



MCPB Item # 6  
October 26, 2023

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** October 19, 2023

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *Michael F. Riley*  
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director, Administration *Miti*  
Gary Burnett, Deputy Director, Operations *Gary Burnett*  
Andrew Frank, Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD) *Andrew Frank*

**FROM:** Brenda Sandberg, Real Estate Management Supervisor, PDD *B. Sandberg*

**SUBJECT:** Land Acquisition Recommendation: 11611 Old Georgetown Road  
Jemal's Norman EMCO LLC c/o Douglas Development Corp  
40,630 sf, more or less, improved

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the following action by the Montgomery County Planning Board:

Approve MCPB Resolution No. 23-100 for the acquisition of 11611 Old Georgetown Road property to create the new White Flint Civic Green for a negotiated purchase price of \$10,400,000, to be funded out of the Legacy Urban Space capital project using State Program Open Space grant funds.

A draft of Resolution #23-100 is attached.

## SUMMARY

This acquisition will combine with a smaller parcel, which is being dedicated to Parks in a functional interim park condition by an adjacent development project, to create the White Flint Civic Green as proposed in the 2010 White Flint Sector Plan. The intent of this Civic Green is to serve a rapidly growing urban center with a central public gathering space. The future park will provide residents and visitors to this community with amenities and spaces that will accommodate major outdoor activities, public events, gatherings, and celebrations. The park will also support casual everyday use, interpretation of the nearby Josiah Henson Park, and provide linkages to other parks and open spaces in White Flint. Located at 11611 Old Georgetown Road, right across from the Pike & Rose development, this near 1-acre lot owned by Douglas Development is improved with a freestanding commercial building currently leased by two tenants. The seller has agreed to a purchase price of \$10,400,000 with a target settlement prior to the end of 2023.

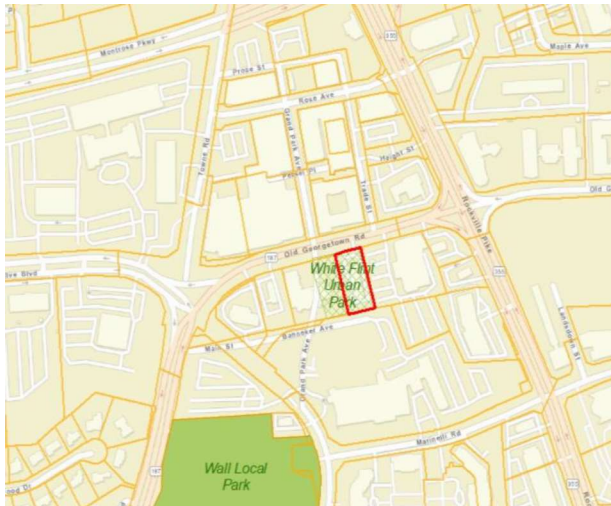
## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

### Description

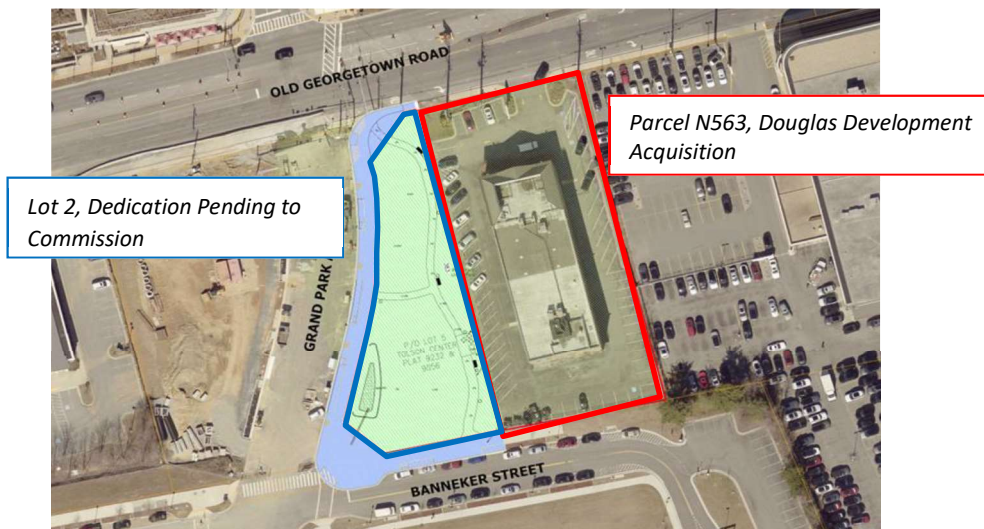
The subject property is located at 11611 Old Georgetown Road, identified as Tax Map GQ62, Parcel N563, Tax ID 04-00049233 and contains approximately 0.93 acres or 40,630 square feet. The subject site is zoned CR-4.0 C-2.0 R-3.5 H-250 (Commercial Residential) and lies within the White Flint Sector Plan area.

