



Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment, Scope of Work

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Description

- Address properties bounded by the Beltway on the north, Rockville Pike on the east, and R-60 single-family neighborhoods on the south and west.
- Proposed boundary includes approximately 96 acres.
- Supplemental to the 1990 Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan.



Summary

The Scope of Work document describes the proposed Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment area; identifies the purpose and issues that will be addressed in the Plan; addresses the planning framework and context for the Plan; and describes the outreach activities for this planning effort.

Staff Recommendation

Approve the proposed Scope of Work.

I. Introduction

Montgomery County planners created a minor master plan amendment process to more quickly address potential land use changes and other priorities identified by community stakeholders. While master plans create a planning framework designed to last 15 to 20 years, minor master plan amendments are envisioned to be smaller and nimbler; addressing current and pressing planning issues. Minor master plan amendments will go through a similar public involvement process as other master and sector plans, including public meetings and opportunities to testify before the Planning Board.



The 15-story Pooks Hill Marriott hotel has 407 guest rooms and was built in 1980

As part of the Planning Department’s solicitation for minor master plan amendment requests, an application for the Pooks Hill Marriott property was submitted. It proposed three high-rise residential buildings on under-used parking lots adjacent to the Marriott hotel. The Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment process will assess this redevelopment proposal and will also assess other land use, transportation, and urban design issues facing the community.

II. Context

Pooks Hill is a densely developed community located at the southwest quadrant of the Rockville Pike interchange with the Beltway in Bethesda (see Map 1: Community Context). The Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment area is bounded by the Beltway on the north, Rockville Pike on the east, and R-60 single-family neighborhoods on the south and west. Its boundaries encompass high-rise multifamily residential development, the 17.9 acre Pooks Hill Marriott Hotel property, and the campus headquarters of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) (see Map 2: Plan Area Boundary).

The area is well positioned near employment centers, Metro and bus lines, and shopping. The federal facilities of the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) are both located approximately a mile south of Pooks Hill and offer approximately 30,000 high paying jobs. Multifamily residential communities in Pooks Hill include: Promenade Towers, Whitley Park Terrace, Bethesda Hill apartments, Bethesda Overlook townhouses, and Bristol Square Lane condominiums. The 11.5-acre FASEB campus, at the Plan area's southeast edge, is zoned R-60. It contains office buildings, a four-story parking structure, and a number of smaller, residential scale administration buildings. The Maplewood single-family subdivision is located just south of Pooks Hill and the juxtaposition of dense multifamily development with single-family homes in Maplewood is unique in Bethesda.

The Pooks Hill community is served by a local park, the YMCA, and several places of worship that are all located within close commuting distance. These gathering places offer an opportunity for social activities and help create a sense of a community.



More than 300 people are employed in The Federation of American Society for Experimental Biology campus in Pooks Hill



Promenade Towers is the largest residential community in Pooks Hill with approximately 1800 residents

Map 1: Community Context



Map 2: Minor Master Plan Amendment Boundary



III. Planning Framework

The area of the Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment was included in the 1990 *Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan*. That Plan identifies Pooks Hill as a higher density area bounded by the Beltway on the north, Wisconsin Avenue on the east, Old Georgetown Road on the west, and the zoning boundary between higher density and lower density residential to the south. It also reconfirms the existing multifamily zoning in Pooks Hill, which maintains a boundary between higher and lower

density residential zoning and prevents encroachment of higher density housing into the adjacent single-family neighborhood.

The Plan further recommends studying the intersection of Pooks Hill Road with Rockville Pike and its relationship to the I-495 interchange. It endorses new pedestrian connections with nearby Metro stations and employment centers, and raises concerns about traffic cutting through Pooks Hill between Old Georgetown Road and Rockville Pike. The Plan supports access restrictions on Linden Avenue to deter cars from cutting through the adjacent single-family area from Pooks Hill during peak commuting period. These traffic and connectivity concerns are still relevant.

The Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment boundary is smaller than the area identified by the *1990 Bethesda-Chevy Master Plan*. Within the confines of a smaller planning area, staff will be able to focus more closely on all relevant land use, transportation and urban design issues facing the community.

IV. Community Snapshot

The Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment area is 96 acres, with a population of 3,223 in 2010. The primary land use is high-rise residential, which includes 70 percent of the Plan area. Offices and the hotel are the other significant land uses. Pooks Hill currently has 2,232 housing units, of which 80 percent are multifamily and 20 percent are townhouses. Most of the housing, about 80 percent, was constructed in the 1970s and approximately 10 percent of housing units were constructed in the 1990s.

