

Introduced by: Councilmember Small

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2023-33

**CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC
HEARING DRAFT OF THE MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT
(MONTGOMERY COUNTY)**

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) is a County plan developed by Montgomery County Planning Department, in partnership with the City of Takoma Park, to amend certain elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan (last updated in 2000); and

WHEREAS, the MMPA provides an opportunity to reexamine elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan in respect to unanticipated economic and land use changes; and

WHEREAS, the unexpected relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital opens an opportunity for the City of Takoma Park to consider resources on the campus and surrounding area and recommend changes, including the Washington Adventist University campus, and the multi-family housing areas along Maple Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has been apprised of the MMPA at each step of the process to date, and has reviewed and discussed the proposed draft plan recommendations as presented by Montgomery County Planning in consultation with City of Takoma Park staff; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council supports the re-envisioning of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus and the enhancement of critical civic, economic, and housing resources in the surrounding neighborhoods along the Maple Avenue corridor in a manner that enhances the quality of life of area residents and is environmentally and financially sustainable; and

WHEREAS, the MMPA covers an area within one of the City's most racially diverse communities and consists of a high number of the City's affordable housing units; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the City Council passed Resolution 2019-47, adopting the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan which outlines the City's vision for housing and economic development for the next decade; and

WHEREAS, this plan outlined three overarching goals for future development in the City: preserve existing businesses and affordable housing in Takoma Park, including in

revitalizing areas; produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs; and protect renters, homeowners, and local businesses from discrimination and displacement, and our environment from destruction; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines many strategies to achieve these goals, one of which is to encourage the use of County allowable use and zoning provisions to create and expand housing types that are under-represented in Takoma Park and desired by existing and new residents of various incomes, needs, abilities and family configurations; and

WHEREAS, other City adopted goals, plans, policies, and ordinances address aspects of the Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board will hold a public hearing and accept public comments to hear testimony on the draft recommendations of the MMPA; and

WHEREAS, at the City Council's request, Montgomery Planning set the Public Hearing date for September 14th, and extended the period of the open public record to allow for additional resident feedback; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan and City Council members have held multiple information sessions and listening sessions for residents to ask questions and provide feedback on the plan, including the July 18, 2023 and August 16, 2023 Information Sessions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that per its June 7, 2023 Council Resolution 2023-16 , the City Council continues to request that the Montgomery County Planning Board ensures that the MMPA addresses seven priorities: incentivizing the creation of a range of housing types; retaining and improving existing affordable housing; retaining existing and attracting new local businesses; creating new public space opportunities; strengthening social and environmental factors; continuing community engagement throughout the planning review process; and assessing the impact of increasing residential units and retail on the provision of public services in the plan area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to address the aforementioned priorities, the City Council requires that the Montgomery County Planning Board holds work sessions that critically examine the following topics during development of the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA:

- Topic: Potential Redevelopment of the Washington Adventist Site and the Flower Avenue District
 - How do the development requirements, including set-backs, building heights and step downs, lot coverage and density of the newly proposed zoning for the Washington Adventist site impact neighboring single-family housing? The MMPA should reduce the scale, height, and apply appropriate set-backs of parcels adjoining Maplewood and Greenwood Avenues in order to preserve the character of adjacent single-family housing.
 - What specific public space and public benefits recommendations can be made for the Washington Adventist site? Specifically, how can recommendations on the site address the six key community priorities in the Public Hearing Draft? The Plan should explore recommending inclusion of dedicated public spaces on the site. Additionally, the plan's 35 percent green cover requirement should not mitigate the need for dedicated public space to the benefit of green roofs.
 - Within the green space requirements of the Washington Adventist site development, the MMPA should (1) retain the greenspace at Hospital Hill (i.e., Maplewood Ave and Maple Ave) and (2) increase the recommended ½ acre primary central public open space with a recommended unobstructed opening on Flower Avenue to better preserve the existing central commons on the Washington Adventist site, promote its continuing accessibility to the public, and respect historical legacy of the commons for public health and recreation.
 - What is the appropriate zoning for the Erie Center retail node to meet the MMPA vision of the neighborhood that serves retail without adversely impacting existing single-family homes? MMPA roadway and transit recommendations within the District should allow for local usability of the Center and well-functioning traffic conditions.
 - The MMPA should clearly map the planned dedication and demarcate the allowable line of development on Site 23 abutting Sligo Creek. Any dedication and additional development requirements should preserve the existing native forested area and provide appropriate development setbacks and stormwater requirements to protect the environmental health of the Creek.