The site is improved with a 23,280 square-foot freestanding retail building built in 1969 with paved parking areas and is currently occupied by two tenants. The property fronts on Old Georgetown Road to the north and Banneker Street to the south, providing the public access and visibility necessary for an urban park.

West of this property lies "Lot 2," a property that is dedicated to the Commission as a condition of Preliminary Plan 12019016A (see Figure 2). Per Site Plan 820220040, the 21,476 sf Lot 2 will be delivered to Parks in an improved condition to serve as an interim park until the complete park on both parcels is designed and constructed in the future. Including this new acquisition and the dedicated Lot 2, the total size of the new White Flint Civic Green will be 1.43 acres.



**Figure 1: Vicinity Map, 11611 Old Georgetown Road, Douglas Development Property**



**Figure 2: Lot 2 (Developer Dedication) and Douglas Development**



**Figure 3: Front and Rear Views, Commercial Building and Parking**

## **POLICY RATIONALE AND PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The acquisition of this parcel supports current efforts to create new urban parks to serve the changing demographics of Montgomery County.

### **2022 PROS Plan and THRIVE Montgomery 2050**

These two policy documents showcase how great places with equitable access to opportunities produce strong communities and people. THRIVE uses a placemaking-first approach to inspire people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces at the heart of every community. The 2022 Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan focuses on providing equitably activated, central community spaces that meet recreational needs, and protecting and managing natural and cultural resources for future generations. The PROS Plan has a special focus on addressing park needs in our most dense communities. This new park at a central location within a growing dense community is in alignment with the policies and goals of both PROS and THRIVE.

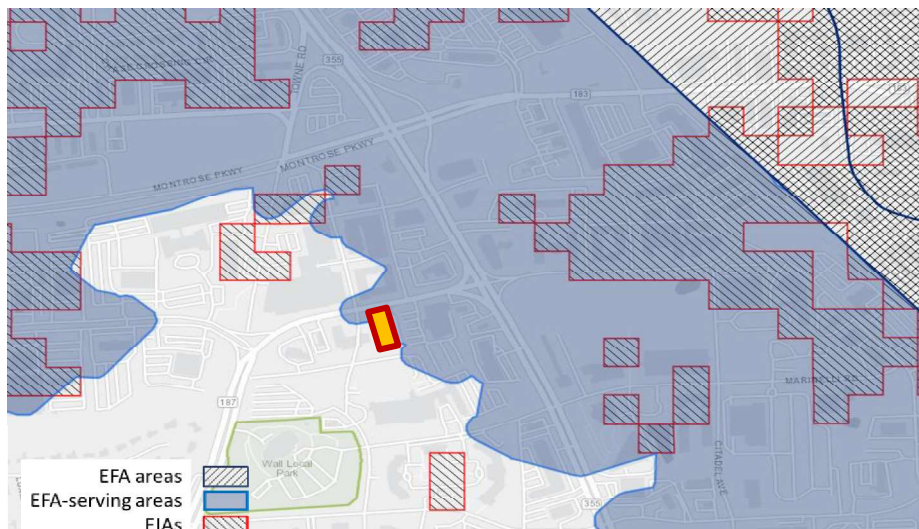
### **Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS)**

The 2018 *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan* (EPS FMP) directed urban park efforts toward creating parks and public spaces within walking distance so people can gather, play and be in touch with the outdoors in our urbanizing communities. The White Flint community is located within the Energized Public Spaces (EPS) Study Area that includes the down-county and the developing corridors with the most density in the County (primarily I-270, U.S. 29, and Georgia/New Hampshire Avenues). The EPS FMP developed a data-driven GIS-based tool to measure the amenities within public parks and publicly available private open space that are within walking distance of any given location within the EPS Study Area. The tool also measures the supply of amenities in three broad categories – active, contemplative, and social gathering – to provide input to more specific park needs in each community.

The newest version of this analytical tool can be used to develop fine-grained maps of *Experience Improvement Areas (EIAs)*, locations where residents and workers have fewer public amenities to access near their homes and workplaces. Analysis indicates that the location of this proposed park is surrounded by areas that need more park experiences to serve the current population, even before taking into account the growing population in White Flint, making this proposed park an ideal location for a new urban park (see Figure 4).

