

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Thursday, September 15, 2022

2425 Reedie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902
301-495-4605

The Montgomery County Planning Board met in regular session in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via Microsoft Teams video conference on Thursday, September 15, 2022, beginning at 9:04 a.m. and adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

Present were Chair Casey Anderson, Vice Chair Partap Verma, and Commissioners Gerald R. Cichy, Tina Patterson, and Carol Rubin.

Items 1 through 8 were discussed in that order and are reported in the attached Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, September 22, 2022, in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via video conference.

Kimberly Young
Kimberly Mann Young
Technical Writer/Legal Assistant

Rachel Roehrich
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Technical Writer/Legal Assistant

MINUTES

Item 1. Preliminary Matters

A. Adoption of Resolutions

1. Olney Acres Preliminary Plan 120220070 – MCPB No. 22-092
2. The Claiborne Site Plan 820220190 – MCB No. 22-093
3. Horizon Hill Lot 38 Plan No. 81999044A – MCPB No. 22-094
4. 1910 University Boulevard West FCP CU202204 – MCPB No. 22-095

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Rubin/Verma

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Adopted the Resolution(s) cited above, as submitted.

B. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from September 8, 2022

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Rubin/Verma

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Planning Board Meeting Minutes, as submitted.

C. Other Preliminary Matters

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Other Preliminary Items submitted for approval.

Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: No Record Plats were submitted for approval.

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Regulatory Extension Requests submitted for approval.

Item 4. Roundtable Discussion

- A. Planning Director's Report
- B. Present the Park and Planning Staff Photo Contest Winners
Theme: "The Best Community Landmark"

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Montgomery Planning Director, Gwen Wright, provided a brief update to the Board regarding the many Master Plan projects the Planning Staff has been working on. The Master Plans included the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan, the Pedestrian Master Plan, Rustic Roads as well as a briefing on the Takoma Park Master Plan which would be heard during September 15, 2022 meeting. Ms. Wright discussed the upcoming American Planning Association National Capital Area Chapter (APA-NCAC) conference to be held at the end of September, in which Planning Staff will present one session, and Montgomery Planning will also be the recipient of two awards as well. The APA-NCAC's jury of experts selected Montgomery Planning's work on equitable engagement for Thrive Montgomery 2050, for the Leadership in Planning Award for Community Outreach and Engagement in Honor of Harold Foster. The second award, the Leadership in Planning Award for a Professional Planner in Honor of Frederick Gutheim will be presented to Ms. Wright.

Ms. Wright noted the Makeover Montgomery 5 event is quickly approaching with sessions taking place from September 22, 2022-September 25, 2022. The keynote speaker, President Elect of the American Planning Association Board of Directors will deliver the opening presentation, and all are encouraged to attend.

Ms. Wright described the summer internship program and highlighted the great success of the program as well as potential for recruitment of long-term employees. The Summer interns contributed to the following: Reforest Montgomery, HR and Recruitment, Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan, Design Excellence, The Great Seneca Plan, GIS work, and Hispanic Heritage Month programming. Ms. Wright also stated the summer interns enjoyed a few tours and field trips that included a tour of the net zero United Therapeutics Building. Robbin Brittingham and Mondriahn Miller were recognized for their efforts in organizing tours and events for the internship program. Lastly, Ms. Wright highlighted the individual interns and their backgrounds.

Ms. Wright and Paul Mortenson announced the winners of the Staff photo contest, "Best Community Landmark". Altogether, there were 139 photos, 34 participants, 30 finalists and 5 winners. The five winners of the photo contest included Brian Kent (winner of two awards), Chris Van Alstyne, Marilyn Stone, and Atara Margolies.

Commissioner Rubin offered comments and asked brief questions regarding the internship program, with brief responses from Ms. Wright. The Board offered congratulations to the winners of the photo contest as well.

Item 5. FY24 Operating Budget Overview

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received Briefing.

Mr. John Kroll, of Human Resource Management, offered a briefing and multi-media presentation detailing the FY24 Operating Budget Overview and Six Year Outlook. Mr. Kroll discussed Key Trends, Expenditure Estimates, FY24 Budget Outlook, FY24 Budget Strategy and the Six-Year Outlook. All areas presented included examples for both the Administration Fund and the Parks Fund.

