

# **Montgomery County Planning Board**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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

**SUMMARY**

**Thursday, September 28, 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, September 28, 2023, beginning at 10:04 a.m. and adjourning at 7:42 p.m.

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

Items 1 through 5, Item 9, Item 6, and Item 8 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

The Planning Board recessed for lunch at 1:18 p.m. and reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 1:56 p.m. to discuss Item 7 and Item 12, as reported in the attached Minutes.

Items 10 and 11 were postponed.

The Planning Board recessed for dinner at 4:06 p.m. and reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 5:50 p.m. to hold a joint meeting between the Montgomery County Planning Board and Montgomery County Board of Education.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, October 5, 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. Wildwood Manor, Forest Conversation Plan No. F20230180 – MCPB No. 23-098

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

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

**B. Approval of Minutes**

1. Minutes for September 14, 2023

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 4-0-1

**Other:** Commissioner Bartley abstained due to being absent on September 14, 2023.

**Action:** Approved the Minutes for September 14, 2023, as submitted.

**C. Other Preliminary Matters**

1. Resolution of Adoption of the Edward U. Taylor Elementary School: An Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation  
R. Ballo/J. Liebertz

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 4-0-1

**Other:** Commissioner Bartley abstained.

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

**Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)**

**Subdivision Plat No. 220230590 – 220230600 Creekside at Cabin Branch**

RNC zone; 39 lots, 3 parcels; located on the west side of Clarksburg Road (MD 121), opposite Dowitcher Way; Clarksburg Ten Mile Creek Amendment Area.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval*

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion: Hedrick/Linden**

**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)**

**Iglesia De Cristo Mi El Maryland: Preliminary Plan No.120220040 – Regulatory Extension Request No.2 - Request to extend the regulatory review period until May 31, 2024.**

Application to create one lot for a religious assembly building and a parsonage; located at 17521 Old Baltimore Road, approximately 410 feet west of Brimstone Academy Court, RNC zone, 7.17 acres, 2005 Olney Master Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request*

J. Casey

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Regulatory Extension Request cited above.

**Item 4. Roundtable Discussion**

Planning Director's Report  
T. Stern

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Received briefing.**

Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern introduced Carrie McCarthy, Chief of Research and Strategic Projects, who offered a multi-media presentation and gave a brief overview of the quarterly Montgomery County Economic Indicators publication recently released September 2023. Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted on the Planning Board website under the agenda for September 28, 2023.

Ms. McCarthy stated the Research and Strategic Projects (RSP) Division serves as a “think tank” on demographic, housing, economic, real estate, land use, and other related data. The goal of the Montgomery County Economic Indicators publication is to provide a quarterly summary of key economic data to give a sense of the direction of the economy. Ms. McCarthy also noted quarterly briefings of the publication will be given to the Montgomery County Council Economic Development (ECON) Committee, and Staff will return to the Planning Board in the Fall to discuss the office market and general economic conditions.

Ben Kraft, Research Planner III, continued with the presentation and began by discussing the resident labor force and employment data trends for Montgomery County comparing data from June 2022 and June 2023 for people in the labor force and people employed who live in Montgomery County. Mr. Kraft stated although there has been an increase in numbers for people new to the labor force and employment, both still have not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels in Montgomery County.

Mr. Kraft discussed the highest growth in occupations, employment industries, and percentage changes from the First Quarter of 2023. It was noted that employment in the retail, restaurant, hospitality, and education industries were some of the hardest hit industries during the pandemic, and although the data does show growth, they have not rebounded to pre-pandemic numbers.

Mr. Kraft explained the commercial real estate market for office, retail, and multi-family. The rent for retail has gone up approximately eight percent year-to-year and vacancy has gone down a half percent, although there is still a demand, and the retail market is still considered strong for Montgomery County. Due to the changing needs for office real estate within the County, it is still unknown what future demand may look like, but rent has gone up slightly and vacancies have gone down, and Mr. Kraft further noted that office vacancy has been on a rising trend even pre-pandemic. Mr. Kraft also discussed multi-family rentals and stated the vacancy rate has gone up slightly. When reviewing the data for residential real estate, Mr. Kraft noted there is not enough

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inventory for residential real estate within the County and residential real estate prices keep going up.

Mr. Kraft stated the venture capital transactions have gone up over time, and the second quarter of 2023 is on pace to equal 2021 and 2022 numbers. Mr. Kraft further noted the capital infusions that tend to be in Montgomery County are related to the life sciences, therapeutic devices, and biotechnology industries.

Lastly, Mr. Kraft discussed migration to and from Montgomery County, based on anonymized IRS tax returns from 2020 and 2021. Mr. Kraft explained the approximate totals of the non-migrants (stayed in Montgomery County), in-migration (to Montgomery County), and out-migration (from Montgomery County), and noted that Montgomery County lost approximately 5,968 people who moved from Montgomery County to somewhere else. Overall patterns show that most people did not move from Montgomery County, 38 percent of movers stayed within Maryland, and Prince George's County – Montgomery County migration saw the largest total volume of migration in both directions.

The Board asked questions regarding changes of small business retail, difference between labor force and employment, sources of data collection, how rental vacancies were calculated, consideration of the current financial state of commercial buildings, and potential indicator for the future of retail.

Staff, including Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

**Item 5. Montgomery Village Marketplace (The Learning Experience Child Care Center) Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12009009A and Site Plan Amendment No. 82009006A (Public Hearing)**

A. Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12009009A: Request to subdivide existing Lot 31 into two (2) lots to accommodate a change in use from commercial to civic/institutional for a Day Care Center and a separate Open Space lot located adjacent to Stedwick Road; The Overall Site is an existing shopping center with surface parking and drive aisles on 3.32-acres of land; Located at 10001 Stedwick Road on the north side of Stedwick Road, west of Montgomery Village Avenue; 1.940 acres of undeveloped land in the CRT-1.5, C-0.75, R-1, H-75 Zone and is within the Montgomery Village Overlay Zone; within the 2016 Montgomery Village Master Plan area.

B. Site Plan Amendment No. 82009006A: Request to construct a two-story, approximately 12,000 square foot building for a Day Care Center and a separate lot for Open Space located adjacent to Stedwick Road; The Overall Site is an existing shopping center with surface parking and drive aisles on 3.32-acres of land; Located at 10001 Stedwick Road on the north side of Stedwick Road, west of Montgomery Village Avenue; 1.940 acres of undeveloped land in the CRT-1.5, C-0.75, R-1, H-75 Zone and is within the Montgomery Village Overlay Zone; within the 2016 Montgomery Village Master Plan area.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions*

T. Graham

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

Tamika Graham, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Montgomery Village Marketplace. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated September 18, 2023.

Ms. Graham gave a brief overview of the property and vicinity stating the 3.32-acre overall site consists of Buildings A, B, and C (the Subject Property) as well as open spaces. The site is located on the north side of Stedwick Road between the shopping center's driveway (opposite Mills Choice Road) and Montgomery Village Avenue.

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Ms. Graham discussed the Preliminary Plan proposal and stated the Applicant is proposing a change of use from the previously approved Commercial use category to the Civic/Institutional use category to allow for a Day Care Center. The Applicant proposes to subdivide existing Lot 31 into one lot and one open space parcel, and no new access points will be created with this re-subdivision. Additionally, as part of the Preliminary Plan Amendment, the Applicant requests approval to eliminate two existing conditions of approval, Condition Numbers 3 and 8.

The Site Plan proposal includes construction of a two-story building for a Day Care Center known as The Learning Center Academy for Early Education, a total gross floor area of 11,972 square feet with surface parking, a total of up to 171 students, 26 instructors, and 2 administrative staff, and 3,100 square foot outdoor play area.

Ms. Graham discussed the access and circulation for the property as well as off-site mitigation projects, which are proposed to address pedestrian deficiencies.

Ms. Graham then showed a series of slides portraying the architecture of the building and stated the Applicant has requested a modification to locate the building entrance on the eastern façade to face the parking area to allow for safe and efficient circulation of student pick-up, drop-off and parking. The south façade facing the open space fronting onto Stedwick Road will include enhanced architectural features, lighting, and landscaping to improve the view and the pedestrian experience along Stedwick Road.

Lastly, Ms. Graham discussed the elimination of Preliminary Plan Condition Numbers 3 and 8.

