



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB No. 21-024
Sketch Plan No. 320210020
Flats at Knowles Station
Date of Hearing: March 18, 2021

'APR 13 2021

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, under Section 59-7.1.2 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, the Montgomery County Planning Board is authorized to review sketch plan applications; and

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2020, 10509 Summit Venture, LLC c/o Woodside ("Applicant") filed an application for approval of a sketch plan for construction of a mixed-use development with up to 102,205 square feet of total development, with up to 79,554 square feet of residential development and up to 22,651 square feet of commercial development. The Application includes a transfer of 33,666 square feet of residential density and 25% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs), on 0.84 acres of CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60 zoned-land, located at 10509 Summit Avenue ("Subject Property") in the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan ("Sector Plan") area; and

WHEREAS, Applicant's sketch plan application was designated Sketch Plan No. 320210020, Flats at Knowles Station ("Sketch Plan" or "Application"); and

WHEREAS, following review and analysis of the Application by Planning Board staff ("Staff") and other governmental agencies, Staff issued a memorandum to the Planning Board, dated March 8, 2021, setting forth its analysis and recommendation for approval of the Application subject to certain binding elements and conditions ("Staff Report"); and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2021, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Application at which it heard testimony and received evidence submitted for the record on the Application; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2021, the Planning Board voted to approve the Application subject to certain conditions, on motion of Commissioner Verma, seconded by Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez, with a vote of 5-0; Commissioners Anderson, Cichy, Fani-Gonzalez, Patterson, and Verma voting in favor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Board approves Sketch Plan No. 320210020, Flats at Knowles Station, for construction of up to 102,205 square feet of total development, with up to 79,554 square feet of residential development and up to 22,651 square feet of commercial development, including a transfer of 33,666 square feet of residential density and 25% MPDUs on the Subject Property, subject to the following binding elements and conditions:¹

A. Binding Elements. The following site development elements are binding under Section 59.7.3.3.F of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance:

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 are illustrative.

B. Conditions. This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Density

The Sketch Plan is limited to a maximum of 102,205 square feet of mixed-use development comprised of 79,554 square feet of residential development (including bonus density for providing 25% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) on site and density transferred from neighboring properties) and 22,651 square feet of non-residential space on the Subject Property and will be developed in one phase. The maximum number and distribution of residential dwelling units will be determined at Preliminary and Site Plan.

2. Density Transfer

Prior to record plat approval, the Applicant must state the gross square footage taken from any lot with reduced density in an instrument approved by the M-NCPPC Office of the General Counsel and must record the instrument in the Montgomery County Land Records. The residential density to be transferred under this Sketch Plan is measured in gross square feet and will total approximately 33,666 square feet. Final allocation of density will be approved with Site Plan No. 820210030. The Sending Properties will transfer the following square feet of development potential based on the existing zoning:

¹ For the purpose of these binding elements and conditions, the term "Applicant" shall also mean the developer, the owner or any successor(s) in interest to the terms of this approval.

- a. 10414 Detrick Avenue will be transferring 12,431 square feet of residential density.
- b. 3827 Plyers Mill Road will be transferring 21,235 square feet of residential density.

3. Height

The development is limited to a maximum height of 72 feet (including up to 12 feet of additional height for providing 25% MPDUs on site), as measured from the building height measuring point(s) illustrated on the Certified Site Plan.

4. Incentive Density

The development must be constructed with the public benefit categories listed below, unless modifications are made under Section 59.7.3.I. Total points must equal at least 75 and be chosen from at least three categories as required by Section 59.4.5.5.A.2. The requirements of Division 59.4.7.1 and the CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines must be fulfilled for each public benefit. Final points and phasing are established at Site Plan approval.

- a. Connectivity and Mobility achieved by providing 1,580 square feet of off-site public open space improvements.
- b. Diversity of Uses and Activities, achieved by providing a minimum of 25% of the residential units as MPDUs.
- c. Quality of Building and Site Design, achieved by providing architectural elevations with the Site Plan, showing transparency on the first floor, minimal spacing between operable doors, and the implementation of the design guidelines of the Sector Plan, and providing structural parking.

