



MCPB

Item No.: 8

Date: 06-21-18

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**MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan – Worksession #4 (Germantown Connect Section Recommendations)**

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**Completed: 06-14-18**

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**Staff Recommendation**

Approve the Germantown Connect Section recommendations for the MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan with the necessary revisions based on the discussions during the worksession.

**Summary**

This is the fourth worksession for the MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan. At the previous worksession, representatives of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) briefed the Planning Board on two key studies: MTA's Draft Growth and Investment Plan Update 2013-2050 and MCDOT's Middlebrook Road Pedestrian Safety Audit. Both studies may inform the Board's decision making for this worksession, which will focus on the Plan's recommendations for the Germantown Connect Section of the sector plan and will highlight public hearing testimony and agency comments on these issues.

The testimony and agency comments focused on the following areas:

1. Traffic Modeling and the Road Diet for Middlebrook Road;
2. Traffic Speeds;
3. Pedestrian Safety;
4. Street Network;
5. Colocation of the Transit Center and MARC Station;
6. Streetscape Enhancements.

Staff has included a summary of public comments received to date on the Germantown recommendations pertaining to the Connect Section of the plan. The summary includes staff's proposed responses to testimony and comments.

**Attachments**

1. Table 1: Individuals Providing Testimony
2. Table 2: Germantown Public Testimony on the Connect Section
3. Table 3: Comments from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation on the Germantown Connect Section of the MARC Rail Communities Plan
4. Memorandum from Sheer Partners, the Representative for 19430 Walter Johnson Road

### MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan Public Hearing—February 1, 2018

The Planning Board Public Hearing on the MARC Rails Communities Sector Plan Public Hearing Draft was held on February 1, 2018, at the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown. Testimony was provided during that hearing, and has continued to be received since then.

The first two tables below summarize the testimony we have received and the individuals delivering it. The first table identifies those who have given testimony together with details about the individual or the group or property the individual represents. The second table summarizes the testimony arranged by topic, as the topics generally appear within the Sector Plan. The third table is the comments received from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT).

**Table 1: Individuals Providing Testimony**

NAME/FIRM	REPRESENTING	RESIDENT	COMMENTS
Perry Berman, David Edgerly Scherr Partners	Mr. Fallahi et al 19430 Walter Johnson Road, Germantown (vacant land)	No	
Timothy Booth		Germantown	
Jeri Crist	PTSA, Seneca Valley HS	Germantown	
Ronit Dancis	Action Committee for Transit (ACT)	No	
Addi Davis		Boys	
Audra Dove	PTSA, Roberto Clemente MS	Germantown	
Jennifer F. Fuss		Germantown	
Samuel Hahn (with American Sign Language translator Carl DuPree)		Germantown	MARC rider
Hammet Hough	Boys Civic Association	Boys	Former MARC rider
Kathie Hulley		Boys	Citizens Advisory Committee for the 2009 Germantown Sector Plan
Shreya Jha		Clarksburg	9 <sup>th</sup> grade student Clarksburg High School
Vagmi Luhar		Germantown	9 <sup>th</sup> grade student Clarksburg High School
Melissa Regan	PTSA, Seneca Valley HS	Germantown	

NAME/FIRM	REPRESENTING	RESIDENT	COMMENTS
Mike Rubin		Boys	
Christopher Ruhlen Lerch, Early and Brewer	Owner of U-Haul property, 19525 Waters Road, Germantown	No	
Charlotte Sanford		Boys	9 <sup>th</sup> grade student Clarksburg High School
Louisa Sanford		Boys	6 <sup>th</sup> grade student Roberto Clemente MS, Germantown
Elizabeth and Robert Schleichert		Boys	
Margaret Schoap	TAME (Coalition for Transit Alternatives to Mid-County Highway Extended)	Germantown	
Miriam Schoenbaum		Boys	MARC rider
Elena Shuvalov	Boys Historical Society	Boys	
Stacy Silber Lerch, Early and Brewer	Clark Enterprises for Rolling Hills Apartments, Germantown	No	
Faith Skordinski		Germantown	
Cindy Snow	Action Committee for Transit (ACT)	Germantown	
Bob Stoddard SVN Wright Commercial Real Estate	Owner of 19115 Liberty Mill Road, Germantown	No	
Ruthanne Stoltzfus		Germantown	
Susan Soderberg	Germantown Historical Society	Germantown	
Jane Thompson		Barnesville	Former MARC rider
Clark Wagner Pleasants Development, LLC	Gunners Lake properties Germantown site GJ	No	

