging, and Implementation

II. WORKSESSION #3: MAY 18, 2009

The worksession on Monday, May 18 will continue the discussion of the LSC Districts, particularly the Belward site. An overview of the recommendations for LSC West (PSTA site) will also be provided. Staff's analysis of Park needs in the Master Plan area will be presented as well. Members of the Residents for Reasonable Development and the Gaithersburg-North Potomac-Rockville Coalition will present their views and concerns to the Planning Board on May 18.

III. SUMMARY OF ISSUES DISCUSSED AT WORKSESSION #2

At the Worksession on May 14, staff presented and discussed with the Board the Urban Design Guidelines, the revised Life Sciences Center (LSC) Zone, and the LSC Districts. Specific properties were discussed by District and a summary of these issues is provided below.

LSC North: Issue #1

Shady Grove Executive Center: 6.9 acres Existing Zone: C-2

Bureau of National Affairs (BNA): 10.5 acres Existing Zone: O-M

Proposed Zone: Planned Development Option

The two property owners agree with the staff recommendation to maintain the underlying zoning (C-2 and O-M) and allow for possible residential development through the Planned Development (PD) Zone option. Staff recommended a PD density of 28-44 dwelling units per acre. The property owners would like a PD-60 recommendation.

Planning Board Discussion: The Board supports the PD Zone option for these sites and requested that the property owners prepare concepts for potential development that show the higher density that they are seeking and provide further rationale in support of this density. The Board will revisit the density at these sites at a subsequent worksession after a broader discussion of the LSC.

LSC North: Issue #2

DANAC 23 acres Existing Zone: I-3 (0.5 FAR)

Proposed Zone: New Mixed-Use (CR) Zone

The property owner is seeking to retain the CCT station on DANAC and has requested a mixed-use zone and a 1.2 FAR. Staff recommended that the density be retained at 0.5 FAR pending a decision from MTA about the CCT alignment. Staff noted that higher density on this site was not factored into the transportation modeling because the property owner's request was made after staff completed the traffic analysis. Staff also noted that the Decoverly residential community north of DANAC is likely to be unaware of the owner's requests to increase density on the site. DANAC should initiate meetings with the residential communities in Decoverly to discuss this issue.

Planning Board Discussion: There is agreement that the CCT station could be retained on the DANAC site on either the north or east side, pending the MTA's assessment of the existing and proposed CCT alignments. There appears to be Board support for rezoning the site from I-3 to a mixed use zone, possibly the new CR Zone. The Board is interested in the effect on CCT ridership if the DANAC site is developed as mixed-use at a higher density.

The Transportation Appendix for the Master Plan includes information from a Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 128 – Effects of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) on Housing, Parking and Travel. (The Transportation Appendix was provided to the Board as part of the Worksession packet on April 23 and some of the TCRP information is on pages 15-18.) This report includes a series of case studies and other recent research that may provide a starting point for developing rough estimates of the potential ridership at a new station located at or near transit-oriented development. An informal methodology used for estimating ridership at a single station could not be used to assess the impact (i.e., loss of ridership due to the additional stop and distance) on the entire alignment.

LSC South: Issue #3

Rickman Property 13 acres Existing Zone: R&D (0.3-0.5 FAR)
Proposed Zone: Planned Development Option

Planning Board Decision: The Board supported the property owner's request to retain the R&D Zone and provide for a Planned Development option at a density of 22 dwelling units per acre. As a floating zone, the property owner will be required to initiate the rezoning by filing a Local Map Amendment for review and approval by the Planning Board and County Council. A Development Plan and Site Plan are required in the PD Zone.

LSC South: Issue#4

The Universities at Shady Grove (USG) request a CCT station on the campus.

Planning Board Decision: The Board agreed with staff that altering the proposed realignment of the CCT further south is not feasible. The Draft Master Plan addresses connectivity between the LSC South and areas to the north and language will be added to the Plan regarding enhanced use of the Traville Transit Center, including shuttle bus service (i.e., reinstating the campus connector) to the transit stations.

LSC Central: Issue #5

LSC Central District: 226 acres Existing Zones: LSC, R&D, O-M, R-200
Proposed Zone: LSC

Property owners in LSC Central support the Plan's recommendations for this District, including the realignment of the CCT, the revised LSC Zone, and the proposed density and height. Johns Hopkins University requested that the 143 foot height that is recommended near the CCT station be extended north one block to include the southeast corner of Broschart Road and Key West Avenue. Staff is not opposed to this request.

Planning Board Discussion: Board members discussed Adventist Hospital's need for increased density (1.5 FAR) and the hospital's representative explained the long-range plans for expansion and responded that this density will accommodate growth for the medical center for the foreseeable future (beyond 30 years).

LSC Belward: Issue #6

JHU-Belward: 107 acres Existing Zone: R&D Proposed Zone: LSC

JHU presented an overview of the Belward site, including the requested overall density of 1.25 FAR and increased height (143 feet) around the proposed CCT station.

Planning Board Discussion: The Board had a number of questions about Belward and the discussion will continue at the next worksession on May 18.