

# **Montgomery County Planning Board**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED  
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY

**Thursday, November 2, 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, November 2, 2023, beginning at 10:06 a.m. and adjourning at 7:57 p.m.

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

Items 1 through 5 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

The Planning Board recessed for lunch and voted at 12:17 p.m. to convene in Closed Session via Microsoft Teams and in person to discuss Item 7 on the motion of Vice Chair Pedoeem, seconded by Commissioner Hedrick with Chair Harris, Vice Chair Pedoeem, and Commissioners Bartley, Hedrick, and Linden voting in favor of the motion. The meeting was closed under the authority of Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(7) & (8), to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice; and, consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

Also present for the meeting was Deputy General Counsel Michael Aniton; Principal Counsel Ben Rupert; Principal Counsel Emily Vaias; Bruce Marcus of MarcusBonsib, LLC; Sydney Patterson of MarcusBonsib, LLC; and Technical Writer Rachel Roehrich of the Office of General Counsel.

In Closed Session, the Board held discussion regarding potential litigation. The Closed Session began at 12:59 p.m. and ended at 2:00 p.m.

The Planning Board also voted at 12:18 p.m. to convene in Closed Session via Microsoft Teams and in person to discuss Item 6 on the motion of Vice Chair Pedoeem, seconded by Commissioner Hedrick with Chair Harris, Vice Chair Pedoeem, and Commissioners Bartley, Hedrick, and Linden, voting in favor of the motion. 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.

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Also present for the meeting was Principal Counsel Emily Vaias of the Office of General Counsel, and the Interviewees.

In Closed Session, the Board discussed the Parks Director position. The Closed Session began at 2:07 p.m. and ended at 6:00 p.m.

The Planning Board reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 6:50 p.m. for a joint dinner meeting with the Montgomery County Planning Board and Historic Preservation Commission as reported in the attached Minutes.

Commissioners Hedrick and Linden were necessarily absent from the joint dinner meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, November 9, 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. 2115 East Jefferson Street Preliminary Plan No. 120230100 – MCPB No. 23-104
2. 2115 East Jefferson Street Site Plan No. 820230080 – MCPB No. 23-105
3. 2115 East Jefferson Street Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230220 – MCPB No.23-106

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**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)**

**Subdivision Plat No. 220230480, Montco Addition to Damascus**

RE-2C zone; 2 lots; located on the north side of Bethesda Church Road, approximately 2,800 feet west of Ridge Road (MD 27); Damascus Master Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval*

**Subdivision Plat No. 220240150 Creekside at Cabin Branch**

RNC zone; 3 lots, 1 parcel; 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:** Pedoeem/Bartley

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

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

**Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)**

**Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center & MHP-Amherst Sketch Extension Request No 1: Request to extend the regulatory review period for Mandatory Referral N0. MR2023015 and Sketch Plan No. 320230030 for two months, from October 24, 2023 to December 24, 2023.**

A. Mandatory Referral MR2023015: Show the site selection of the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center (“WACC”) and the corresponding disposition of the land at 11507 Georgia Avenue.

B. Sketch Plan 320230030: Request to build two mixed use buildings and 39 townhouses; establishes the location of the future WACC on the site; creates new roads, opens spaces and amenity areas; and shows the location of the future parkland. The overall density is 1.58 FAR for a total of 470,000 sq. ft. to include 420,000 sq.ft. of residential uses (including a minimum of 25% MPDUs) and 55,000 sq.ft. of commercial uses residential uses; on approximately 6.14 acres. CR-2.0, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-75; located within the Wheaton Downtown Area, north of Blueridge Avenue, and extends from Georgia Avenue on the west and Elkins Street on the east; within the 2012 Approved and Adopted Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan area.

*Staff recommendation: Approval of the extension request*

T. Leftwich

**Brickyard Estates: Administrative Subdivision Plan No. 620230150 & Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230390 – Regulatory Extension Request No. 2 - Request to extend the regulatory review period from November 2, 2023, to January 25, 2024.**

Application to create three lots for three single-family detached units; located at 7601 Brickyard Road, Potomac; RE-2 zone; 6.64 acres; 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan.

*Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request*

A. Duprey

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Bartley

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

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

**Item 4. Conditional Use No. CU202402: Axcobar Tree Care (Public Hearing)**

A. Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230310: Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan

B. Conditional Use No. CU202402: Request to transmit comments to the Hearing Examiner on a conditional use application to operate a Landscape Contractor pursuant to Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance Sections 59-7.3.1.E (General Conditions) and 59.3.5.5 (Specific Conditions) at 20108 Zion Road, Gaithersburg; R-200 Zone; 2005 Olney Master Plan.

*Staff recommendation: Approval of the Forest Conservation Plan with conditions. Approval of the Conditional Use with conditions and transmittal of comments to the Hearing Examiner.*

J. Penn

**A. BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Bartley

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan 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.

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

**Action:** Approved staff recommendation to transmit recommendations to the Hearing Examiner regarding the Conditional Use request cited above, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

Joshua Penn, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Axcobar Tree Care. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 20, 2023.

Mr. Penn described the background, vicinity, and property area. Mr. Penn stated the property is improved with a single-family residential structure, a gravel contractor's area, and is mostly open with approximately 0.81 acres of forest onsite. The business provides tree services including: tree cut down/removal, stump grinding, wood removal, yard cleaning, lot clearing, storm damage service, and emergency tree removal/assistance. Mr. Penn noted the Applicant will have no retail sales or nursery operation, and therefore, no customers will visit the site.

Mr. Penn discussed Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230310, noting the Applicant is proposing to remove 0.53 acres of forest, and the planting requirement will be met onsite.

Sean Hughes of Miller, Miller, and Canby offered comments on behalf of the Applicant and noted agreement to all conditions. Mr. Hughes offered further comments regarding land usage, hours of operation, number of trips both on and off the property, and noted all work is done off-site.

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Michael Norton of Norton Land Design offered comments regarding the forest conservation onsite.

The Board asked questions regarding removal of forest, usage, hours of operation, number of trips onto and out of the property, proposed trees between Zion Road and the parking lot, and additional landscaping at the entrance of the property.

Staff, including Chief of Upcounty Planning Patrick Butler, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

**Item 5. Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment Work Session 2**

M. Williams

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**

**Vote:**

**Other:**

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

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Chief of Downcounty Planning, offered comments regarding the Takoma Park City Council recommendations as well as the Takoma Park Resolution. Mr. Hisel-McCoy also gave an overview and timeline of specific topics for the upcoming work sessions.

Melissa Williams, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Work Session Number 2 for the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted on the Planning Board website under the agenda for November 2, 2023.

Ms. Williams gave an overview of topics to be discussed during Work Session Number 2 which included: edits from the October 19, 2023 work session as well as proposed language, and review of the Chapter 3 Plan-wide recommendations for Connectivity, Environment, Housing, and Parks, Trails, and Open Space.

**October 19, 2023 edits and proposed language**

*Equity – proposed language*

Ms. Williams discussed and displayed the proposed language for Equity 1.2 (page 9). The Board offered comments regarding rent-burdened households. Staff, including Chief of Downcounty Planning Elza Hisel-McCoy, offered comments and responses.

The Board agreed by consensus to the proposed language.

*Key Takeaways Graphic– proposed language*

Ms. Williams discussed the proposed language for the Key Takeaways graphic on page 11.

The Board and staff held further discussion regarding changes to language including: removal of percentage regarding open space requirement for the public amenities on Washington Adventist Campus; additional language of environmental sensitive development adjacent to parks language to the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park; additional language for affordable housing on the Washington Adventist Campus to allow for a flexible mixed-use zone to accommodate MPDU's and other affordable housing, and changing the wording of "character" to "characteristics".



*Green Promenade Language 3.2.1.1*

Ms. Williams stated clarity was requested regarding implementation of the Green Promenade and the following proposed language was added “This process does not preclude the City of Takoma Park from constructing it in its entirety as a Capital Improvement Project.”