5. Public Spaces

The Applicant must provide the open space as conceptually shown on the Sketch Plan that will be privately owned and maintained. While this space must be in the approximate location and size, as shown on the Sketch Plan, the exact size, location and design will be determined at the time of Site Plan(s).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that having given full consideration to the recommendations and findings of its Staff as presented at the hearing and set forth in the Staff Report, which the Planning Board hereby adopts and incorporates by reference (except as modified herein), and upon consideration of the entire record and all applicable elements of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board FINDS that as conditioned the necessary elements of the Sketch Plan are appropriate in concept and appropriate for further review at site plan and that:

1. *The Sketch Plan meets the objectives, general requirements, and standards of the Zoning Ordinance.*

The CRT Zone permits a mix of residential and nonresidential uses at varying densities and heights. Section 5.4.5.4 of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the development standards for the Optional Method of Development within the CRT Zone. The development will satisfy the applicable development standards for the Optional Method of Development in the CRT Zone, with the exact figures to be determined at the time of Site Plan.

a. Development Standards

The Subject Property includes a tract area of approximately 0.84 acres, zoned CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60. The Sketch Plan meets the development standards of Section 59-4.5.4, as shown in Table 1 below. The Application will provide the minimum required number of bicycle parking spaces for residents and visitors, which will be determined at the time of Site Plan(s). The number of vehicular parking spaces will be determined at Site Plan(s) based on the square footage of non-residential uses, and number and type of residential dwelling units.

Table 1- Development Standards and Parking Requirements

Data Table: CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60 Zone			
Chapter 59	Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Approved
4.5.4.B.2.b	Tract Area (sf)	n/a	36,507 sq. ft.
	Previous Dedication	n/a	14,018 sq. ft.
	Proposed Dedication	n/a	3,414 sq. ft.
	Site Area	n/a	33,093 sq. ft.
	Density		
	Commercial	C-1.0 FAR (50,525 sq. ft.)	C-0.45 FAR (22,651 sq. ft.)
	Residential	R-0.5 FAR (25,263 sq. ft.)	R-1.57 FAR (79,554 sq. ft.) ²
	Density Transfer 10414 Detrick Avenue (CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60)	Available for Transfer 10414 Detrick Avenue	R-0.5 FAR

² 25,263 sq. ft. residential base density + 33,666 sq. ft. residential transferred density + 20,625 sq. ft. 35% MPDU bonus residential density = 79,554 SF

	3827-3833 Plyers Mill Road (CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60)	Residential R-0.5 FAR (12,431 sq ft)	(12,431 sq ft)
		3827-3833 Plyers Mill Road Residential R-0.5 FAR (21,235 sq ft)	R-0.5 FAR (21,235 sq ft) 33,666 sq ft
		Total Density Transfer Available	
	Total Density including transferred density and bonus density for 25% MPDUs	1.50 FAR (503,552 sq. ft.)	2.02 FAR (102,205 sq. ft.)
4.5.4.B.2.b	Building Height (feet)	60	72 ³
4.5.4.B.3	Minimum Setback (feet)	TBD at Site Plan	0
4.5.4.B.1	Minimum Public Open Use Space (%)	0%	8.2% (2,705 sq. ft.) ⁴
6.2.4.	Total Vehicle Parking Spaces (min/max)	123/208	166
	Bicycle Parking Spaces (min)	54	65

b. Intent of the Zone

The Sketch Plan conforms to the intent of the CRT Zone as described below.

i. *Implement the recommendations of applicable master plans.*

The Property is located at the corner of Knowles Avenue and Summit Avenue, within the Town Center District, as delineated on page 20 of the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan. According to page 21 of the Sector Plan, "The town center is envisioned as a walkable attractive place with local convenience retail, housing, dining and entertainment, offices, and neighborhood services in a compact development pattern with a variety of buildings along Connecticut Avenue."