Timothy Dugan of Bean, Kinney, and Korman Attorneys offered comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding The Learning Experience Daycare that will occupy the site. Mr. Dugan offered further comments regarding the age range of the children that will be attending, the rough breakdown of square footage, the proposed transparency, and landscaping.

The Board asked questions regarding ground floor transparency, expected opening date, parking spaces, consideration for additional protection at Stedwick Road crosswalk, need for subdivision of Lot 31, and open space landscaping.

Staff, including Transportation Planner III Richard Brockmyer, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

William Newman of Gutschick, Little and Weber Consultants for the Applicant offered comments regarding parking, and noted spaces will actually be eliminated.

**Item 9. 2024 Growth and Infrastructure Policy Update – Scope of Work**

Briefing: The County Council is required to adopt the 2024-2028 Growth and Infrastructure Policy (GIP) by November 15, 2024. In support of this effort, Planning Department staff is initiating the update to the GIP to ensure the adequacy of public infrastructure and that the policy is aligned with other County policies and priorities as well as the County’s current growth context. This briefing will provide an overview of the current Growth and Infrastructure Policy, the approach to engagement and the scope and timeline for the 2024 update.

*Staff recommendation: Brief the Planning Board. Review and approve Scope of Work.*

D. Buckley/L. Govoni

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Received briefing and approved staff recommendation for Scope of Work.

Jason Sartori, Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy gave a brief overview of the review of the 2024 Growth and Infrastructure Policy Update.

Darcy Buckley, Planner III and Lisa Govoni, Planner IV, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the 2024 Growth and Infrastructure Policy Update Scope of Work. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated September 21, 2023.

Ms. Buckley stated the Growth and Infrastructure Policy (GIP) directs the Planning Board’s administration of adequate public facility requirements and explained the goal of the policy is to make sure Montgomery County’s growth does not outgrow it’s infrastructure. Montgomery Planning initiates an update of the GIP every four years, with the current update due in 2024. Ms. Buckley then explained the history of the GIP from 1969 to 2020 noting the County Council adopted the County’s Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirement in 1973, the first formal growth policy followed in 1986, a Transportation Impact Tax on all new developments Countywide was expanded in 2001 followed by a similar School Impact Tax in 2003, and the policy was renamed the GIP in 2020.

Ms. Buckley explained how the GIP Policy reflects the County’s growth context and goals, and stated when the growth policy was initially adopted, much of the land in the County was undeveloped. The initial focus was on ensuring roads and schools were in place as farmland was converted into neighborhoods, and over time, the policy has shifted to respond to the County’s changing growth context and reflect its planning goals.

Lisa Govoni, Planner IV, discussed how the GIP policy works, and stated the Council-adopted GIP establishes the broad rules for defining adequacy which are then implemented through subject-specific guidelines approved by the Planning Board including the Annual School Test Guidelines and the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) Guidelines.

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Ms. Govoni stated the GIP uses a context-sensitive approach that classifies County neighborhoods into School Impact Areas based on the character of their growth and that growth's impact on school facilities. Ms. Govoni then discussed how adequacy is determined for impact areas, transportation, water/sewer, and police, fire and health services.

Ms. Buckley reviewed the major themes that Montgomery Planning intends to explore during the 2024 update. These included: performance review of the 2020-2024 GIP; aligning with the updated County priorities such as Thrive Montgomery 2050, the Climate Action Plan, and the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act; consider the current growth trends by preparing a status report on the County's general land use conditions, as the code requires; making policy implementation clearer and more efficient; and review of development impact taxes.

Ms. Govoni discussed the community engagement and outreach strategy which will include: technical working groups such as the School Technical Advisory Team (STAT) and Transportation Advisory Group (TAG), public meetings both in-person and virtual, community and stakeholder group meetings, and videos, explainers, blog posts, social media, e-letter, and the Montgomery Planning Website. The Board suggested further outreach to daycare associations providing before/after care to school-age children, advocates for safe streets and better transit, and Chamber of Commerce groups.

Ms. Buckley gave an overview of the anticipated project schedule with potential Planning Board approval in July 2024. County Council will review in Fall 2024 with adoption of the new policy adoption in November 2024.