- Topic: Promoting a Diversity of Housing in the Plan Area
 - What are the potential impacts of newly proposed zoning on the diversity of housing stock and affordability? The MMPA should recommend that any new units constructed within the Plan area help meet the City’s objectives of increasing the number of units and variety of housing types across the affordability spectrum that result in economically diverse communities.
 - What funding and regulatory recommendations can the MMPA make to ensure stakeholders (City, County, etc.) incentivize and finance the creation and preservation of quality, safe, diverse, and energy efficient housing within the Maple Avenue District?
 - What are the best comparable jurisdictions to Takoma Park with regard to housing density, transit access, geographic location, etc. to the MMPA and how do their zoning densities compare to the proposed MMPA land use?
 - Where appropriate, in the Maple Avenue District, the MMPA should encourage innovative in-fill development opportunities on underutilized portions of parcels that do not adversely impact existing affordable housing units. Given the trade-offs between commercial and housing development, consider alternatives to the proposed 100 percent commercial FAR to promote increased housing creation.
- Topic: Public Space, Infrastructure, and Amenities within the MMPA
 - What is the impact of the density proposed in the Plan on access to and provision of public space, infrastructure, recreational facilities, school capacity, roads, public utilities, and healthcare? How does the MMPA ensure adequate services will be available with the proposed increased population growth, and what mitigating strategies can be considered?
 - Are there specific parcels outside the Municipal District that would be appropriate locations to incentivize the expansion or creation of specific public benefit facilities?
 - The MMPA should include more specific recommendations around the activation and creation of usable greenspace including the activation of the greenspace neighboring Essex House and identification of additional opportunities for ballfields and structured play areas.
 - The plan should clearly support improvements in multi-modal transportation, help meet City and County climate goals, and address the current and future challenges of local vehicle traffic in the plan area.
- Topic: Protecting Existing Housing Affordability in the MMPA
 - How can the MMPA stakeholders retain existing housing affordability while improving the quality of existing stock of housing?

- What protection mechanisms are in place to prevent displacement of current renters in the Maple Avenue District and are additional protections needed in the MMPA?
- How do federal, state, and local policies such as low-income housing tax credits, Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) requirements, rent stabilization, and others advance affordable housing goals in the MMPA, including no-net loss of affordable housing? The MMPA should be more explicit about how its goal of no-net loss of affordable housing, and City housing goals, will be met in this plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council wants the Montgomery County Planning Board to address the following in the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA directly or prior to the advancement of the revised MMPA to the City Council and the Montgomery County Council:

- Include language in the MMPA that explicitly explains how the plan’s recommendations address the Community Priorities identified;
- Provide additional documentation and background information on the Climate Assessment as well as assess the potential impacts of the MMPA on the environment and consider possible mitigating strategies;
- Provide additional information on the race equity impacts and how they were developed;
- Provide additional details on resident engagement during the development of the MMPA’s vision, including outreach to residents along Maple Avenue;
- Provide additional information on how existing tree coverage in the MMPA along with future development requirements will help meet the goal of 60% tree canopy coverage throughout the entire City;
- Work with City staff to demonstrate alignment of the MMPA with City of Takoma Park adopted plans and policies, including: the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the 2019 declaration of climate emergency, the 2020 Climate Action Framework, the City’s Rent Stabilization ordinances, the City’s Racial Equity Initiative, and City policies and ordinances related to stormwater, tree canopy, safe streets, and City right-of-way;
- Address forthcoming additional list of City edits and corrections to the text of the MMPA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the development of the Planning Board Draft Plan, the City Council will endeavor to hold work sessions on the following topics related to the MMPA:

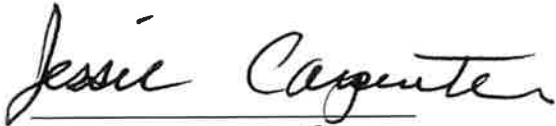
- School facilities within the MMPA area and the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) site selection and school construction process;
- Current state of housing within the Maple Avenue District and ways to achieve City housing goals for protection and preservation; including rehabilitation needs, partnerships, and financing opportunities;
- The County’s development review process and how the City can play a role in influencing future development;

- The Montgomery County Mapping Segregation project and how the results may advance race equity in the City including the elimination of racial restrictive covenants and street renaming.

Adopted by the Takoma Park City Council this 13th day of September, 2023.

AYES: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Honzak
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Seamens, Small

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessie Carpenter". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk