



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 input we have received on the Draft Urban Design Guidelines for the 2017 *Rock Spring Sector Plan* and the 2018 *White Flint 2 Sector Plan*. The correspondence and comments received to date have been summarized in the table starting on page 3, which provides an overview of the property owners’ input, their requested revisions, and staff’s response. Staff has also prepared an updated, revised draft of the document that reflects the revisions we think are appropriate based on the feedback received and guidance provided by the Planning Board at the first work session on June 6, 2019. Staff will review and present these revisions to the Planning Board at the second work session on July 18, and any outstanding issues will be discussed prior to the Board’s vote on the guidelines.

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 received 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 18, 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 Urban 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 2018 *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.

Draft Revisions Process

The following revisions are the result of discussions with area residents and stakeholders, including civic association leaders, property owners, and developers to determine the right balance between clarity and flexibility for the Urban Design Guidelines. Staff incorporated this input into the revised draft that is attached to this staff report. The major topics raised during the guidelines review process included the need for flexibility regarding the location of buildings, streets, and open spaces, particularly when developing or redeveloping large, multi-phase sites. Other topics included consideration for alternatives to implement the road diet recommendations; the importance of expanding opportunities for public open spaces; providing comfortable pedestrian and bike connections to and from the surrounding neighborhoods; and addressing compatibility of new development with adjacent, existing properties.

The revisions outlined in the table below have all been incorporated into the attached, revised draft of the Urban Design Guidelines. Based on our work session discussions on July 18, if the Board makes additional modifications to the text of the guidelines, staff will incorporate those changes into the final version of the document. To facilitate the Board's review, staff organized the comments in the table by property and within three color categories that indicate the following:

- The green text boxes indicate areas where staff is in substantial agreement with the input received and has made changes to reflect the revisions requested.
- The blue text boxes indicate areas where staff has provided additional clarification and identified issues that are typically resolved during the regulatory review process.
- The yellow text boxes indicate areas where staff does not concur with the revisions requested since they conflict with the vision set forth in the approved and adopted sector plan.

ATTACHMENTS

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

Stakeholder Comments and Revisions:

Stakeholder / Summary of Input	Revision Requested by Stakeholders	Staff Response
MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS SITE		
<p>The development program of certain uses, such as a CCRC, being driven by specific programmatic considerations.</p>	<p>Pg-2 Design proposals and alternative solutions will be evaluated during the development review process based on surrounding context, site conditions, <u>programmatic considerations of a particular use</u> and ways in which the projects address applicable plan goals and the intent of the design guidelines.</p>	<p>Staff accepted the proposed language.</p>
<p>Concerns regarding street facing retail and activating uses along Fernwood Road.</p>	<p>Pg-24 Consider placing retail, <u>when feasible</u>, and other activating uses such as entrance lobbies <u>at prominent/visible locations. building corners.</u></p> <p>Pg-58 Create a pedestrian friendly frontage along Fernwood Road with buildings opening directly onto the street with active uses, <u>when programmatically feasible.</u></p>	<p>Staff accepted the proposed language.</p> <p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff will revise the language as follows: Create a pedestrian friendly frontage along Fernwood Road with buildings opening directly onto the street with active uses, <u>to the greatest extent possible.</u></p>
<p>Desire for flexibility regarding the location of the open spaces.</p>	<p>Pg 57-59; Figures 3.19, 3.20, and 3.21:</p> <p>Change the note below:</p> <p>Note: Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design</p>	<p>Staff accepted the proposed language for all diagrams throughout the document.</p>

	<p><u>and locations of open spaces</u> will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p> <p>Pg-59 Figure 3.21</p> <p>-Mid block connection links civic green to existing open space.</p>	<p>Staff revised the call-out text to read as follows:</p> <p><u>Explore ways to connect the Civic Green to existing open spaces on site.</u></p>
<p>Concern regarding mid-block crossing from the project to future potential BRT stop.</p>	<p>Pg-59 Figure 3.21</p> <p>Civic Green along the central spine and across from <u>proximate to</u> the future Bus Rapid Transit Station</p>	<p>Staff accepted the proposed language.</p>
<p>Concern regarding the recommendation that new development create smaller blocks.</p>	<p>Pg-58 All infill and rebuild scenarios should break up the large property into smaller, more walkable blocks</p> <p>Pg-59 New Streets creates smaller block sizes</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff revised the text as follows:</p> <p><u>Segment the large Marriott property in Rock Spring into more walkable blocks when proposing infill and rebuilding scenarios.</u></p> <p>New streets <u>should</u> create smaller block sizes <u>more walkable blocks.</u></p> <p>Staff also notes that diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>

WESTFIELD MONTGOMERY MALL SITE		
Location of open space on the Westfield Site	Pg-46 The location of heritage gardens should be accurately located on Figure 3.9.	Staff agreed and revised the diagram on page 46.
Property ownership structure and grades on Westfield site.	Pg-69 Due to grades as well as current ownership interests of the Mall property, future development of the southwest portion of the site would not be oriented toward Westlake Drive. The build to line along Westlake Drive should be eliminated.	Staff acknowledges the comment regarding property ownership. The diagram on page 69 shows a “Build to Area” and not a “Build to Line”. A “Build to Area” is more flexible in terms of building placement. Staff also notes that diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.
Access to mall site from Auto Park Avenue and Motor City Drive.	Pg-72 As has been discussed, it is not possible to extend Auto Park Avenue and Motor City Drive through the Mall property. This bullet should be eliminated.	Staff agreed and revised text on page 72 as follows: Extend Autopark Avenue and Motor City Drive through the site to create compact blocks that expand the existing street grid. Provide access to the site from Autopark Avenue and Motor City Drive and create compact blocks that increase local connectivity.
Use of Westfield’s drawings within the design guidelines.	Pg-72,73 The images on Figures 3.33 and 3.34 should be replaced with the URW images	Staff recommends retaining the original diagrams since they are more conceptual and encompass multiple properties. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated

Westfield Montgomery Mall Site Contd.

		during the regulatory review process.
Designation of internal circulation within the Westfield property.	Pg-73 As noted, there are no internal public streets within the Mall property and references should clarify the status of these internal access ways.	Staff acknowledges the comment. The status of roads whether access ways, alleys, private or public streets will be determined during the regulatory review process in consultation with MCDOT.
Property ownership structure on and adjacent to the Westfield site.	Pg-72-73 The development in the southwest corner of the Mall property is unrealistic due to grades and existing ownership interests. Moreover, URW does not own or have any interest in the gas station that occupies the corner of Westlake Drive and Democracy Boulevard.	<p>Staff acknowledges that as a mall operator, the property owner is subject to ground lease agreements and that the gas station is owned by another entity.</p> <p>Staff revised heading on page 72 as follows: Westfield Montgomery Mall, <u>Westfield Crossing Shopping Center and Gas Station Site.</u></p> <p>Staff revised caption on page 73 as follows: Illustrative Plan of Westfield Montgomery Mall, <u>Westfield Crossing Shopping Center and Gas Station Site.</u></p> <p>Staff added note below the diagram on page 73:</p> <p><u>Future development on these sites will need to account for ground lease agreements and property ownership of various parcels at that time.</u></p>
Recommended street section for Westlake Terrace that illustrates a road diet as	Pg-76 Property owner worked with Staff to arrive at an alternative street section.	Staff accepted the alternative street section as agreed upon with the property owner and updated the street section on

envisioned in the Sector Plan.		page 76.
Recommended cross section for Democracy Boulevard requiring rebuilding curbs.	Pg-79 Property owner proposed an alternative cross section that would retain existing curbs while providing landscape, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Staff acknowledges the alternative provided by the property owner. However, no development is proposed in the near future along this road on the mall site. Staff recommends keeping the original section in the design guidelines. Staff will work with applicant at the time of regulatory review to finalize details.
ROCK SPRING CENTRE SITE		
Clarification regarding the DAP process.	Pg-3 Is an Applicant required to submit the application for review by the Design Advisory Panel? The DAP was specifically created for Bethesda, not other areas of the County. How "optional" is this process? Is it really needed?	As explained on pages 2 and 3, it is not mandatory for applicants to go through the DAP process. A DAP review is being offered as a courtesy for interested applicants.
Requesting provision for drive-throughs.	Pg-10 Under "Transformation," we believe that there is a need to integrate drive-throughs in some locations. They are limited uses; they are desirable and should be allowed.	Staff does not support the provision of new drive throughs within the plan area since these are incompatible with the vision set forth by the sector plan for a pedestrian friendly, mixed use environment.
Flexibility on building design.	Pg-25 Townhouse bays and balconies should be allowed to be either grounded or floating.	Staff acknowledges the comment. Floating bays are permitted as long as they are supported by architectural elements.

Flexibility on building and parking design.	Pg-30 In the last bullet, what type of "uses" creates transparency? Too much retail space just ends up with posters of activity or artwork-we question whether this is this better than a garage face?	Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff revised text to read as follows: Line structured parking with retail and other uses with transparency to maintain an active building edge.
Flexibility on building design.	Pg-31 In the 1st bullet, how much of the parking really needs to be screened? Ground plane elements really seem more important than substantial screening.	The extent of screening of parking will be determined during regulatory review.
Types of open spaces recommended within the plan area.	Pg-35 Civic Greens. It may not be practical to have multiple civic greens in this planning area (and be able to activate each of them). There should be more flexibility in the type, character and size of the open spaces.	Recommendations for open space types are built on the recommendations in the Sector Plan, which were created in consultation with Parks staff and guidance from the Planning Board. Actual size and location of spaces will be determined during regulatory review.
Types of open spaces recommended within the plan area.	Pg-36 In the 5th bullet under "Urban Plaza," ¼ to ½ acre is more suitable to an urban plaza. Bigger does not necessarily mean better. These spaces need to be sized right for the location and for the adjacencies and uses.	Recommendations for open space types are built on the recommendations in the Sector Plan, which were created in consultation with Parks staff and guidance from the Planning Board. Actual size and location of spaces will be determined during regulatory review.

Rock Spring Centre Site Contd.

<p>Flexibility for stormwater management design.</p>	<p>Pg-38 In the 1st bullet, limiting the use of stormwater management facilities within public open spaces really is not possible.</p>	<p>The guidelines do not prohibit stormwater management facilities within open spaces. The goal as stated is to incorporate stormwater management into the design of parks and public open spaces without impeding their functionality for users.</p>
<p>Expanding sustainable design strategies.</p>	<p>Pg-41 Under the goal to promote energy conservation and on-site energy production, the words "and site" should be inserted in the 4th bullet after the word "building."</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff revised the text to read as follows: Design buildings <u>and sites</u> to maximize natural ventilation and air flow.</p>
<p>BRT alignment and station clarification.</p>	<p>Pg-45; Figure 3.8 the location of the transit stop changes from map to map. The Rock Spring Centre project already provided for future dedication of the transit easement.</p> <p>Pg-49; Figure 3.10 the transit easement already is provided at a somewhat different location for the station.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the dedication made by the property owner for the transitway along the Rock Spring Centre Site on the north side of Rock Spring Drive.</p> <p>The exact location of BRT stops has not been determined at this point. This diagram is illustrative.</p>
<p>Open space location within the Rock Spring Centre Site.</p>	<p>Pg-46; Figure 3.9 the recreation park has moved to the Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center (Wall Park). Furthermore, recreational uses should not be shown at this location as the Applicant is seeking to relocate this use to a more centrally located area within the project.</p>	<p>Staff agreed and modified this diagram to remove the Urban Recreational Park symbol.</p> <p>Staff also added a symbol for a potential interim recreational space whose size and location will be determined during the regulatory review process.</p>
<p>Ground floor activation.</p>	<p>Pg-49; Figure 3.10 For Rock Spring Centre, the Figure shows</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment and will work with the</p>