The Property is a part of analysis area TC-19, as outlined on page 22 of the Sector Plan. The Sector Plan recognized the small scaled parcels within this analysis area and expected proposals to be filed under the

³ Additional 12 feet of height for providing 25% MPDUs

⁴ 1,125 sq. ft. on-site + 1,580 sq. ft. off-site

Standard Method. The Sector Plan did state that should significant land assembly occur, optional method, mixed-use development would be desirable. While the Sketch Plan does not propose assembly, it does include the transfer of density, as allowed under Section 59.4.5.2.B, and the Sketch Plan is for mixed-use development using the optional method of development.

The Sector Plan's goal is to create a mixed-use core for the Town of Kensington. The mix of unit types and office and retail space will provide new residential and commercial options in Kensington.

Both the Sector Plan and associated Urban Design Guidelines emphasize that development within the Town of Kensington should be compatible with the Town's character. While the Property is not within a historic district, the Sector Plan and Urban Design Guidelines still recommend that compatibility be a key factor in building design. The development incorporates the following elements as described in the Sector Plan and Urban Design Guidelines:

- o Strong delineation of a base – middle – top.
- o Strong horizontal expression along the top datum line where a traditional cornice would occur.
- o A balanced façade composition with repeating bays and standard doors and windows.
- o Human-scaled design features and details, especially along the base.
- o Detailing in the portion of the façade along Knowles Avenue and Summit Avenue, especially at the ground floor level.

Additionally, both the Sector Plan and Urban Design Guidelines emphasize the need for street-oriented development that creates an animated community life along the sidewalks to encourage high levels of pedestrian comfort and activity. The project increases the street-level activity by having retail uses opening onto public open space at the corner of Summit Avenue and Knowles Avenue. The open space at the corner of the Property is similar in design and materials to the open space on the southeast corner of Summit Avenue and Knowles Avenue (approved with Preliminary Plan No. 120200160), creating a unified streetscape and a pedestrian-scale entrance into Kensington.

- ii. *Encourage development that integrates target opportunities for redevelopment of single-use commercial areas and surface parking lots with mix of uses.*

The Property and surrounding development are currently single-use commercial with surface parking. The Application redevelops the Site into a pedestrian-friendly project that will incorporate ground-floor uses that will activate the open space.

- iii. *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 development includes market-rate, MPDU, and live/work units in a variety of unit types (studios, one-bedrooms, and two-bedrooms). As a result, the development provides different housing opportunities for a range of demographics and incomes. The Application also allows for important streetscape improvements that enhance pedestrian connectivity in and around the Property. No parking is located between the building and street frontages.

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

The mix of commercial and residential uses is compatible with the adjoining properties and is scaled appropriately to fit with current and future land use in the neighborhood.

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

The development of multi-family residential uses on the Property creates a more balanced mix of uses in the Kensington Town Center District. There are a number of commercial office and industrial uses in the vicinity of the Property which generate employment opportunities. Given the proximity of well-established employment uses near the Property, the additional housing provided by the Project creates an opportunity for individuals to live, work, and play in the Kensington area. Also, the development offers new opportunities with the live/work units. This is not a unit type currently found in the area and is an innovative way to balance and combine employment and housing.

- vi. *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 development provides public benefits that support the increased density by providing MPDUs, structured parking, an enhanced streetscape with underground utilities, and binding architectural elevations.

2. *The Sketch Plan substantially conforms to the recommendations of the applicable master plan.*

Land Use

The Sketch Plan substantially conforms to the vision of the 2012 *Kensington Sector Plan* ("Sector Plan") which is to "promote a mixed-use Town Center with pedestrian-friendly connections to the vibrant neighborhoods that define Kensington." The Plan depicts the Town Center as "a lively and active place with streets that are welcoming and comfortable for residents, workers, and visitors."

The Sector Plan provides both general and site-specific guidance for the Subject Property, which is located within the Sector Plan's Town Center District Area TC-19, and identified as the Detrick and Summit block consisting of roughly 30 relatively small properties that total about four (4) acres. While the Plan's analysis suggests that due to the ownership and lot size pattern in the TC-19 area, revitalization is likely to use the standard method of development that would reduce intensity of development. However, the Plan further cites the optional method of development for more intense mixed-use as desirable. The Sector Plan recommended the CRT 1.5 C 1.0, R 0.5, H 60 for the Subject Property, which reflects the existing zoning.