By one estimate more than 100,000 high paying jobs are located within 3-miles of Pooks Hill. Along with NIH, WRNMMC, and FASEB, nearby employment includes the Food and Drug Administration, Lockheed Martin, and Suburban Hospital.

V. Proposal

Representatives of the Pooks Hill Marriott property, which currently contains a 15-story hotel, have applied for a minor master plan amendment to consider mixed-use zoning. According to the application, the gross building area of the existing hotel is approximately 267,000 square feet, with lot coverage of about 15 percent. The property also has approximately six acres of under-used parking and vacant land, located to the west and southwest of the hotel.

The site is currently zoned H-M (Hotel-Motel), primarily allowing guest rooms and eating and drinking establishments for hotel patrons. Residential uses are not allowed. The applicant proposes to develop Marriott's surplus parking area and vacant land with multifamily residential and seeks rezoning that would allow the construction of three

high-rise (up to 20 stories) apartment buildings, totaling 780,500 square feet. This would include a number of moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs). The Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment will assess the proposed multifamily residential development in the context of the broader community and will make recommendations to ensure that any redevelopment results in enhancing the Pooks Hill community.



The applicant proposes to develop six acres of under-used surface parking area with three high-rise residential buildings



The 17.9 acre site is currently improved by the Pooks Hill Marriott hotel building

VI. Purpose

The proposal to redevelop under-used parking lots presents an opportunity for the Pooks Hill community. The planning process will help facilitate appropriate redevelopment near Metro stations and employment centers. It will further seek ways to maintain a defined boundary and appropriate transitions between high density housing and the lower density Maplewood subdivision. It will also study the feasibility of creating new bike and pedestrian connections between the existing residential neighborhoods and employment areas along Rockville Pike and to the Metro stations. The Plan will further assess and consider:

- ways to develop under-used parking areas and undeveloped land adjacent to the Pooks Hill Marriott Hotel
- ways to expand housing opportunities, including moderately priced dwelling units, near transportation and employment centers
- an urban design framework to address overall development character
- ways to accommodate multi-modal transportation along transportation corridors, including pedestrian and bicycle connections linking residential areas with Walter Reed, NIH and Metro stations
- ways to improve pedestrian safety
- opportunities for improved and expanded public spaces.

VII. Outreach

To better understand the Pooks Hill community and to assess the development potential of the large under-used parking areas adjacent to the Marriott Hotel, planners will seek regular input from various stakeholders. Planners will meet with individual property owners, business owners, and community residents throughout the process. Such meetings are essential to



Outreach efforts will include public meetings, and opportunities to testify before the Planning Board

ensure that all stakeholders are adequately heard during the development of Plan recommendations. Outreach efforts will include public meetings, an interactive project website, and opportunities to testify before the Planning Board. The first public meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2012, and staff will notify all Pooks Hill area citizen and homeowner associations via email. The following is a schedule of public meetings to elicit feedback:

Meeting	When	Objective
Open House, Project Kick-off	November 13, 2012	Introduce minor master plan amendment process; identify and better understand community issues, challenges and strengths; discuss the proposal to redevelop a portion of the Pooks Hill Marriott parking lots and seek community feedback
Planning Board and Community Workshop	February/March 2013	Review draft planning principles and preliminary recommendations
Planning Board Public Hearing	April 2013	Present staff draft

All public meeting dates, events and staff reports will be posted on the website:

www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/pookshill

VIII. Project Timeline

Staff will consult with various stakeholders in the coming months and anticipates completing the staff draft in spring 2013.

Pooks Hill Minor Master Plan Amendment Timeline	2012					2013												2014				
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Scope of Work																						
background research	■	■																				
scope of work presentation			■																			
Analysis and Draft Plan																						
analysis/ concept refinement				■	■	■	■															
draft recommendations							■															
staff draft								■														
Planning Board Review																						
public hearing									■													
worksessions							■		■	■	■											
planning board draft publication												■										
Transmit to Executive & Council																						
county executive review													■	■								
county council notice period															■							
council public hearing																■	■	■	■			
Commission Adoption, SMA																					■	■

- Staff
- Planning Board
- County Executive
- County Council
- Commission Adoption, SMA