Table 2: Germantown Public Testimony on the Connect Section

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>General</b>		
<i>Support plan</i>	Hammet Hough (Association rep) Elena Shuvalov (Assoc)	Support the working draft as written without any changes.
<i>Support plan</i>	Miriam Schoenbaum (Ind)	The staff draft guides change in the direction that the current and future Montgomery County residents want and need change to go.
<i>Support plan</i>	Susan Soderberg (Assoc)	This is a good and balanced plan.
<b>Staff Response:</b> The plan recommendations were developed with significant stakeholder input.		
<i>MARC service</i>	Ronit Dancis (Assoc)	Support two-way weekday and weekend MARC service.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Addition to the Public Hearing Draft. Add language expressing that while staff supports two-way weekday and weekend service on the Brunswick line, the line is owned by CSX and service enhancements would have to be negotiated between CSX and MTA.		
<b>Introduction</b>		
<i>Community engagement</i>	Addi Davis (Individual)	Residents were included in every step of the process. Hope to see the plan come to fruition.
<i>Community engagement</i>	Clark Wagner (Representative for property owner)	We were not contacted by staff about this plan.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Staff has conducted an extensive outreach process since the plan was initiated in November 2015, including presentations to community groups, notices in the Upcounty Today! E-newsletter, community surveys and questionnaires, posters in bus shelters, informational posters placed at prominent and well-traveled locations and meetings with property owners. We are continuing meetings with stakeholders during the worksession process.		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>Vision</b>		
<i>Future</i>	Charlotte Sanford (Ind)	Make Montgomery County a place students will want to live when they become adults.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The intent of this master plan and all of our master plans is to ensure that the vision and recommendations within the plan promote vibrant communities for people of all ages.		
<i>Transit, pedestrian and bicycle connections to MARC</i>	Cindy Snow (Assoc) Ronit Dancis (Assoc)	Support the plan's recommendations to promote better transit, pedestrian and bicycle connections to the MARC stations in Boyds and Germantown, and to promote a range of alternatives.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The plan's purpose and recommendations are to promote a range of safe transportation alternatives, improvements to the existing transportation systems and better connections to the station areas that respect the residential neighborhoods and historic resources of each community.		
<b>Connect</b>		
<i>Walking, biking and public safety</i>	Cindy Snow (Assoc)	Support Vision Zero and the plan's recommendations for making the areas safe to walk, bike and drive.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The road classification recommendations and proposed street sections provide designated areas for pedestrians and bicyclists.		
<b>Appendix</b>		
<i>ULI Study</i>	Susan Soderberg (Assoc)	Move the ULI Study in the appendix to the published plan.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change from the Public Hearing Draft. The public hearing draft has already incorporated many of the ideas found in the ULI mTap Study for the Germantown MARC Station area in its recommendations.		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>Other</b>		
<i>Expand boundary</i>	Bob Stoddard (Rep)	Representative for the owner of 19115 Liberty Mill Road requests the expansion of the Germantown MARC boundary to include the property in order to rezone it to a Townhouse zone.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change from the Public Hearing Draft. The boundary was established on January 28, 2016, when the Scope of Work for the MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan was approved the Planning Board. Staff has used this boundary during all advertised meetings for the past two years.		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>Germantown</b>		
<b>Traffic Modeling and the Road Diet for Middlebrook Road</b>		
<i>Support the Middlebrook Road "road diet"</i>	Jeri Crist (Assoc) Ronit Dancis (Assoc) Jennifer F. Fuss (Ind) Kathie Hulley (Ind) Shreya Jha (Ind) Vagmi Luhar (Ind) Melissa Regan (Assoc) Miriam Schoenbaum (Ind) Cindy Snow (Assoc)	Support the road diet on Middlebrook Road, reducing the number of travel lanes from six to four lanes. It is a big, dangerous, high-speed road. Seneca Valley HS is expanding to 2,500 students, and those students should be able to walk to and from school safely.
<i>Retain the 2009 Sector Plan densities</i>	Kathie Hulley (Ind) Miriam Schoenbaum (Ind) Susan Soderberg (Assoc) Cindy Snow (Assoc)	Retain the development densities recommended in the MARC Public Hearing Draft for Germantown and the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan. Exclude densities above that from traffic modeling.
<p><b>Staff Response:</b></p> <p>Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. During the Planning Board scope of work review for this plan, the community and Planning Board requested that the plan boundary be extended to include Middlebrook Road in order to consider ways to make the road safer especially for the Seneca Valley High School students. Based on this request, a road diet on Middlebrook Road has been studied.</p> <p>The plan envisions Middlebrook Road as a tree-lined boulevard and a "complete street." The number of vehicular lanes will be reduced from six lanes to four lanes which will allow for wider, shaded sidewalks, pedestrian refuges and dedicated bike lanes. The road diet improves pedestrian and bicycle safety, calming traffic to make Middlebrook Road more walkable.</p> <p>Transportation consultants, Sabra Wang &amp; Associates (SWA), modeled the intersections in the vicinity of the plan area to test that the road diet works with two lanes removed. Their analysis found that the road operates with the densities proposed in the Public Hearing Draft. In response to testimony, SWA also tested the current zoning with two requested zoning changes to determine if the road diet still worked. The results of those findings determined that most intersections worked with minimal impact except for the intersections at Germantown Road and Wisteria Drive and Germantown Road and Bowman Mill Drive. The mitigation for these impacts requires additional lanes which will increase pedestrian crossing distances and adversely impact pedestrian safety. The intersection of Germantown Road and Wisteria Drive requires an additional second SB left-turn from Germantown Road onto Wisteria Drive, an exclusive additional right-turn lane from WB Wisteria Drive to NB Germantown Road and maintaining the approach configuration on the west leg. At the intersection of Germantown Road and Bowman Mill Drive, the westbound approach that is currently striped as one lane will need to be widened to include an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through-right lane.</p>		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>Traffic Speeds</b>		
<i>Assess traffic speeds</i>	Jeri Crist (Assoc) Audra Dove (Assoc) Ruthanne Stoltzfus (Assoc)	Assess speed and traffic flow. Make appropriate changes on Middlebrook Road to ensure pedestrian safety.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The public hearing draft recommendations extending the Urban Road Code area eastward north of the railroad tracks from Crystal Rock Drive to Great Seneca Highway help address this comment. The Urban Road Code requires that urban roads have narrower vehicle lanes, narrower curb radii and lower target speeds. The plan makes recommendations to reduce the number of lanes on Middlebrook Road from six to four, narrow the lane widths and set the speed limit on Middlebrook Road to 30 miles per hour during school hours and 35 miles per hour during non-school hours.		
<b>Pedestrian Safety</b>		
<i>Making walking safer for students</i>	Jeri Crist (Assoc) Ronit Dancis (Assoc) Audra Dove (Assoc) Jennifer F. Fuss (Ind) Kathie Hulley (Ind) Shreya Jha (Ind) Vagmi Luhar (Ind) Charlotte Sanford (Ind) Miriam Schoenbaum (Ind) Faith Skordinski (Ind) Cindy Snow (Assoc) Ruthanne Stoltzfus (Ind) Melissa Regan (Assoc) Hammet Hough (Assoc) Louisa Sanford (Ind)	Make walking safer for students walking to and from Seneca Valley High School. Provide buffers between pedestrians and traffic. Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Limit crossing distances for pedestrians. Help students get around without a car.  Extend the Urban Road Code and Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Area to Great Seneca Highway [include all four roads around the Seneca Valley High School site].
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The public hearing draft recommends extending the Urban Road Code and providing complete streets that are safer and more comfortable for all users (see p.58). Additionally, the plan recommends planting tall growing shade trees between pedestrian and bicycle facilities and the roadway to buffer pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicles and provide traffic calming.		



TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<i>Consider pedestrian bridges around Seneca Valley High School</i>	Jeri Crist (Assoc)	Consider adding “over the street walkways” to streets surrounding Seneca Valley High School in order to eliminate pedestrian/car collisions.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change from the Public Hearing Draft. Pedestrian bridges to the school could be considered, but may be challenging with the topography and connecting to pedestrian walkway at the school. Cost would also be a consideration. The public hearing draft makes recommendations that extend the Urban Road Code and thereby support safer pedestrian/vehicle interactions, by limiting crossing distances to 60 feet or less (curb-to-curb or between curb and a pedestrian refuge), and providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the school.		
<i>Support a new pedestrian bridge over the tracks</i>	Melissa Regan (Assoc)	A new pedestrian bridge would be a win-win for both Seneca Valley High School students and MARC riders.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. A second pedestrian bridge east of the existing pedestrian bridge will give the community south of the tracks another means of crossing the tracks without having to walk or bike to Great Seneca Highway.  In addition, at the time that improvements are made to the MARC station area, MTA anticipates that additional improvements will be required by CSX to reduce at-grade pedestrian track crossings. A second pedestrian bridge may meet CSX’s requirement.		
<b>Street Network</b>		
<i>Improve walkability with a fine-grained network of streets</i>	Jeri Crist (Assoc) Audra Dove (Assoc) Ronit Dancis (Assoc) Miriam Schoenbaum (Ind) Cindy Snow (Assoc) Melissa Regan (Assoc)	Create a fine-grained network of streets with sidewalk so that pedestrians have the opportunity to walk on streets with less traffic.
<i>Remove reference to “street”</i>	Stacy Silber (Rep)	On p. 46, remove reference to “street”. [The recommendation will then read, “Create a context-sensitive, interconnected ___ network that is safe, attractive, comfortable and convenient for all users regardless of age, mobility or transportation choice, supporting the county’s complete___ policy.”]

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<i>Remove reference to “a network of local roads and pedestrian bicycle facilities that will result in.”</i>	Stacy Silber (Rep)	On p. 57, remove “a network of local roads and pedestrian/bicycle facilities that will result in.” [The sentence will then read “Provide ____ improved circulation and access, and create a fine-grained network of small, walkable blocks on the north side of the railroad tracks.”]
<i>Remove reference to “roadway” and “a network of streets.”</i>	Stacy Silber (Rep)	Remove reference to “roadway” and “a network of streets” on Rolling Hills property. Don’t be unnecessarily prescriptive. Allow flexibility to encourage creative design solutions.
<p><b>Staff Response:</b></p> <p>Mixed testimony, some in support of the Public Hearing Draft and some requesting changes. One of the purposes of this master plan is to provide safer facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists and greater connectivity to lessen reliance on cars to make short trips. With potential redevelopment that increases densities, a street network is necessary to improve connectivity and disperse traffic, providing residents and commuters safe and convenient access to the MARC station and other destinations. This street network will help to implement the County’s Complete Street Policy and Vision Zero Action Plan. The Complete Street Policy addresses “the safety and comfort of pedestrians, transit-users, people on bikes, and people in cars,” and the Vision Zero Action Plan strives to eliminate traffic deaths by 2030.</p> <p>A fine-grained, interconnected street grid with sidewalks and bike facilities will allow residents, commuters and students to safely access destinations within their community, including the MARC station. This network of streets may also reduce roadway widths and pedestrian crossing distances at other locations and provide alternative routes. If blocks are too long, residents and commuters will not walk or bike, but rather still drive. Our analysis also suggests that a parallel and interconnected network of streets on either side of Wisteria Drive could balance the future traffic demand expected by the proposed density and reduce the need for costly and pedestrian-adverse intersection improvements at Wisteria Drive and Germantown Road, which would be inconsistent with other plan recommendations.</p> <p>Last, an increase in density will necessitate an improved street network. At subdivision, a network of local roads will be required per the County’s subdivision regulations based on the number of units proposed. The draft plan provides flexibility for the location of local roads but provides some guidance to the Planning Board for their use in reviewing redevelopment proposals.</p>		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<i>Remove reference to Bowman Mill Road</i>	Stacy Silber (Rep)	Remove reference to Bowman Mill Road on the sidepath diagram.
<i>Pedestrian path location</i>	Stacy Silber (Rep)	For Rolling Hills Apartments, allow flexibility in the location of pedestrian paths.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. The label can be removed from the sidepath diagram, but the line will remain (p. 61).  When the Rolling Hills Apartment complex is redeveloped, the applicant will have the flexibility of establishing the location of pedestrian paths during the development review process. The language in the master plan gives guidance to reviewers and future Planning Boards and ensures that pedestrian connections to the MARC station and surrounding areas are safe and adequate.		

Colocation of Transit Center and MARC station		
<i>Co-locate the Germantown transit center with the MARC station</i> <i>(Vision)</i>	Samuel Hahn (Ind) (with Carl DuPree as American Sign Language interpreter)	When the train is delayed or broken down, it takes half an hour to walk to the Germantown transit center. It's frightening to cross the roads to get there because of the way people drive. Move the Germantown transit center to the MARC station where both can have adequate parking and transportation.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff has informally heard that delays and cancellations are common. Improved operational coordination between Ride On and MARC may be appropriate. Moving the Germantown Transit Center would be more difficult and would entail realigning the CCT requiring additional study, and acquiring the necessary right-of-way for the CCT. Additionally, the Germantown transit center is a regional facility that will be a future Corridor City Transitway station, north of the MARC Plan area.		

TOPIC	NAME(S)	COMMENT
<b>Streetscape Enhancements</b>		
<i>Support enhanced streetscapes</i>	Susan Soderberg (Assoc)	Support the enhanced streetscape, sidewalks, lighting, and especially the burial of utilities along “old Germantown Road.” That will enhance the sense of place and the continuity recommended in the ULI study.
<i>Concerns about streetscape recommendations</i>	Clark Wagner (Rep)	For site GJ, they have concerns about recommendations for utilities and improvements to Middlebrook Road, Wisteria Drive and Walter Johnson Road.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Mixed testimony, some in support of the Public Hearing Draft and some requesting changes. The plan provides a recommendation for the burying of utilities on all new or reconstructed roads (see p. 58). The undergrounding of utilities will help to ensure that any new shade trees on sidewalks are not removed by PEPCO, that a mature tree canopy can develop to enhance water quality and reduce the heat island effect and that an attractive pedestrian environment will be implemented.		

**Table 3: Comments from Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) on the Germantown Connect Section of the MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan**

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Madeline V. Waters House</i> <i>Figure 12</i>	Clarify the nature of the Madeline V. Waters House, which does not appear to have much documentation or graphics elsewhere in the plan (such as on p11). The lots highlighted appear to consist of two modern office buildings, an auto parts store, and a State highway. Is there a historic structure on any of these lots? Is it the land itself that is being designated as a historic resource? Needs clarification somewhere in the plan (perhaps on p39?), and imagery of specific resources may be helpful.
<i>Madeline V. Waters House</i> <i>Preserve p. 39</i>	See previous comment on p27, Figure 12.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Clarifying graphics or text can be added to the plan. A linear park along Wisteria Drive, at Route 118, commemorates the Madeline V. Waters House that was destroyed by arson in 1986 (from 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County, Maryland). The land is still designated as a historic resource as a matter of policy to prevent other historic sites from falling into the same fate.	
<i>MARC Parking Garage</i> <i>Connect p. 45</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.1.b.)</i>	Consider clarifying whether if the garage parking is added: are the additional "small, well landscaped lots" still needed?
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Clarifying language can be added. Parking is at a premium at the MARC Station in Germantown. The parking lots usually fill up by 7:30 in the morning, and commuters than begin to park illegally in drive aisles. Since the Germantown Station has the most passengers on the Brunswick Line, and all the trains stop at this station, the small parking lots may still be needed even with the construction of a parking garage.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Bus Service</i> <i>Connect p. 45</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.1.c.)</i>	What is the nature of the express bus: is it envisioned to be an MTA Commuter Bus or something operated by Ride-On?
	Consider highlighting other activity centers intended to be served by express buses serving the MARC station.
	2nd Bullet - It is always the goal to synchronize schedules; however, each route can have many other factors that can make it difficult to time a route to be ideally coordinated with MARC schedules.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The buses that currently service the Germantown MARC station are operated by Ride On. We envision that this would continue to be the case and express service would have a limited number of bus stops leading to the MARC Station, such as the transit center, in order to provide a faster route to the station.  It is understood that MCDOT tries to synchronize their buses with the MARC schedule and that this is sometimes difficult. The recommendation emphasizes this as a goal.	
<i>Bikeshare</i> <i>Connect p. 45</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendations B.1.e.)</i>	"bike share" should be "bikeshare"
	Consider noting that this area could be served by private dockless bikeshare.
	Note that Bikeshare expansion has not been funded through MCDOT CIP. Rather, it has been funded through operating, grants received, and developer contributions.
	Consider rephrasing the first sentence to "Provide bikesharing facilities...", and in the last sentence "Expansion of bikesharing facilities...". These changes are intended to generalize this section to allow for dockless bikeshare, should it continue to grow in prominence. The middle sentence's reference to bikeshare stations is OK.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will correct the term bikeshare and recommends updating the text to generalize the section to allow for dockless bikeshare as requested by MCDOT.	
<i>Germantown Maps</i> <i>Connect pp. 56-70</i>	Consider including a map showing the proposed Bicycle & Pedestrian Priority Area.
	Consider including a map showing the proposed Urban Service District.
	Consider including a map showing the proposed Parking Lot District.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Addition to the Public Hearing Draft. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area can be added to Figure 30 and the title of the map can be changed. An Urban Service District map and Parking District map can be added to the implementation section next to the associated text (Implementation B).	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Cross Sections</i> <a href="#">Connect p. 58</a> <a href="#">(Germantown Recommendation B.2.c.)</a>	The cross-sections shown in the PDF attachments do not show 2 ft landing strips along the curb line where on-street parking is anticipated. Providing this strip to serve on-street parking would -- in all cases -- reduce the planting strip to less than 6 ft, which would negate the ability for the planting strip to accommodate large trees (per the 1st bullet) or SWM facilities (per the 4th bullet).
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Other master plans have not provided this level of detail. Therefore, this detail will be evaluated and designed during project design. However, we envision that 2-foot landing strips can be accommodated outside of the immediate areas where trees are located, thus providing some pedestrian access for those who use on-street parking while still maintaining the 6-foot tree panels immediately around trees to ensure larger trees can be used.	
<i>Utilities</i> <a href="#">Connect p. 58</a> <a href="#">(Germantown Recommendation B.2.d.)</a>	It is traditionally assumed that text such as this does not expect that a stand-alone utility relocation CIP is being proposed, and our fiscal analysis will assume all utility work is done by private development or as a built-in part of other projects. If this assumption is incorrect: specify that a stand-alone utility relocation CIP is anticipated.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. In the draft, this recommendation is broadly worded to allow flexibility for funding. A public or private project would be expected to relocate utilities (staff suggests an undergrounding scenario as an alternative in assessing cost).	
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figure 31</a>	Consider arranging the Business District streets in alphanumeric order.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will reorder the table into alphanumeric order.	
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figures 31-32</a>	M-90 - Per the draft MPOHT, MD 119 is shown as a 6-lane Major Highway, but the MARC plan shows it as a 4-lane Arterial. Ensure that both plans show the same proposals.
	Per the draft MPOHT, Middlebrook Rd is shown as a 6-lane Major Highway, but the MARC plan shows it as a 4-lane Arterial. Ensure that both plans show the same proposals.
	B-2 - Per the draft MPOHT, Wisteria Drive is shown as an Arterial alongside the high school, but the MARC plan shows it as a Business Street. Ensure that both plans show the same proposals.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. MD 119, Middlebrook Road and Wisteria Drive were not changed in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) to allow the Planning Board and the Council to address these with the road diet analysis.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figures 31-32</a>	B-1 - Per the draft MPOHT it appears that Crystal Rock Dr's current ROW is 80 ft, but the plan shows 70 ft. Confirm that the reduction of 10 ft is intentional, as in general it tends to be preferred to retain such additional ROW.
	B-3 - Per the draft MPOHT it appears that Walter Johnson Rd's current ROW is 80 ft, but the plan shows 70 ft. Confirm that the reduction of 10 ft is intentional, as in general it tends to be preferred to retain such additional ROW.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff recommends retaining the 80-foot ROW.	
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figures 31-32</a>	B-22 - Per the draft MPOHT it appears that Century Blvd is shown as extending straight to Waters Rd (70 ft ROW), and that Waterford Hills Blvd would extend to meet Century Blvd (112 ft ROW), the two extensions forming a triangle (with Waters Rd as the third side). Ensure both the MARC plan and MPOHT show the same proposals.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The MPHOT has been amended to make this recommendation consistent.	
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figures 31-32</a>	Per the draft MPOHT, Liberty Mill Rd is shown as becoming a Primary Residential street, but the MARC plan shows it as 70 ft Unclassified. Ensure that both plans show the same proposals.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Plan. Liberty Mill Road is recommended as an unclassified road, because redevelopment potential is very limited.	
<i>Road and Bike Classification Table</i> <a href="#">Figures 31-32</a>	Ensure that the proposed bikeway classifications match those proposed in the Bicycle Master Plan, which show Middlebrook as having sidepaths on each side on the block with the high school, and also do not show conventional bike lanes along Dawson Farm Rd.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Staff working on the MPOHT and Bicycle Master Plan have been working extensively with our team on road and bike classifications. We will ensure that all road and bike classifications are consistent between plans. With the MPOHT beginning worksessions with the Council, changes may be anticipated. Staff will continue coordinating efforts.	



TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Mislabeled Sections</i> <i>Connect pp. 58, 62</i>	There are two "d" sections.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will relabel the sections so that there are no duplicates.	
<i>Bowman Mill Road</i> <i>Figure 32</i>	The map does not show the proposed extension of Bowman Mill Rd as described on page 66.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The text describes that Bowman Mill extended to Great Seneca Highway as a sidepath or roadway depending on future development needs. If a roadway, it is not proposed to be classified.	
<i>Walter Johnson Road</i> <i>Figure 32</i>	Per our discussions in December 2017, we only support the extension of Walter Johnson Rd to Middlebrook Rd if text is included to require that the extension's new intersection must be a minimum 100 ft from the intersection with MD 118 (measured between Points of Curvature). It is anticipated that such an extension would likely be right-in / right-out only. [at present there does not appear to be any text about the Walter Johnson extension at all, and the graphic shows a straight extension very near to the 118/Middlebrook intersection]
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. As shown in Figure 32, the centerline of the extension of Walter Johnson Road to Middlebrook Road would be a minimum 100 feet from the intersection of Germantown and Middlebrook Roads. We anticipate that this would be a right in/ right out intersection. We suggest additional text to Germantown B.2.o. describing this intersection.	
<i>Waters House Avenue</i> <i>Figure 32</i>	Consider showing more curve to the Waters House Ave alignment. It currently appears to have a 90-degree bend, which is unlikely to be realized in practice and could give nearby property owners a misrepresentation of its impacts. [see also the previous comment toward ensuring that the MARC and MPOHT show the same proposals]
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. We can show a greater radius to the bend in the roadway.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<p><i>Middlebrook Road</i>  <a href="#">Connect p. 62</a>  <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.d.)</i></p>	<p>Review the cross-section for Middlebrook Rd with respect to school buses and other large vehicles, particularly with consideration of whether gutter pans are included in the dimensioned widths shown.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Other master plans have not provided this level of detail. Therefore, this detail will be evaluated and designed during project design.</p>	
<p><i>Middlebrook Road Phases</i>  <a href="#">Connect p. 62</a>  <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.d.)</i></p>	<p>Consider changing "mid-term" to "near-term", to reduce the vagueness from three undefined timeframes (near, mid, long) to only two (near, long).</p> <p>Consider rephrasing these items (and perhaps all of Grmntwn.d(2) as well as the Middlebrook Cross-Sections) to clarify what I perceive as three intended stages for Middlebrook Rd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Existing</li> <li>(2) Near-term road diet only (no reconstruction of curbs or anything behind curb)</li> <li>(3) Long-term full reconstruction.</li> </ul> <p>The 7th bullet may suffice without any references at all to timeframes such as near, mid, or long-term.</p> <p>Consider what the anticipated implementation would be, and what would be conditioned upon development. As the Existing curb line runs 44' from the Centerline (putting it 2/3 the way into the 2-way separated bike lane), it appears most likely that anything within the existing curb-line would be implemented as part of a CIP project (this includes the road diet and bike facilities). It appears that private development could potentially be conditioned to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1a) Construct a new curb line &amp; drainage facilities 4 ft behind the existing curb (if the near-term road diet has been implemented).</li> <li>(1b) Construct a new curb line &amp; drainage facilities 4 ft behind the existing curb (if the near-term road diet has not been implemented, but the development spans a significant share of a block as to make curb shifts/transitions acceptable).</li> <li>(2) Construct the 7 ft planted buffer and 8 ft sidewalk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff supports changing "mid-term" to "near-term."</p>	
<p><i>Germantown Street Sections</i>  <a href="#">Connect pp. 62-69</a></p>	<p>Consider noting the location of the existing curb lines on the proposed cross-sections.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. This can be added to the diagrams.</p>	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Middlebrook Road Road Diet</i> <i>Figures 34-35</i>	If LATR/TPAR analyses should find the road diet to be infeasible, perhaps consider retaining a six-lane section but narrowing the outside 14' lanes to 11'. This should allow for pedestrian refuge islands in the median, and should allow for a sidepath/sidewalk along both eastbound and westbound Middlebrook Road, without sacrificing the third through lane in each direction along Middlebrook Rd.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Transportation consultants, Sabra Wang & Associates (SWA), modeled the intersections in the vicinity of the plan and determined that the road diet is feasible along Middlebrook Road. Staff is currently working on a TPAR analysis for Germantown and that will be provided to MCDOT as soon as it is complete. In the event the modeling finds the road diet to be infeasible, MCDOT's suggestion should be recommended to improve pedestrian safety.	
<i>Middlebrook Road</i> <i>Figures 34-35</i>	Any microscopic traffic analyses should consider the potential for... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to multimodal conflicts: converting permissive left-turn phasing to protected left-turn phasing.</li> <li>- Due to multimodal conflicts: implementing No Turn On Red.</li> <li>- Whether changes to ped &amp;/or veh clearance intervals are needed to accommodate potentially wider or narrower crossing areas.</li> <li>- Due to additional multimodal conflicts: potential new signals or access restrictions.</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Response:</b> The Public Hearing Draft does not include this level of operational details, but staff supports consideration of these comments, due to their potential to improve pedestrian safety. SWA did provide analysis on the various intersections and the turning movements. Definitive operational considerations are generally determined during the design phase. A sidebar could be added to the plan, suggesting these elements be considered during design.	
<i>Middlebrook Road</i> <i>Figures 34-35</i>	Consider how the Middlebrook Rd cross-section may accommodate a potential alignment of the Corridor Cities Transitway, which could potentially route along Middlebrook Rd to improve its service of the Germantown area in lieu of construction of a new street alongside the Dept of Energy.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. In discussing this question with MCDOT staff, it was determined that the 150-foot ROW shown in Figure 35 would be wide enough to accommodate the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) if it is not constructed through to the Department of Energy. Modifications to some of the dimensions of the proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Middlebrook Road may be needed.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Middlebrook Road</i> <i>Figures 34-35</i>	Consider adding a cross-section for Proposed Middlebrook Road Near-Term.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. During the planning process, staff developed a near-term alternative for Middlebrook Road that used the existing curb-to-curb dimensions with a road diet. This section can be reviewed by MCDOT and inserted into the plan.	
<i>Middlebrook Road</i> <i>Figure 35</i>	Proposed Middlebrook Road Long-Term: The two curbs & grade differentials between the separated bike lanes and roadway will require particular attention toward drainage for both facilities (and, to a lesser degree: also the sidewalk).
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Attention will have to be given to drainage of bike facilities during the design phase. Note that this section is also conceptual and can be revised with latest best practices at the time of implementation.	
<i>Great Seneca Highway</i> <i>Figure 37</i>	Proposed Great Seneca Highway (north of the railroad tracks): The curb-to-curb adds up to 76 ft; not the labelled 78 ft.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will make the correction.	
<i>Germantown Diagrams and Street Sections</i> <i>Connect pp. 64, 67, 68, 69</i>	There is no 2 ft landing strip between the planting strip and the on-street parking. Without other adjustments: providing such a strip would reduce the planting strip below thresholds whereby large trees or SWM can be accommodated. Per discussions in December we suggest reallocating the 2ft maintenance strips to 2 ft landing strips, and requiring 2 ft of maintenance strips under Public Improvement Easements.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Staff recommends this modification.	
