

# **Montgomery County Planning Board**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES AND SUMMARY**

**SUMMARY**

**Thursday, April 27, 2023**

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, April 27, 2023, beginning at 9:31 a.m. and adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Present were Chair Jeff Zyontz, Vice Chair Roberto Piñero, and Commissioners Shawn Bartley, James Hedrick, and Mitra Pedoeem.

Items 1 through 3, Item 13, Item 7, and Item 8 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

Item 4 was removed from the Agenda, and Items 5 and 6 were postponed to the May 4, 2023 Agenda. Item 11 was also postponed.

In compliance with Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b), the following is a report of the Board's Closed Session Meeting:

The Planning Board recessed for lunch and convened in Closed Session at 12:14 p.m. to discuss Item 14 on the motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Commissioner Pedoeem with Chair Zyontz, Vice Chair Piñero, and Commissioners Bartley, Hedrick, and Pedoeem voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was closed under the authority of Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(8) consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

Also present for the meeting were General Counsel Debra Borden; Deputy General Counsel Michael Aniton; Principal Counsel Emily Vaias; Associate Counsel Allison Myers; and Technical Writer Rachel Roehrich of the Office of General Counsel.

In Closed Session, the Board received a briefing regarding the status of MPIA litigation.

The Closed Session meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m. and the Planning Board reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 1:36 p.m. to discuss Items 9, 10, and 12 as reported in the attached Minutes.

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2023

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 4:35 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2023, in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via video conference.

*Rachel Roehrich*

Rachel Roehrich  
Technical Writer/Legal Assistant

MINUTES

**Item 1. Preliminary Matters**

**A. Adoption of Resolutions**

1. 5500 Wisconsin Avenue Sketch Plan No. 32022001A – MCPB No. 23-033
2. 5500 Wisconsin Avenue Site Plan No. 820230040 – MCPB No. 23-034
3. 10601 Falls Road – Bullis School FFCP Amendment No. 12008003D – MCPB No. 23-036

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Hedrick/Bartley

**Vote:** 4-0-1

**Other:** Chair Zyontz abstained (absent for these items).

**Action:** Adopted the Resolutions cited above, as submitted.

**B. Approval of Minutes**

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action:** There were no Minutes submitted for approval.

**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: There were no Record Plats 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. REMOVED - Roundtable Discussion**

Parks Director's Report  
M. Riley

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: REMOVED.**

**Item 5. POSTPONED TO MAY 4, 2023 - Briefing on the Board-approved 2022 Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan**

*Staff Recommendation: Receive briefing in advance of the Forest Conservation Plan hearing that follows, to better understand the park, and the goals and recommendations of the park master plan.*

C. Kines

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: POSTPONED TO MAY 4, 2023.**

**Item 6. POSTPONED TO MAY 4, 2023 - Wheaton Regional Park, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230090 (Public Hearing)**

Request to create a Forest Conservation Plan over Wheaton Regional Park to allow the for implementation of the Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan; On approximately 538.66 acres zoned R-90; Within the 1990 Master Plan for Kensington-Wheaton and 2001 Kemp Mill Master Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions*

A. Lindsey

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: POSTPONED TO MAY 4, 2023.**

**Item 13. Work Session and Action: Little Falls Parkway Pilot Project**

*Staff Recommendation: APPROVE the permanent configuration of two opposing drive lanes along Little Falls Parkway between Arlington Road and Dorset Avenue, with future study of repurposing removed travel lanes.*

A. Tsai

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/ Hedrick

**Vote:** 4-0-1

**Other:** Commissioner Bartley abstained.

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation to approve the permanent configuration of two opposing drive lanes along Little Falls Parkway between Arlington Road and Dorset Avenue, with future study of repurposing removed travel lanes, and modifications discussed during the meeting.

Director Riley gave opening remarks, and acknowledged correspondence received from Councilmember Friedson and the District 16 Delegation of the General Assembly. Director Riley gave an overview of the letter from Councilmember Friedson and noted the concerns raised would be addressed during the presentation.

Darren Flusche, Division Chief for Park Planning and Stewardship, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Little Falls Parkway Pilot Project. Mr. Flusche gave a brief overview the public outreach performed with regard to the Little Falls Parkway as well as anticipated timeline of the project if approved. Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted under the April 27, 2023 Agenda on the Planning Board website.

Kyle Lukacs, Montgomery Parks Trail Planner, began the Work Session by giving an overview and background of parkway history and functions as well as addressed the purpose of the road, concerns regarding authority, vehicular and trail counters, people’s use of open parkways, Public input that has been received to date, and repurposing of the travel lanes.

