

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Thursday, November 30, 2023

2425 Reedie 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 30, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and adjourning at 4:36 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 convened in Closed Session at 11:53 a.m. to discuss Item 9 on the motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Vice Chair Pedoeem 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 Emily Vaias; 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 11:55 a.m. and ended at 12:46 p.m.

The Planning Board reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 1:37 p.m. to discuss Items 6 through 8 as reported in the attached Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, December 7, 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. White Oak Self Storage 320230040 MCPB No. 23-111
2. White Oak Self Storage 820230100 MCPB No. 23-112
3. White Oak Self Storage F20230050 MCPB No. 23-113

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0-1

Other: Commissioner Bartley abstained due to abstaining during the underlying vote.

Action: Adopted the Resolution cited above, as submitted.

4. Loehmann's Plaza – Sketch Plan No. 320230050– MCPB No. 23-110

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Adopted the Resolutions cited above, as submitted.

5. 4861 Battery Lane – Sketch Plan No. 320230070 – MCPB No. 23-117

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0-1

Other: Commissioner Linden abstained due to being absent.

Action: Adopted the Resolution cited above, as submitted.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes for October 12, 2023
2. Minutes for October 19, 2023
3. Closed Session Minutes for October 19, 2023

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Planning Board Meeting Open Session Minutes of October 12, 2023 and October 19, 2023, as well as the Closed Session Minutes for October 19, 2023.

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)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Record Plats submitted for approval.

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

Cozi Restobar Regulatory Extension Request No. 2, Site Plan No. 820230090 - Request to extend the review period from December 10, 2023 to January 31, 2024.

Request to construct a 320 square foot addition to an existing one story commercial building for a total of 1,970 square feet; Located on Georgia Avenue approximately 100 feet south of Thayer Avenue; 0.05 acres zoned CR 3.0 C 3.0 R 3.0 H-130 and the Fenton Village Overlay Zone; 2022 Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of Extension

G. Bogdan

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

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
J. Sartori

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Montgomery Planning Director Jason Sartori offered a multi-media presentation regarding a brief explanation of his background and his priorities for the Montgomery Planning Department as he steps into his new role of Planning Director.

Mr. Sartori began by giving an overview of his childhood, school age years, and college years. Mr. Sartori described his career background, explained how he eventually became involved with planning, and how it shaped his career. Mr. Sartori stated he initially served as an intern for M-NCPPC, was hired as a term-contract employee in 2016, and eventually took over the role of Chief for the Countywide Planning and Policy Division. Mr. Sartori noted he has been a Montgomery County resident since 2002, his children are products of Montgomery County Public Schools, and some of his interests include baseball, traveling and sporting events.

Mr. Sartori noted future Director's Reports may include highlighting Staff efforts that may not come before the Planning Board including personnel updates, Staff milestones, as well as department events and activities.

Mr. Sartori continued by noting great appreciation for Tanya Stern and thanked her for her time serving as Acting Planning Director for the Planning Department. Cultural Resources Planner III Chris Berger, Planner III Jun Yang, Planner II Sophie Kotzker, and Human Resources Volunteer Margie Jurist were also highlighted as recent new hires for the Planning Department.

Lastly, Mr. Sartori discussed his vision for short-term, medium-term, and long-term priorities for the Planning Department, and gave a brief overview of Planning and Parks sustainability efforts that will be discussed in the next upcoming Planning Director's Report.

The Board offered comments welcoming Mr. Sartori to his new position as Planning Director and noted appreciation for the overview of priorities. The Board also requested information regarding upcoming events for the County Council.

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

M. Williams

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by discussion.

Melissa Williams, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment Work Session Number 5. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 22, 2023.

Ms. Williams stated the work session will focus on the remainder of Chapter 4 (4.3 Flower Avenue District) and Chapter 5 Implementation, as well as any additional issues raised by the Takoma Park City Council Resolution that have not already been discussed in a previous work session. Staff will also provide the language requested by the Planning Board at the November 16, 2023 work session and updated graphics.