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Figures 38-39</i>	Proposed Wisteria Drive: Be mindful that the at-grade side-by-side placement of the sidewalk and separated bike lane make it likely that pedestrians -- particularly during surge times, as with the start and end of school -- are likely to utilize the full width, including the bikeway.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. It may be appropriate to use different materials and markings to delineate the sidewalk from the bike lane.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Figure 39</i>	Proposed Wisteria Drive between Crystal Rock Drive and Great Seneca Highway: Acquiring additional ROW from the MCPS site and other properties along Wisteria Dr may be infeasible, unless they have already indicated that an additional 20 ft of total ROW is viable. Confirm MCPS' feedback on this cross-section, or whether 80 ft ROW options should be retained.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Per the Seneca Valley High School Mandatory Referral, the 80-foot ROW is being retained, and structures were moved away from the ultimate 100-foot ROW with an additional five feet for a public utility easement.	
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Figure 39</i>	Note that as part of the high school's redevelopment, it is likely that the right-turn lane along the school property (northwest bound along Wisteria) will be extended significantly, and that parking will be restricted (even off-peak) along most of Wisteria.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. It is understood that the high school will have right turn lanes along the school property. Parking, where feasible, is encouraged to calm traffic and offset reduced parking at the school.	
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Figure 39</i>	Reach out to Fire & Rescue Services to specifically seek their input on the proposed Wisteria cross-section, as they may have concerns about 10 ft of effective travel width during off-peak conditions.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Further input recommended. The Wisteria Drive cross-section is provided as the goal for the rebuilt Wisteria Drive, where most student drop-offs and pick-ups will occur. Staff will reach out to Fire and Rescue Services, as suggested. Fire and Rescue requirements vary in the region and change over time. For example, the proposed cross-section is consistent with Rockville and Gaithersburg requirements.	
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Connect p. 64</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.f.)</i>	Ensure that the proposed 4-lane section and off-peak parking is expected to be adequate for anticipated operations as part of the Seneca Valley HS reconstruction/expansion.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) supports the four-lane road section with off-peak parking. MCDOT and MCPS staff work together when a new school is opened to ensure that operations are safe and efficient.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Connect p. 64</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.f.)</i>	<p>It is stated that median breaks would be incorporated with pedestrian refuges to ensure safe turning movements on Wisteria Drive between Seneca Valley High School and Rolling Hills Apartments. Please note that median breaks would also be needed for access to and from the various apartment complex driveways along Wisteria Drive. Currently, a two way left turn lane (TWLTL) exists along Wisteria Drive from south of Walter Johnson Road to north of MD 119/Great Seneca Highway. With the proposed grass and tree lined median, will left turn storage bays be incorporated to accommodate turning vehicles to and from the apartment driveways (this is implied from the figures, but a confirmation is requested)? Having this left turn storage would be beneficial in preventing the risk of increased rear end collisions, and operational/blocking issues that may arise due to having only one through lane of traffic during off-peaks.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Staff recommends that left-turn lanes be incorporated as needed. Clarifying language can be added.</p>	
<i>Wisteria Drive</i> <i>Connect p. 64</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.f.)</i>	<p>4th Bullet - While we support median breaks for pedestrian refuges, the text "to ensure safe turning movements" inherently conflicts with the provision of median breaks. Median breaks do not inherently make turning movements safer or more dangerous; they only allow them to happen (which could be an argument that median breaks, if anything, inherently make turning movements more dangerous).</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will change the language to the following: "Incorporate median breaks with storage bays that provide safe pedestrian refuges and allow necessary turning movements between Seneca Valley High School and Rolling Hills apartments to the south. Limit uncontrolled turning movements that create conflicts."</p>	
<i>Germantown Road</i> <i>Connect p. 65</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.g.)</i>	<p>Clarify the reference to "restrictions on widening of Germantown Road intersections". It should be clear that this restriction will prohibit the addition of lanes intended toward general purpose vehicular capacity, and that such congestion can only be addressed through expanding ped/bike/transit options.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Addition to the Plan. The recommendation confirms the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan that Germantown Road intersections should not be widened unless needed for pedestrian safety or improved bus and bicycle access. Staff suggests adding the 2009 Germantown recommendation, which reads "Widening street intersections is inconsistent with creating Germantown as a transit-served, pedestrian-scaled community; the intersections with MD 118 should not be widened unless needed for pedestrian safety, improved bus access or bicycle access and safety. Elsewhere, if lane widening is required for transportation capacity, notably in the vicinity of I-270 interchanges, do not exceed 60-foot crossings without a landscaped median for pedestrian refuge."</p>	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Bowman Mill Road</i> <i>Connect p. 66</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.h.)</i>	Consider noting the location of the Pumphrey-Matney House on Figure 43.
	The map on p60 does not show this proposed extension.
	Consider environmental impacts relating to an extension of Bowman Mill Rd, particularly the two existing stormwater management ponds (do they have excess capacity that might be usable by the extension of Bowman Mill Rd?) as well as several apartment buildings that may be significantly impacted (is redevelopment anticipated?). We suggest preparing a drawing showing the potential alignment and impacts to demonstrate feasibility.
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The location of the Pumphrey-Matney House will be added to Figure 43. The extension of Bowman Mill Road is not shown in the diagram as a roadway, because the text states that the connection could be a sidepath or roadway.  This recommendation would be part of redevelopment, so stormwater management would comprehensively addressed at that time.	
<i>Rolling Hills, Germantown Regional Post Office and Gunners Lake Thirteen Property</i> <i>Connect p. 68</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.i.)</i>	It is anticipated that these will be public unless the plan identifies them as private streets, and if the latter: under what conditions?
	Consider whether additional guidance should be provided as to how curb cuts could be limited, which may relate to potential design exceptions that developments may seek to pursue. Centralized &/or interconnected parking structures? Shared/managed loading bays or on-street loading? Alleys?
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. It is anticipated that any new streets will be built to public standards regardless of whether they are public or private, which will be determined at the time of redevelopment.  Staff is suggesting limiting curb cuts for service related functions to make new streets more walkable.	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Walter Johnson Road</i> <a href="#">Figure 48</a>	<p>Proposed Walter Johnson Road:</p> <p>To avoid impacts to historic resources it appears much or all of the additional ROW needs south of Wisteria Drive will come from the west side. This should be explicitly noted in the plan. Consider also how ROW needs may be met to the north of Wisteria Drive: whether the centerline will be shifted west (to meet the centerline to the south), remain in-place (ROW impacts equal along both sides), or shift east (to take advantage of open land).</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b></p> <p>Addition to the Public Hearing Draft. Language may be added to the plan to shift the centerline south of Wisteria Drive to the west to protect the historic Pumphrey-Mateney House. The centerline between Middlebrook Road and Wisteria Drive may shift slightly to make a safe connection between the southern portion of Walter Johnson Road and the new Middlebrook Road intersection.</p>	
<i>Liberty Mill Road</i> <a href="#">Figure 49</a>	<p>Proposed Liberty Mill Road:</p> <p>The stipulated 70 ft of ROW could have major impacts to nearby properties.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b></p> <p>Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. Many of the homes in this area were built around 1900. We do not envision significant redevelopment along this stretch due to proximity of the properties to the historic district and the residential zoning. The maintenance area varies on both sides of the ROW to accommodate the individual property conditions.</p>	
<i>Liberty Mill Road</i> <a href="#">Connect p. 69</a> <a href="#">(Germantown Recommendation B.2.o.)</a>	<p>This bullet proposes filling in missing sidewalk linkages along Liberty Mill, but the cross-section (Figure 49) shows only sidepath (no sidewalk) along the northwest side.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b></p> <p>Change to the Public Hearing Draft. The text should be changed from “sidepath” to “sidewalk”, and the dimensions adjusted.</p>	



TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Utility Relocation</i> <i>Connect P.69</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.o.)</i>	<p>It is traditionally assumed that text such as this does not expect that a stand-alone utility relocation CIP is being proposed, and our fiscal analysis will assume all utility work is done by private development or as a built-in part of other projects. If this assumption is incorrect: specify that a stand-alone utility relocation CIP is anticipated.</p> <p>Is a standalone CIP anticipated to install signature lighting along Liberty Mill Rd?</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The 1989 Germantown Master Plan recommended streetscaping along Walter Johnson and Liberty Mill Roads (then MD 118) from wisteria Drive to Dawson Farm Road (then unbuilt A-254). The streetscape improvements have not been realized. With numerous historic sites and attractive older homes, redevelopment will be limited. This plan is confirming the streetscape recommendations from the 1989 Germantown Plan with the recommendation that “Old MD 118” become the Neighborhood Main Street, as shown on the Staff Concept for Germantown diagram. The roadway improvements will be very difficult to achieve with limited redevelopment potential and the existing overhead utilities. A standalone CIP may be needed to realize this recommendation.</p>	
<i>Missing Sidewalks</i> <i>Connect p. 70</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.o.)</i>	<p>The Mateny Hill Road Property (820160020) will construct a significant portion of the sidewalk missing along the east side of Mateny Hill Rd, connecting Dawson Farm Rd to Summit Ridge Ter. To a lesser degree: Kids 'N Care Learning Center (S-2471) will construct a portion of sidewalk on the west side immediately by Dawson Farm Rd. Our fiscal analysis will assume that any sidewalk+lighting newly constructed by this (or other) private projects would be considered adequate.</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. The Mateny Hill Road Property and Kids 'N Care Learning Center will construct a significant portion of the missing sidewalk along Mateny Hill Road. A sidewalk will still need to be constructed at the short bend in Mateny Hill Road adjacent to the railroad tracks.</p>	
<i>Pedestrian Bridge</i> <i>Connect p. 70</i> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.2.q.)</i>	<p>Rephrase as a new "bicycle and pedestrian bridge"</p>
<p><b>Staff Response:</b>  Change to the Public Hearing Draft. Staff will add the word “bicycle” to the recommendation.</p>	