Lastly, Ms. Buckley noted public testimony received, and Ms. Govoni discussed the next steps which include a virtual community meeting being held on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

The Board asked questions regarding whether the impact tax and LATR are different, impact tax rate requirements, if the LATR determines off-site transportation elements, potential to add Park Impact Payments to other areas of the County, and status of the utilization premium payments.

Staff, including Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern, Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori, and Multimodal Transportation Supervisor David Anspacher, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion regarding the importance and inclusion of Parks and Recreation as well as adequacy of power within the GIP. The potential development of a test for adequacy of Parks coupled with Capital Improvement Programs priorities was discussed and noted that it could help the Parks Department assess needs and see how it could impact ongoing studies of the PROS Plan.

Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori and Chief of Park Planning and Stewardship Darren Flusche offered comments and responses.

**Item 6. BOZ Briefing**

*Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board*  
E. Hisel-McCoy

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action:**       **Received briefing.**

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Chief of DownCounty Planning, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ). Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted on the Planning Board website under the agenda for September 28, 2023.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy gave a brief overview of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and overarching goals that include the following: equity and sustainability, parks and open space, affordable housing, environmental innovation, and economic competitiveness. Implementing the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan includes: the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ), Park Impact Payments (PIPs), the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel (DAP), the Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC), and the Annual Monitoring Report.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy noted the BOZ set a development cap of 32.4 million square feet, allows increase in density over mapped FAR (BOZ density), and sets time limits for projects utilizing the BOZ density. Mr. Hisel-McCoy explained how the Bethesda Overlay Zone Tracking Tool works, which can be found on Montgomery Planning's Bethesda Downtown Monitoring and Tracking website, and stated anyone can view the amount of BOZ density that has been used, projects built since 2017, approved unbuilt projects using BOZ density, and how much BOZ density is left. Mr. Hisel-McCoy then gave an overview and explained the PIP, DAP, and IAC in greater detail as well.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy stated the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan has been a success since the approval in 2017. Since 2017, the Planning Board has approved over 7 million square feet of development, with over 3 million square feet built. There are over 4,800 multi-family units that have been approved, and over 2,800 units have been either built or are under construction. Over 750 Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) have also been approved, and over 400 have been either built or are under construction. Mr. Hisel-McCoy also highlighted the Plan's success for Montgomery Parks as well which included: the Capital Crescent Civic Green, the Farm Women's Market Civic Green, the Eastern Greenway, addition of new bikeways and pedestrian improvements, and traffic and schools are operating within standards.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy described the keys to success in Bethesda were like surfing the right timing and right tools. The Bethesda Downtown Plan provided that once total development-including approvals reached 30.4 million square feet, the County Council may require certain actions before additional development is permitted.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy discussed the needed infrastructure, Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) goals, Parks progress, and school capacity. It was noted that continued private investment from development is key to advancing the needed infrastructure, NADMS goals, and Parks progress.

The keys to continued success within Downtown Bethesda include: a new time, new tools, and reviewing if the tools are currently still the right tools. Mr. Hisel-McCoy discussed how the market is very different today than when the BOZ was initially introduced and moving away from a building moratorium may be an effective new tool to build capacity, but yet the BOZ and the PIP have been successful generators of economic growth, jobs, affordable and market-rate housing, progress toward spectacular new parks, and improved transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Mr. Hisel-McCoy also explained the BOZ development cap has created uncertainty and as development approached the 30.4 million square feet mark, developers began to worry about the viability of new development in Bethesda.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy discussed several strategies to determine an alternative development capacity and recommends a multi-prong strategy that may consist of of the following:

- as total development approaches the cap, begin a minor master plan amendment limited in scope to address that provision, perhaps in coordination with the 2024-2028 GIP;
- creation of a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) to remove from the overlay zone only the 32.4 million square foot cap and use-or-lose provisions in favor of master plan conformance finding;
- continue to evaluate each project against the GIP standards for transportation and schools; and
- continue to track progress toward implementation of plan recommendations by project with website and Annual Monitoring Report

Deputy Planning Director Robert Kronenberg offered further explanation to the Planning Board regarding the creation of a ZTA to remove the BOZ.

Lastly, Mr. Hisel-McCoy discussed next steps including receiving public testimony and Planning Board recommendation to the County Council on October 12, 2023, followed by County Council and Committee discussion throughout the fall.

The Board asked questions regarding square footage included within the cap, further clarity of the BOZ density use-or-lose requirements, if lost project approval density is reinstated to the BOZ density pool, lease space within the Marriott Building and Avocet Tower, if MPDU requirement was too low, and why the cap was good for Bethesda.

Staff, including Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern, Deputy Planning Director Robert Kronenberg, and Real Estate Market Researcher Bilal Ali offered comments and responses to the Board's question.

**Item 8. History of the Commission – Presentation**

*Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board*  
D. Borden

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Received briefing.**

Debra Borden, General Counsel, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the History of the Commission.

Ms. Borden began the presentation by recognizing the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (the Commission) will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> year of operation in 2027. Ms. Borden then gave an overview of the important milestones in the Commission's history. Ms. Borden stated that due to stream pollution issues caused by small towns and villages located around the watersheds in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties which then flowed downstream to the Washington D.C. area a commission was appointed by the General Assembly to recommend legislation for a regional solution for the water and sewerage problem. The regional solution led to the establishment of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) in 1916. In 1918 the General Assembly finished forming WSSC as a public service corporation and gave it the authority to construct and operate water and sewer systems for the suburban district. WSSC would later receive additional authority to plan a permit system of highways and streets in 1922, as well as reviewing subdivision plats. Ms. Borden then noted in 1926 the Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Company would become the first significant United States Supreme Court landmark case regarding the practice of zoning.

Ms. Borden explained with the new establishment of zoning the Federal Government proposed Virginia and Maryland create regional agencies, and in 1927, Chapter 448 of the Laws of Maryland established The Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission. Ms. Borden stated all Commissioners were appointed by the General Assembly, not locally, in the early days of the Commission. Ms. Borden further noted one of the first Commissioners appointed was the brother of E. Brooke Lee, who was a wealthy landowner and politician in Montgomery County.

Ms. Borden stated the Capper-Cramton Act was passed in 1930 which appropriated \$33.5 million for parks and parkways in and around the Nation's Capital. Ms. Borden noted the Capper-Crampton Act was important to the Commission as the funding has allowed for the purchase thousands of acres of land over time for both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, acquisition of parkways such as Sligo Creek and Little Falls, as well as helped to complete the GW Parkway.

Ms. Borden noted the General Assembly authorized the Commission to work on a General Plan for the Regional District, although it was halted due to World War II, and it would not be finalized until 1957.

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Ms. Borden then discussed the housing struggles between development of single-family and multi-family housing within the first 20 years of establishment of the Commission, as well as racial covenants that occurred in Montgomery County. The late 1960's saw the last Capper-Cramton funding, but Ms. Borden noted during this time period land was also donated or dedicated to the Commission as well.

Ms. Borden explained planning throughout the 1970's was concerned with the development around the County's rapid transit stations as construction on the Metro began in 1969, and new categories of zones were created for a mix of uses both around the transit areas and residential areas of the County. In the 1980's there was a growing interest in preservation farmland, and former Planning Board Chair, Royce Hanson, was instrumental in making a point to preserve agricultural farmland through zoning as well as providing a way to sell development rights. Ms. Borden also noted the first program for Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) was established in 1970, and it was the first program in the nation to promote affordable housing.

Ms. Borden then discussed key and contentious issues that are still seen today which include: State versus local control, the Federal Government, affordable housing, environmental protection, and Public utilities and roads.

Lastly, Ms. Borden spoke about today's impacts and noted the Commission's parks are the finest in the country, joint park and planning staff review of development plans result in maximum opportunities, and Prince George's and Montgomery Counties benefit from a broad regional perspective of land use and planning.

**Item 7. Streetlighting Design Guidelines, Installation Procedures, and Specifications Briefing**

The Board will receive a briefing on the recently completed Streetlighting Design Guidelines, a collaborative effort between the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and Montgomery Planning to comprehensively update the county's illuminance standards.

*Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board*

E. Glazier

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Received briefing.**

Eli Glazier, Transportation Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Streetlighting Design Guidelines, Installation Procedures, and Specifications. Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted on the Planning Board website under the agenda for September 28, 2023.