Some of the Key Trends included: Assessable Base, Tax Rates, Expenditure Trends, and Personnel Cost Pressure. The largest portion of the budget continues to be personnel and the outlook continues to be most heavily impacted by the costs of wage increases, health insurance, retirement and OPEB. With regard to the FY24 Budget Outlook, employee compensation is the number one internal cost pressure and the estimated cost for benefits, OPEB and retirement are projected to increase. In summary, the estimated major internal costs are \$3.2 million for the Administration Fund and \$11.3 million for the Park Fund.

The largest external cost pressure continues to be the Montgomery County Government revenue challenges, and to date, there has not been any specific news as to what that forecast may be.

The FY24 Budget Strategy would include a preliminary need for a 0.13 cent tax rate increase for the Administration Fund, and 0.53 cent tax rate increase to the Park Fund in FY24, prior to inclusion of critical needs that the departments may identify.

When discussing the Six-Year Outlook it is likely tax rate increases are projected in order to maintain minimal fund balance above the required reserve level.

The Budget timeline was presented as follows: Staff will present proposed Budget to Planning Board in October and November, followed by Commission approval of the Budget December 21, 2022. Proposed Budget Books will be presented to Montgomery County Council on January 15, 2023. The County Executive will make recommendations by March 15, 2023, and the County Council will hold Public Hearings and review the Budget throughout April. In May, the County Councils will meet jointly, and adopt the Budget by June 1, 2023. Lastly the Commission will adopt the Budget Resolution by June 21, 2023.

The Board asked questions and offered brief comments regarding the Operating Budget, expenditures, actuarial forecast and revenue challenges. Mr. Kroll provided brief answers and discussion to the Board's questions and comments.

Item 6. Fall 2022 Semiannual Presentation Outline

G. Wright and M. Riley

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received Briefing followed by discussion.

Planning Director, Gwen Wright and Parks Director, Mike Riley offered a briefing to the Board regarding the Planning and Parks 2022 Fall Semiannual Presentation to the Montgomery County Council.

Planning Department topics to include: highlights of how Planning has been accomplishing “Makeover Montgomery” from 2013 to present day; Speed to Market; plans, studies and projects in progress; upcoming plans and studies; innovative community engagement; and work program updates.

Planning’s accomplishments from 2013 to the present will emphasize various Master Plans and implementation for Urban, Suburban and Rural areas with a focus on constructed buildings or buildings currently under construction, as well as agritourism, solar projects and wineries/breweries within those areas. Other major accomplishments may include but are not limited to: the Zoning Code rewrite, Vision Zero, Complete Streets Guidelines, Reforest Montgomery, and Speed to Market and regulatory improvements.

The Board offered comments and suggestions as to capturing the economic development, community benefits, housing opportunities, and the value Master Plans such as Chevy Chase Lake or Fairland and Briggs Chaney as well as projects such as the future Forrest Glen Medical Center site bring to the County. The Board suggested it may also be helpful to the Public to incorporate the fiscal impact produced by implementation of projects and Master Plans throughout the County as well.

Ms. Wright responded that she might limit the scope to possibly one Master Plan such as Chevy Chase Lake in order to expand the fiscal impact including land values, tax increases, number of school children etc., and Chair Anderson suggested focusing on one building (such as The Elm) or an area with a smaller amount of buildings.

Chair Anderson noted that this would be the last semiannual presentation for Ms. Wright before she retires, and this semiannual presentation highlights the many achievements and accomplishments throughout her career.

Parks Director, Mike Riley offered a briefing of the topics to be presented to the Montgomery County Council for Parks. The major topics include: the PROS 2022 Plan Update; Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan; Park Activation Program and fall events; Project Delivery Timeline; Park Refreshers: Grants and Special Funding; Trails; South Silver Spring Park; Long Branch Initiative; Program Access; Athletic Fields; Enterprise; Data; and Volunteer Programs.

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The presentation will begin with two plans the Planning Board approved which are the PROS 2022 Plan Update and Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan. Highlights for both plans will include the Active, Urban, Social theme while still preserving and protecting the environment for the PROS 2022 Plan Update, and the improved bicycle, pedestrian, and overall access both into and throughout Wheaton Regional Park.

Another major topic will be the success of the robust Parks Activation Program and events which engage the community. Mr. Riley noted the reconciliation process, which has contributed to many of the Parks, has helped move the Parks Department forward through last minute resources provided by the County Council, and will highlight how Parks has used the resources given.

The remaining topics will include new parks or newly renovated park examples, the Trail Ambassador Program, Fairland Skills Bike Park, park updates on both South Silver Spring and Long Branch Parks, the CommUNITY Mural at Wheaton Regional Park, Blair High School renovations, the Enterprise Fund and Division, and the Harvest Share food donation program at Pope Farm.

The Board offered comments and suggestions about showcasing the number of community members attending Parks events, providing a map to highlight equity focus areas as new projects and themes are being introduced within the Parks, how Parks projects are affecting the local economy, and highlighting the importance of coordination between Parks and Planning. It was also suggested to incorporate the Chair's initiative with the mountain bike program as it included community outreach, was well received, and successful.

Item 7. Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Update

Update on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment including a briefing on the Community Engagement Update Report, plan partnerships and next steps including the Fall 2022 Visioning efforts

M. Williams

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by discussion.

Planning Department Staff offered a multi-media presentation discussing the updates on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (the Plan). The Plan is an update to the Approved and Adopted 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan. The plan is a partnership with the City of Takoma Park, Washington Adventist Campus, and other large property holders including Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP). Further details of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Update can be found in the Staff Report dated September 15, 2022.

Melissa Williams of the Downcounty Planning Staff provided a Partner update. Weekly coordination meetings have been held with the City of Takoma Park and monthly coordination meetings have been held with Washington Adventist Campus that include both Planning Staff and the City of Takoma Park. Meetings between Staff and civic associations as well as other community organizations have also been held.

The Plan will seek to answer the following three questions:

1. What is the future of Maple Avenue and surrounding area?
2. What is the future of Washington Adventist Campus and the surrounding area?
3. How can the plan build on community assets to enhance the livability and quality of life in the Plan Area?

Lauren Stamm of the Downcounty Planning Staff gave an update on the Community Engagement. Community engagement within the area began in September 2021, and Staff received responses from 550+ community members including residents of multifamily buildings, students and faculty at Washington Adventist University, community members and other stakeholders, as well as neighborhood and community groups. Staff has also been working with the City of Takoma Park, additional partners, and a diversity of community stakeholders in a multipronged approach that included local farmers markets, door-to-door canvassing with the assistance of Everyday Canvassing, pop-up events in neighborhood retail districts and the City of Takoma Park's newsletters, both mailed and emailed versions to obtain feedback and information.

Additional engagement also took place at the following locations and events: Takoma Park Farmers Market and Crossroads Farmers Market, National Night Out, and Retail Pop-ups at Erie Center and on Maple Avenue, community and neighborhood groups including: Climate Action Coffee Group, Sligo Park Hills Citizens Association, Long Branch Sligo Creek Citizens Association, and Ward 5 Residents Meeting (Hosted by Councilmember Jarrett Smith).

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The feedback received during the canvassing efforts and community engagement varied, but some of the key takeaways included the following:

- Residents like living in Takoma Park, especially because they enjoy the walkability, safety, and proximity to DC, Silver Spring and the small businesses in the area.
- There is concern about loss of the hospital, and community members have a desire for urgent care or health clinic to remain.
- Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park is an important asset that should be protected.
- Desire for affordable housing on Washington Adventist Campus.
- Desire for walkable retail options on Washington Adventist Campus, specifically a grocery store.
- Desire for public amenities on Washington Adventist Campus, such as a space for community gathering, fitness center and swimming pool.

The Plan timeline has been updated to incorporate an additional seven months, which was discussed with the City of Takoma Park. The next steps for the Plan include : Community Engagement Update/Briefing to the Planning Board and City of Takoma Park City Council in September 2022; Visioning Open House on October 18, 2022; Preliminary Recommendations during Fall 2022; Working Draft in Winter 2023; Public Hearing Draft and Work Sessions in Winter-Spring 2023; Planning Board Draft in Spring 2023; County Council Review/Hearing/Work Sessions in Summer 2023; Commission Adoption of Plan in Fall 2023; and Sectional Map Amendment by Fall 2023.

The Board asked questions regarding the delivery of the survey and questionnaire. Ms. Wright noted multiple methodologies have been used during this study, but personal face-to-face conversations has been the methodology that has produced the best results.

The Board also offered brief comments regarding the demographics of the area, housing, rent control, connectivity/accessibility with regard to Washington Adventist Hospital, and emphasized utilization of the groups/residents within the area.

Elza Hisel-McCoy of Downcounty Staff offered comments on the potential for job opportunities within the Washington Adventist area which will be further explored as the project moves forward. Mr. McCoy also offered comments on rent stabilization in Takoma Park which will most likely impact the Plan. The topic is under discussion and will continue to be discussed as the Plan progresses.

Item 8. ZTA 22- 10, SRA 22-01, and Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads (Public Hearing)

A. ZTA 22-10 amends Chapter 59 to replace any reference to a road or street type with updated terminology from Chapter 49 and the Complete Streets Design Guide.

B. SRA 22-01 amends Chapter 50 to replace any reference to a road or street type with updated terminology from Chapter 49 and the Complete Streets Design Guide, and modifies the design standards for certain types of road criteria including intersection spacing and horizontal alignment.

C. Bill 24-22 amends Chapter 49, making numerous changes to road terminology and design standards and implementing the Complete Streets Design Guide.

Staff Recommendation: Transmit Comments to County Council.

(Action required for County Council public hearing of 9/20/2022)

B. Berbert/S. Aldrich

BOARD ACTION

Motion: A-C Verma/Rubin

Vote: A-C 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved staff recommendation to transmit comments to the County Council, as stated in the attached transmittal letter.

Planning Staff offered a multi-media presentation regarding the proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 22-10, Subdivision Regulation Amendment (SRA) 22-01 and Bill 24-22. ZTA 22-10, SRA 22-01 and Bill 24-22 collectively amend Chapters 59, 50, and 49, respectively, to incorporate the definitions, standards, and policies from the Complete Streets Design Guide. Collectively these three items are intended to align the County Code with the Complete Streets Design Guide. A Council Public Hearing is scheduled for September 20, 2022, more details can be found in the September 8, 2022 staff report.

Planning Staff supports ZTA 22-10 and SRA 22-01 with some minor corrections, as well as Bill 24-22 with modifications implementing many of the recommendations of the Complete Streets Design Guide. These updates are a major step forward in helping implement countywide complete streets, and in achieving the County's Vision Zero goals.

Jason Sartori, Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy, briefly introduced and offered comments on the proposed ZTA, SRA and Bill that would codify the Complete Streets Design Guide.

Benjamin Berbert, Countywide Planning and Policy, presented and offered comments on SRA 22-01 and ZTA 22-10 with recommended modifications listed below:

Two recommended modifications to the SRA to Section 4.3.E (Chapter 50) include:

- Clarifying what a Protected Crossing is

On streets with operating speeds of 30 mph or higher, protected crossings **shall be included, as defined in Chapter 49 of the County Code.** Protected crossings include HAWK signals, all-way stop controlled intersections, or grade-separated crossings.

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- Private Roads when...
 - (a) connects to no more than one higher classification road and the road does not need to be extended onto adjacent property to facilitate a future subdivision of land[.]; **[[and]] or,**
 - (b) when it has a cul-de-sac less than 500 feet in length.

The recommended modifications to the ZTA located in the defined terms section include:

- Road[, Arterial]: A right-of-way with a classification of Freeway, Parkway, Controlled Major Highway, Boulevard, Town Center Boulevard, Downtown Boulevard, Town Center Street, Downtown Street, Industrial, **Area** Connector, **Neighborhood Connector**, Country Connector, Country **Road**, Rustic Road, **Exceptional Rustic Road**, Neighborhood Street, Neighborhood Yield Street, **Residential Shared Street, Commercial Shared Street** or Alley[See]under Chapter 49.
- **Street: See definition of Road**

Mr. Berbert noted a Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) statement was received. Mr. Berbert further stated ZTA 22-10 (and Bill 24-22) are anticipated to have little to no RESJ impacts in the County. The ZTA is highly technical with no policy changes. Bill 24-22 may have impacts that are indeterminant without sufficient information on which streets would be upgraded, if any, and how the projects would be selected or funded.

Stephen Aldrich, with Countywide Planning and Policy, presented and offered comments regarding Bill 24-22. Bill 24-22 will make major changes to Chapter 49 to replace current street classification design standards with street types and requirements from the Complete Streets Design Guide. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will also be submitting new executive regulations after approval of Chapter 49 code changes to modify Chapter 49 COMCOR.

Bill 24-22 introduces a number of changes in Chapter 49 including the following:

1. Revises Standards and Specifications (Section 49-28) to include references to the executive regulations implementing the Complete Streets Design Guide and standards and specifications from both the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) when no county standards or specifications are applicable.
2. Revises Pedestrian Sidewalks, Bikeways, and Wheelchair Traffic (Section 49-29) to incorporate new terminology, including the term “sidepath” and to provide a fee-in-lieu option for the construction of bikeways and sidewalks under certain conditions.
3. Revises Traffic Calming standards (Section 49-30), to reference the new street types and to be in conformance with traffic calming guidance in the Complete Streets Design Guide.
4. Revises Road Classifications (Section 49-31) by defining the street areas (in subsection (a)) and street types (in subsection (c)) included in the Complete Streets Design Guide. Subsection (b) also establishes the need for both a county classification and a federal classification. Subsection (d) provides translations to convert the existing road

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classifications in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways to the new street types presented in subsection (c) and in the Complete Streets Design Guide. This conversion is seen by Planning staff as a necessary interim step until a technical update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways can be added to the Planning Department's work program.

5. Revises Design Standards for Type of Roads (Section 49-32) to add minimum rights-of-way for some of the proposed street types, revised curb radius guidelines consistent with the Complete Street Design Guide, and maximum target speeds for all street types.
6. The remaining proposed changes to Chapter 49 update references to street types for consistency with Section 49-31 as well as modifications deemed necessary by MCDOT.

Mr. Aldrich further introduced and offered extended comments on the following ten major issues identified for recommended modifications:

Issue 1: Defining the Area Types.

Issue 2: Remove legacy area types from the County Code.

Issue 3: Interim translations for Arterials, Minor Arterials and Business District Streets.

Issue 4: Interim translations for Primary Residential Streets in the Country Area.

Issue 5: Transitions between street types on continuous roads.

Issue 6: Authority to Modify Interim Street Type Designations.

Issue 7: Minimum Rights-of-Way.

Issue 8: Curb Radius.

Issue 9: Modify target speeds.

Issue 10: Sidewalk exemptions.

Andrew Bossi, Transportation Planner, and Tim Cupples, Acting Deputy Director of Policy, both from MCDOT offered extended comments to the individual issues presented and proposed recommended modifications as well.

Ms. Leslie Saville, a Silver Spring resident, thanked Staff and MCDOT for the amendments and recommendations. Ms. Saville offered comments and testimony on Issue 9 with regard to the Rustic Roads and Exceptional Rustic Roads target speeds. Ms. Saville is in support of the mark-ups within the Staff Report on pages 4-19, but recommended the Country Roads speed classification should be applied to Rustic and the Exceptional Rustic roads. She also noted a few other corrections and comments.

The Board offered brief comments during the presentation of the ten major issues and recommended modifications

Once the ten major issues were presented, Mr. Aldrich offered brief comments on the ten minor issues for recommended modifications. Both Mr. Bossi and Mr. Cupples offered comments on behalf of MCDOT for the ten minor issues as well.

The Board asked questions and offered comments on the ten minor issues presented.

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Item 9. ~~Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update—Working Draft Presentation~~

Approve the Working Draft of the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan as the Public Hearing Draft and schedule the Public Hearing date.

J. Pratt

BOARD ACTION

Motion: _____

Vote:

Other: _____

Action:

(MOVED TO 9/22/22 AGENDA)