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Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan Worksession #2

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### Summary

At this worksession, Staff will present the Planning Board Draft based on the changes the Board made at the July 13 worksession and seek the Board's approval and transmission of the attached Planning Board Draft to the County Council and the County Executive.

### Discussion

The Planning Board held a public hearing on the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan Public Hearing Draft on June 29, 2017. The Board decided to keep the hearing record open until July 13, 2017.

On July 13, the Board held a worksession where the Staff presented a summary of the public hearing testimony and reviewed major issues raised during the July 13 hearing as well as the correspondence received between the public hearing and July 13. Given that numerous residents raised concerns about the potential impacts of traffic in the area, Staff presented the results of a detailed, delay-based traffic modeling analysis using Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) for existing and future traffic conditions. For future conditions, the traffic model included existing development in the area, the projected pipeline of approved but undeveloped projects, the estimated traffic projections for additional growth recommended in the draft White Flint 2 and Rock Spring master plans, the normal growth projections used in the COG's 2040 estimates for the Kensington Sector Plan and the 2010 White Flint Sector Plan, and the amount of additional growth recommended in the Grosvenor-Strathmore Public Hearing Draft Plan. In addition, the Planning Board reviewed the Staff's response to the issues and concerns raised in the public testimony and made the following modifications to the Public Hearing Draft:

1. Changed the recommended zoning for the Metro site from CR2.5 C0.25 R2.5 H260 to CR 3.0 C0.5 R2.75 H300.

The Planning Board was persuaded by the testimony of Five Squares, the developer selected by WMATA to develop the Metro Site, that 3.0 FAR with a maximum residential FAR of 2.75 was appropriate for this site because of its location at a Metro station and the proposed Plan's ability to accommodate additional development without adversely impacting the roads and schools in the area. With a combination of operational and physical

improvements to the intersection of Tuckerman Lane and Rockville Pike, the road network would be able to adequately serve the increased development in the future. On the school capacity and enrollment side, the proposed increase from 2.5 FAR to 3.0 FAR would generate approximately 14 more Elementary School students than the 62 students for the 2.5 FAR scenario, 5 more Middle School students than the 25 students for the 2.5 FAR scenario, and 8 more High School students than the 35 students for the 2.5 FAR scenario, for a total of 27 more students than the 122 total students for the 2.5 FAR scenario. The availability of some of the currently closed school sites and other opportunities to acquire new school sites in the Walter Johnson cluster in the future would adequately address any school impacts arising from the full build out of the recommended development.

2. Increased the height of two towers from 260 feet to a maximum of 300 feet and allowed a third tower of up to 220 feet on Tuckerman Lane.

The Planning Board increased the maximum height of the two towers from 260 to 300 feet, and allowed a third tower of 220, (estimated to be 160 feet in the Public Hearing Draft) to accommodate the increased floor area and to make sure that the increased development would not impinge upon the recommended open space areas as well as the recommended transition zone along Tuckerman Lane.

3. Required 10% workforce housing for the Metro site development, in addition to the required 12.5% MPDUs.

The Board supported Staff's recommendation that an increase in the maximum recommended FAR from 2.5 FAR to 3.0 FAR, as requested by Five Squares team, should be required to provide 10% workforce housing units. However, Staff now believes that instead of 10% workforce housing, raising the minimum MPDU requirement from 12.5% to 15% would be a better option since it would create more units with a deeper level of affordability (65% of AMI) than the workforce housing (80-120% of AMI). It would also be consistent with the County Council's efforts to require minimum 15% MPDUs in recent master plans. Therefore, Staff is requesting a change from 10% workforce housing to a requirement of minimum 15% MPDUs.

4. Reduced the length of the "Transition Zone" along Tuckerman Lane by approximately 90 feet to mirror the distance between Strathmore Park and Meridian to the south.

The Board supported staff's recommendation that, as requested by the Five Square development team, it was appropriate to reduce the length of the transition zone at its the northern end along Tuckerman Lane.

5. Required that before approval of the last tower on the Metro Site, the property owner must submit a traffic study to analyze the capacity and adequacy of the area road network.

Although the traffic modeling analysis conducted for both the 2.5 FAR scenario and the 3.0 FAR scenario demonstrated that, with some mitigation improvements, the road network would be able to adequately support the estimated traffic increase at the nearby intersection of Tuckerman Lane and Rockville Pike (the intersection most impacted by the projected increase in traffic), the Board recommended that a traffic study be required before the construction of the last tower to assure the community that the capacity of the road network will be assessed and taken into account over a longer period than the first phase of the project.