Mr. Glazier stated new standards are necessary to allow the County to ensure that people traveling through the county by any mode can do so safely with the benefit of adequate illumination. Upgrading these standards is an opportunity for Montgomery Planning and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to incorporate national best practices and is also an important component of implementing Vision Zero.

To achieve this goal, in February 2022, MCDOT and Montgomery Planning applied for consultant support through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOG) Transportation-Land Use Connections planning grant program. This application was successful, and the Streetlighting Design Guidelines, Installation Procedures, and Specifications document detailing updated street lighting standards and specifications was completed in June 2023.

Charles Phippen of MCDOT, then proceeded with the presentation and stated the new MCDOT Streetlight Design Guidelines introduces updated standards for streetlight spacing and photometrics. Mr. Phippen then explained the differences between the current street classifications (functional road, roadway, and pedestrian zone) and the future classifications (street typology, street zone, and active zone) in greater detail as well as the streetlighting warrant criteria and target lighting values for active zones.

Mr. Phippen noted the new photometric analysis evaluates illumination levels, measuring distribution based on real-world environment conditions and some key advantages are as follows: optimized visibility and safety (Vision Zero Initiative), reduced light pollution, energy efficiency, cost savings, compliance and standards, and public perception.

Mr. Phippen then showed a series of slides portraying the comparisons of the old versus new road classifications, and noted the revised standards and guidelines aim to provide a comprehensive

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explanation of various factors that influence streetlight design guidelines, emphasizing main factors such as photometrics, street typology classification, street zone classification and active zone classification.

Lastly, Mr. Glazier discussed next steps which included MCDOT updating the streetlight standards to be consistent with the guidelines and continued coordination between Montgomery Planning, MCDOT, and others on the following topics:

- Identifying a preferred street tree/streetlight spacing standard to achieve adequate illumination levels and high-quality tree canopy
- Incorporating ambient lighting from buildings and other private property locations into streetscape lighting target calculations
- Ensuring that street lighting on private streets complies with lighting standards
- Determining how flexibility can be applied to street lighting in areas near environmental and cultural resources
- Detailing how new streetlight fixtures, luminaires, and poles can be added to MCDOT's list of standard materials

The Board asked questions regarding timeline for replacing infrastructure, if accessibility and length between lights was addressed, if the Wheaton area lighting along Georgia Avenue would be updated, and potential conflicts between State Highway Administration and MCDOT standards.

Staff, including Multimodal Transportation Supervisor David Anspacher, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Mr. Pippen also offered comments and responses to the Board's questions regarding timeline and potential conflicts.

**Item 10. POSTPONED - Briefing on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation; Historic Site & District Designations; Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites; and other items.**

*Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board*  
R. Ballo/J. Liebertz

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Postponed to October 26, 2023.**

**Item 11. POSTPONED - Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan – Existing Conditions**

Provide the Planning Board with information on the existing conditions in the sector plan area that will help to inform the future recommendations for the Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: N/A*

R. Duke/J. Pratt

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Postponed. Date TBD**

**Item 12. Briefing to the Planning Board on the recommendations proposed by the Development Review Committee Workgroup.**

*Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board*  
R. Kronenberg/C. Sorrento

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action: Received briefing.**

Deputy Planning Director Robert Kronenberg and Chief of Intake and Regulatory Coordination Christina Sorrento offered a multi-media presentation regarding the recommendations proposed by the Development Review Committee.

Mr. Kronenberg gave a brief overview of the background and creation of the workgroup, which was formed by Montgomery County Delegate Lesley Lopez (D-39) in February 2023. Mr. Kronenberg stated the workgroup was comprised of 18 members, had 3 community meetings, 9 workgroup meetings, received community testimony and recommendations, had 28 originally proposed recommendations, and 3 recommendation for State Legislation.

At this time, Ms. Sorrento discussed the two State Law recommendations that the workgroup voted to pass as well as the one recommendation that did not pass.

Mr. Sorrento continued by discussing the Non-State recommendations noting the recommendations that passed and those that did not.

The Board asked questions regarding specific recommendations for Minor Subdivisions, changes to the Administrative Procedures for Developments Review and the Zoning Ordinance increasing notice requirements to HOAs and Civic Associations to 1 mile in all zones, and East County representation.