TOPIC	COMMENT
<i>Bowman Mill Extended Connection</i> <a href="#">Connect p. 70</a> <i>(Germantown Recommendation B.3.b.)</i>	The extension of Bowman Mill Rd is even more likely to impact the regional stormwater management facilities than the addition of a third track. Would the Bowman Mill extension be subject to this same requirement?
<b>Staff Response:</b> Consistent with the Public Hearing Draft. An extension of Bowman Mill Road as either a sidepath or roadway would include stormwater management facilities, because the existing facilities do not meet the current requirements. A coordinated design approach will help ensure visual compatibility.	



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December 18, 2017

Chairman Casey Anderson  
 and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board  
 8787 Georgia Ave.  
 Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan – Working Draft Plan

Dear Mr. Anderson and Members of the Planning Board:

Scheer Partners represents Mr. Fallahi, et al, the owners of 19430 Walter Johnson Road which is identified as parcel GG in the Draft Plan. This undeveloped, one acre parcel is located between Walter Johnson and Germantown Roads (See Attachment #1).

We request that the Working Draft Plan recommendation of CR .75 C .75 R .50 H 60 be changed to CR 2 C.1.5 R 2 H 70.

The Working Draft Plan would permit the construction approximate of 27+/- townhouses. We are requesting the ability to build around 80-100 apartments. The property should be developed as a mid-rise 6 story apartment project with structured parking. The residential density of 75/units per acre, which we believe is appropriate, is similar to other mid-rise apartments near MARC locations. The Working Draft townhouse density is more in keeping with transitional sites around BRT stations.

**Density Review at MARC Stations:** The County has a limited number of Marc stations and this property is only a 1-3 minute walk to the Marc Station. As in all County Master Plan's goals, residential development/density around mass transit centers should and have been recommended.

The City of Gaithersburg has taken advantage of their commuter rail station. For example, a new apartment project called Crossings at Olde Towne at 200 Old Town Towne Ave. This affordable housing project is located to maximize access to the Marc station. (See Attachment #2)

The Kensington Master Plan recommends FAR 1.5- 2 around the Kensington Marc station. Ironically, other properties around the Germantown Marc Station are zoned CR2.

The Working Draft Plan raises concerns regarding the protection of nearby history resources. A mid-rise apartment project can be designed to be compatible with the Pumphrey-Mateny House which is located across Walter Johnson Road. This resource does not face our property. The Madeline Waters resource site is limited to a series of trees in the middle of a parking lot and as such, should not be used as development constant on the abutting properties.

Unless the density is increased our property will likely be underdeveloped with fast food or a density inferior convenience store, but as yet, the Fallahi property is undeveloped the abutting properties have on-going businesses. In order to create a unified and coordinated residential project, additional density must be provided to encourage assembly.

The Working Draft Plan recommends the construction of a private road through our property. Because of the small block, we see no reason for the construction of this short road which further disrupts the site.

*Confirm the recommended private road connection between Bowman Mill Road and Walter Johnson Road, unless properties are consolidated for redevelopment (Site GG). Page 82*

We believe the necessity of constructing of a private road should be made at the time of site plan approvals.

The Working Draft Plan recommends the construction of additional MARC station parking

*Expand MARC parking with surface lots and garages to support greater ridership (Sites GD, GE GF, GG and GH). Page 99*

It is possible that with an assembly of abutting properties (or portions thereof), a joint private/public facility should be considered.

Thank you for your consideration.

Perry Berman  
David Edgerley



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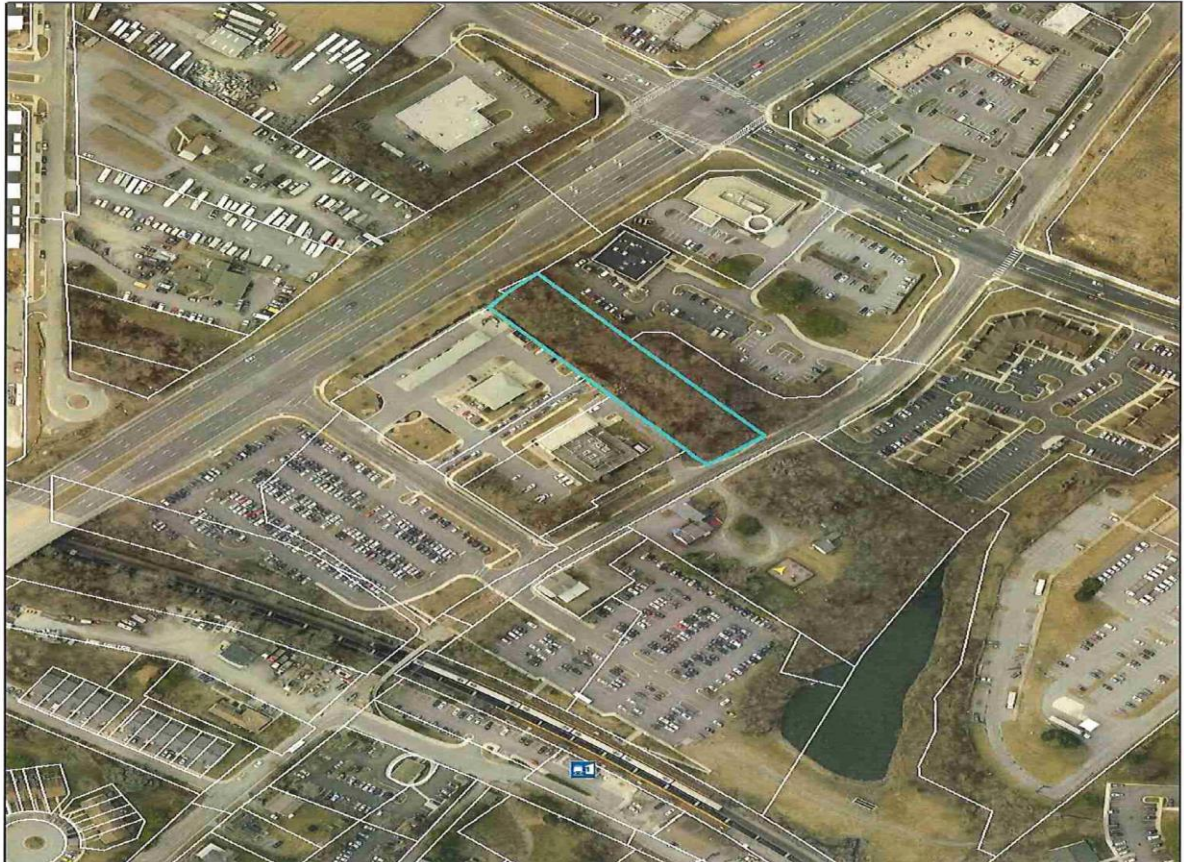
## Attachments

CC:

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Leslie Saville, Senior Planner, [leslie.saville@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:leslie.saville@montgomeryplanning.org),  
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## Attachment #1

**Fallahi Property, Walter Johnson Road**



0 100 200 400 Feet





## Attachment #2



**Crossings at Olde Towne**

## Working Draft Master Plan Recommendation

