



Draft Urban Design Guidelines for the Rock Spring and White Flint 2 Sector Plans

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Summary

At this work session, staff will provide the Planning Board with an overview of the Draft Urban Design Guidelines for the 2017 *Rock Spring Sector Plan* and the 2018 *White Flint 2 Sector Plan*. As the Board will recall, the Rock Spring and White Flint 2 Sector Plans were developed concurrently due to the similarities of the areas in terms of development patterns and market trends, particularly the high vacancy rates of office buildings. The two areas are proximate, just a mile-and-a-half apart, linked by Old Georgetown Road. For these reasons, the Guidelines for the Rock Spring and White Flint 2 Sector Plans are in one document.

Correspondence received to date is attached, and staff will summarize these comments and discuss them with the Board during the work session. Staff will seek the Board’s direction on a few key issues in the Guidelines that may require further refinement.

Schedule

Staff released a draft of the Urban Design Guidelines for public review in March 2019 and hosted separate open houses in the two plan areas that were well attended by residents, civic association leaders, property owners and developers. Staff posted the entire draft document on the Planning Department’s website to solicit feedback and receive comments by email and phone as well as several in-person meetings.

The key dates for this project include:

- **March 2019** Draft Urban Design Guidelines released for public review
- **March 26, 2019** White Flint 2 Open House
- **March 28, 2019** Rock Spring Open House
- **June 06, 2019** Planning Board Work Session 1
- **July 11, 2019** Planning Board Work Session 2

DISCUSSION

Design issues that are encountered with redevelopment in Area 2, including these two sector plan areas, are emblematic of a transformational change from suburban land use patterns to more compact, pedestrian-oriented, inter-connected developments that emphasize a high quality public realm. Redevelopment presents challenges, as well as opportunities, for the stakeholders involved with these projects. One of the reasons the Planning Department undertakes master/sector plans is to provide a vision for the future, and a roadmap for changes over time. To help guide that change and provide clear direction for those involved with implementing the Rock Spring and White Flint 2 Sector Plans, Area 2 staff engaged in a robust exercise to create detailed Design Guidelines. Staff also coordinated with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation staff to ensure that recommendations for multimodal facilities and streetscape design elements met requirements per the county's street standards and achieved the vision set forth in *The Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan*. Through the public review process, staff received additional comments on the Guidelines from individual property owners.

The Draft Urban Design Guidelines build on the recommendations in the 2017 *Rock Spring Sector Plan* and the 2018 *White Flint 2 Sector Plan* with the intent of providing additional details to guide the transformation of the Plan areas, particularly the public realm. The Guidelines should help stakeholders achieve high quality building design, exemplary open spaces, and streets that provide ample pedestrian comfort and multimodal connectivity. The Guidelines contain overall design principles applicable to both sector plan areas, as well as specific guidance for districts and individual sites.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Urban Design Guidelines for Rock Spring and White Flint 2
- B. Correspondence received from the public