	four-sided activation that may be difficult to achieve. It could reference activated or pedestrian friendly.	property owner during regulatory review to prioritize locations for activated ground floors. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.
Designation of private vs. public streets.	Pg-52 The 3rd bullet regarding Georgetown Square should reconfirm that the proposed street can be public or private. This is consistent with the Sector Plan.	Staff acknowledges the comment. The determination of whether new streets are public or private will be made during the regulatory review process in consultation with MCDOT.
Clarification regarding drawings included in the design guidelines.	Pg-53 Comment on Georgetown Square. The Sector Plan shows an illustrative plan that generally is viable. We are not sure why this illustration changed in the Design Guidelines.	The only diagram in the Sector Plan shows a concept diagram for the entire plan area. The design guidelines provide recommendations for key sites, including Georgetown Square. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.
Location of density in illustrative drawings.	Pg-54 Comments on Rock Spring Centre 1st bullet - The highest intensity uses are near the intersection of Rock Spring Drive and Rockledge Drive, not Old Georgetown Road.	Staff agreed and revised bullet to read as follows: Locate highest intensity uses near the intersection of Rock Spring Drive and Old Georgetown Road. <u>Locate higher intensity uses along Rock Spring Drive.</u>

Rock Spring Centre Site Contd.

Reference to previous approvals for the Rock Spring Centre Site.	Pg-54 2nd bullet- We would suggest striking the language "and previously approved" as it relates to the grid of streets. The proposed amendment to Rock Spring Centre modifies the street grid.	Staff agreed and revised bullet to read as follows: Connect to already built and previously approved grid of streets to create smaller blocks on the property.
Flexibility for building design.	Pg-54 3rd bullet - We question why buildings along Rock Spring Drive should be designed to create an appropriately designed base that responds to lower buildings on the Walter Johnson High School site. The Rock Spring Centre property is separated by a large right-of-way and the school use does not seem impacted by nearby height.	Staff acknowledges the comment and revised bullet to read as follows: Design buildings along Rock Spring Drive with appropriately sized bases that respond to the human scale. correspond to low-rise buildings on the Walter Johnson High School Site.
Previous dedication for open space within the Rock Spring Centre site.	Pg-54 5th bullet - Strike. The Applicant is requesting that the Planning Board abandon this dedicated parcel along Old Georgetown Road in favor of a more central location.	Staff acknowledges the comment and revised bullet to read as follows: Incorporate county-owned parcel along Old Georgetown Road into a larger active recreation amenity, such as athletic fields and a dog park. Provide a large active recreation amenity such as athletic fields and a dog park. Abandonment of the parcel will be examined during the regulatory review process.

Rock Spring Centre Site Contd.

<p>Reference to an older recommendation for Community Center on the Rock Spring Centre Site.</p>	<p>Pg-54 6th bullet - Remove the language "community center" as the Council already has determined that a community center for the Rock Spring area will be provided at Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center Park.</p>	<p>Staff agreed and revised bullet to read as follows: Explore the feasibility of incorporating a local community center / meeting space for current and future residents.</p>
<p>Location of open space along Rock Spring Drive.</p>	<p>The open space along Rock Spring Drive, if provided, should be incorporated into the transit station easement.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>
<p>Recommendations for open space within the Rock Spring Centre Site.</p>	<p>Pg-55 We are concerned about the recommendation regarding the interim recreational field and would request that it be removed from the Guidelines.</p>	<p>Staff recommends retaining this recommendation in the design guidelines. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>
<p>Flexibility for parking design.</p>	<p>Removal of surface parking, while retaining commercial uses, is difficult to achieve even with shared parking arrangements. The guidelines must be more accepting of surface parking in certain situations.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment and will work with property owners to incorporate surface parking areas appropriately into projects during the regulatory review process.</p>

Rock Spring Centre Site Contd.

<p>Road diet recommendation for Rock Spring Drive as envisioned in the Sector Plan.</p>	<p>Pg-75 The Road Diet recommended in the Sector Plan should be re-evaluated, both in design and implementation. Along Rock Spring Drive, we would urge Staff to consider recommending in the guidelines a proposal that essentially flips the location of the bike lanes and sidewalk so that they are able to be implemented now. A formal consideration of the road diet should be deferred until such time as the Transitway became a reality.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff added a note to page 75: under the recommended section for Rock Spring Drive / Fernwood Road:</p> <p><u>Planning Staff will work with property owners during regulatory review process to finalize the implementation of the road diet concept in consultation with MCDOT.</u></p>
<p>Flexibility for landscaping.</p>	<p>When referencing "native vegetation," the term "an adaptive" also should be included.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment. Staff edited references to native species with <u>native and adapted species that require less irrigation, are not invasive and benefit local wildlife.</u></p>
<p>HOME DEPOT SITE</p>		
<p>Concerns regarding the road diet on Westlake Terrace.</p>	<p>Pg-76 Home Depot does not support the elimination of vehicle travel lanes, which are necessary for customers to get in and out of the store.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment and revised the section on page 76 so it does not eliminate travel lanes.</p>
<p>Recommended street section for Motor City Drive and intersection operations.</p>	<p>Pg-84 Home Depot supports the continuation of the existing conditions on the west side (Home Depot side) of Motor City.</p> <p>Home Depot strongly encourages the County to</p>	<p>The Section on page 84 reflects the existing conditions.</p>

Home Depot Site Contd.

	modify the Westlake Terrace/Motor City Drive traffic signal to allow cars to exit Motor City onto Westlake Terrace more efficiently and avoid unreasonable delays.	Staff acknowledges the comment. Intersection operation will be reviewed during regulatory review of projects or during CIP implementation.
Recommended street section for Auto Park Avenue.	Pg-85 Home Depot supports maintaining the existing condition and does not support the elimination of the on-street parking on Auto Park Avenue.	Staff acknowledges the comment. However, no development is proposed in the near future along this road. Staff recommends keeping the original section in the design guidelines. Staff will work with applicant at the time of regulatory review to finalize details.
LOEHMANN'S PLAZA SITE		
Flexibility regarding public open space on site.	<p>Pg-102-104 Replace the words "central" and "centralized" with the term "usable".</p> <p>Add language clarifying the diagrams are illustrative.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment and replaced the words "central" and "centralized" with the term "usable".</p> <p>Staff also updated the note below diagrams throughout the document as follows:</p> <p>Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design <u>and locations of open spaces</u> will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>
6006 EXECUTIVE BOULEVARD SITE		
Diagrams showing interior circulation within the site.	Pg-91; Fig 4.38 Shows potential interior connections running horizontally and vertically through the site. This is	Staff acknowledges the comment and will work with applicants to determine appropriate connectivity during

	<p>something that we will need to review in further detail to determine whether this can be achieved, particularly with adjoining property owners.</p>	<p>regulatory review.</p> <p>Staff notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>
<p>Recommendations for open space on sites.</p>	<p>Pg-91 We also question the need/location for certain public open space particularly at the location shown on Figure 4.38. There are three public open spaces shown on three adjoining properties, and it doesn't appear if any are shown on the west side of Executive Boulevard (recognizing that there is a civic green on the west side).</p>	<p>Each property will need to provide open space in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance during the development process. Staff will work with applicants to determine suitable sizes and locations of open spaces during regulatory review. Staff also notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>
	<p>Pg-94 The guidelines discuss attempting to link properties in the Executive Boulevard District with adjacent single-family neighborhoods to the south. The guidelines should recognize that a stream separates these two areas.</p>	<p>Staff acknowledges the comment and added text as follows:</p> <p><u>Such connections will need to consider natural features along the southern edge of the district.</u></p>
	<p>Pg-96; Fig 4.40 Please take a look at the scale of the drawing. The buffer to the east appears larger than that evaluated as part of the Sector Plan.</p>	<p>Staff notes that these diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. Actual site and building design and locations of open spaces will be evaluated during the regulatory review process.</p>