Following this work session, Staff will transmit to the Takoma Park City Council a matrix of responses to the City of Takoma Park Resolution. Following a two-week City review period, Staff will return to the Board on December 14 to present final edits including a red-line version of the draft plan and ask for a vote of approval of the Public Hearing Draft as the Planning Board Draft Minor Master Plan Amendment and permission to transmit it to the County Executive and County Council.

Edits from the November 16, 2023 Work Session

Housing -3.3.2.3 Preservation of Housing and Affordability

Ms. Williams read the proposed updated language aloud for the Board, and the Board agreed.

Housing -3.3.2.1 Housing Production

Ms. Williams noted a proposed new recommendation and read the proposed language aloud for the Board. The Board agreed with the proposed new recommendation and language.

Maple Avenue District –Land Use and Zoning: Section 4.2.2.1

Ms. Williams noted a proposed new bullet will be added and read the proposed language aloud for the Board. The Board agreed with the proposed new bullet and language.

Parks and Open Space 4.2.2.2 (pg86)

Ms. Williams read the proposed updated language aloud for the Board.

The Board asked questions regarding what could be considered temporary activation of unprogrammed parkland at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, and Park

Planner III Charles Kines offered comments and responses to the Board. Furthermore, Mr. Kines suggested removal of the word temporary from the proposed language.

Plan Area Transit –Existing - Graphic

Ms. Williams discussed the requested updated graphics for the Plan Area Transit – Existing graphic, and the Board agreed.

Chapter 4.3 – District Recommendations (continued)

Flower Avenue District

Ms. Williams explained the Municipal District includes: the Washington Adventist Campus, Erie Center, varied housing types, and a portion of Sligo Creek Park. Ms. Williams also discussed the recommended Municipal District land use, zoning, and the Takoma Park/East Silver Spring Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone.

The Board requested clarity of the CR and CRN Zones, and Staff offered responses.

Takoma Park/East Silver Spring Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone

Ms. Williams noted the Plan recommends removal of the existing overlay zone.

Washington Adventist (Site 23)

Ms. Williams discussed the rezoning of site 23, the redevelopment vision, and individual recommendations for the site in greater detail, including zoning, Sligo Creek Park Slope Easement, and the Concept 1 vision of the Crescent Village for the Washington Adventist Site.

The Board asked questions regarding the potential timing of the dedication for the Sligo Creek Park Slope Easement, condition of the existing gymnasium, and input received from stakeholders regarding vision of redevelopment for the common area/greenspace.

Staff, including Chief of Downcounty Planning Elza Hisel-McCoy, offered comments and responses.

Ms. Williams further discussed the City of Takoma Park Resolution questions relating to the Washington Adventist Site 23, and how the Plan proposed to address compatibility and development impacts. Ms. Williams noted there are no text changes proposed, but showed a graphic portraying the anticipated the zoning ordinance and zoning recommendations working together. Ms. Williams noted the graphic will not be included in the Plan, but is readily available on Montgomery Planning’s website.

The Board asked questions regarding setbacks, requirements of height, ownership of site 26, building heights along Maplewood Avenue, potential for listed heights to be attainable with surrounding development, potential for future property consolidation, and if recommended zoning would accommodate future development plans on the Washington Adventist site.

The Board further recommended language encouraging future consolidation of properties.

Staff, including Chief of Downcounty Planning Elza Hisel-McCoy, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions and recommendations.

Ms. Williams noted proposed language would be crafted regarding the building heights for Maplewood Avenue, as well as an additional bullet to be added encouraging property consolidation. The Board agreed.

Ms. Williams continued by discussing the City of Takoma Park Resolution's questions regarding public space and public benefits recommendations, and Staff's responses to the questions raised.
Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

Ms. Williams also discussed the City of Takoma Park Resolution's questions regarding green space requirements of the Washington Adventist site development.
Staff Response: Staff proposed text revision to Site 23 (page 91) – Washington Adventist, which would add an additional bullet and revise the text of another bullet. Ms. Williams read the text aloud for the Board. Updated language will be provided.

