



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

**APPROVED
MINUTES**

The Montgomery County Planning Board met in regular session on Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 9:08 a.m. in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland, and adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Present were Chair Casey Anderson, Vice Chair Marye Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Norman Dreyfuss and Natali Fani-González. Commissioner Gerald R. Cichy was necessarily absent.

Items 1, 2, and 4 are reported on the attached agenda.

The Board recessed for lunch at 10:54 a.m. and reconvened in the auditorium at 12:08 p.m.

Items 5 and 3, discussed in that order, are reported on the attached agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, February 16, 2017, in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland.

M. Clara Moise
Sr. Technical Writer/Editor

James J. Parsons
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Montgomery County Planning Board Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2017
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760
301-495-4600

1. Consent Agenda

***A. Adoption of Resolutions**

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: There were no Resolutions submitted for adoption.

***B. Record Plats**

Subdivision Plat No. 220091130, Finlandia

RE-2 zone; 2 lots; located on the west side of Hanson Road, 1,000 feet north of Hilton Road; Damascus Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

Subdivision Plat No. 220160170, Sugarland

R-200 zone, 2 lots; located at the southwesterly terminus of Sugarland Lane; Agricultural and Rural Open Space Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion: FANI-GONZÁLEZ/WELLS-HARLEY

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: CICHY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Record Plats cited above, as submitted.

***C. Other Consent Items**

1. Shady Grove Station, Westside Site Plan No. 82013022B --- Request to modify the approved Site Plan to revise party walls of select townhomes, update the footprint of Building A and interior courtyards, update the location of electric transformers, update details of the parking garage screen, and revise the Final Forest Conservation Plan infrastructure improvements for the trail and WMATA entrance approved under Mandatory Referral No. MR2014019 and Site Plan No. 820130220.
Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions and Adoption of Resolution

2. APF Test No. APF201701, United Therapeutics, 1101 Spring Street
EOF-3.0, 0.20 acres; located at 1101 Spring Street; North and West Silver Spring Master Plan.
Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

3. Adoption of the Corrected Resolution for Black Hill Thrive Assisted Living Facility Site Plan 820160100, MCPB No. 17-002

BOARD ACTION

Motion: 1. WELLS-HARLEY/FANI-GONZÁLEZ
 2. FANI-GONZÁLEZ/WELLS-HARLEY
 3. WELLS-HARLEY/DREYFUSS

Vote:
 Yea: 1, 2, & 3. 4-0

Nay:

Other: CICHY ABSENT

Action: 1. Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, and adopted the attached Resolution.
 2. Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Adequate Public Facilities finding cited above, subject to conditions.
 3. Adopted the corrected Resolution cited above, as submitted.

MCPB, 2-9-17, APPROVED

***D. Approval of Minutes**

Planning Board Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2017

BOARD ACTION

Motion: FANI-GONZÁLEZ/WELLS-HARLEY

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: CICHY ABSENT

Action: Approved Planning Board Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2017, as submitted.

2. Roundtable Discussion

- Parks Director's Report

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Parks Department Director Mike Riley introduced staff members Colter Burkes, Naomi Rotramel, and Patrick Harwood who offered a multi-media presentation and updated the Board regarding the ongoing abatement measures for the emerald ash borer, an invasive species of beetle that feeds on and ultimately kills ash trees with a 50 to 98 percent mortality rate within one to three years after the first signs of infestation. To date, Parks Department staff has removed a total of 1,982 infected trees at a cost of \$1,479,000, an average of \$746.21 per tree, with 90 percent of infected tree removal along Beach Drive, Sligo Creek Parkway, and Little Falls Parkway complete; 50 percent along the Rock Creek, Capitol Crescent, Little Falls, and Sligo Creek Trails complete; and 10 percent complete near park amenities. Due to the vast expanse of property maintained by the Parks Department, the number of infected trees located along natural surface trails, within park rights-of-way along I-495 and the Inter-County Connector, as well as trees potentially affecting private properties sharing a boundary with park property is unknown, and therefore tree removal in those areas has yet to begin. The next steps for staff include the removal of 1,701 infected trees within 134 parks. Staff added that additional funding for abatement efforts will be requested.

There followed extensive Board discussion with questions to staff.

4. 2017 Mobility Assessment Report --- Presentation to Board and discussion as required biennially under Subdivision Staging Policy legislation. This report provides the most current data regarding multi-modal travel in the County, including roadway and intersection congestion, transit ridership, pedestrian and bicycle counts.

Staff Recommendation: Approval to Transmit 2017 Mobility Assessment Report to County Council.

