

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Monday, November 7, 2022

2425 Reedie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902
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The Montgomery County Planning Board met in a specially scheduled session in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via Microsoft Teams video conference on Monday, November 7, 2022, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and adjourning at 11:33 a.m.

Present were Chair Jeff Zyontz, Vice Chair Amy Presley, and Commissioners Cherri Branson and David Hill. Roberto Piñero was necessarily absent.

Commissioner Branson joined the meeting at 9:48.

Commissioner Presley left the meeting at 9:40 and rejoined at 10:10 a.m.

Item 1 was discussed and reported in the attached Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, November 10, 2022, in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via video conference.

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MINUTES

Item 1. Planning Board Briefing on Planning Department Organization

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received Briefing.

Planning Staff presented a multi-media presentation regarding the structure and work program of the Planning Department.

Acting Planning Director, Tanya Stern introduced the Planning Department Structure, department-wide equity agenda, and a brief overview of Thrive Montgomery 2050.

Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director, gave an overview of the Planning Department's Placemaking Initiative, highlighting successful placemaking events in areas such as Silver Spring, Bethesda, Burtonsville, and Fairland and Briggs Chaney.

Paul Mortenson, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office, gave an overview of the Design Excellence Program.

Karen Warnick, Chief of the Management Services Division, gave an overview of the four different areas of Management Services including Human Resources, Budget, Procurement, and Policy. Some highlights included the recruitment initiatives of the Human Resources Department, the future childcare center located within Wheaton Headquarters, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) initiatives, and emergency preparedness.

Commissioners asked questions regarding the percentage of vacancies, diversity outreach and personnel, the parameters for selection for the Leadership Institute, and diversity goals as it pertains to procurement.

Commissioner Branson further encouraged outreach to the local sororities/fraternities, local chapter for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and other avenues for diversity outreach.

Jason Sartori, Chief of the Countywide Planning and Policy Division, gave a brief overview of the division. Mr. Sartori highlighted transportation planning initiatives, such as the Predictive Safety Analysis; housing policy Initiatives, such as the Innovative Housing Toolkit; Growth and Infrastructure Policy; school initiatives; County Code amendments; Natural Resources and Environmental Planning; and Functional Master Plans including the Pedestrian Master Plan.

Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Supervisor in the Countywide Planning and Policy Division, gave a brief overview of the Historic Preservation department which supports the

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Historic Preservation Commission for Montgomery County. The Historic Preservation department also supports the Regulatory Teams and Master Plan Teams, as well as administers the Historic Preservation review for other review processes.

Commissioner Branson asked questions regarding any involvement with the police when conducting the Pedestrian Comfort Survey and how the Mapping Segregation Project fits into policy and vision for the greater narrative.

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Chief of the Downcounty Planning Division, briefed the Board on the division, which encompasses the established urban centers such as Silver Spring, Bethesda, and Friendship Heights, and highlighted the division's current projects/plans, including the Silver Spring Downtown & Adjacent Communities Plan Design Guidelines & Design Advisory Panel and the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. Mr. Hisel-McCoy discussed the total reviewed square footage in Bethesda, Friendship Heights and Long Branch as well as potential future development and affordability within the Downcounty area.

Carrie Sanders, Chief of the Midcounty Planning Division, gave a brief overview of the division, noting that the Midcounty Planning Division serves areas such as White Oak, North Bethesda, Aspen Hill, Kensington, Montgomery Village, Rock Spring, the Great Seneca and Shady Grove areas. Ms. Sanders highlighted plans that have been adopted -- including the Great Seneca Science Corridor Minor Master Plan Amendment, The I-270 Transit Plan, and the 2021 White Flint Sector Plan Biennial Monitoring Report -- as well as plans that are underway -- including the Wheaton Downtown Study, University Boulevard Corridor Plan, and the Great Seneca Plan: Connecting Life and Science.

Patrick Butler, Chief of the Upcounty Planning Division, gave a brief overview of the division, which oversees the largest amount of land area and is home to the Agricultural Reserve. Mr. Butler highlighted recent plans and events, including the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Placemaking Event and the 10-Year Water and Sewer Plan and Water and Sewer Category Change Requests, as well as current plans and events, including the Clarksburg Master Plan Amendment, Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan, and the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Amendment.

Chair Zyontz expressed his interest in having future discussions about the time period for Regulatory Review.

Carrie McCarthy, Chief of the Research and Strategic Projects Division, gave an overview of the division, which supports other division teams by tracking and providing data as well as equity and inclusivity analysis. Notable recent studies and upcoming projects include Colocation of Public Facilities, Trends in Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Montgomery County Mixed-Use Development Study, and Neighborhood Change in Montgomery County and the Washington, DC Region.

Christina Sorrento, Chief of the Intake and Regulatory Coordination (IRC) Division, gave a brief overview of the division's main functions, which include customer service, intake and noticing of development applications, record plat review, post-approval document review, and enforcement. The IRC Division also administers the County's Forest Conservation Law and recommends legislative updates at the County and State level including the recent No Net Loss of Forest Bill.

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Ms. Sorrento highlighted the Reforest Montgomery program and the Releaf the Reserve partnership planting forest in the Agricultural Reserve.

Commissioner Branson asked questions regarding mapping of the forest conservation areas and the management of the Forest Mitigation Banks.

Bridget Broullire, Chief of the Communications Division, introduced the division, which handles graphic design, publications, mapping, websites for the Planning Department and the Planning Board, media relations for the Planning Department and the Planning Board, and audio-visual needs. Ms. Broullire also discussed the process of working with Master Plan teams on developing a communications plan.

Vince Hu, Chief of the Information Technology & Innovation (ITI) Division, gave a brief overview of the division, which serves both Montgomery Planning and Montgomery Parks. The division is comprised of six sections including Planning, IS/GIS, Parks, Program Management, Rec Trac, and Cybersecurity. Mr. Hu highlighted services and accomplishments for Network, Telecom & Server Uptime.

Acting Director Stern concluded the briefing by highlighting recent honors received by the Planning Department, including the MARCOM Awards for Communications, the Textio Award, and the APA National Capital Area Chapter's Leadership in Planning for Community Outreach and Engagement for Thrive Montgomery 2050. Lastly, Acting Director Stern recognized some of the agencies Montgomery Planning partners with as well as Inter-Agency Committees on which the Planning Department serves.

Commissioner Hill offered comments on his approach to engaging Staff and the public during the Planning Board's public meetings.

Chair Zyontz offered comments regarding the respect for Staff and the Commission as a whole and expressed expectations moving forward.