The Board offered concerns with limiting open space and placing restrictions on design regarding the location of the open space and need for flexibility. Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments and responses to the Board's concerns.

The Board asked questions regarding dedication of the Sligo Creek Park slope easement, clarification regarding open space will not be considered as parkland to be owned by Montgomery Parks, and current usage of the common space on the site. Staff offered responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion regarding potential limits to design and location of the public open space with requiring it to open to Flower Avenue, as well as suggesting language stating expectations for the common open space.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered responses, and stated additional language could be drafted regarding design flexibility to be presented with the redline draft version of the Plan in a future work session.

Ms. Williams continued by discussing the City of Takoma Park Resolution's questions regarding mapping of the planned dedication and demarcating the allowable line of development on Site 23 abutting Sligo Creek, and Staff's responses to the questions raised.
Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, but could add a graphic to the Appendix, and the Board agreed.

Ms. Williams discussed the City of Takoma Park Resolution's questions regarding appropriate zoning for the Erie Center retail node, and Staff's responses to the questions raised.
Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

Ms. Williams then discussed testimony received regarding the comparability within the Flower Avenue District, general concerns, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended. Updated language will be drafted.

The Board held discussion regarding parking impacts related to new development, and numerous opportunities for public transit within the Plan area

Staff noted revisions to language regarding connectivity within the Plan area, and Mr. McCoy suggested general language in the Plan-wide Recommendations for land use and connectivity sections of the Plan.

Ms. Williams also discussed the testimony received from the Washington Adventist University, general concerns and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended. Updated text on page 96 as stated below. The Board agreed with Staff's recommendations.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments regarding the sketch plan recommendation for Site 23, which will provide a holistic approach for future development. The Board agreed with Mr. Hisel-McCoy.

The Board also asked if the largest property owner would bring the sketch plan, if agreement is needed by all property owners, number of owners, the SHA Carroll Avenue realignment, and actual potential for adaptive reuse on the campus.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments and responses to the Board's questions, and recommended a text change on page 96 regarding striking the word "pursue" and replace with "evaluate".

Flower Avenue District Staff-recommended text changes

Ms. Williams read aloud the recommended text changes for Section 3.2.4 Roadway Network (p. 43), Section 4.3.2.1, Land Use and Zoning, Flower District (p.90), Section 3.2.4.1, Roadway Cross-Sections, and a typographical error (p. 90).

The Board agreed with the recommended text changes.

Connectivity

Ms. Williams explained the recommendations for connectivity including: establishing a network of streets, bicycle facilities, and sidewalks that actively connect the campus to the surrounding community; dedicating a maximum of 50 feet of right-of-way on the north side of Carroll Avenue along a portion of the site frontage as needed to accommodate an SHA project to realign Carroll Avenue; providing an opportunity for campus mobility hub for better multi-modal access; providing a publicly accessible pedestrian path at the western edge of the WA site overlooking Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park; and providing a significant covered bike parking area for student, resident, and community use.

Ms. Williams then discussed testimony received regarding connectivity, general concerns, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

The Board asked about the possibility to test and analyze traffic during sketch plan, and Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments and responses.

Parks and Open Space

Ms. Williams then discussed the recommendations for the parks and open space for the Flower Avenue District, as well as testimony received, general concerns, and Staff's response. Ms. Williams noted many of the concerns raised are typically addressed through the regulatory process.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

Design

Ms. Williams discussed the recommendations for design for the Flower Avenue District, as well as testimony received, general concerns, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy suggested no text changes, but adding a section discussing compatibility including the diagrams of the zoning ordinance. It was determined language and diagrams would be added to the best possible place as determined by Staff within the Plan.

Chapter 5 – Implementation

Implementation- Zoning, Public Benefits, On-site Public Open Space, and Accessory Uses

Ms. Williams discussed the recommendations for 5.1.1 CR-Family Zoning, 5.1.2 Obsolete Overlay Zones, 5.1.3 Public Benefits, 5.1.4 On-Site Public Open Space, and 5.1.5 Accessory Uses in the CR Zones, as well as testimony received, general concerns, City of Takoma Park Resolution, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

The Board requested the CR zone accessory uses to be as broad as possible, and asked if the language used within the Plan would be broad enough to easily fix via a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA). Staff offered comments and responses.