Mr. Lukacs noted the Planning Board is not being asked to determine how to repurpose the unused travel lanes at this time; rather, the decision in front of the Board is whether to approve the changes to the roadway configuration, so Parks can then seek NCPC approval and make additional roadway enhancements that are not currently in place as part of the Pilot Project.

Andrew Tsai, P.E., Engineer, Park Development Division then discussed the BAI Traffic Analysis Report prepared by Brudis Associates, Inc. explaining the report’s summary of findings and takeaways.

Mr. Tsai also discussed emergency response concerns, traffic modeling questions, 2045 traffic growth projections, and roadway configuration. Mr. Tsai then presented the various traffic concepts for enhancements along Little Falls Parkway that would improve safety as well as accommodate traffic.

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2023

Andy Frank, Chief of Park Development Division, addressed the questions received from Council Member Friedson's correspondence and offered responses to specific questions regarding total cost, the permanent engineering and design features, timeline of the pilot project and permanent realignment of the road, public engagement on options for realignment, linear park, and how the project fits into the priorities of the Westbard Sector Plan. Mr. Frank then described the next steps of the project if approved.

Director Riley offered comments regarding Little Falls Parkway and noted Staff's recommendations, which included a pedestrian refuge at the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) crossing and incorporation of a narrow median on portions of the Parkway, will further improve safety and traffic efficiency. Director Riley further noted the proposed Linear Park it not a decision for the Planning Board to make at this meeting.

The Board asked questions regarding whether the traffic study performed had been by a consultant or by the Commission, if the demonstrated declines in traffic were linked to the pandemic, the investigation of potential traffic cameras or other traffic calming measures was explored along Little Falls Parkway, if the 5% growth rate was an overall growth factor, how the permanent alignment would be funded, need for NCPC approval, addressing letter from delegation, why the CCT crossing could not be moved to the Arlington Road intersection, input from the County Executive, and if the proposed configuration along Little Falls Parkway is safer than four lanes.

Staff, including Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori and Travel Forecasting and Monitoring Supervisor Eric Graye, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Lieutenant Sarah Mikalauskas of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police offered comments regarding safety of the lane alignment as well as potential for further traffic calming measures.

The Board offered comments regarding need for safety along Little Falls Parkway and made a motion to support approval for the pedestrian refuge being as wide as possible at the CCT crossing, desire for median where possible, re-enforced shoulders, and additional proposed turning lanes.



**Item 11. POSTPONED - Friendship Heights Select Sites Zoning Study Scope Briefing**

Staff will brief the Planning Board on the scope for the Friendship Heights Select Sites Zoning Study.

A. Margolies

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: POSTPONED.**

**Item 7. Sandy Spring Museum, Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11996032B and Site Plan Amendment No. 81996010B (Public Hearing)**

- A. Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11996032B
- B. Site Plan Amendment No. 81996010B

Amendment to increase the building square footage from 12,500 to 23,200 square feet; located at the northeast corner of Olney Sandy Spring Road and Bentley Road; 7.24 acres; RC zone; 2015 Sandy Spring Rural Village Master Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions*

A. Duprey/J. Casey

**A. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.

**B. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions as modified during the meeting, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.

Jonathan Casey, Planner II, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Sandy Spring Museum. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 14, 2023.

Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11996032B proposes an increase in the total square footage permitted from 12,500 to 23,200 square feet, which will be implemented in two phases.

The Site Plan Amendment No. 81996010B includes a total of 18,800 square feet of development and removing approximately 188 square feet from the existing museum building, razing the existing single-family detached house, adding 6,300 square feet of improvements, additional parking, altered driveway access, additional landscaping features and lighting, and improved pedestrian connectivity. The amenities included as part of the Site Plan expansion include new Artist Studios, Lobby area expansion, a new Folklife area, and additional storage. The remaining 4,400 square feet square approved by the Preliminary Plan Amendment will be realized in Phase 2, which will require a future site plan amendment before implementation.

Phase 2 will provide additional museum expansion for future programming. The updates for the Amendments will cumulatively result in an improved aesthetic and functional experience for the users and occupants of the space.

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2023

Staff received two letters of correspondence from community members which expressed concern regarding stormwater runoff from the Property, loss of trees, the new driveway, and parking. Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS) responded directly to the one community letter regarding stormwater runoff and Staff responded to the other letter.

Fran Hayward, Individual, offered testimony in opposition to the proposed driveway and trails.

David Woodward, Individual, yielded testimony.

Kevin Foster of GLWPA offered comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding the tree impacts, natural surface trail, and forest conservation area.

The Board asked questions regarding the width of the natural surface trail, screening between the natural surface trail and adjacent properties, additional parking, if new driveway would offer both left and right turns, if any current building structures onsite would be replaced, and possibility of the natural surface trail encroaching into easement area.

Staff offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion regarding the natural surface trail and recommended a condition stating the natural surface trail would not encroach within ten feet of the utility right-of-way.

- Item 8.       A. Sandy Spring Meadow, Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11982180A, Site Plan Amendment No. 81982092A**  
**B. Sandy Spring Missing Middle Pilot Project, Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation No. 120220050, Preliminary Plan No. 120220050, Site Plan No. 820220090 (Public Hearing)**

A. Sandy Spring Meadow

1. Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11982180A
2. Site Plan Amendment No. 81982092A

B. Sandy Spring Missing Middle Pilot Project

1. Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation No. 120220050, Preliminary Plan No. 120220050
2. Site Plan No. 820220090

Applications to amend the approved maximum dwelling unit density, minimum green space and parking for an existing subdivision, and to create new lots for 18 new dwelling units, including 25.7 percent MPDUs; located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Olney Sandy Spring Road (MD 108) and Skymeadow Way, approximately 450 feet east of Brooke Road 3.27 acres; R-60 zone; 2015 Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions*

P. Estes/J. Casey

**A1. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:       Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote:         5-0**

**Other:**

**Action:       Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

**A2. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:       Hedrick/Bartley**

**Vote:         5-0**

**Other:**

**Action:       Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

**B.1 BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:       Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote:         5-0**

**Other:**

**Action:       Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plan and Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation cited above, subject to conditions, which will be**

**reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

**B.2 BOARD ACTION**

**Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Other:**

**Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan cited above, subject to conditions and changes proposed by staff, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

Jonathan Casey, Planner II, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Sandy Spring Meadow and the Sandy Spring Missing Middle Pilot Project. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 17, 2023.

The Applicant submitted Applications to remove lots and amend the approved maximum dwelling unit density, reduce the minimum green space and parking for an existing subdivision; and to create three new lots for twelve townhouse living units, four lots for three new duplexes (two-unit living), eleven lots for eleven existing single-family detached dwelling units, three open space parcels, and one parcel for a shared private driveway.

*Sandy Spring Meadow Amendments*

Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11982180A would remove Parcel B and Lot Nos. 7 to 17, Block A from the existing Sandy Spring Meadow subdivision to allow the creation of new lots for the proposed Sandy Spring Missing Middle Pilot Project subdivision. Site Plan Amendment No. 81982092A would reduce the overall density, green space, and parking for the Sandy Spring Meadow subdivision. A new half-court basketball court is also proposed.

*Sandy Spring Missing Middle Pilot Project*

Preliminary Plan No. 120220050 would allow a new subdivision in order to create three new lots for 12 townhouse living units, six lots for three new duplexes (two-unit living), eleven lots for eleven existing single-family detached dwelling units, three open space parcels and one parcel for a shared private driveway in the area.

Site Plan No. 820220090 would allow the development of eighteen new dwelling units consisting of twelve townhouse living units and three duplex units, including 25.7 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) using the MPDU Bonus/Optional Method of Development. The Applicant is receiving a 35 percent density bonus for providing 25.7 percent MPDUs or MCDHCA-approved equivalent. Eleven existing single-family detached units will remain, and one single-family unit will be removed.

Phillip Estes, Planner III, offered comments regarding the open space for the project, access and parking, and compatibility of the proposed building with the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Estes then provided building concepts for the proposed buildings portraying the building standards and types.

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2023

Lastly, Mr. Estes noted proposed revisions to Site Plan Condition Number 1 for density regarding clarification that the condition includes the 18 new dwelling units as well as the 11 existing single-family detached units.

David Woodward, Individual, offered testimony in support of the project and offered concerns regarding decreasing the density.

Matt Gordon of Selzer Gurvitch offered comments on behalf of the Applicant noting full agreement to all conditions proposed by Staff. Mr. Gordon also offered comments regarding the number of building units and the missing middle context of the units being all rental units.

Jay Shepherd with the Housing Opportunities Commission offered comments regarding the project and intent to provide different housing opportunities for mixed income as well as using the project as a prototype for future housing throughout the Montgomery County.

The Board asked questions regarding allotted parking spaces, owner of the lots, if the rear loaded parking was within or outside of the structures, if the townhomes each had separate entrances, orientation of lots 6 and 7, how deep the subsidies and mixed income were.

Staff offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

**Item 14. Closed Session**

According to MD ANN Code, General Provisions Article, § 3-305(b)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or individuals about pending or potential litigation. Topic: Status of MPIA litigation. E. Vaias/D. Borden

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote: 5-0**

**Other:**

**Action: Advice obtained with discussion. See the open session disclosure statement in Summary Section.**

**Item 9. Flats at Knowles Station Preliminary Plan No. 12021003A & Site Plan Amendment No. 82021003A (Public Hearing)**

- A. Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12021003A
- B. Site Plan Amendment No. 82021003A

Request to increase the overall project density to a maximum of 106,102 square feet, comprised of up to 27,835 square feet of commercial uses (including up to 14,765 square feet for 16 hotel/short term rental use) and up to 78,267 square feet of residential uses for up to 84 multifamily residential dwelling units, including a minimum of 25% MPDUs; In accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section.7.3.3.I, the Site Plan will amend the conditions and binding elements of Sketch Plan No. 320210020 to increase the project density from 102,205 square feet to 106,102 square feet; on approximately 0.84 acres of land zoned CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60; located on 10509 Summit Avenue; within the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan area.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions*

T. Leftwich

**A. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote: 4-0-1**

**Other: Vice Chair Piñero abstained.**

**Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

**B. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem**

**Vote: 4-0-1**

**Other: Vice Chair Piñero abstained.**

**Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.**

Troy Leftwich, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Flats at Knowles Station. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 17, 2023.

The Property is located in the Town of Kensington, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Knowles Avenue and Summit Avenue within the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan area and is approximately one-half mile west of the MARC-Brunswick line's Kensington Station.

The Subject Property is comprised of Lots 15, 17, and 19 and Parts of Lots 21, 23, and 25 of the "Huck and Copp" Subdivision located at the intersection of Summit Avenue and Knowles Avenue within the Town of Kensington. The 36,409-square foot Property is zoned CRT-1.5, C-1.0, R-0.5, H-60. The Property is currently improved with a house used commercially and an adjoining surface parking lot, accessed from Summit Avenue and from Detrick Avenue through the existing



Knowles Station commercial property. There is existing vehicular access to the Property via a curb cut on Summit Avenue, midblock between Knowles Avenue and Brainard Avenue, on the western frontage of the Site.

The Applications continue to propose a mixed-use project under the optional method of development. The Amendments will increase the Project's density from 102,205 square feet to 106,102 square feet, which is due to the removal of the 25 live/work units and the provision of up to 16 Hotel/Short term stay units. The Project is also adding a 2,329-square foot rooftop amenity space that is counted toward the commercial FAR, as determined by the Department of Permitting Services. These changes result in an increase of commercial uses, from 22,651 square feet to 27,835 square feet, and a decrease in multifamily residential units, from 100 to 84 units. The Project will continue to provide 25% MPDUs.

The proposed density changes do not modify the previously approved building footprint, facades, or elevations, except for the addition of rooftop amenity space. There are proposed modifications to the parking lot layout and cellar area, which will increase the parking capacity by 4 spaces (to 170 spaces) and increase the cellar space from 12,200 square feet to 12,562 square feet. The Project will also increase the quantity of bicycle parking spaces, from 65 to 80 total spaces.

Richard Brockmyer, Planner III, gave an overview of the transportation aspect of the project as well as the transportation study that was conducted.

Lastly, Mr. Leftwich noted the community outreach performed as well as the community's concerns regarding traffic and stormwater approvals.

Joan McDermott of Kensington Estates Civic Association offered testimony regarding the traffic in the area, need for coherent fix to flow for the retail area, lack of parking, and need for upgraded stormwater pipes. Ms. McDermott further requested a new traffic study be performed as well as further methods of traffic enforcement.

Ryan Hall, Adjacent Property Owner, offered testimony regarding concerns for stormwater draining/flooding, traffic and school impacts.

David Woodward, Individual, offered testimony in support of the project but recommended no increase to parking capacity.

Thomas Brault of 10509 Summit Venture, LLC and Woodside offered comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding the project.

The Board asked questions regarding the stormwater pipe diameters, if the development would exacerbate the traffic situation within the area or increase traffic, potential for new traffic study, and adequacy of the stormwater drainpipes.

Staff offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

**Item 10. Forest Conservation Fees: In-lieu Fee and Administrative Civil Penalty Rate**

*Staff recommendation: Approval for a \$0.15 increase to the forest conservation in-lieu fee amount to a new rate of \$1.45 per square foot, and a \$1.25 increase to the maximum administrative civil penalty allowable for forest conservation violations to a new rate of \$13.00 per square foot.*

K. Taddei / C. Sorrento

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Bartley/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation for approval for a \$0.15 increase to the forest conservation in-lieu fee amount to a new rate of \$1.45 per square foot, and a \$1.25 increase to the maximum administrative civil penalty allowable for forest conservation violations to a new rate of \$13.00 per square foot; and adopted the attached Resolution.

Chair Zyontz offered a brief overview and explanation regarding the Forest Conservation Fees for In-lieu fees and the Administrative Civil Penalty Rate. After the brief explanation Chair Zyontz requested a motion from the Board to approve. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated February 24, 2023.

**Item 12. Pedestrian Master Plan Work Session #2**

*Staff Recommendation: Discuss Master Plan elements and provide direction*  
E. Glazier

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Received briefing followed by discussion.**

Eli Glazier, Project Lead, Countywide Planning and Policy Division offered a multi-media presentation for Work Session #2 for the Pedestrian Master Plan. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated April 20, 2023.

The Pedestrian Master Plan provides detailed, actionable recommendations in line with national and international best practices to improve the pedestrian experience, from more and better places to cross the street to a data-driven, equity-focused approach to identifying the County’s future pedestrian/bicycle capital investments.

The following recommendations for the Pedestrian Master Plan topics were discussed during Work Session #2 and listed as follows:

**5. Recommendations Chapter**

**A. Recommendations Overview**

*Design, Policy, and Programming Organization (Pages 62-127)*

**Comment** - Reorganize the recommendations section so agencies clearly understand the recommendations they are responsible for implementing.

**Planning Staff Response:** Disagree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommends adding a summary table at the beginning of the Design, Policy, and Programming recommendation section that identifies each recommendation, the applicable lead and support agencies, and the plan goals the recommendation addresses. This table will be included in the Planning Board Draft plan presented to the Planning Board at the last work session.

The Board asked if there would be a separate list for each agency, and Staff offered responses.

The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*Key Action Lead Agencies (Pages 61-62, Throughout)*

**Comment** - Include municipalities as stakeholders in the key actions and as implementation partners.

**Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding “Municipalities” to the list of entities on pages 61 and 62 that will be responsible for implementing the key actions. “Municipalities” will be identified as “Lead” partners on individual key actions as applicable. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*References to Related Efforts (Throughout)*

**Comment** - Many of the action items identified in this plan are already in various stages of implementation within MCDOT and other Executive Agencies. Where there is overlap, a connection between plans should be shown.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree. There are several key actions that overlap with elements in the Vision Zero Action Plan.

**Recommended Action:** Because the Vision Zero Action Plan is updated every two years, Planning staff recommends updating the descriptions of the following recommendations and key actions to mention efforts in the Vision Zero Action Plan with the text: “Related Effort: Vision Zero Action Plan”. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

**B. Design, Policy, and Programming Recommendations**

*Key Action B-1a (Page 64)*

**Comment** - The proposed shift from a “reactive” sidewalk project to a “proactive” sidewalk project should not remove existing sidewalk requests from the queue and should continue to permit residents to request sidewalks.

**Staff Response:** Partially Agree.

**Planning Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding language to the description of Key Action B-1a.

The Board asked questions regarding if sidewalk projects within the queue could be re-prioritized, and Staff offered comment and responses.

*Key Action B-1b (Page 65)*

**Comment** - Support for streamlining the sidewalk construction public engagement process and changing the conversation from whether a sidewalk will be built to how it will be built in a contextually-appropriate way.

Opposition to streamlining the engagement process in favor of earlier, and neighborhood by neighborhood engagement about whether sidewalks are wanted.

**Planning Staff Response:** No change. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*Key Action B-1d (Page 65)*

**Comment** - Key Action B-1d should exclude sidewalk work that is only fixing the existing sidewalk to ensure there are no trip hazards. As written, the recommendation could be interpreted to mean that anytime MCDOT conducts routine sidewalk maintenance, the agency will need to bring existing sidewalks up to current standards, which will reduce the amount of routine sidewalk concrete maintenance that can be completed.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended the additional text to Key Action B-1d stating “Note that sidewalk reconstruction does not include maintenance projects to eliminate tripping hazards.”

The Board asked questions regarding the PLOC metric and if information is gathered from the community or investigative data. Staff offered responses.

The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*B-1 New Key Action (Page 67)*

**Comment** - The SHA 8" curb height should be lowered to MCDOT's 6" standard in areas with pedestrian activity to allow more accessible sidewalks and crossings to be created.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding the following key action: B-1X: Update state curb height standards to 6" in areas with pedestrian activity. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*B-1 New Key Action (Page 68)*

**Comment** - Ensure sidewalks along higher volume roadways have adequate pedestrian space. Document deviations from the Complete Streets Design Guide standards and ADA Best Practices so County Council and the Planning Board can be aware of trade-offs being made.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding the following key action: B-1X: Document deviations from Complete Streets Design Guide streetscape default widths where applicable. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*Recommendation B-2 (Page 67)*

**Comment** - The term “beg button” should not be used.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended amending the Recommendation B-2 text to state “pedestrian push button”

The Board also offered comments regarding different terminology for “usage of creative technologies”.

*Key Action B-2a (Page 68)*

**Comment** - Supports the key action but recommends including major trail crossings as well.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree. Major trail crossings are locations with high pedestrian activity and should be considered for pedestrian recall.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommends updating Key Action B-2a to include “major trail crossings” within the description. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*Key Action B-2b (Page 69)*

**Comment** - Passive Pedestrian Detection is expensive and not yet reliable or effective. While we continue to evaluate these, their benefits have not been found to justify their costs. We suggest removing this recommendation at this time.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing Key Action B-2b to read: B-2b: Continue to evaluate passive detection to eliminate the need for pedestrians to press a button to safely cross the street in areas where pedestrian recall is not desirable. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action B-3a (Page 70)*

**Comment** - The graphic shown is useful but should be modified to show one of the ramps occurring on a curved sidewalk section to forestall any misunderstanding that these ramps can only be constructed on a straight section of curb.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** As Planning staff did not develop this graphic, instead of modifying it, we recommend adding the following text to the recommendation: Perpendicular curb ramps aligned with the crosswalk can be provided on both straight and curved sections of curb. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*B-3 New Key Action (Page 72)*

**Comment** - Wider crosswalks should be provided to accommodate heavier volumes of pedestrians in commercial areas, near schools and where the crosswalk is part of a named trail.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommends adding the following key action: B-3X: Crosswalk markings and associated curb ramps should be at least as wide as the sidewalks and trails they connect on either side. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action B-3e (Page 74)*

**Comments** - In support of this key action, there should be additional advance signage for drivers approaching crosswalks.

-Recommend removal of this key action because prior discussions left this code alone because it is impossible for a driver to determine if a pedestrian intends to cross. The current code makes crossing intent clear.

-If the recommendation remains, change from "yield to" to "stop for" because Maryland is a "Stop for Pedestrians" state.

**Planning Staff Response:** Partially Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended updating the key action for vehicles to stop for pedestrians waiting to cross the street. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*B-4 Climate Change Recommendations (Pages 74-75)*

**Comment** - Highlight the plan's relationship to climate change mitigation/adaptation.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Add additional text in the description of Key Actions B-4a and B-4c.

The Board offered comments regarding encouraging colocation and collaboration with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to allow smaller school sites.

Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori suggested modified language to "Encourage MCPS to revise minimum acreage of colocation..."

*Key Action B-4d (Page 75)*

**Comments** - Key Action B-4d appears to apply this overlay along very long lengths of Boulevards, which somewhat erodes the purpose of the Boulevard street type.

-In lieu of overlays, would a better approach be to carve out Town Center designations around stations? That would use existing tools and avoid complexity/confusion of new overlays. Or, per MCDOT/Planning staff discussions on 4/11/2023, consider rephrasing as “Growth Overlays”. Incorporating land use (and other topics) as additional elements will better support achieving the intended transportation components here.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing Key Action B-4d as follows: B-4d: Update the CSDG to include a Growth Corridor overlay to provide additional context-based guidance on crossings and target speeds. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendation.

*Key Action B-4g (Page 78)*

**Comment** - Oppose Open Parkways as they generate residential cut through traffic and make it more difficult to access amenities within the adjacent parkland. Open Parkways do not achieve the Pedestrian Master Plan Vision. Opposition to this being permanent, especially the Friday closure [on Beach Drive].

**Planning Staff Response:** Open Parkways are not inherently a problem.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended text changes to the key action with additional text within the description.

The Board offered comments regarding the terminology changing to “study making”, and Staff, including Deputy Director Robert Kronenberg and Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori offered responses.

*Key Action B-4h (Page 78)*

**Comment** - Support for key action to include public restrooms with family bathrooms and/or adult changing tables. Support for key action to also include parks and trails and respite locations. Add Urban Districts as a lead agency to handle maintenance.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing the key action to read:

The Board offered comments regarding further coordination with Montgomery Parks regarding restrooms. Staff agreed to coordinate with Montgomery Parks and present key action at a later Work Session.

*Recommendation B-5 (Page 79)*

**Comment** - Consider stating that SHA does not require sidewalks/bike paths in the right-of-way to be lit as Montgomery County does, and revise recommendation title to Lighting for Roadways, Intersections, and Pedestrian and Bike Facilities.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended modifying the recommendation text. The Board agreed with Staff’s recommendations.

*Key Action B-5c (Page 81)*

**Comment** - This key action is not practical because repair efforts won't occur on weekends or holidays. This is a maintenance recommendation, not a build one.

Streetlight repair timelines cannot be ensured. Consider adjusting phrasing to set prioritized target times. Consider rephrasing to suggest working with energy companies on repair timeline improvement plans.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended moving Key Action B-5c to become Recommendation MA-4 and Key Action MA-4a.

*Key Action B-6c (Page 81)*

**Comment** – Include MCDOT as a Lead if this recommendation is expected to include MCDOT facilities.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding MCDOT as a Lead Agency in the key action.

The Board asked questions regarding additional similar recommendation for materials and if Montgomery County would use different surface types.

*Key Action B-7a (Page 82)*

**Comment** - Better bus stop access and accessibility is needed. Either reintroduce/expand the Bus Stop Improvement Program.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding language including The Bus Stop Improvements capital funding program. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action B-7f (Page 85)*

**Comment** - Be sure to target this recommendation to areas where residential communities are separated from local goods and services.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding additional language to B-7f.1. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendations.

*B-7, B-8 Climate Change Recommendations (Pages 85, 88)*

**Comment** - Highlight the Plan's relationship to climate change mitigation/adaptation.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding text to Key Action B-7g and B-8e.

The Board offered comments regarding footprints of houses and impervious limits. Staff agreed to bring back to a future Work Session.

*Key Action B-9a (Page 89)*

**Comment** - Complete Streets built on Thrive Montgomery 2050, which proposed more widespread traffic calming. The Fiscal Impact Statement for Thrive noted the need for



substantially increased traffic calming funding, which is critically important to implementing more proactive traffic calming.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended rewriting Key Action B-9a. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendations.

*Key Action B-9b (Page 89)*

**Comment** - Oppose. Pedestrian volumes should remain a factor to spend limited funds the best. Instead of deemphasizing pedestrian volumes, change to using pedestrian "demand", which should be able to be done while complying with the MUTCD. Montgomery Planning should not be listed as a lead agency.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended rewriting Key Action B-9b.

The Board offered comments regarding use of different terminology other than "modeled".

*Key Action B-10a (Page 90)*

**Comments** - There are significant financial implications to assuming control of state highways. The recommendation assumes the county would be able to make changes faster than the state. While there are bureaucratic delays in changing state highways, most of the time, the issue is funding rather than bureaucracy. It is not likely the state will adequately provide maintenance funding for these roadways, and this recommendation should be removed.

-Concern that the cost would be high.

-Support. Wants Piney Branch Road included.

-Would county control make improvements along formerly state roads happen more quickly than they do today?

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing text in Key Action B-10a. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendations.

*Key Action MA-2a (Page 92)*

**Comment** - Sidewalks should be checked every two years to ensure that adjacent landscaping has not encroached on sidewalks and paths. Where encroachments occur, adjacent property owners should be notified that vegetation should be removed within two feet of the sidewalk or path.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended updating the description of Key Action MA-2a. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action MA-2d (Page 93)*

**Comment** - This recommendation would add hundreds of miles of manual labor. Any expansions of county snow-clearing responsibilities would necessitate major increases to the operating budget for personnel and equipment (or contracting), and potentially capital and right-of-way needs for new or expanded maintenance facilities. These costs are likely to be so substantial as to be infeasible, and this recommendation should be removed from the plan.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing text in Key Action MA-2d.

The Board offered comments regarding sidewalk clearing and agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-1a (Page 95)*

**Comments** - County employees, including Ride-On drivers, need to drive more safely. There should be an expectation of punishment when breaking traffic laws as a county employee. To support safe behavior, MCDOT should consider adopting an operational policy to require bus drivers stop on yellow lights when it is safe to do so. Require all current county and public agency vehicles to have backup cameras and require all future new vehicles have forward and rear pedestrian detection equipment.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing the description of Key Action P-1a.

The Board offered comments regarding potential to include language regarding pedestrian collision. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-1b (Page 95)*

**Comment** - The recommendation is okay but would need to include an override for emergency response activities.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended modifications to Key Action P-1b regarding emergency vehicles being exempt from the policy. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Education Recommendations (Pages 97, 98, 104)*

**Comments** - Strengthen pedestrian education and enforcement recommendations. Ensure drivers understand their responsibilities at intersections and elsewhere. Support for conducting pedestrian/bicycle safety programs with multiple agency partners, for education that actually sticks.

**Planning Staff Response:** Education is an important component of improving the pedestrian experience in Montgomery County. Staff does not recommend any changes, and the Board agreed.

*Key Action P-1e (Page 98)*

**Comment** - Require the County to mail to each resident at least yearly all changes to traffic rules and regulations, instead of requiring drivers to have an in-person knowledge test every eight years.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended amending Key Action P-1e.

The Board suggested the removal of the text "mail" as form of notification.

*P-1 New Key Action (Page 98)*

**Comment** - There should be a tax credit or requirement for people to get pedestrian detection systems for their cars.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding the following key action to Recommendation P-1 to explore requiring or incentivizing pedestrian detection systems in cars registered in Montgomery County: P-1X: Study requiring or incentivizing the use of pedestrian detection systems in vehicles registered in Montgomery County. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-2e (Page 102)*

**Comment -** The Plan's recommendations for more pedestrian crossing time but not increasing traffic signal cycle lengths need to be reconciled.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended additional language listed as a note for Key Action P-2e. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-4c (Page 104)*

**Comment -** The education component of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) goes beyond what occurs directly on school grounds, which is why Departments of Transportation are typically the home of SRTS programs. The County's SRTS program also integrates the engineering and education sides of SRTS which would be removed under this recommendation.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended text modifications to Key Actions P-4c.

The Board asked if MCPS had any comments and suggested to reach out to MCPS again.

*Key Action P-5a (Page 105)*

**Comment -** The lead agency for Key Action P-5a is MCPD (Police), not MCPS (Public Schools).

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing the Lead agency to MCPD. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-5b (Page 106)*

**Comment -** Rephrase Key Action P-5b. Walking and biking school buses are intended to improve walking/biking rates within the school walkshed and not to replace students being bussed. Consider deleting the text "and the reduction in conventional school buses needed to transport kids to school." Also, highlight the Plan's relationship to climate change mitigation/adaptation.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended additional language to Key Action P-5b. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-7a (Page 109)*

**Comment -** The last sentence in Key Action P-7a references the illustration "to the right", but it's currently located below. Verify directionality when ready for final copy.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff will make this technical correction. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-7b (Page 110)*

**Comment** - There are many locations where stop bars don't exist at all, or which have been neglected for so long that they are not visible/functional. Consider as supplemental strategies to Key Action P-7b: flashing stop signs at critical intersections; raised crosswalks; double posting of stop signs where visibility is impaired; adding painted stop "boxes" or writing "STOP" at the intersection.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended adding additional text to the description. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendation.

*Key Action P-7d (Page 111)*

**Comment** - Remove Key Action P-7d. Is there any case where the breakaway pole has injured a pedestrian or bicyclist? Removing breakaway poles increases the crash severity and goes against Vision Zero and can run afoul of other State and Federal requirements. Oppose eliminating breakaway poles. This would increase the injury rate for vehicle operators.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** After review of the relevant section of the AASHTO Roadside Design Guide, Planning staff recommended amending Key Action P-7d to read: P-7d: Eliminate breakaway traffic signal and other poles in the immediate vicinity of transit stops and other areas of significant pedestrian activity.

*Key Action P-8 (Page 112)*

**Comments** - Supports increasing the number of Automated Traffic Enforcement locations with the following changes: supplementary in-person police enforcement is needed to reinforce the posted speed limit. Other methods of improving the usefulness of cameras should be considered such as keeping a log of ALL speeding violations and having MCPD contact the worst repeat offenders; police enforcement to protect pedestrians should be at least eight times what it is currently and MCPD should consider having a dedicated group of motivated officers in charge of enforcement so that proper training and accountability are assured. A list of all potential traffic and pedestrian-related violations should be included on the County's Vision Zero website, along with a tally of all tickets given for each offense every year; the assessment of the adequacy of police enforcement of pedestrian safety needs to be focused on the reduction of pedestrian collisions and fatalities not on tickets given or hours spent on enforcement; and consideration should be given to discussing with the State Delegation the possibility of allocating the fines collected for pedestrian violations to pedestrian enforcement and pedestrian improvements rather than going into the state's general coffers as with other traffic violations.

-Interest in ATE being used for other violations like running stop signs, etc.

-Consider adding narrative to recognize the need to consider Equity in Automated Traffic Enforcement implementation, minding that some communities have had historic underinvestment &/or have over-designed facilities conducive toward higher speeds, and both of these -by design- can induce higher rates of violations in communities least able to afford these costs.

-Enforcement in Equity areas should be done concurrently with efforts to reduce violation rates by design.

**Planning Staff Response:** Agree with Modifications.

**Recommended Action:** Planning staff recommended changing Recommendation P-8 and its description, changing Key Action P-8a, and adding a key action to Recommendation P-8 to read:

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2023

P-8X: Increase in-person traffic enforcement activities.

The Board offered comments regarding Key Action P-8a concerning equity and enforcement. The Board suggested including the first sentence of the second paragraph of Key Action P-8a, and Staff agreed.

At this time, the Board recommended revisiting the rest of the recommendations at the next Work Session.