BOARD ACTION

Motion: FANI-GONZÁLEZ/WELLS-HARLEY

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: CICHY ABSENT

Action: **Approved staff recommendation for approval to transmit the 2017 Mobility Assessment Report to the County Council.**

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the 2017 Mobility Assessment Report (MAR). The biennial report, which this year analyzed approximately 430 miles of roadway, is used to inform residents and public officials regarding roadway and intersection congestion, pedestrian and bicycle travel, and public transportation findings, and to help inform the commentaries of the Planning Board and the County Council regarding the State Consolidated Transportation program and the County Capital Improvements Program (CIP) project priorities. The report is organized in accordance with the policy area boundaries specified in the 2012-2016 Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP). The report continues to utilize many of the traditional roadway and intersection performance metrics that past reports have relied on, such as bottlenecks, Travel Time Index (TTI), and Critical Lane Volume (CLV), while introducing new performance metrics, including Planning Time Index (PTI) as an evaluation of travel time reliability for auto travel, bicycle accessibility to measure bike performance, and frequency and coverage for the evaluation of local bus service. Staff briefly discussed current travel trends, noting that although the 2015 total Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) was at an all-time high since 2005, the per capita VMT decreased 11 percent during that same time period.

The key roadway congestion findings include an overall four-mile per hour decrease in speed throughout the County from 2011 to 2015, and a four-tenths increase in the PTI within the same time period, which indicates that unexpected delays and congestion are increasing, with down county areas and the I-270 Corridor experiencing the greatest decrease in speed and travel time reliability. Three of the five policy area groupings within the I-270 Corridor saw reductions in average speed greater than those in down county areas. Currently, Ridge Road (MD27) between Brink Road and Davis Mill Road, and Colesville Road (US29) between the Capital Beltway(I-495) and the District of Columbia line are the most congested corridors, with seven of the remaining top ten congested corridors located in the

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4. 2017 Mobility Assessment Report

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Silver Spring or Bethesda vicinity. In 2015, approximately 40 percent of roadway miles inside I-495 exhibited moderate to severe levels of congestion, with approximately 13 percent of roadways outside I-495 exhibiting the same levels of congestion during the same time period.

Regarding intersections, staff stated that seven of the top 25 bottlenecks in the County occur along Rockville Pike (MD355), with the top bottleneck occurring at the intersection of MD-355 and First Street/Wootton Parkway in the northbound direction. The percentage of intersections that exceed the applicable policy area congestion thresholds established in the 2013 Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) and Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR) Guidelines continues to decrease compared to previous reports, with a total of 68 intersections exceeding the CLV threshold through 2015, which is down approximately one percent from the percentage reported in the 2014 MAR. Currently, the Fairland, Colesville, and Gaithersburg City Policy areas have nine intersections that exceed the CLV thresholds, followed by Rockville City and the Silver Spring/Takoma Policy areas with six intersections that exceed the applicable CLV thresholds. Currently, MD355 at Cedar Lane has the highest CLV in the County.

Staff then discussed pedestrian and bicycle travel, noting that 11 of the top 20 pedestrian observations occurred at intersections within the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD), particularly in the Bethesda Metro Station Policy Area, with 73 percent of riders accessing the station by either foot or bike. The greatest number of pedestrians observed occurred within the Silver Spring CBD at the intersection of Colesville Road and 2nd Avenue/Wayne Avenue where 6,097 pedestrians were recorded in the evening and morning hours. The highest concentration of bicycle activity is located within the Bethesda CBD, with 375 cyclists observed during morning and evening hours. Staff noted that the majority of the top 20 most utilized Capital Bikeshare stations are located within a mile of a Metrorail station, which validates the role of the program as a last-mile transportation source. The highest levels of non-work accessibility via bicycle occur predominantly in the Wheaton, White Flint, Twinbrook, and Bethesda areas. However, when the Countywide bicycle network is limited to only segments characterized as a low level of traffic stress, accessibility decreases significantly, specifically in more urban areas, which can experience a decrease in accessibility of 90 percent or more.

Key public transportation findings include a 6.9 percent decrease in Ride-On system ridership since 2010, with an almost 11 percent increase in Metro Bus ridership over the same time period. Increases in ridership are mainly outside I-495 in more rural areas of the County. From 2010 to 2015, average weekday boardings and exits at County Metro Rail stations decreased 3 percent. However, weekend usage was significantly higher, though average weekend boardings and exits decreased 11.5 percent during the same period.

There followed extensive Board discussion with questions to staff.

5. White Flint 2 Sector Plan - Worksession #2

Staff Recommendation: Discuss and Provide Guidance to Staff

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by discussion and provided guidance to staff.