Implementation Connectivity Improvements

Ms. Williams discussed the recommendations for 5.2 Connectivity Improvements specifically for the Green Promenade, as well as testimony received, general concerns, City of Takoma Park Resolution, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended except for those noted in previous work sessions, and the Board agreed.

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The Board held discussion regarding possibility to encourage the key points of recommendations within the Plan for the future implementation of connectivity improvements to be accelerated.

Mr. Hisel-McCoy offered comments and responses. Mr. Hisel-McCoy suggested additional language be drafted and brought back to the Board.

Capital Improvement Program 5.3

Ms. Williams continued by discussing and displaying a table with recommendations for projects, project category, lead agency and coordinating agency. Ms. Williams explained the testimony received, general concerns, City of Takoma Park Resolution, and Staff's response.

Staff Response: No text changes are recommended, and the Board agreed.

Additional Resolution Questions

Ms. Williams discussed additional questions that were not discussed in previous work sessions and provided responses. Ms. Williams further noted there are no proposed text changes to the additional resolution questions.

Lastly, Ms. Williams discussed the timeline and upcoming work session schedule.

The Board asked if there were potential incentives within the density recommendations for Site 23 to encourage more Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU's) or affordable housing.

Staff, including Mr. Hisel-McCoy and Acting Housing, Infrastructure, and Zoning Supervisor Lisa Govoni, offered comments and responses to the Board.

Item 9. 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.

B. Rupert/W.Aniton/E. Vaias

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Advice obtained with discussion. See the open session disclosure statement in Summary Section.

Item 6. 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: Staff requests feedback from the Planning Board on the existing conditions analysis of the plan area.

J. Pratt/R. Duke

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by comments.

Roberto Duke, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding existing conditions for the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 22, 2023.

Mr. Duke gave an overview of the Plan area and boundary as well as the topics that will be discussed. Mr. Duke stated the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan is an update to the 1994 *Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area*, and consists of major employment centers planned in Clarksburg. The Plan area is comprised of 969 acres and includes several residential developments, public schools, parks, and vacant or underdeveloped properties. Mr. Duke then discussed why the 1994 Plan is being updated as well as the timeline for the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan.

James Lee, Forcaster and Demographic Research Specialist, continued by discussing the demographics within the Plan area. Mr. Lee described the population growth from 1990-2020 and stated there are over 3,800 residents within the Plan area. Mr. Lee explained the population diversity including the percentage of foreign-born residents, median age distribution, and household types. Household income diversity and poverty were discussed regarding the Plan study area versus Montgomery County as a whole, as well as the percentages of housing cost burden for owner-occupied household and rent-occupied households.

Mr. Lee continued by describing the educational attainment within the Plan area, occupations of the residents, commuter modes, and percentages for place of work including within Montgomery County, elsewhere in Maryland, and outside of Maryland.

Lastly, Mr. Lee discussed the key point for demographics within the Plan area including: the population in the study area grew from fewer than 300 people in 2000 to nearly 4,000 people today; the area has shifted from majority non-Hispanic White to 76 percent People of Color since 2000; Asians and Pacific Islanders are the largest racial or ethnic group, with South Asians being the largest subgroup; 44 percent of the residents are foreign-born and 60 percent of residents speak a language other than English at home; residents are predominantly working-age adults and children; the median household income is higher than the County median; and use of public transportation is negligible.

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The Board asked about the reasoning that contributed to the diversity growth within the Plan area. Chief of Upcounty Planning Patrick Butler offered comments and responses.

Brett Brown, Planner II, continued by discussing transportation for the Plan area. Mr. Brown spoke about the roads planned under the 1994 *Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area* Transportation Concept and the 2014 *10 Mile Creek* Transportation Concept. Mr. Brown noted the planned transportation networks including Observation Drive, Little Seneca Parkway, MD 355 Clarksburg Bypass, the I-270 Interchange, the Corridor Cities Transitway, and Gateway Center Drive.

Mr. Brown also spoke about the bus network within the Plan area as well as bus routes, and bus rapid transit. Mr. Brown noted the bicycle and pedestrian networks within the Plan Area, as well as the goals of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans for the Plan area.

Transportation key points include: several key transportation network elements have yet to be built, and the Clarksburg area currently suffers from a lack of transit options; traffic is predicted to worsen 13-23 percent by 2040; and the Plan area contains a mixture of sidepaths, sidewalks, and park trails, but many more will need to be built to create complete pedestrian and bicycle networks.

The Board asked if there are any planned options to cross across the plan boundary, and Staff offered comments and responses.

Mr. Duke continued by discussing the land use and zoning for the Plan area. Mr. Duke noted there are currently 12 distinct land uses within the Plan area with research and development making up the largest land usage followed by institutional. Mr. Duke spoke about the existing zoning within the Plan area and noted roughly 42 percent of the Plan area is zoned R-200, but much of this land is occupied by schools and the Little Seneca Greenway.

Key points for land use and zoning include: the largest land use in the Plan area is “flex” space; much of the land identified as “flex” space is the undeveloped portions of the former COMSAT properties; with three schools in the Plan area, institutional/community facilities are the next largest land use; the R-200 zone is the largest zone in the Plan area; most of the R-200 land is occupied by parkland or schools; and the second largest zone is EOF.

Mr. Duke then discussed the planned public facilities including fire and police, a library, recreation centers and swimming pools, and sewer service.

The Board asked questions regarding proximity of closest library and potential planned public amenities.

Staff offered comments and responses.

Bilal Ali, Real Estate Researcher, discussed the housing production and development for the area. Mr. Ali noted most of the units within the Plan area are townhomes, and 97 percent have been built after 2000. Mr. Ali further stated less than 3 percent of the households have lived in their units

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before 1999, and most of the units are located within five developments including Clarksburg Square, Dowden's Station, Gateway Commons, Gallery Park, and the Meadows at Hurley Ridge. Furthermore, Mr. Ali noted based on for-sale data, the units sold within the Plan Area are relatively newer and larger and reflect County average prices.

Housing key points include: 97 percent of the housing units in the Plan area were built after 2000; 74percent of the housing units are single-family attached; there are no multi-family rental units in the Plan area; and 15 percent of the housing units in the Plan area are Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU's).

Mr. Ali continued by discussing the economic development for the Plan area. Mr. Ali stated the Plan area currently has approximately 50 employers and 1,350 jobs. There have been 20 businesses added, although 60 jobs have been lost since 2010. The largest employers are Research and Development and Light Industrial. Mr. Ali also summarized what flex development was, and gave an overview of the retail development and nonresidential real estate for the Plan area.

Mr. Ali listed the economic development key points which included: 50 businesses and 1,350 jobs in the Plan area; 20 more businesses but 60 fewer jobs than in 2010 as mid-sized businesses have been replaced by smaller ones; the only retail establishments are a café in Gateway 270 and a veterinary hospital; most of the non-residential real estate is "flex" development space; and most of Gateway 270 is occupied, while about 70 percent of the former COMSAT site is vacant.

The Board asked questions regarding the jobs within the Plan area, if the job market is being filled by residents or regional commuters, and why the vision for employment within the Plan area did not come to fruition. Staff offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Hye-Soo Baek, Senior Planner Coordinator, discussed the elementary, middle, and high schools serving the Plan area. Ms. Baek spoke about the collective utilization trend and projections, as well as enrollment, and student generation rates analysis.

The Board asked for clarification of enrollment versus utilization and how housing turnover is interpreted. Staff offered comments and responses.

Ms. Baek discussed the key points for schools that include: the Plan area is primarily served by the Clarksburg Cluster; enrollment at all levels has experienced dramatic growth over the last two decades; elementary school enrollment peaked around 2019; enrollment will continue to increase for a few more years at the middle school and high school levels; a major capital project at Damascus High School will provide relief to overutilization at Clarksburg High School; and elementary and high schools in the vicinity are projected to have surplus capacity under existing conditions, and enrollment may gradually ebb as housing growth slows.