To be clear and remove any ambiguity about what would constitute a tower and when this requirement would apply, Staff is proposing to use a specified amount of square footage instead of “the last tower” as the trigger for this recommendation. Staff has estimated the total floor area of the last tower as shown in the 3-D sketches in the Draft Plan to be approximately 300,000 square feet. Since 3.0 FAR in this case would yield approximately 1.9 million square feet, Staff is recommending that any development in excess of 1.6 million square feet be subject to a traffic study.

6. The Board also recommended that language be added to the Plan suggesting exploration of the possibility of creating a layover area for buses on the west side of Rockville Pike to unload passengers who would take the existing below grade passage to reach the Metro station. This would create a more efficient circulation for buses and reduce the increased traffic at the intersection of Tuckerman Lane and Rockville Pike that would otherwise be created by the buses having to make left turns at the intersection to reach the Metro station passenger loading and unloading area.
7. Final size and configuration of the civic green to be determined during regulatory review.

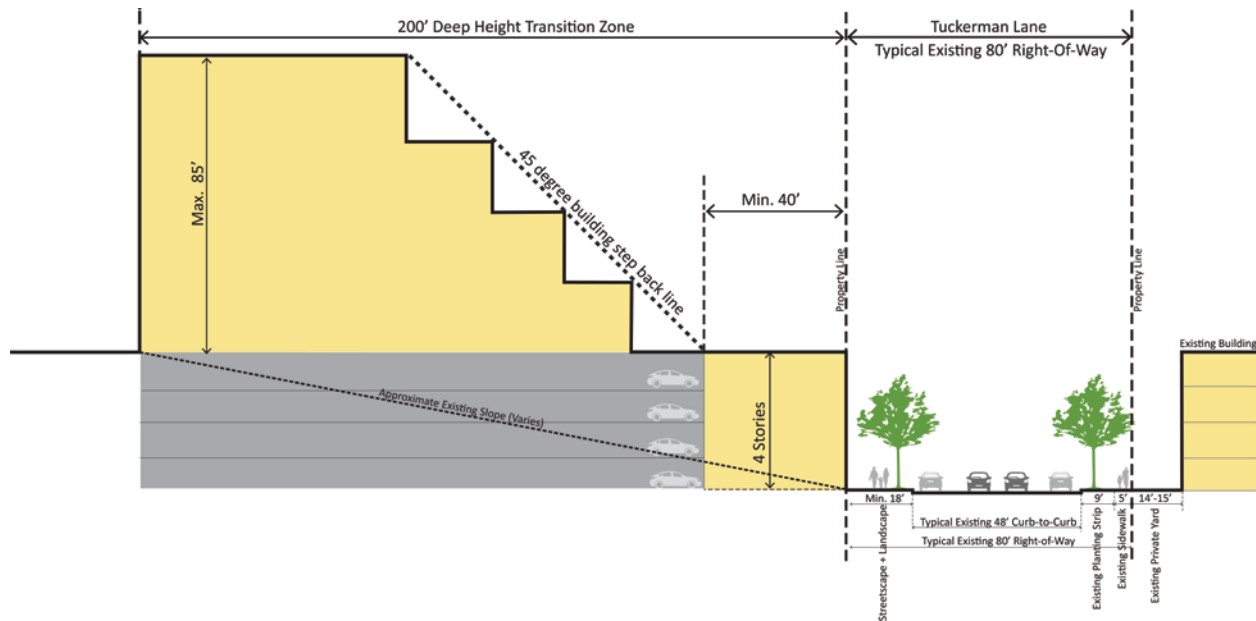
The Public Hearing Draft states the Metro site should provide a civic green of minimum 1.25 acres on the Metro site. Staff is recommending adding language to clarify that the goal of the master plan is to achieve a civic green of 1.25 acres; however, the exact size and configuration of the civic green will be determined during the regulatory review of the project.

8. Refinement of the Transition Zone Diagram

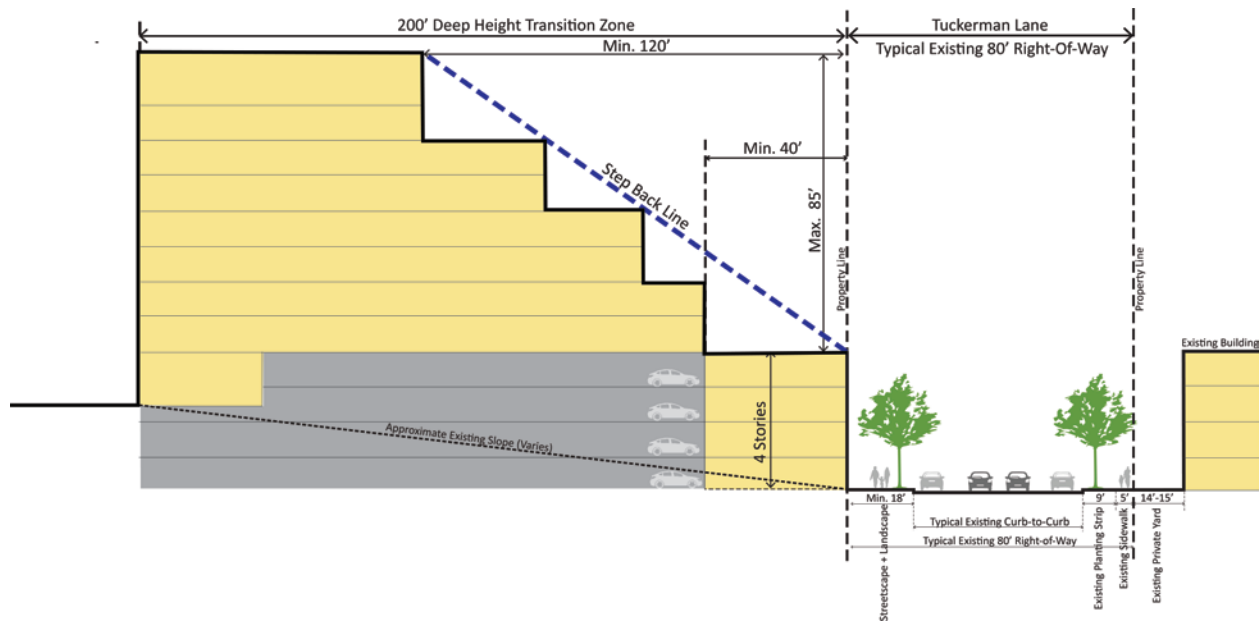
The testimony by the Five Squares team indicated that the site grade along Tuckerman Lane was less than the 40 feet Staff had assumed when developing the transition zone diagram included on page 41 of the Public Hearing Draft, and shown below (Figure 1). This means that development on the Metro Site could be higher at the western edge of the transition zone and still be at the same height from the Tuckerman Lane side to provide an appropriate transition for new buildings long Tuckerman Lane. The Board was sympathetic to the idea of a more flexible envelope for the transition zone to accommodate the increase from 2.5 to 3.0 FAR without compromising the compatibility of the new development with the existing four-story condominium building across Tuckerman Lane.

The purpose of the transition zone is to create an appropriate building along Tuckerman Lane, and to step back the building heights away from Tuckerman Lane to reduce their visual impact on Tuckerman Lane. To account for the variation in site elevation and maintain the purpose of the zone, Staff is recommending that the 85-foot height limit be measured from four stories above Tuckerman Lane, instead of from ground level on the Metro station side of the transition zone, and the angle plane begin at four stories above Tuckerman Lane and step back to 85 feet in height at a point 120 feet away from Tuckerman Lane, as shown in the revised diagram below (Figure 2). This revision flattens the angle of the plane to less than 45 degrees creating adequate protection against adverse visual impacts from Tuckerman Lane while providing the new development on the Metro Site with the design flexibility needed to address unique site conditions at the regulatory review stage. Since the compatibility and other urban design elements of any new development at the Metro Site will be analyzed in greater detail during regulatory reviews, Staff believes that the proposed adjustment in the transition zone diagram is appropriate for the purposes of general master plan guidance for the site.

**Figure 1: Public Hearing Draft Transition Zone Diagram**



**Figure 2: Revised Transition Zone Diagram**



**Staff Recommendation**

Approve the attached document as the Planning Board Draft of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan for transmittal to the County Council and the County Executive.

**Next Steps**

After the Board’s approval, Staff will transmit the approved Planning Board Draft, along with the Master Plan Appendix, to the County Council and the County Executive in August. The County Council is expected to hold a public hearing in late September or early October, followed by the PHED Committee and Council worksessions and the Council’s approval of the final master plan in the Fall of 2017. The final step in the master plan process will be Commission adoption of the Plan approved by the Council and a subsequent Sectional Map Amendment to implement the zoning recommendations of the approved Master Plan.

Attachment 1 – Draft Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan Planning Board Draft