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the Public Hearing draft recommendations and testimony for the Executive Boulevard District in the White Flint 2 Sector Plan area. Staff noted that the Plan divides the District into two areas: Executive Boulevard North and South. As a traditional suburban office park, Executive Boulevard is a unique section of White Flint with 2.1 million square feet of development. Staff noted that some property owners desire significantly more densities, building heights and a different range of uses, while others wanted minor changes and others were supportive of the Plan's recommendations. Some property owners supported the Employment Office (EOF) zone, while others suggested the Commercial Residential Town (CRT) or Commercial Residential (CR) zones.

Staff from the Planning Department Research and Special Projects Division discussed a financial analysis report prepared by staff to determine if the Plan's recommended densities would provide an incentive for property owners to redevelop in the future. Staff evaluated the economic feasibility of redevelopment concepts proposed by Willco and Eagle Bank, two large property owners on Executive Boulevard, and presented the economic implications of the density and building height recommendations the owners are contemplating for these two properties, and how the scale of these developments would impact the surrounding market. The Executive Boulevard District is west of Pike & Rose and the Metro West District. Portions of this district have the potential to evolve from the current single-office use into a sustainable and innovative district with mixed-uses. The district will benefit from its proximity to new development and infrastructure. It is envisioned that the existing environmental and health resources will provide the framework for new infill development and some redevelopment to create a sustainable and innovative district. Several existing offices will be retained and complemented by new residential and non-residential development, especially properties that are in proximity to new infrastructure and development in the White Flint 2 Sector Plan area. The realignment of Executive Boulevard and Old Georgetown Road (MD187) and the opening of Towne Road will provide greater pedestrian and vehicular access to and from the district.

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5. White Flint 2 Sector Plan - Worksession #2

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Staff added that there will be a joint worksession with Rock Spring Master Plan staff next Thursday, February 16, to discuss school issues with Montgomery County Public Schools representatives. On February 23, there will be a worksession on Montrose North-Rockville Pike; on March 9, a worksession on Parklawn South and Randolph Hills; and the final worksession on March 23 will be devoted to discussion of Public Facilities in the White Flint 2 Sector Plan area.

The following speakers offered comments: Mr. Steven Robins, attorney from Lerch, Early, and Brewer representing the Camalier Davis properties; Ms. Francoise Carrier, attorney from Bregman, Berbert, Schwartz, and Gilday; and Ms. Stacy Silber, attorney from Lerch, Early, and Brewer.

There followed extensive Board discussion with questions to staff and some of the speakers.

The Board instructed staff to update the Plan based on feedback received during the meeting and thanked staff for the very detailed financial and economic analysis presentation.

3. Rocking Horse Center, Mandatory Referral No. 2017008 --- Request by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to expand the existing parking lot by approximately 115 parking spaces to accommodate current users of the facility; add sidewalks and a new vehicular entrance on Macon Road; and provide required stormwater management; 18.7 acres zoned R-90; located at 4910 Macon Road, Rockville in the 1992 North Bethesda-Garrett Park Master Plan area.

Staff Recommendation: Approval to Transmit Comments to Montgomery County Public Schools

BOARD ACTION

Motion: WELLS-HARLEY/DREYFUSS

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: CICHY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval to transmit comments to Montgomery County Public Schools, as stated in the attached transmittal letter.

In keeping with the January 30 technical staff report, Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and discussed a proposed Mandatory Referral request from Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to expand the Rocking Horse Center existing parking lot by approximately 115 parking spaces to accommodate current users of the facility; add sidewalks and a new vehicular entrance on Macon Road; and provide the required stormwater management. The 18.7-acre site is zoned Residential (R-90) and is located on Macon Road in Rockville in the North Bethesda-Garrett Park Master Plan area.

Staff noted that the parking lot expansion is needed to alleviate safety issues created by staff and visitors parking off-site. While there are 160 staff and approximately 90 visitors to the facility each day, there are only 102 parking spaces on-site. In addition, special events and peek registration add approximately 160 visitors. The facility is also home to a quarterly English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) group meeting that brings an additional 400 visitors to the site. When vehicles are parked on both sides of Macon Road and the surrounding neighborhood streets, the narrow width of the roadways creates safety concerns for vehicles and pedestrians. Staff also added that MCPS is exempt from submitting a forest conservation plan for this proposed project under Section 22A-5(t) of the Forest Conservation Law.

Messrs. Michael Sanchez and Seth Adams from MCPS offered comments.

Mr. Ted Kroos of Rugby Avenue offered testimony.

There followed a brief Board discussion with questions to staff and MCPS representatives.

Chair Anderson instructed staff to inform MCPS that the Planning Board does not support this request and would recommend that MCPS consider allocating the funds to the construction of a new school instead.