The Board asked further questions regarding implementation, possible timeline, and which recommendations will specifically speed up the approval process.

Staff, including Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

**Joint meeting of the Montgomery County Planning Board and Montgomery County Board of Education**

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

**Action:           Discussion.**

The meeting started at 5:45 p.m. The following were in attendance:

**Internal Staff – Montgomery County Planning**

Tanya Stern - Planning  
Robert Kronenberg - Planning  
Atul Sharma - Planning  
Carrie McCarthy - Planning  
Jason Sartori - Planning  
Elza Hisel-McCoy - Planning  
Carrie Sanders - Planning  
Patrick Butler - Planning  
Eli Glazier - Planning  
Hye-Soo Baek - Planning  
Mike Riley - Parks  
Darren Flusche - Parks  
Gary Burnett - Parks  
Artie Harris – Planning Board Chair  
Mitra Pedoeem – Planning Board Vice Chair  
Shawn Bartley - Commissioner  
James Hedrick - Commissioner  
Josh Linden - Commissioner  
Emily Vaias – Legal

**External Staff – MCPS BOE**

Monifa McNight – Superintendent of MCPS  
Karla Silvestre – Board of Education President  
Shebra L. Evans - Board of Education Vice President  
Brenda Wolff - Board Member  
Rebecca Smondrowski - Board Member  
Lynne Harris, Board Member  
Grace Rivera-Oven – Board Member  
Julie Yang - Board Member  
Lori-Christina Web - Chief of Staff for the Board of Education  
Ryvell D. Fitzpatrick - Ombudsperson  
Patricia A. Ursprung - Legislative Affairs Coordinator

Seth Adams - MCPS Associate Superintendent  
Shiho C. Shibasaki, MCPS Assistant Director

## **I. Introductions**

Planning Board Chair Artie Harris welcomed the Board of Education members and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Staff, and expressed enthusiasm to start the annual dinners with the school system once again in order to enhance collaboration and communication between the agencies. Chair Harris then described priorities envisioned as the Planning Board Chair as well as shared goals and opportunities between the Planning Board, the Board of Education, and MCPS.

Board of Education President Karla Silvestre gave opening remarks regarding the collaborative work between the Board of Education and Planning Board, the upcoming boundary study, and the collaborative work between Montgomery Parks and the Board of Education regarding MCPS Athletic Fields.

MCPS Superintendent Dr. Monifa McKnight offered opening remarks regarding the shared opportunities between the Planning Board, Board of Education and MCPS, as well as building on the relationships together.

At this time, the rest of the attendees introduced themselves as well.

## **II. Overview of Coordinated Functions**

Planning, Parks and MCPS discussed the elements of the draft Planning Process Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that has been jointly developed following direction provided by both Boards at the last joint meeting in October 2021. The MOU will provide both Boards with an opportunity to learn more about each agency's respective planning functions and how each engages the others in their processes.

Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy Jason Sartori gave a brief overview of the Planning Process MOU, and stated the MOU has been drafted and is currently undergoing legal review, with copies distributed to all in attendance. Mr. Sartori further noted the MOU was a result of two related efforts including monthly staff coordination meetings and multiagency school design work group meetings.

At this time various members of Montgomery Planning and MCPS offered an overview of the different elements of the MOU:

Chief of MidCounty Planning Carrie Sanders offered comments regarding Article II: Commission Master and Sector Planning of the MOU.

Chief of Park Planning and Stewardship Darren Flusche offered comments regarding Article III: Commission Park Planning Process of the MOU.

MCPS Associate Superintendent Seth Adams Article IV: MCPS Capital Project Process of the MOU

Acting Assistant to the Deputy for Development and Design Review Atul Sharma offered comments regarding Article V: Mandatory Referral Process of the MOU.

Ms. Silvestre asked for confirmation that the MOU brings both Montgomery Planning and MCPS together sooner in order to get projects done and move the process along quicker, and Mr. Sartori offered comments and responses.

Chair Harris asked questions regarding next steps and timeframe to get the MOU signed and moved along. Mr. Sartori and Mr. Adams offered comments and responses regarding current collaboration and implementation.