### Equity Focus Areas

In addition to being in a location that can help meet the measured need for more amenities, this acquisition will provide a new public park within an EFA-serving area (area within walking distance of an Equity Focus Area) as illustrated on Figure 4. Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) were determined by the Planning Department using demographic data to identify parts of the County that should be considered a priority for providing public services including parks.



**Figure 4: Experience Improvement Areas (EIAs) and EFA-Serving Areas near White Flint Civic Green**

### 2010 White Flint Sector Plan

In 2010, the White Flint Sector Plan recommended creation of a new Civic Green of 1 – 2 acres to be designed as a central public space in this rapidly developing urban core (see Figure 5). The master plan goals for this recommended new park include:

- Creating a large, public civic space that complements the smaller privately owned public spaces (POPS) located in developments throughout White Flint
- Providing open, green space to support community activities and special events, plus informal social and recreational activities
- Activating the public space to draw people from surrounding areas to participate in events
- Providing opportunities for interpretation of Josiah Henson and increasing visibility of the significant museum a short walk away

The purchase of the Douglas Development property combined with the dedication of Lot 2 will provide the necessary land to implement this critical parks and open space recommendation in the White Flint Sector Plan.



Map 49: Existing and Proposed Public Use Space System and Recreation Loop

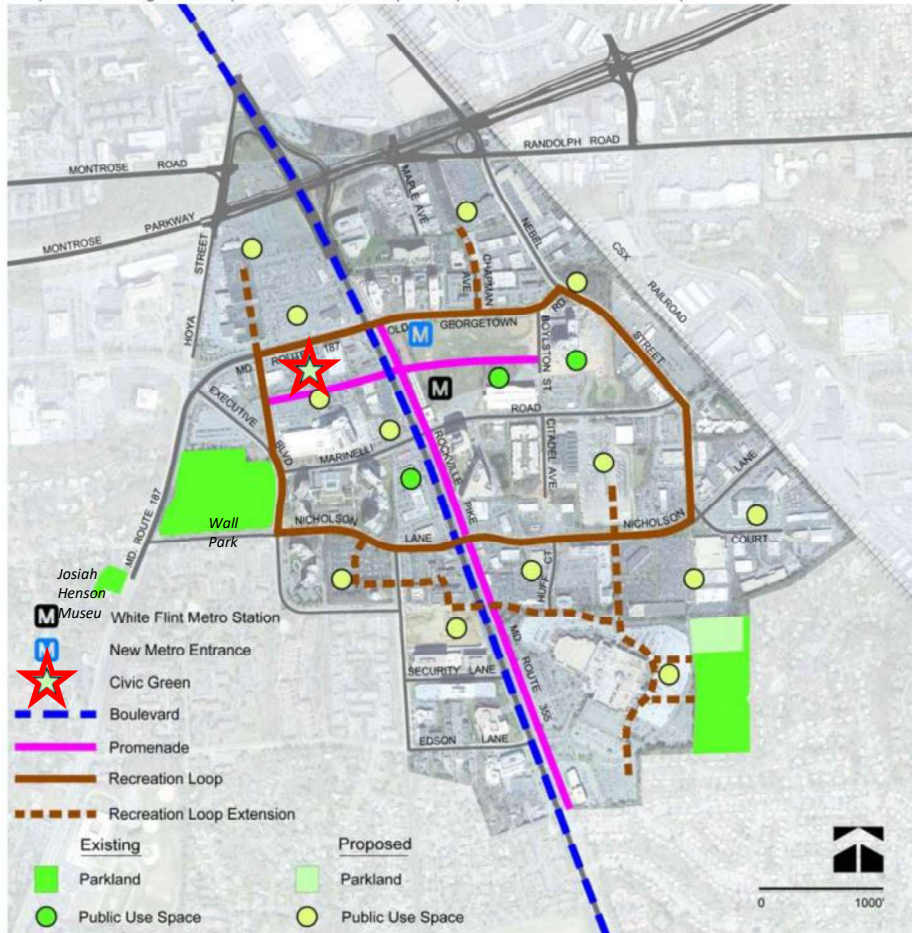


Figure 5: White Flint Sector Plan, Map 49 with proposed location of Civic Green



Figure 6: White Flint Civic Green Concept Sketch, January 2023

## **PARK CONCEPT**

As described in the White Flint Sector Plan, the White Flint Civic Green is intended to provide a central gathering place for people across the White Flint area. The *Energized Public Spaces Design Guidelines* (2019) defines these spaces as “formally planned, flexible, and programmed open spaces that serve as places for informal gathering, quiet contemplation, or large special events.” A signature amenity in such a “civic green” could be a large central lawn that serves multiple purposes. Additional key features recommended for this type of urban park include an abundance of seating, areas of shade and sun, public art that invites interaction and education, and other amenities to support everyday use and special programming. The Sector Plan also recommends this park include educational signage about Josiah Henson and directions to the Josiah Henson Museum only a short walk away down Old Georgetown Road.

The half-acre Lot 2 is being conveyed to Parks with open grass, paths, and benches to provide a functional park on this site during the interim period until the full one-and-a-half-acre park can be designed and constructed on both parcels. Figure 6 demonstrates a concept example for future development of the full park site.

## **OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (OBI) & START UP COSTS**

During the period between acquisition and development of the new park, the building will remain occupied by the tenants and the property will be managed by the Property Management Section, Facilities Management Division, and other Parks units as appropriate. Revenue from the tenants will support operating expenditures to manage the property during this post-closing period, so no additional OBI is anticipated for the initial years after acquisition.

While converting this property into the central civic green for White Flint is a priority urban park project, the development of this significant park would be implemented in phases overtime. The post-closing phase provides an opportunity to conduct outreach, planning, and design for the overall park on all 1.5 acres while the acquisition site is still in productive private use. Demolition and site cleanup will also be planned during the post-closing period. Estimated cost for planning and interim park condition design work is about \$400,000, and site demolition implementation is estimated at about \$500,000. It is anticipated that the significant rental revenue from this property would provide most of the funds necessary for site cleanup and interim park design, with the rest provided by existing funding in CIP level-of-effort projects.

Once the tenants vacate the property, demolition and interim park creation will proceed and facility planning for the ultimate park condition could begin using available LOE capital funds and other sources. The ultimate park development of an urban park would require a stand-alone capital project with dedicated funding in future years. Costs for construction and operating budget impacts for either the interim or the ultimate park conditions will be addressed through future operating budget and CIP approvals. Developer contributions to the Mid-County Parks Benefit Payment PDF, which covers the White Flint Sector Plan area, may be available to support any of the phases of creating this important urban park.

## **CONCLUSION**

Real Estate Management staff are pleased to bring this urban park acquisition to the Planning Board for approval. Acquisition of the Douglas Development property will create a vibrant central civic space for the White Flint community and provide park amenities within walking distance to a growing population.

CC: Gary Burnett  
Trish Swann  
Darryl McSwain  
Kenny Black  
Kristi Williams  
Megan Chung

**MCPB No. 23-100**

**Acquisition: 11611 Old Georgetown Road**

**Seller: Jemal's Norman EMCO LLC**

**Project: White Flint Civic Green**

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission ("Commission") is authorized by Md. Code Ann., Land Use §17-101 (formerly Article 28, Section 5-101), to acquire, develop, maintain and operate a public park system within the Maryland-Washington Metropolitan District; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board received and considered a recommendation from staff of the Commission, in closed session on October 19, 2023, that it approve the acquisition of 11611 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville, Maryland, identified as Tax Map GQ62, Parcel N563, Tax ID No. 04-00049233 ("Property"), containing approximately 0.93 acres or 40,630 square feet, from Jemal's Norman EMCO, LLC ("Seller"). The Property is improved with a 23,280 square-foot freestanding retail building leased by Piano Gallery, Inc. and Pacific Operating Company, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the Property meets parkland acquisition criteria to create the White Flint Civic Green as envisioned in the 2010 White Flint Sector Plan and will provide a vibrant central civic space for the growing White Flint community; and

WHEREAS, there are sufficient State Program Open Space grant funds available in the Legacy Urban Space capital project account to pay the \$10,400,000 negotiated purchase price for the Property; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the acquisition of the Property from the Seller as described above, for a purchase price of \$10,400,000, in accordance with a proposed Land Purchase Agreement between the Commission and Seller, is hereby approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2023 and the Executive Director is authorized to execute said Agreement on behalf of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

*[AUTHORIZATION APPEARS ON THE NEXT PAGE]*

**MCPB No. 23-100**

**Acquisition of 11611 Old Georgetown Road from  
Jemal’s Norman EMCO LLC for the White Flint Civic Green**

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This is to certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, with \_\_\_\_\_ voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, October 26, 2023 in Wheaton, Maryland.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Artie Harris, Chair

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

M-NCPPC Legal Department

Date: \_\_\_\_\_