The Project is seeking approval via the optional method of development in order to intensify development density at this location as permissible by the Sector Plan and the zoning, where properties in this District Area with the potential to support mixed-use developments with parking structures could have five- to six-story buildings. The Project matches this vision with a two-story parking structure with 4 floors of live/work and multifamily units above. Facilitated by the density transfer of residential FAR, the Project provides higher density mixed-use within the Town Center district, which is a desirable use to further the Sector Plan's goal for creating a mixed-use core for the Town of Kensington. Further, both the Sector Plan and Urban Design Guidelines

emphasize the need for street-oriented development that creates an animated community life along the sidewalks to encourage high levels of pedestrian comfort and activity. The lot is oriented to allow sidewalk improvements to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic with trees along the curb.

The Project satisfies the intent of the CRT zone as envisioned in the Sector Plan and helps to revitalize the Town Center by utilizing an opportunity for redevelopment, encouraging various housing types such as the live/work units and fostering a pedestrian scale development. The housing goals of the 2012 *Kensington Sector Plan* note that more housing is desirable in the Town Center as it “will mean livelier and more active streets that are attractive for residents, shoppers, and visitors” and “increase the diversity of housing choices.” The Project responds to the Sector Plan’s call for more housing and more diverse housing types in the Town Center by proposing 100 high-density residential units, none of which are age-restricted. The live/work units are a “missing middle” housing type and not currently common in the Town Center and their introduction into this Project is supported by the Town of Kensington. The mixed-use building with 25 live/work units and 75 multi-family units will replace the existing small home on the Subject Property, providing greater activation along Knowles and Summit Avenues and new housing opportunities within the Town, thereby fulfilling a Sector Plan recommendation.

Transportation

The Application addresses master planned roadways as recommended in the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan and 2018 Bicycle Master Plan. The segment of Knowles Avenue (MD 547), between Summit Avenue and Connecticut Avenue, is classified as an arterial (A-66). This segment is currently 65 feet wide and planned to be 80 feet wide with two travel lanes. Additionally, Summit Avenue, between Knowles Avenue (MD 547) and Plyers Mill Road, is classified as a business district street (B-2). The segment is currently 75 feet wide and planned to be 80 feet wide with two travel lanes. The 2012 Kensington Sector Plan identifies an extension of Summit Avenue from Plyers Mill Road to Farragut Avenue (and Connecticut Avenue) as part of a future Capital Improvements Project, currently being studied by MCDOT. Per the Master Plan recommendation, the Applicant is proposing public right-of-way dedications along each respective roadway frontage (15’ dedication on Knowles Avenue and 5’ dedication on Summit Avenue) to meet these requirements.

3. *The Sketch Plan satisfies, under Section 7.7.1.B.5 of the Zoning Ordinance, the binding elements of 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. *Under Section 7.7.1.B.5, for a property where the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was the result of a Local Map Amendment, satisfy any green area requirement in effect on October 29, 2014; any green area under this provision includes and is not in addition to any open space requirement of the property's zoning on October 30, 2014.*

The Property's zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was not a result of a Local Map Amendment.

5. *The Sketch Plan achieves compatible internal and external relationships between existing and pending nearby development.*

The Sketch Plan successfully achieves compatibility with the surrounding development through architectural elements and streetscape connections. The Sketch Plan confronts a townhouse project located south of the Subject Property on Knowles Avenue known as Residences at Knowles Station (Preliminary Plan No. 120200160) which was approved by the Planning Board on July 2, 2020 and includes architecture and open space complementary to the development. By using similar elements on both sides of Knowles Avenue, the development creates a unified, visual entrance to the Town of Kensington. The architecture of the development also complements the existing adjacent commercial development to the east. The pedestrian and vehicular connections from Summit Avenue to Detrick Avenue through the parking garage also create an important connection that helps tie the development to the surrounding area.