The Board asked if implementation of the Green Promenade should be limited to one entity, and staff offered comments and responses.

Staff will discuss recommendation language again and bring back before the Board in a future work session.

**Policy Area Transportation Analysis**

Ms. Williams then discussed testimony received regarding the Policy Area Transportation Analysis, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff’s response.

**Staff Response:** Staff does not recommend a text change. The Board agreed with staff’s recommendation.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments regarding the policy area traffic analysis and noted project specific transportation analysis will be conducted as part of the development review process.

The Board offered comments regarding the transportation analysis addresses implications for the future not existing or current challenges.

The Board asked questions regarding existing traffic problems and if so, how are the problems addressed. Staff, including Multimodal Transportation Supervisor Dave Anspacher, offered comments and responses.

**Reconnected**

*Bicycle Network*

Ms. Williams gave an overview of a map portraying the existing and proposed bicycle network. Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff’s response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff’s recommendation.

*Pedestrian Network*

Ms. Williams gave an overview of a map portraying the existing and proposed pedestrian network. Ms. Williams also discussed the Pedestrian Network recommendations including: providing contiguous, unobstructed, ADA accessible sidewalks on both sides of all streets within the Plan Area; upgrading all intersections with high-visibility continental crosswalk markings for all pedestrian approaches; and reducing the number of driveway entrances along Maple Avenue to minimize conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and vehicles. Ms. Williams also discussed the

testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended.

The Board asked regarding pedestrian usage of separate bike/of street paths not labeled as shared use and the elimination of driveways.

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

The Board offered suggestions regarding off street trails safe for pedestrians should be added to both the Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Network maps, and Staff agreed.

### *Roadway Network*

Ms. Williams gave an overview of a map portraying the existing street classifications and discussed the recommendations including: all new private streets must be designed consistent with the Complete Streets Design Guide and be open to the public; realignment of the intersection of Sligo Creek Parkway and Maple Avenue to a standard cross intersection would improve safety as part of Vision Zero; dedication of additional right-of-way on the north side of Carroll Avenue west of the intersection with Flower Avenue to accommodate an SHA capital project, improving existing roadways to implement the guidance of the Complete Streets Design Guide; and supporting the City's ongoing Maple Avenue Connectivity Project as the interim condition for the roadway. Ms. Williams discussed the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

### *Street Section – Maple Avenue*

Ms. Williams discussed the testimony received, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

### *Transportation Recommendation*

Ms. Williams stated no additional transit options are recommended, although the Plan does recommend upgrading the remaining unfurnished bus stops by making them ADA compliant and adding shelters and seating. Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Proposed Language for Transit page 50:** The Plan recommends improved, comfortable and efficient connections to existing and planned transit facilities, and nearby activity centers within the plan area.

The Board asked questions regarding whether the Plan showed a graphic of both existing and new connections.

Staff discussed potential graphic/map with transit and connectivity within the Plan area with layered service of existing and proposed transit. The map will be brought back before the Board in a future work session.

#### *Non-Auto Driver Mode Share*

Ms. Williams discussed the Plan recommendation stating the Plan confirms the goals of the Growth and Infrastructure Policy (GIP) for the Plan Area by setting a Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) goal of 48 percent for residential and commercial development.

Ms. Williams noted no specific testimony was received.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

#### **Resilient**

Ms. Williams discussed the Plan recommendations for Extreme Heat and Tree Canopy and Green Cover in greater detail, as well as the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** Individual tree protection is reliant on the City Tree Ordinance and the Forest Conservation Law; impervious cover will be reduced due to green cover requirements; requirements for new development may increase open space and tree planting outside of the campus; and retaining the existing park green open space.

**Proposed Language for Heat and Tree Canopy 3.3.1.1 (page 54):** "Consistent with the City's goals of 60 percent tree canopy throughout the entire city, the plan proposes achieving 60 percent tree canopy coverage for the overall plan area on both public and private property"

The Board asked questions regarding potential to attain the 60 percent goal, requirements for a green roof, and if a green roof would count towards open space requirements.

Staff, including Planner III Tina Schneider, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board agreed with staff's recommendations and proposed language.

#### *Carbon Sequestration*

Ms. Williams discussed the Plan's recommendations to increase carbon sequestration within the Plan area in greater detail as well as the testimony received, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

*Water Quality and Stormwater*

Ms. Williams discussed the Plan's recommendations to reduce stormwater runoff and its negative effects within the Plan area in greater detail as well as the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

*Buildings and Energy*

Ms. Williams stated the Plan recommendations encourage new development and improvement of existing development to exceed the County's minimum energy standards and strive for net zero buildings. Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

The Board asked if the County sets the energy efficient standards, and staff offered comments and responses.

*Food Security*

Ms. Williams stated the Plan recommendations support access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food by making commercial food kitchens, food processing, and rooftop farms permitted uses in the Plan area; and expanding existing food distribution services such as those provided by the Montgomery County Food Council.

Ms. Williams noted no specific testimony was received.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

*Environmental Equity 3.3.1.6*

Ms. Williams stated The Plan recommends public and private investment in enhanced access to parks, open space, community gardens, and local healthy food production and recommends the expansion of available tools to identify and address local environmental inequities. Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received, general concerns, and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No text changes are recommended.

The Board asked what the Plan states regarding flood control.

Staff offered comments and responses regarding the potential for increase of pervious surfaces and stormwater management.

Staff suggested adding a sentence regarding the potential for redevelopment reducing impervious surfaces and also stated no new graphic would be needed. The Board agreed.

*Climate Assessment*

Ms. Williams discussed the testimony received, general comments, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** The Climate Assessment will be completed by staff upon the approval of the Public Hearing Draft as the Planning Board Draft and as required by law, it will be transmitted to the County Council at least seven days prior to their public hearing. Ms. Williams further noted no text change is proposed and a draft will not be provided prior to approval of the Public Hearing Draft.

The Board asked if the climate assessment is happening currently, and staff offered comments and responses.

The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

*Parks, Trails, and Open Space*

Ms. Williams noted specific recommendations will be discussed during the District recommendations. Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received, general concerns, the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions and Staff's response.

**Staff Response:** No specific text changes are recommended.

The Board asked questions regarding potential opportunities to increase parks or purchase areas for parkland especially including the Washington Adventist Campus, and potential activation next to the Essex House, and further explanation of a food forest.

Staff, including Park Planner III Charles Kines, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board further suggested adding Sligo Creek Trail to both the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network map listing, as well as showing access to the parks, trails, and open space. Staff offered comments and responses suggesting a layered graphic including connectivity improvements on top of the parks, trails, and open space map. Mr. Hisel-McCoy noted map 8 on page 41 and map 7 on page 37 also show the pedestrian and bicycle connections as well.

Ms. Williams confirmed no additional language was needed and the Board agreed to refer to the graphics/maps noted by Mr. Hisel-McCoy within the text.

Lastly, Ms. Williams discussed the future work session schedule.

**Item 7.        CLOSED SESSION**

According to MD ANN Code, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(7), to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice; and (8) consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. Topic: Potential litigation.

E.Vaias/B.Rupert

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:**        **Pedoeem/Hedrick**

**Vote:**         **5-0**

**Other:**

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

**Item 6. 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: Park's Director Position

E. Vaias

**BOARD ACTION**

**Motion:** Pedoeem/Hedrick

**Vote:** 5-0

**Other:**

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

**Joint meeting of the Montgomery County Planning Board and Historic Preservation Commission**

Artie L. Harris, Chair, Planning Board  
Mitra Pedoeem, Vice Chair, Planning Board  
Shawn Bartley, Commissioner, Planning Board  
Ilana Branda, Chief of Staff, Commissioners' Office  
Jason Sartori, Incoming Director, Montgomery County Planning

Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Supervisor  
John Liebertz, Planner  
Dan Bruechert, Planner  
Brian Crane, Planner  
Michael Kyne, Planner  
Kevin Manarolla, Planning Tech

Robert K. Sutton, Historic Preservation Commission Chair  
Karen Burditt, Historic Preservation Commission Vice Chair  
Jeffrey Hains, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
Cristina Radu, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
Julie Pelletier, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
James Doman, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
J. Michael Galway, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
Zara Naser, Historic Preservation Commission Member  
Marc Dominianni, Historic Preservation Commission Member

The meeting started at 6:50 p.m.

**Introductions of Board Members, Commissioners, and Staff**

Planning Board Chair Artie Harris offered opening remarks and highlighted four key objectives of the Montgomery County Planning Board including: accelerating housing production (especially affordable housing), advance regional collaboration and coordination, implement Thrive Montgomery 2050, and implement the Montgomery Parks PROS Plan.

Historic Preservation Commission Chair Robert K. Sutton offered remarks regarding the opportunity for the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), the Planning Board, and the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) to work together through planning and preservation to make the County and community more livable and interesting.

Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Supervisor, gave brief opening remarks and stated the examples shown during the presentation will highlight the work of the HPC, Planning Board, and HPO.

At this time, the remaining members of the HPC, Planning Board, and HPO gave brief introductions and backgrounds.



### **Roles and Responsibilities of the HPC, Planning Board, and Historic Preservation Office**

Ms. Ballo explained the roles and responsibilities of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), the Montgomery County Planning Board, and the Montgomery Planning Historic Preservation Office (HPO) in greater detail.

Ms. Ballo noted the Historic Preservation Office staffs both the HPC and Planning Board and described a few notable roles including applying for grant funding for HPO special projects as well as funding in partnership with other preservation partners, participating in County Executive mandated training for Boards, Commissions, and Committees, and administering historic preservation easements on behalf of Montgomery County.

### **Historic Preservation & Thrive Montgomery 2050**

#### *A. Racial Equity & Social Justice*

Ms. Ballo spoke about recently listed and upcoming Master Plan Historic Sites including The Pien House in Potomac, Heffner Park Community Center in Takoma Park, and the Edward U. Taylor School in Boyds. Ms. Ballo also noted the HPO will focus on designating more historic sites with African American and Native American heritage as well.

Ms. Ballo described the rehabilitation of the Scotland AME Zion Church, which the HPO has helped to manage throughout the process in response to the flood damage by successfully applying for a \$290,000 in grant funding, organizing internal permitting and regulatory groups, participating in weekly construction meetings, managing the grants on behalf of the Church, and partnering to add the property to the Montgomery Heritage Area.

Ms. Ballo noted other projects the HPO have either spearheaded or been involved with that include: the Mapping Segregation Project, LGBTQ+ Heritage and Capital Pride in Washington D.C., a collaborative effort with M-NCPPC/Montgomery Planning, Preservation Maryland, City of Baltimore, and the Maryland Historical Trust for an abridged publication of “Planting the Rainbow Flag”, the Robert Coggin House National Register Listing, the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Project, Remarkable Montgomery: Untold Stories, and the Street and Park Facilities Naming Review Project.

#### *B. Environmental Resilience*

Ms. Ballo discussed the solar panel policy and approvals as well as the innovative ways historic properties have installed solar technology. Ms. Ballo state the Solar Panel Policy was adopted in 2020 as well as the Illustrated Guidelines issued in 2021. Ms. Ballo noted the HPC released a statement stating “The HPC is committed to safeguarding our heritage and protecting our environmental resources. In response to the Council’s resolution, the HPC released a policy statement that provided the framework for the expanded installation of solar technology in Master Plan Historic Sites and Historic Districts in January 2020.” To date, the HPC has approved 98 solar projects from 2018-2023, and the HPC has never denied a solar project.

Ms. Ballo stated another environmental resilience initiative the HPO has been involved with in partnership with Takoma Park includes Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which are approved by the HPC. Ms. Ballo noted ADUs have been approved in almost every historic district within the beltway within the last 10 years, and a series of webinars have been developed to help homeowners understand the steps needed to get an ADU approved.

Planning Board Vice Chair Mitra Pedoeem asked if the ADUs have to follow specific characteristics of the historic district to match other historic resources on a property.

Historic Preservation Commission Vice Chair Karen Burditt offered comments and responses regarding ADUs, stating the ADU needs to meet the specific historic district guidelines, but there can also be obvious differences between the original historic resource and the ADU. Ms. Burditt offered further comments regarding solar panels and elements used on historic sites as well.

Ms. Ballo also showed a slide of the Spencer Carr House Master Plan Historic Site Solar Array, which was the first solar array approved by the HPC. Ms. Ballo noted the HPC approved the whole solar array in one meeting.

Chair Harris asked if the Spencer Carr house was located within the Agricultural Reserve, and Ms. Burditt noted the Spencer Carr house is actually located in East County.

### *C. Economic Competitiveness*

Ms. Ballo discussed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 22-06 which was one initiative that expanded the allowable uses of certain designated historic properties. Examples of historic properties that could benefit from the ZTA included the Oakdale Community Church in Olney, Bethesda Community Store in Bethesda, and the Locust Grove/Magruder House in Bethesda. Ms. Ballo noted the Oakdale Community Church ignited the conversation to expand commercial uses within designated historic properties through requesting the opening of a coffee house within the Church.

Chair Harris asked if the coffee house within the Oakdale Community Church ever opened, and Ms. Ballo stated it has not.

Ms. Ballo noted another example of economic competitiveness is the Hammer Hill Day Care approved project in Clarksburg, and showed illustrative pictures of the modern design within the historic setting.

Vice Chair Pedoeem offered comments regarding the visual effects of a new modern building to an historic structure, and Ms. Burditt offered comments and responses.

Michael Kyne, Planner, also offered comments regarding the design and materials of the Hammer Hill Day Care project.

At this time, a short video was shown highlighting the Flower Theater Rehabilitation project in Silver Spring, which is ongoing. Ms. Ballo stated the Flower Theater is a designated Master Plan

Historic Site, and the HPO has been working with Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) to apply for a state grant to fully rehab the signage. Ms. Ballo stated the neon sign will be restored, the stone will be cleaned, and the marquee will be completely rehabilitated.

Ms. Burditt noted the Flower Theater will also be a stop on the National Trust for Historic Preservation Tour.

### **Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation**

Ms. Ballo explained the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits program. The program was created in 1984 and offers a 25 percent credit on County property taxes for eligible expenses. Ms. Ballo noted there were 144 Applications in 2023 for over \$4 million in eligible expenses. Ms. Ballo then described eligible examples for work to the historic properties and ineligible examples, noting interior work performed is not eligible. The work must be performed by a licensed contractor and Ms. Ballo gave examples of work that must be certified by the HPC. One site highlighted was the National Park Seminary in Silver Spring.

### **Prioritizing Surveys of Potential Historic Sites & Districts**

Ms. Ballo stated prioritizing surveys of potential Historic Sites and Districts is a topic that is a real priority for the HPC and HPO offices. Ms. Ballo stated that it has to do with sites that are still listed on the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites, and noted there are 130 individually listed sites most of which are located within the Agricultural Reserve. Ms. Ballo stated there are also 13 districts that are located on the Locational Atlas as well.

Chair Sutton offered comments regarding the need for the HPC to prioritize looking into as many of the listed sites as possible as many have been listed since the 70's without follow up. Vice Chair Burditt offered further comments regarding the sites and need for funding, stating a continual small funding every year to research the properties would be needed as the research and process can be expensive.

Chair Harris asked questions regarding the process to remove properties from the Locational Atlas, and both Ms. Ballo and Chair Sutton offered comments and responses.

The question was also asked about what happens if the property is gone, and Ms. Ballo offered comments and answers.

Mr. Sartori offered comments regarding the Locational Atlas sites and potential funding within the budget for surveying properties.

Ms. Ballo and Chair Harris offered closing remarks.

The Meeting ended at 7:57 p.m.