

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Thursday, October 5, 2023

2425 Reddie 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, October 5, 2023, beginning at 9:07 a.m. and adjourning at 3:55 p.m.

Present were Chair Artie Harris, Vice Chair Mitra Pedoeem, and Commissioners Shawn Bartley, James Hedrick, and Josh Linden.

Chair Harris welcomed a delegation of local government officials visiting from Mandaluyong City in the Philippines, including leaders from the City's Planning and Development Office. The delegation was in the DC region as part of the Washington Global Institute's Innovation, Leadership and Good Governance Program.

Items 1, 2, 4, and 6 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

Item 3 was postponed until October 12, 2023 and Item 5 was postponed until October 19, 2023.

The Planning Board voted at 10:43 a.m. to convene in Closed Session to discuss Item 7 on the motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Vice Chair Pedoeem with Chair Harris, Vice Chair Pedoeem, and Commissioners Bartley and Hedrick voting in favor of the motion. Commissioner Linden was necessarily absent for this vote but was present for the Closed Session meeting via Teams. The meeting was closed under the authority of Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article §3-305(b)(1), to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

Also present for the meeting was Principal Counsel Emily Vaias of the Office of General Counsel, Michelle Lopez and Anne Lewis both from Baker Tilly, and the Interviewees.

In Closed Session, the Board held discussion regarding the Planning Director position. The Closed Session began at 11:00 a.m. and ended at 3:55 p.m.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, October 12, 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. Arora Estates, Preliminary Plan No. 120230050 – MCPB No. 23-099

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Adopted the Resolution cited above, as submitted.

2. Montgomery Village Marketplace, Site Plan Amendment No. 82009006A, MCPB No. 23-103

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Pedoeem/Hedrick

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Adopted the Resolution cited above, as submitted.

3. Montgomery Village Marketplace, Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12009009A, MCPB No. 23-102

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Bartley/Hedrick

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Adopted the Resolution 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 Matters submitted for approval.**

Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)

Subdivision Plat No. 220220690, Willerburn Acres, Section 2

R-90 zone; 4 lots; located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Seven Locks Road and Fontaine Street; Potomac Subregion 2002 Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Record Plat cited above, as submitted.

Subdivision Plat No. 220240040, Brothers Grove

TF-5 zone; 2 lots; located on the northeast side of Griffin Circle, 500 feet east of Frederick Road (MD 355); Clarksburg Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Pedoeem/Bartley

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Record Plat cited above, as submitted.

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

POSTPONED - Loehmann's Plaza: Extension Request for Sketch Plan No. 320230050

Applicant: Rosenfeld Investment, LLC

Applicant's second request to extend the regulatory review period for two (2) additional weeks, from October 26, 2023 through November 9, 2020.

A. Sketch Plan No. 320230050: Proposed infill development with up to 710,000 square feet of residential uses and up to 40,000 square feet of commercial uses for a cumulative density of up to 750,000 square feet of mixed-use development, with 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs), open space, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and associated public benefits to support incentive density; The Overall Site is an existing strip shopping center with surface parking and a pad site on 9.74-acres of land; Located at 5200 Randolph Road at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Randolph Road with Parklawn Drive and west of Putnam Road; Commercial Residential (CR-1.75, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-75) Zone; within the Randolph Hills District of the 2018 White Flint II Sector Plan area.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Extension Request for 30 days through November 30th.

T. Graham

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Postponed to October 12, 2023.

Item 4. Roundtable Discussion

Parks Director's Report
M. Riley

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Montgomery Parks Director Mike Riley introduced Chief of the Management Services Division, Shuchi Vera, who offered comments regarding the evolution of the Data Analytics Team. Ms. Vera then introduced Hassan Symes, EAM/GIS Manager, who offered a multi-media presentation regarding an overview and highlights for the Data Analytics Team.

Mr. Symes explained the history of the Data Analytics Team from 2004 through 2021, and highlighted certain dates such as the creation of the first Department of Parks work order systems for operation known as EAM (Smartparks) in 2004, going live with Infor EAM in 2014, the EAM Strategic Plan in 2017, the GIS Strategic Plan in 2019, and most recently the adoption of the Data Analytics Strategic Plan in 2021.

Mr. Symes stated the vision of the Data Analytics Team is to provide services to enhance and support the Parks Department's data-driven goals, and the mission is to provide accurate and meaningful information of park system assets; automate and streamline business processes; foster efficiencies, improvements and better decision-making; and enable employees to utilize data driven technologies to their full potential. Mr. Symes discussed the four components including assets, automation, analytics, and outreach and education in greater detail for the Board.

Mr. Symes continued by introducing the members of the Data Analytics Team which included GIS Coordinator Keegan Clifford, GIS Specialist Tiffany Wu, Data Analyst Carter Hughes, EAM Project Manager Vikas Kapoor, and Asset Manager Niels Lykke.

Lastly, Mr. Symes highlighted some projects including the Montgomery County Community Gardens program which uses ArcGIS Field Maps to update the inventory of the garden plots on demand; using analytics to use clustering technology to perform condition assessment inspections on Countywide programs such as bridges, boardwalks, culverts, courts, retaining walls, bleachers, and playgrounds; and the usage of EAM and the EAM mobile app for building condition assessment. Mr. Symes also stated an Asset Crowdsourcing Map will be introduced in the future, which will be designed to allow a wider range of Parks employees to request changes of assets via a browser-based map and data entry tool that can be easily accessed via a mobile device in the field or from a desktop.

The Board offered comments regarding GIS tools, importance of data analysis for employees, and asked if the EAM system was cloud based. Staff offered comments and responses.

Item 5. POSTPONED - 2023 Biennial Monitoring Report for the North Bethesda (White Flint) Sector Plan area.

Staff Recommendation: Transmit the 2023 Biennial Monitoring Report to the County Council and County Executive.

N. Yearwood

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Postponed to October 19, 2023.

Item 6. University Boulevard Corridor Plan – Briefing

Staff Recommendation: Provide an overview of existing development, market analysis, and outreach and engagement completed to date for the University Boulevard Corridor Plan.

N. Yearwood

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Nkosi Yearwood, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the University Boulevard Corridor Plan. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated September 29, 2023.

Mr. Yearwood described the Plan Area, which is approximately 3.5 miles in length as well as the demographics and age distribution of the Plan Area.

Public outreach and engagement included mailings, a Public Open House, online engagement, Civic Association Meetings, and public transit. Mr. Yearwood noted there were 10 in-person or virtual meetings, 13 in-community events, knocked on over 1,000 doors for canvassing, sent 2,454 mailers, and over 20,000 words of text analyzed.

Zubin Adrianvala, Planner III, described the door-to-door canvassing and transit user's engagement, as well as, digital outreach through an online platform that was also used for community members to provide comments. Mr. Adrianvala stated staff analyzed roughly 80 pages of comments and described the analysis of qualitative data received. Some community feedback themes included: appreciation for neighborhood diversity, concerns for pedestrian safety and need for better biking infrastructure, housing quality, affordability, and availability, as well as a desire for signaled intersections, wider sidewalks, and real-time bus arrival information at well-lit shelters.

Mr. Yearwood discussed the existing development and land use in the Plan Area including residential housing, existing zoning, specialized housing, retail, institutional uses, office, and public parks. It was noted that residential development is the primary land use within the Plan Area including residential townhouses and multi-family residential buildings. Mr. Yearwood also provided examples of the facilities and Parks and Open Spaces within the Plan Area including Northwood High School, Blair High School, Kemp Mill Urban Park, and North Four Corners Parks to name a few.

Alex Rixey, Planner IV, proceeded with the presentation by discussing the existing roadways and transportation for the Plan Area. Mr. Rixey described the pedestrian level of comfort and conditions, and stated University Boulevard is viewed as undesirable or uncomfortable with regard to pedestrian conditions. Mr. Rixey gave an overview of the protected crossings along University Boulevard at the intersections of Edgewood Avenue, Dennis Avenue, and Royaltown Road, as well

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as the protected crossing spacing along University Boulevard. Mr. Rixey noted most of the University Boulevard Corridor exceeds the desired maximum protected crossing spacing of 800 feet and the longest distance between protected crossings is 2,790 feet between Dennis Avenue and Caddington Avenue.

Mr. Rixey described the bikeways and level of traffic stress for the Plan Area, the State Highway Administration (SHA) Multimodal Shared Streets Pilot Project from Arcola Avenue to Amherst Avenue, crashes within the Plan Area, and existing transit service. Mr. Rixey also noted the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Proposed Pilot Bus Lanes project between Amherst Avenue and Dennis Avenue should improve overall service, reduce congestion, and provide more consistent travel times.

Bilal Ali, Real Estate Market Researcher, gave an overview of the market analysis for the residential, retail, and office markets within the Plan Area. Mr. Ali noted the Plan Area has a delicate balance between historical richness and modern evolution. Some of the key findings included: the Plan Area is predominantly residential, the most significant non-residential use is institutional, followed by retail, the Plan Area is bookended by two significant retail and office nodes, and growth opportunities lie in supporting more residential development, which will help spur more retail development.

Lastly, Mr. Yearwood discussed the next steps for the Plan which included continued outreach, plan analysis and staff review through Fall 2023 and Winter 2024; Planning Board Review Spring-Summer 2024; County Executive review Spring 2024; and County Executive and County Council review in Fall 2024.

The Board asked questions regarding reasons for lack of residential development, zoning, targeted footage between protected crossings, and analysis of qualitative data received.

Staff, including Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern and Chief of Downcounty Planning Carrie Sanders, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board also offered comments and suggestions regarding need for sensitivity regarding the different ethnicities within the Plan Area pertaining to potential zoning updates, affordable housing, and dangerous pedestrian access at the Blair High School intersections.

Item 7. CLOSED SESSION

According to the MD Ann Code, General Provisions Article, § 3-305(b)(1), to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

Topic to be discussed: Planning Director Position
E. Vaias

BOARD ACTION

Motion: **Hedrick/Pedoeem**

Vote: **4-0**

Other: **Commissioner Linden absent for vote.**

Action: **Discussion. See the open session disclosure statement in Summary Section.**