6. *The Sketch Plan provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, parking, and loading.*

The Sketch Plan provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, parking, and loading. Primary vehicular access is from Summit Avenue, with secondary access through the adjoining commercial development from Detrick Avenue. The structured parking is incorporated into the development and includes long term bicycle parking. A separate loading dock is accessed from Summit Avenue and provides for trash service, as well as commercial deliveries.

7. *The Sketch Plan proposes 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, including the recommendations and objectives of the Master 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, the Planning Board 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 developments of this size in the CRT zone, the Zoning Ordinance requires 50 points in a minimum of three categories. However, per Section 59.4.5.2.B.3.c, when density is averaged across two or more non-contiguous properties in the CR or CRT zones, the minimum public benefit points must be exceeded by at least 50%. Therefore, this development requires a minimum of 75 public benefit points. Although at the time of Sketch Plan review, only the categories need to be approved, the following table shows both the categories and points for public benefits requested at Sketch Plan to demonstrate the project's ability to meet the requirement to provide sufficient public benefit points. Table 2 shows the Applicant's public benefits in the following categories: Connectivity and Mobility, Diversity of Uses and Activities, and Quality of Building and Site Design. The Planning Board supports the public benefits at this time, with a more detailed review and the final number of points to be determined at Site Plan.

Table 2- Public Benefits

Public Benefits		
Public Benefit	Incentive Density Points	
	Max Allowed	Total Requested
59.4.7.3.C: Connectivity and Mobility		
Streetscape Improvements	20	3
59.4.7.3.D: Diversity of Uses and Activities		
Affordable housing-25% MPDUs	n/a	150
59.4.7.3.E: Quality of Building and Site Design		

Architectural Elevations	20	10
Structured Parking	20	10
Total	-	173

Connectivity and Mobility

Streetscape improvements: The Applicant seeks to gain approval for 3 points for providing approximately 1,114 SF of paver installation and the addition of four public benches to upgrade the off-site public open space on the southeast corner of Knowles Avenue and Summit Avenue. The Planning Board supports the Applicant's request based on the following calculation:

$$[1,114/33,093] * 100 = 3 \text{ points}$$

Diversity of Uses and Activities

Affordable housing-25% MPDUs: The Applicant seeks to gain approval for 150 points for providing 25% MPDUs. The project will provide 25% MPDUs, 12.5% above the minimum required. Twelve (12) points are allowed for every percentage point over the required 12.5% MPDUs as demonstrated in the calculation below. The Planning Board supports the Applicant's request based on the following calculation:

$$[25\% (\text{percentage MPDUs provided}) - 12.5\% (\text{percentage MPDUs required})] * 12 = 150 \text{ points}$$

Quality of Building and Site Design

Architectural Elevations: The Applicant seeks to gain approval for 10 points for providing architectural elevations with the Site Plan. The elevations show elements including transparency on the first floor, minimal spacing between operable doors, and the implementation of the design guidelines of the Sector Plan.

Structured parking: The Applicant seeks to gain approval for 10 points for providing structured parking. All of the 166 parking spaces will be provided in a structured parking garage.

8. *The Sketch Plan establishes a feasible and appropriate phasing plan for all structures, uses, rights-of-way, sidewalks, dedications, public benefits, and future preliminary and site plan applications.*

The Applicant intends to develop the structures, landscaping and streetscaping for the Project simultaneously in a single phase.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Board's approval of a sketch plan is in concept only and subject to further review at site plan, when based on detailed review the Planning Board may modify the Sketch Plan's binding elements or conditions based on the Montgomery County Code, the Sector Plan, or other requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution incorporates by reference all evidence of record, including maps, drawings, memoranda, correspondence, and other information; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all binding site development elements shown on the latest version of Sketch Plan No. 320200030, Residences at Forest Glen, received by M-NCPPC as of the date of the Staff Report March 30, 2020, are required, except as modified by the above conditions of approval; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution constitutes the written opinion of the Board in this matter, and the date of this Resolution is APR 13 2021 (which is the date that this Resolution is mailed to all parties of record); and

* * * * *

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by The Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Cichy, seconded by Commissioner Verma, with Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Fani-González, and Commissioners Cichy, Patterson, and Verma voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Thursday, April 8, 2021, in Wheaton, Maryland.



Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board