### **III. MCPS Boundary Study Update**

Mr. Adams offered comments regarding the school boundary process and the multiple upcoming high school boundary studies that will be forthcoming. Mr. Adams stated the boundary studies will evaluate sixteen of the twenty-five high schools in Montgomery County as well as all middle schools associated with those. The upcoming boundary studies will include the reopening of Charles W. Woodward High School scheduled for August 2026, the opening of Crown High School scheduled for August 2027, and the expansion of Damascus High School scheduled for August 2026. Mr. Adams discussed the boundary study process, timing for community engagement and other key milestones associated with each of the boundary studies in greater detail.

Vice Chair Pedoeem asked questions regarding the demographics of the students within the boundary study areas and Mr. Adams offered comments and response.

Dr. McKnight offered comments regarding the boundary studies, community outreach, and planned community engagement between Montgomery Planning and MCPS.

Ms. Silvestre offered comments regarding the importance of the boundary studies in order to maximize seats.

### **IV. Growth and Infrastructure Policy**

Mr. Sartori gave a brief overview of the background of the Growth and Infrastructure Policy, FY2024 school test results, school test trends for FY2021 through FY2024, the scope and timeline for the 2024 update, and the school utilization report.

### **V. Pedestrian Master Plan and Safe Routes to School**

Multimodal Transportation Planner III, Eli Glazier, offered comments regarding the Pedestrian Master Plan, spoke on the status of the Plan with County Council, and highlighted particular key

actions and elements of the Plan that directly pertain to MCPS such as the student survey, and related ongoing coordination efforts.

Mr. Sartori offered further comments regarding the Pedestrian Level of Comfort maps for each of the different schools within the County, and noted the importance in order to determine what may need to be done to further encourage safe pedestrian access to the schools.

Board of Education Member Grace Rivera-Oven asked questions regarding pedestrian safety and the coordination of the of implementation of the Pedestrian Master Plan with MCPS, how the equity lens will be applied, and community engagement. Mr. Glazier and Mr. Sartori offered comments and responses.

Ms. Rivera-Oven offered further comments regarding the breakdown of demographics and geographies of the students who completed the pedestrian survey, as well as need for outreach at the planning level before decisions are made for groups.

## **VI. Equity and the County's Racial Disparities**

MCPS, Planning and Parks highlighted some of their respective plans to understand and address racial disparities across the county, including the MCPS Antiracist System Audit, Thrive Montgomery 2050 and the Equity Agenda for Planning. Planning research staff will also highlight trends in the county's racial and ethnic diversity.

Acting Planning Director Tanya Stern offered comments and a brief overview of how the demographics have changed within Montgomery County from 1960-2020. Ms. Stern also discussed the Racial Equity and Social Justice efforts, the Equity Agenda for Planning implementation, Thrive Montgomery 2050, and tools for equitable community engagement. Ms. Stern also noted how equity is applied internally through the Equity Peer Review Group and mandatory equity training for staff.

Chief of Research and Special Projects Carrie McCarthy gave a brief overview of the data driven approach for equitable engagement that Montgomery Planning does within the community in order to reach people where they are, and described both the Equity Focus Areas Tool and Community Equity Index Tool in greater detail.

Mr. Adams offered remarks on the MCPS Antiracist System Audit and action plan, as well as how it fits into the school facilities, boundary areas, and walk zones.

Ms. Rivera-Oven requested a copy of the presentation and stressed the need for overall safety of children going to school within Montgomery County.

## **VII. Montgomery Parks/MCPS Partnership on Athletic Fields**

Montgomery Parks Director Mike Riley gave an overview and described the partnership of Montgomery Parks and MCPS regarding Athletic Fields. Mr. Riley described the program history which began in FY2000, funding, and current status. Mr. Riley stated 109 of the 125

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elementary/middle schools within MCPS are in the Parks program, and 16 elementary/middle schools remain to be renovated and added to the program. Mr. Riley also listed the schools in FY24-28 that still need to be done, and ended the presentation by showing before and after photographs of Cedar Grove Elementary School and Blair High School field renovations.

Chair Harris, Ms. Silvestre, and Dr. McKnight offered closing remarks regarding collaboration and coordination as well as data sharing between the agencies.

The meeting ended at 7:42 p.m.