

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY
Thursday, April 10, 2025
2425 Reedie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902
301-495-4605

The Montgomery County Planning Board met in regular session in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via Microsoft Teams video conference on Thursday, April 10, 2025, beginning at 9:03 a.m. and adjourning at 11:33 a.m.

Present were Chair Artie Harris, Vice Chair Mitra Pedoeem, and Commissioners Shawn Bartley, James Hedrick, and Josh Linden.

Items 3 and 4, Item 7, and Items 5 and 6 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, April 17, 2025, in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via video conference.

Rachel Roehrich
Rachel Roehrich
Technical Writer/Legal Assistant

MINUTES

Item 1. Preliminary Matters

A. Adoption of Resolutions

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Resolutions submitted for adoption.

B. Approval of Minutes

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Minutes submitted for approval.

C. Other Preliminary Matters

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no other Preliminary Items submitted for approval.

Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Record Plats submitted for approval.

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

MHP Amherst Preliminary Plan No. 120250010, Site Plan No. 820250010, and Forest Conversation Plan No. F20250080 Extension Request No. 2 - Request to extend the regulatory review period until June 12, 2025.

Application to create a mixed-income, affordable, residential development containing 272 multifamily dwelling units, 39 townhomes, structured parking, a 42,000 square foot County Arts and Cultural Center, and up to 20,000 square feet of commercial space; located in downtown Wheaton, north of Blueridge Avenue, between Georgia Avenue and Elkin Street; CR-2.0, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-75 Zone; 6.14 acres; 2012 Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan.

Staff recommendation: Approval of the Extension Request

T. Leftwich/E. Fowler

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Chair Harris recused himself.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Regulatory Extension Request cited above.

7070 Arlington Road, Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11998051B, Sketch Plan Amendment No. 32021010A, Extension Request No. 1 - Request to extend review period until June 26, 2025.

Preliminary Plan amendment application and Sketch Plan amendment; CRT-2.25 C-2.25 R-2.25 H-90', H-70' and Bethesda Overlay Zone; Located at the SE quadrant of the intersection of Arlington Road and Bethesda Avenue; 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the Extension Request

T. Gatling

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Regulatory Extension Request cited above.

Emory Grove Village, Pre-Preliminary Plan No. 720250010, Extension Request No. 2 - Second request to extend the regulatory review period until June 23, 2025.

Request for a binding approval for the future subdivision of Lot 1 (N542) and Lot 2 (N485) into 162 residential lots for the construction of three-story apartments and three-story townhomes; Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) Optional Method development and public benefits, 30 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs); located at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Midcounty Highway (MD 124) and Washington Grove Lane; on 8.57-acres of land zoned Residential Multi-Unit Low Density – 30 (R-30); within the 1985 Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan area.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the Extension Request

T. Graham

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Regulatory Extension Request cited above.

Item 4. Roundtable Discussion

Planning Director's Report
J. Sartori

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Montgomery Planning Director, Jason Sartori, offered a multi-media presentation regarding recent updates for the Planning Department.

Mr. Sartori discussed the recent approval of the Bethesda Minor Master Plan Amendment by the County Council as well as changes made by the Council, Montgomery Planning's events celebrating Earth Month, and celebrating the five-year anniversary for the Reforest Montgomery program. Mr. Sartori introduced Kelsey Desmond (Forest Conservation Planner III), Mia Rothberg (Forest Conservation Planner II), and Reagan Ogburn (Forest Conservation Intern II) who offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the Reforest Montgomery Program. Ms. Desmond discussed the benefits of trees and reforestation programs. Ms. Rothberg discussed tree planting programs including the free tree program and native tree coupons as well as community engagement; and Ms. Ogburn gave an overview of the Reforest Montgomery Map.

Mr. Sartori also discussed the recent YouTube Planning videos that have been posted by Ben Kraft, Atara Margolies, and Lauren Stamm. Lastly, Mr. Sartori welcomed new Staff Kristen Taddei and Brittani White.

The Board asked questions regarding replacement and survivability of the trees, further explanation of the free tree and native tree coupon programs, if the programs install or sell fruit trees, future planning for adjustment of the native/near native tree inventory due to climate change, and if there has been engagement with the Master Planning teams for more implementation of trees within the Master Planned areas.

Staff offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Item 7. Legislative Update

- HB 503 Housing for Jobs Act
- SB 0931 Renewable Energy Certainty Act (Solar)

D. Borden

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Debra Borden, General Counsel, briefed the Board on Bills HB 503 and SB 0931. Ms. Borden gave an overview of Bill HB 503 and the outcome, noting that no version of the bill passed during the current legislative session. Ms. Borden also noted Bill 0931 passed, gave an overview of the amendments, highlighted the main components, and noted the new law will take effect July 1, 2025.

The Board asked questions about Bill 0931 regarding whether the five percent calculation was based on the total Agricultural Reserve or parcel by parcel, if there were other PPA's within Montgomery County, if the bill removes the Tier 1 and Tier 2 soil concerns, and potential timeline for the drafting process and regulations.

Staff, including Jason Sartori, Planning Director and Matt Mills, Senior Counsel, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Item 5. Montgomery County Cultural Plan Briefing

The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County will present an overview of the scope, approach and schedule for the County’s new Cultural Plan Initiative.

Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board

A. Sharma

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Atul Sharma, Assistant to the Deputy Director, offered comments regarding the Montgomery County’s Cultural Plan initiative. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 1, 2025.

Mr. Sharma introduced Suzan Jenkins, CEO of the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC), who offered brief comments regarding the preliminary research that has been performed over the past three years for the Cultural Plan as well as collaboration with consultant, Metris Arts. Ms. Jenkins introduced Anne Gadwa Nicodemus of Metris Arts, who offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the cultural planning effort as well as the identified values of belonging, cultural resilience and intersectionality. Ms. Gadwa Nicodemus also discussed past research on which the values are based upon, the objective for the Cultural Plan, and connections of the Cultural Plan with Thrive 2050.

Maame Amoyaw of Metris Arts continued with the multi-media presentation discussing the community engagement performed including: a youth town hall that was recently held, artistic pop-up events known as community preserves events, distribution of a community survey, community meetings/conversations, presentations to boards and classes, and cultural focus groups. Ms. Amoyaw also showed a short video from the youth town hall as well.

The Board asked questions regarding potential timeline, areas of focus, deliverables and priorities, implementation process, lead parties, and examples of past success.

Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Gadwa Nicodemus, and Ms. Amoyaw offered comments and responses to the Board’s questions.

Item 6. Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update (Public Testimony Accepted)

Request authorization to publish and transmit the revised draft as the Planning Board Draft to the County Executive and the County Council
S. Aldrich

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Planning Board Draft of the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2025 Technical Update, and transmittal to the County Executive and County Council.

Sofia Aldrich, Planner IV, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) – 2024 Technical Update. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 3, 2025.

Ms. Aldrich gave an overview and presented additional technical edits to the Master Plan including the retitling of the Planning Board Draft to Master Plan of Highways and Transitways - 2025 Technical Update and slight revisions to ten locations for street classifications and area types. Ms. Aldrich discussed each of the street classification revisions in greater detail. Ms. Aldrich also reviewed the sections for Racial Equity and Social Justice, Climate Assessment, Engagement, and Comments/Responses with the Board.

Lastly, Ms. Aldrich discussed Staff’s proposed recommendations including: retitling the Planning Board Draft to Master Plan of Highways and Transitways - 2025 Technical Update; approval of the ten street re-classification changes; approval of the Racial Equity and Social Justice statement; approval of the revised Climate Assessment; and authorization for Staff to publish and transmit the revised draft as the Planning Board Draft of the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2025 Technical Update to the County Executive and the County Council.

The Board asked questions regarding the reductions to speed limits and target speeds, whether further analysis was required for the Racial Equity and Social Justice statement, and potential impacts to the community and Climate Assessment due to the removal of a planned item.

Staff, including Dave Anspacher, Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy, offered comments and responses to the Board’s questions.

The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendations.