

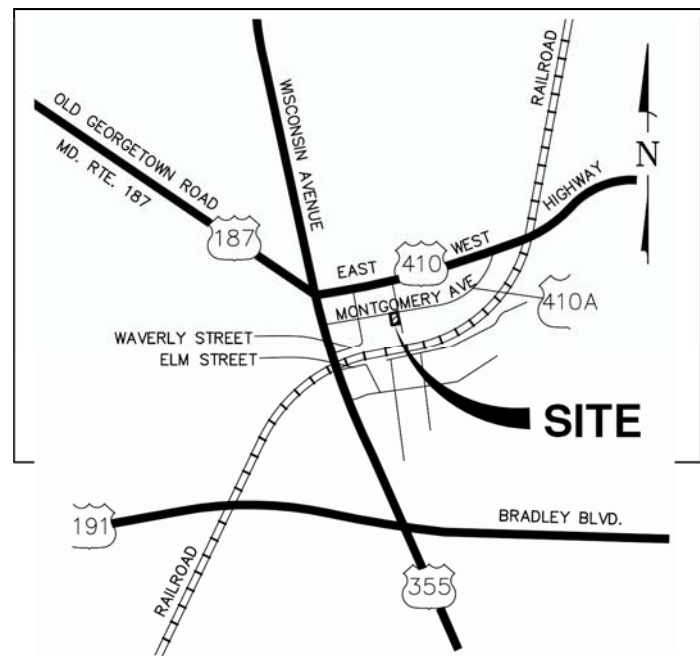
4540 Montgomery Avenue Sketch Plan No. 320180010

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Completed: 12/29/17

Description

- Construction of a mixed-use project of up to 61,250 total square feet of residential and ground floor retail uses; project does not include an allocation of Bethesda Overlay Zone density;
- Current use(s): surface parking lot;
- Located on the Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street;
- 0.28 gross acres zoned CR 5.0 C 4.0 R 4.75 H-175, in the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*;
- Applicant: Promark Development, LLC;
- Acceptance date: August 4, 2017.



Summary

- Staff recommends approval of the Sketch Plan with conditions.
- The proposal will redevelop the site with a mixed-use building including 15% moderately priced dwelling units, a vegetated roof and contribute to the creation of the Pearl Street "Shared Street".
- The 90-day Sketch Plan schedule was extended for a period up to 60-days, through January 11, 2018, by the Planning Board pursuant to Section 59.7.3.3.C of the Zoning Ordinance.

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SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATION AND CONDITIONS

Staff recommends approval of Sketch Plan No. 320180010, for a mixed-use building of up to 61,250 total square feet with residential and ground floor retail uses, on 0.28 acres of land, zoned CR 5.0 C 4.0 R 4.75 H-175. The Project does not include an allocation of Bethesda Overlay Zone density. The following site development elements shown on the latest electronic version as of the date of this Staff Report submitted via ePlans to the M-NCPPC are required except as modified by the conditions below:

1. Maximum density and height;
2. Approximate location of lots and public dedications;
3. General location and extent of public open space;
4. General location of vehicular access points; and
5. Public benefit schedule.

All other elements of the Sketch Plan are illustrative and subject to refinement at the time of Site Plan.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Density
The Sketch Plan is limited to a maximum of 61,250 square feet of total development with residential and retail uses. The maximum number of dwelling units will be determined at Preliminary Plan.
2. Height
The development is limited to a maximum height of 175 feet, as specified in the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Incentive Density
The development must be constructed with the public benefits listed below, unless modifications are made under Section 59.7.3.3.I. Total points must equal at least 100 and be chosen from at least four categories as required by Section 59.4.5.4. A.2. The requirements of Division 59.4.7 and the *CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines* must be fulfilled for each public benefit. Final points will be established at Site Plan approval.
 - a. Major Public Facility, achieved through contribution towards the future construction of a “Shared Street” along Pearl Street as envisioned in the *2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*;
 - b. Connectivity and Mobility, achieved through minimum parking;
 - c. Quality of Building and Site Design, achieved through architectural elevations and exceptional design; and
 - d. Protection of the Natural Environment, achieved through building lot termination, energy conservation and generation, and a vegetated roof.
4. Building Design
The Applicant must submit their architectural design concept to the Design Advisory Panel prior to submittal of Site Plan.
5. Streets and Streetscape
 - a. The Applicant must participate in the implementation of the Pearl Street shared street, as recommended in the Sector Plan with further details to be determined at the time of Site Plan.
 - b. The Applicant should provide a 15-foot-wide sidewalk along Pearl Street as envisioned in the Design Guidelines for street types designated as “Neighborhood Main Streets”.

- c. The Applicant must install the Bethesda Streetscape Standard along the Frontage along Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street, including the undergrounding of utilities.

6. Bicycle Facilities

The Applicant must coordinate with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to implement master planned bicycle facilities along the project frontages, including:

- a. Separated bicycle lanes on Montgomery Avenue, and
- b. Pearl Street shared street design.

7. Department of Transportation

The Planning Board accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (“MCDOT”) in its letter dated November 27, 2017, and hereby incorporates them as conditions of the Sketch Plan approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations as set forth in the letter, which may be amended by MCDOT provided that the amendments do not conflict with other conditions of the Sketch Plan approval.

8. Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)

The Applicant must provide on the Subject Property a minimum of 15% of the total units as Moderately Priced Dwelling Units. The development must provide MPDUs in accordance with Chapter 25A.

9. Future Coordination for Preliminary and Site Plan

In addition to any other requirements for Preliminary Plans under Chapter 50 and Site Plans under Chapter 59, the following must be addressed when filing a Preliminary or Site Plan, as appropriate:

- a. Fire and Rescue access and facility details;
- b. Streetscape details;
- c. Provide details and cross sections showing appropriate soil volumes associated with the new plantings per the Sector Plan;
- d. Provide a tree-save plan addressing any impacts to the neighboring trees.
- e. Demonstration of how each public benefit satisfies the Zoning Ordinance and Incentive Density Implementation Guideline requirements;
- f. Address the SITES & LEED recommendations of the Sector Plan, specifically related to energy efficiency and building design features;
- g. Noise analysis to determine appropriate noise mitigation for noise generated from motor vehicles on Montgomery Avenue;
- h. Dedication along Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street;
- i. Transportation Impact Study and ADA evaluation within 500-feet of the site;
- j. Traffic Mitigation Agreement to participate in the Bethesda Transportation Demand Management District and achieve the Sector Plan 55% NADMS goal;
- k. SWM concept which addresses the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan recommendations regarding SWM;
- l. Provide Green Cover exhibit demonstrating a minimum 35 percent green cover achieved for the site; and
- m. Coordination with MCDOT in accordance with that agency’s letter, dated November 27, 2017.

SECTION 2: SITE DESCRIPTION

Site Vicinity and Analysis

Subject Property

The subject site (Subject Property or Property) is in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street, in the Pearl District of the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* area. The Property has a tract area of approximately 0.28 acres, or 12,250 square feet.

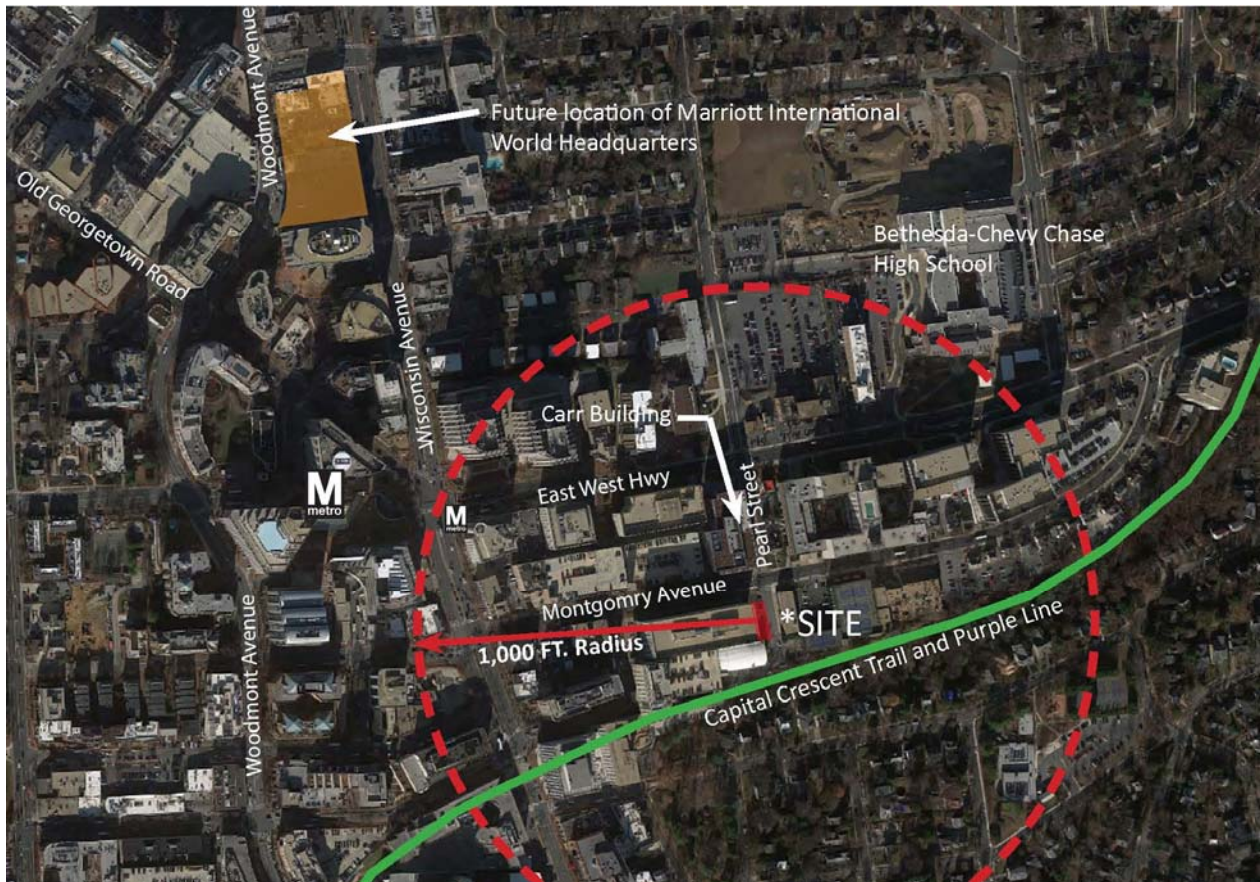


Figure 1-Aerial View

The Property is within the area encompassed by the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* (the Sector Plan). The Property is located within a ¼ mile of the Bethesda Metro Station and falls within the Bethesda Parking Lot District (PLD).

Site Analysis

The Property is zoned CR 5.0 C 4.0 R 4.75 H-175. The Site is comprised of one surface parking lot. This lot has frontage on Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street. There are no known rare, threatened, or endangered species on site; there are no 100-year floodplains, stream buffers, or wetlands on site. There are no historic properties on site.

Surrounding Uses

The Property is surrounded by a mix of retail, residential, office, and institutional uses. Directly to the north of the Property, across Montgomery Avenue and East-West Highway, is the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School (R-60). Across Montgomery Avenue, to the north, is the 4500 East-West Highway (Carr Building) office building (CR 5.0 C 5.0 R 5.0 H-125). Immediately adjacent to the west is 7300 Pearl Street “Air Right Center,” (CR 5.0 C 4.0 R 4.75 H-175) and to the east across Pearl Street, along Montgomery Avenue is PNC Bank (CR 3.0, C 3.0, R 3.0, H-145) and Sport and Health (CR 1.5 C 1.5 R 1.5 H-120). To the south of the site, Pearl Street dead-ends into the Capital Crescent Trail and future Purple Line.

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposal

The Sketch Plan application (Project) proposes to redevelop the Property with up to a maximum of 61,250 gross square feet of mixed-use development with residential and ground floor retail, with a maximum building height of 145 feet (175 feet allowed per the zone). The Project includes 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs). The Project proposes no on-site parking (a county parking garage is located directly across Montgomery Avenue) and proposes to contribute towards the future construction of the “Shared Street” along Pearl Street as envisioned in the Sector Plan.

Buildings

Although building architecture is conceptual at the time of Sketch Plan, the concept envisions the proposed building as an eastern gateway to Bethesda with access to the Capital Crescent Trail and future Purple Line from the new Pearl Street “shared street”. As presented to the Design Advisory Panel on November 29, 2017, the building is anticipated to activate its two frontages through the implementation of a highly articulated building with glass bay windows and balconies and improved Bethesda streetscape. The base of the building is anticipated to include a 20-foot-tall ground floor housing the main residential lobby with corner retail fronting onto Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street to help activate the street and provide a pedestrian friendly connection to the future Purple Line and CCT at the south end of Pearl Street.

Figure 2-Proposed Ground Floor

Off-street loading is enclosed and accessed from Pearl Street at the southern edge of the Property. The west façade has been setback from the property line 3 feet to allow a limited number of windows to break up the façade and provide visual interest. In addition, the western façade will be clad in metal panels of various sizes to provide an articulated design.

There is a vegetated green roof and trellis to further enhance the penthouse level of the building. The required bicycle parking is located at the ground floor adjacent to the loading area. New brick pavers around the Property will bring an added warmth to the pedestrian environment and will be consistent with the new downtown streetscape guidelines.

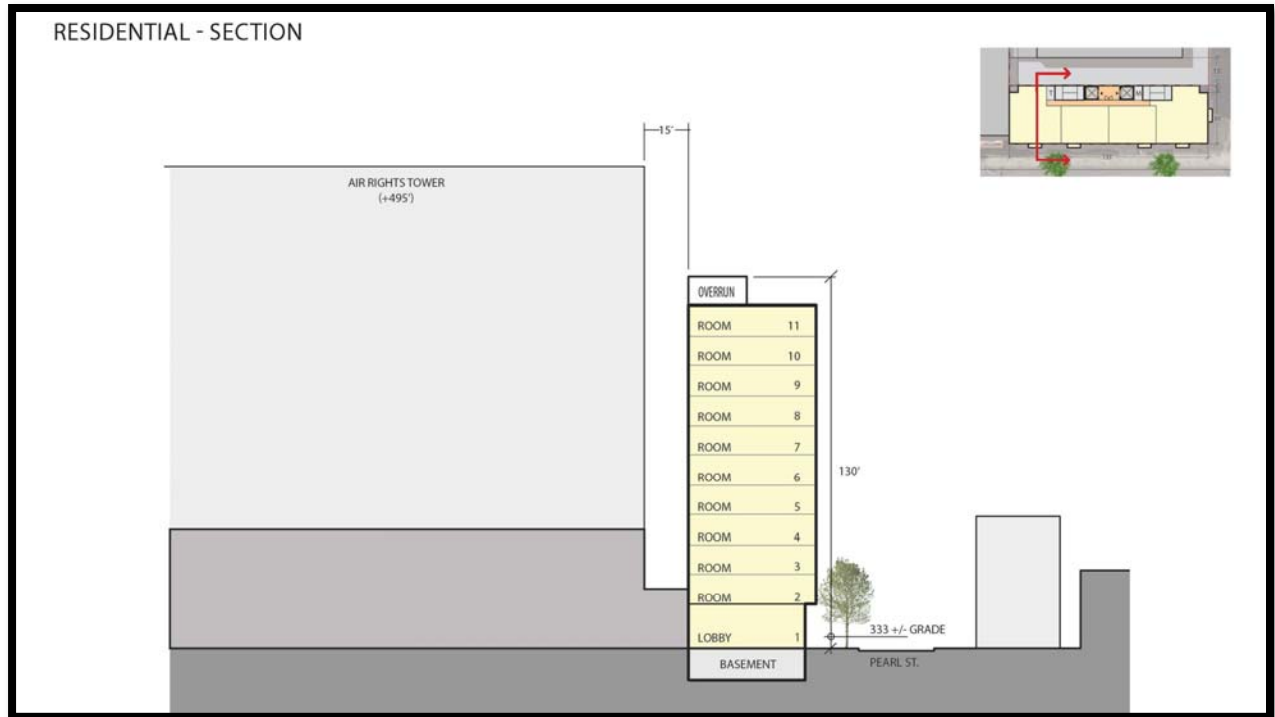


Figure 3- Illustrative Section (Pearl Street, looking north)



Figure 4- Illustrative Elevation (Pearl Street and Montgomery Avenue, looking southwest)

Figure 5- Illustrative Elevation (Pearl Street, looking south)



Figure 6- Illustrative Perspective (Pearl Street, looking northwest)

Open Space

With a Site area of 12,250 square feet (0.28 acres) and two frontages, there is no open space requirement as outlined in section 59.4.5.4.B of the Zoning Ordinance.

Environment

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Exemption (42018014E) was granted on August 15, 2017, under through Section 22A-5(s)(2). The exemption was granted as the property is less than 1-acre and will not result in the clearing of more than 20,000 square feet of existing forest, or any existing specimen or champion tree, and reforestation requirements would not exceed 10,000 square feet (See Attachment C).

Canopy Corridor

Pearl Street is a tree 'canopy corridor' intended to connect tree cover to parks, bicycle trails, stream buffers, and denser forest networks beyond the Bethesda boundary. Trees must have a minimum soil volume of 600 cubic feet or greater. Trees along Pearl Street and Montgomery Ave should be spaced 30-feet on center. The soil volume and details must be addressed at the time of Site Plan submission.

Noise

The Project proposes residential units to be built adjacent to an arterial roadway that carries more than 5,000 cars per day. As a result, a noise analysis is needed at time of Preliminary Plan submission. A noise analysis must be prepared by an engineer specializing in acoustics that quantifies the existing and 20-year projected noise levels. The study must address the type and location of noise mitigation techniques that may be required to appropriately attenuate noise levels for any affected dwelling units and areas of common outdoor activity, as applicable.

Stormwater Management (SWM)

A Stormwater Management (SWM) Concept Plan is not required at the time of Sketch Plan. Submission of the stormwater concept plan to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) will be required at the time of Preliminary Plan. The SWM plan approval should address the Bethesda Downtown Plan recommendations such as meeting or exceeding the County's minimum stormwater treatment requirement and the use of integrated environmental site design in a treatment train where feasible.

Green Cover

The Sector Plan recommends, on private property, that each Applicant provide a minimum of 35 percent green cover which may include singularly or a combination of the following:

- Intensive green roof (6 inches or deeper) on 35 percent of rooftop;
- Tree canopy cover on 35 percent of landscape;
- A combination of tree canopy and intensive green roof for a total green cover of 35 percent or greater.

The final details of the green cover requirement will be addresses at the time of Site Plan submission.

Energy

Buildings must meet the public benefits category for Energy Conservation and Generation 59.4.7.3.F.3 per the Sector Plan and the Bethesda Overlay Zone. An optional method building over 4 stories must exceed the current International Green Construction Code (IGCC) by 2 percent. As proposed, the Project will meet this requirement and final points will be determined at the time of Site Plan.

Transportation

Access and Circulation

Pedestrian access to the site will be from the established sidewalk network and will be enhanced by streetscape improvements along both Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street, along the Site's frontages, consistent with the Bethesda Streetscape Standards.

Bicycle access will be from Montgomery Avenue along a planned separated bikeway, and on Pearl Street. The southern segment of Pearl Street provides a connection to the Capital Crescent Trail. Long-term bicycle parking for residents will be provided in a secure room, accessed from Pearl Street. The final location and capacity of the long- and short-term bicycle parking will be determined at Site Plan.

Vehicular access to the Property is proposed directly from Pearl Street to a single-bay loading dock that is designed for vehicles no larger than SU-30 trucks. No residential parking is proposed on site and therefore an additional driveway is not necessary. The Site is located within the Parking Lot District, and therefore the Applicant is encouraged to provide fewer than the minimum parking spaces required (Section 59.6.2.3.H.1.a). Given the Site's proximity to the Bethesda Metrorail Station (approximately 1,100 feet) and the proximity of the Waverly Public Parking Garage (approximately 250 feet), it is appropriate for the Applicant to forgo providing parking on site. Figure 7 shows Site circulation for all modes.

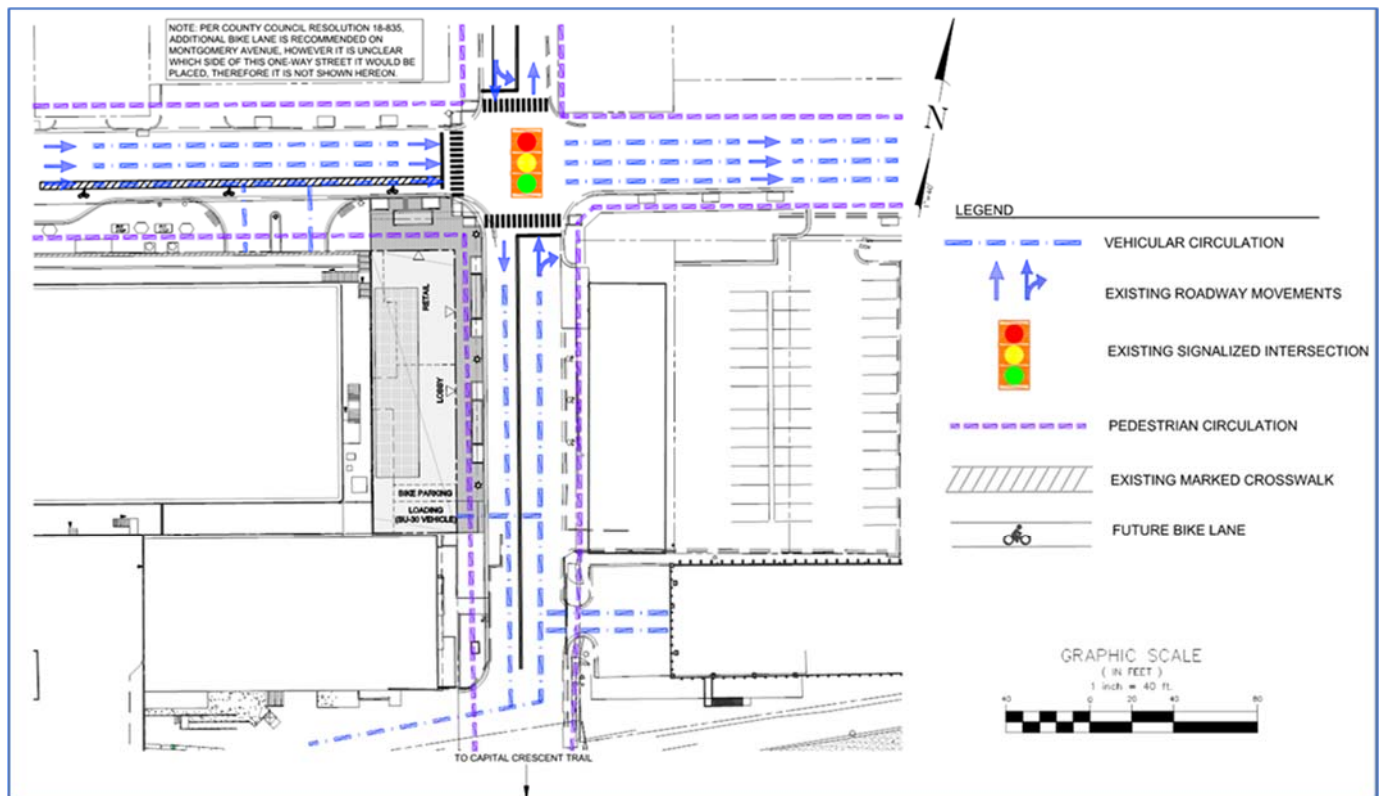


Figure 7-Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation

Transit Connectivity

The immediate area is well served by transit that includes the Red Line Bethesda Metrorail Station (located approximately 1,100 feet to the south of the site), Metrobus, RideOn, and the future Purple Line. Specific transit routes near the Site include:

1. RideOn Bus Route 34 and
2. WMATA Metrobus Routes J2, J3, J4, and L2.

Master Plan Roadways and Pedestrian/Bikeway Facilities

The 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* has the following master plan facilities along property frontage:

1. Montgomery Avenue, along the north site frontage, as a Business District Street with a minimum right-of-way width of 80 feet and a separated bike lane (CT-9);
2. Pearl Street, along the east site frontage, as a Business District Street with a minimum right-of-way width of 60 feet, and an ultimate design of a shared street (LB-3).
3. Pearl Street/Capital Crescent Trail Connector, the Bethesda Downtown Plan recommends a prominent connection to the Capital Crescent Trail at the southern terminus of Pearl Street (LB-3).

Sector-Planned Transportation Demand Management

The Sector Plan encourages a Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) of 55%, averaged between employees and residents of downtown Bethesda. In order to meet this goal, downtown Bethesda manages a Transportation Demand Management District (TMD) that strives to promote travel by means other than single occupancy vehicles. As a project located within the Bethesda TMD, the development is required to enter into a Traffic Mitigation Agreement (TMAg) with the Planning Board and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to participate in the Bethesda TMD. Specific details of the TMAg will be determined during the Preliminary Plan review.

Community Outreach

The pre-submission meeting was held at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center on the evening of July 12, 2017. Notice was properly given for the pre-submission community meeting in accordance with the standards set forth in the Development Review Procedures Manual. The sign-in sheet and meeting minutes are being submitted concurrently as part of this Application. No resident correspondence has been received as of the date of this staff report.

SECTION 4: PROJECT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of a Sketch Plan is to identify general land uses, development intensity, and public benefits for the optional method of development in the CR, CRT, EOF or LSC Zones. The Sketch Plan is intended to be conceptual in nature with an emphasis on building densities, massing, heights and anticipated uses, the locations of open and public use spaces, the general circulation patterns for all modes of transportation, an estimated range of peak hour trips and relationships between existing or proposed adjacent buildings and rights-of-way. Details of the proposed development are determined during Preliminary and Site Plan review. Section 59.7.3.3.E of the Zoning Ordinance states: "To approve a Sketch Plan the Planning Board must find that the following elements are appropriate in concept and appropriate for further detailed review at site plan. The Sketch Plan must:"

1. *meet the objectives, general requirements, and standards of this Chapter;*

The Sketch Plan meets the development standards of Section 59.4.5.4, as shown in the Data Table below:

Sketch Plan Data Table			
Section 59.4	Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Approved
	Gross Tract Area per Zone CR 5.0 C-4.0 R-4.75 H-175	n/a	12,250 sf (0.28 ac)
	Prior Dedication	n/a	4,750 sf (0.11 ac)
	Approved Dedication	n/a	2,100 sf (0.05 ac)
	Net Lot Area	n/a	5,400 sf (0.12 ac)
	Commercial Density (GFA/FAR) CR 5.0 C-4.0 R-4.75 H-175	49,000 sf (4.0)	3,062 sf (0.25)
	Residential Density (GFA/ FAR) CR 5.0 C-4.0 R-4.75 H-175	58,188 sf/ (4.75)	58,188 sf/ (4.75)
	Bethesda Overlay Zone Density	n/a	n/a
	Total FAR/GFA	5.0	61,250 sf (5.0)
	Building Height	175 feet	145 feet
	Public Open Space (min)	0% (0 square feet)	0% (0 square feet)
	Minimum Setbacks	n/a	0

The Application will provide the minimum required number of bicycle parking spaces within the building, which will be determined at the time of Site Plan.

The Sketch Plan conforms to the intent of the CR zone as described below.

- a) *Implement the recommendations of applicable master plans.*

The Project substantially conforms to the recommendations for the Property included in the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. The Property is designated as site 189 on page 120 and 121 of the Plan. The Property is in the Plan area designated as the “Pearl District,” an emerging center of activity with potential for concentrated retail growth along Pearl Street between East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue. Specifically, the Project addresses the following goals as outlined in the Pearl District section of the Plan:

- *Improve the visual quality of buildings and streetscapes along Montgomery Avenue to enhance the public realm for pedestrians and incentive economic investment.*

The Project will vastly improve the existing corner, because of the quality architecture and improvements to the existing streetscape, which will begin to develop an inviting pedestrian experience south on Pearl Street toward the Purple Line. The existing eastern boundary of the Property consists of a vacant gravel parking lot sloping down to the Pearl Street right-of-way, which lacks curb and gutter. As a result, the Property appears to be flowing into Pearl Street, without any physical or visual boundary. The Project will include a new sidewalk that will include landscaping and pavers to enhance connectivity in this area in accordance with the Sector Plan. The transparency of the building on the ground floor, in addition to the residential lobby and the corner retail space which will anchor the building, will promote pedestrian activity and help improve the streetscape in this area of Bethesda.

- *Promote more mix of land uses to enhance 24-hour activity in the district.*
The Project will transform a vacant lot within 1,100 feet of the Bethesda Metro into unique residential units with activating ground floor retail contributing to diverse housing opportunities in the CBD with MPDUs that ensure the Project provides economic diversity within the Pearl District.
- *Promote Pearl Street as a new main street with local neighborhood serving retail.*
The Project provides for ground floor retail at the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street promoting an activated streetscape and providing the appropriate uses as outlined in the Pearl District goals in the Sector Plan. The Project will also be contributing to the future construction of the “shared street” along Pearl Street as recommended in the Sector Plan.
- *Enhance pedestrian connectivity throughout the district.*
The Project will vastly improve the existing corner, as a result of the quality architecture and improvements to the existing streetscape including adding a needed sidewalk along the Pearl Street frontage, which will begin to develop an inviting pedestrian experience south on Pearl Street toward the Capital Crescent Trail.

The Project is in general conformance with the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*.

- b) *Target opportunities for redevelopment of single-use commercial areas and surface parking lots with a mix of uses.*

The Project will redevelop the existing vacant surface parking lot with a mixed-use building with residential and ground-floor retail uses catalyzing a much-needed transformation of the Pearl District. The Project meets the objective of this finding.

- c) *Encourage development that integrates a combination of housing types, mobility options, commercial services, and public facilities and amenities, where parking is prohibited between the building and the street.*

The Project encourages such development by proposing market-rate residential units in a variety of unit types as well as 15% MPDUs, offering housing opportunities for a range of incomes proximate to the numerous transit options of downtown Bethesda. The Project facilitates pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular movement near the Metro and bus service improving the streetscape along its two frontages. The Project does not propose any parking between the building and the street frontages.

- d) *Allows a flexible mix of uses, densities, and building heights appropriate to various settings to ensure compatible relationships with adjoining neighborhoods.*

The Sector Plan identifies this area as an emerging center of activity with potential for concentrated retail growth along Pearl Street between East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue. The Project will provide activating ground-floor uses in the form of retail at the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street and needed residential uses with height and density compatible with the Sector Plan recommended character of the Pearl District.

- e) *Integrate an appropriate balance of employment and housing opportunities.*

4540 Montgomery Avenue will have a variety of housing opportunities available at a variety of price levels. Employment opportunities within the Project may be found within the small commercial space on the ground floor. The Sector Plan identified several distinct districts within Downtown Bethesda to guide development compatibility. The Subject Property is within the Pearl District which contains a mix of office and residential uses, many constructed prior to the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan. Montgomery Avenue contains the rear service entrances to high-rises on the north and a variety of offices in single-unit houses on the south. The recommended concept for this district is to promote open space and street activity through a mixed-use environment with improved pedestrian connectivity and new public space opportunities. As proposed, the proposed project provides the appropriate land use, as recommended in the Sector Plan.

- f) *Standardize optional method development by establishing minimum requirements for the provision of public benefits that will support and accommodate density above the standard method limit.*

The Project will provide the required public benefits from a minimum of four categories to achieve the desired incentive density above the standard method limit. Final determination of public benefit points will be determined at the time of Site Plan.

2. *substantially conform with the recommendations of the applicable master plan;*

As discussed in Finding 1.a. above, the Project substantially conforms to recommendations of the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. The Project will increase the supply of housing to serve a variety of income levels, redevelop an under-utilized property, improve the visual quality and architectural character of the immediate area, provide streetscape improvements that improve the safety and character of the existing streets and catalyze the much-needed transformation of the Pearl District.

3. *satisfy any development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014;*

The Sketch Plan is not subject to a development plan or schematic development plan.

4. *achieve compatible internal and external relationships between existing and pending nearby development;*

The building design is compatible in height and scale with the existing nearby development in the Pearl District.

5. *provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, parking, and loading;*

The Project provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, and loading. The Project appropriately locates vehicular access for loading on Pearl Street, thus eliminating curb cuts from Montgomery Avenue, and provides a pedestrian/bicycle lobby on Pearl Street. Long term-bicycle parking for residents will be provided in a secure room, accessed from Pearl Street. The final location and capacity of the long- and short-term bicycle parking will be determined at Site Plan.

6. *propose an outline of public benefits that supports the requested incentive density and is appropriate for the specific community;*

Taking into account the considerations in Section 59.4.7.1.B and the Bethesda Overlay Zone Section 59.4.9.2, including the recommendations and objectives of the Sector Plan and any applicable design guidelines, the Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines, the size and configuration of the site and its relationship to adjacent properties, similar public benefits nearby, and additional enhancements related to the individual public benefits, Staff finds that the following outline of public benefits supports the Applicant’s request for incentive density and is appropriate for the community surrounding the site, as described below.

For the proposed development, the Zoning Ordinance requires 100 points in four categories. Although at the time of Sketch Plan review only the categories need be approved, Table 2 shows both the categories and points for the public benefits recommended at Sketch Plan to demonstrate the project’s ability to meet the requirement to provide sufficient benefit points.

Table 2: Public Benefits Calculations		
Public Benefit	Incentive Density Points	
	Max Allowed	Requested
59.4.7.3A: Major Public Facility		
Pearl Street “Shared Street”¹	70	35
59.4.7.3C: Connectivity and Mobility		
Advance Dedication	30	30
Minimum Parking^{1,2}	20	20
59.4.7.3E: Quality of Building and Site Design		
Architectural Elevations²	30	15
Exceptional Design^{1,2}	30	15
59.4.7.3F: Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment		
BLTs	30	1
Energy Conservation and Generation^{1,2}	25	15
Vegetated Roof^{1,2}	20	15
TOTAL		146

¹Denotes Sector Plan priority

²Denotes Bethesda Overlay Zone Requirement per Section 59.4.9.2

Major Public Facility

The Applicant requests 35 points for contributing towards the future construction of a Pearl Street “Shared Street” as envisioned by the Sector Plan. The Applicant’s contribution is based on the improvement of Pearl Street from the centerline west to the Property, for the extent of the Property frontage. Staff supports the Applicant’s request at this time with final calculations and points determined at the time of Site Plan.

Connectivity and Mobility

Advance Dedication: The Applicant requests 30 points for dedicating 2,100 square feet for master planned rights-of-way in advance of a preliminary or a site plan application. Points for this incentive are granted on a sliding scale that allows up to 30 points in the CR zone based on the percentage of tract area that is dedicated. The only advance dedications that will be considered for incentive density in a sketch plan approval are dedications made in anticipation of future development, such as those made prior to filing a site plan or those made within areas that will be developed during later phases of a sketch plan. Final determination will be made at Preliminary Plan. Staff supports the category at this time, but further discussion will be held at the time of Site Plan submission.

Minimum Parking: The Applicant requests 20 points for providing no parking on-site and fewer than the minimum allowed number of parking spaces. Points for this incentive are granted on a sliding scale from no points for providing the maximum allowable number of on-site spaces to 20 points for providing no more than the minimum numbers of spaces on site. Final determination on the number of points recommended in this category will be made at Site Plan. This category is a priority in the Sector Plan.

Quality of Building and Site Design

Architectural Elevations: The Applicant requests 15 points for architectural elevations that will further the Sector Plan goal to create quality architecture in the downtown. The building is a contemporary modern glass box with an articulated façade using glass bay windows and balconies to help articulate the residential character of the building and to compliment the new office glass building developed directly across the street, as well as to reduce the massing and provide visual interest. The pedestrian ground floor will be 100 percent transparent to activate the street and provide a pedestrian friendly environment furthering the goals of the Bethesda Design Guidelines. Incentive density of 10 points is appropriate for development that provides and is bound by architectural elevations as part of a certified site plan showing façade elements outlined in the guidelines.

Exceptional Design: The Applicant requests 15 points for building or site design that enhances the character of a setting. Per the CR Guidelines, incentive density of 10 points is appropriate for development that meets all the guideline criteria. As a site within the Bethesda Overlay Zone, the Project is subject to the Design Advisory Panel review, which will award points based on the quality of the design. The Applicant asserts that the Project provides innovative solutions in response to the immediate context; creates a sense of place and serves as a landmark; enhances the public realm in a distinct and original manner; introduces materials, forms, or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way; and integrates low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building, beyond green building or site requirements. Further refinement will be determined at the time of Site Plan. This category is a priority in the Sector Plan.

The Applicant presented the Sketch Plan to the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) on November 29, 2017 and the DAP recommended the following during their meeting:

1. Exceptional Design Points: The design is headed in a positive direction to go higher than the requested 15 points as a creative development solution for a compact site, if there is attention to the recommendations listed below.
 - a. Give more emphasis to the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street.
 - b. Articulate the base of the building to correspond to the base of the adjacent Air Rights Building.
 - c. Provide further development of the streetscape to include more trees and stormwater management along the street.
 - d. Explore the view of the building coming from the west along Montgomery Avenue.
 - e. Consider a different proportion to further emphasize the top of the building.

Additional context and discussion for the DAP's recommendations are included in the November 29, 2017, DAP meeting summary (Attachment B).

Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Building Lot Termination (BLT): The Applicant requests one point for the purchase of BLT easements or equivalent payment made for every 31,500 square feet of gross floor area comprising the 7.5% incentive density floor area. Points are granted by the calculation of BLTs as provided in Section 59.4.7.3.F of the Zoning Ordinance.

Energy Conservation and Generation: The Applicant requests 15 points for providing a project that exceeds the energy efficiency standards for new buildings by 17.5% through high efficiency mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Further refinement will be determined at the time of Site Plan. This category is a priority in the Sector Plan.

Vegetated Roof: The Applicant requests 15 points for providing vegetated roofs with a soil depth of at least eight inches and covering at least 33% of the total roof excluding space for mechanical equipment. The CR Guidelines recommends 20 points for development that provides a vegetated roof with a soil depth of at least four inches over at least 33% of the rooftop, excluding space for mechanical equipment. At the time of Site Plan, the Applicant will provide additional details on meeting the vegetated roof criteria. This category is a priority in the Sector Plan and the Sector Plan recommends a minimum of at least six inches for vegetated roofs. To achieve the points for this category, the vegetated roof must not include stormwater management areas required by state law.

7. *establish a feasible and appropriate provisional phasing plan for all structures, uses, rights-of-way, sidewalks, dedications, public benefits, and future preliminary and site plan applications.*

The Project will be built in one phase.

CONCLUSION

The Sketch Plan application satisfies the findings under Section 59.4.5.4 of the Zoning Ordinance and substantially conforms to the recommendations of the Approved and Adopted *2017 Approved and Adopted Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Sketch Plan with the conditions specified at the beginning of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Sketch Plan
- B. Design Advisory Panel Comments
- C. Forest Conservation Exemption 42017154E
- D. Agency Letters