John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner III, continued by discussing the Historic resources the Plan area. Mr. Liebertz noted the Clarksburg School and Clarksburg Historic District were identified for the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, and the Dowden's Ordinary Site and Marker will be referred for the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites. The John Wesley United Methodist Church Cemetery was also identified for the Burial Sites Inventory.

Mr. Liebertz further noted new sites will be evaluated within the Plan area including: the Maurice and Sarah Mason House, the Clarksburg Heights Historic District, the Warner Wims House, the John Wesley Methodist Church and Cemetery, and the COMSAT Laboratories site.

Historic Resources key points included: several designated resources with architectural and historical significance within the plan boundary; a section of the Clarksburg Master Plan Historic District is in the Plan area; and several resources will be evaluated for inclusion in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Jamey Pratt, Planner III, discussed the environmental resources within the Plan area. Mr. Pratt stated the watershed is the most important feature within the Plan area and other constraints within the area make development difficult. Mr. Pratt noted the 1994 plan envisioned a greenway network along the stream valleys, and this Plan will provide opportunities to expand the greenway network. Mr. Pratt stated the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has also identified several places in the Plan area as significant for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Targeted Ecological Areas.

Environment key points included: significant forested areas still exist in the Plan area; some areas have been identified by the state as Targeted Ecological Areas; most of the Plan area is within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area; the rest is within the Ten Mile Creek Special Protection Area; 1994's envisioned Greenway Network is incomplete; and the "Coolbrook" tributary of Little Seneca Creek offers an opportunity to expand the Greenway Network in Clarksburg.

The Board asked questions regarding sewer services within the Plan area and Staff offered comments and responses.

Rachel Newhouse, Park Planner and Landscape Architect, gave an overview of the Parks, Trails, and Open Space for the Plan Area. Existing parks within the Plan area which include Dowden's Ordinary Park, Clarksburg Neighborhood Park, Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park, North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park, and Black Hills Regional Park. Ms. Newhouse noted the Plan area is categorized as an urban area and discussed the amenities available to the public. Ms. Newhouse stated within the plan area boundary there are .19 miles of natural surface trails and .24 miles of hard surface paths.

Ms. Newhouse stated the parks and trails key points included: the Plan area is within the "urban" zone of the 2022 PROS Plan, but the area currently has a suburban character; there are two local parks and parts of two stream valley parks in the Plan area; the main entrance to Black Hill Regional Park is opposite the Plan area's southern boundary; access to some athletic facilities is relatively high, while for others it is limited; residents of the Plan area are well served by parks and park facilities within two miles of the Plan area, but not as well served in easy walking distance; and there is less than a half mile of park trails within the Plan area, but there are over 46 miles of park trails within two miles of the Plan area.

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The Board asked if the urban areas of the PROS Plan are matched in Thrive Montgomery 2050's categories as well. Staff, including Planning Director Jason Sartori and Chief of Upcounty Planning Patrick Butler, offered comment and responses.

At this time Planning Director Jason Sartori recognized Ms. Newhouse and stated she will be retiring at the end of the year.

Planning intern Amory Jones discussed the community engagement strategy for the Plan area, and stated to date, Planning Staff has received 121 survey responses, 176 Everyday Canvassing interviews, and 310 comments recorded during four listening sessions. Ms. Jones further explained some examples of common comments received through community feedback.

Lastly, Mr. Pratt discussed the next steps including a Community Engagement Report in early winter 2024, Visioning Sessions in late winter 2024, and Preliminary Recommendations in spring 2024.

The Board offered further comments regarding the lack of public transportation, retail, and restaurants within the Plan Area, and asked if the market drives progress as well as what can be provided in the short-term.

Deputy Planning Director Robert Kronenberg and Mr. Butler offered comments and responses.

Item 7. HBKY Metmiq Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church; Preliminary Plan No. 120230080 & Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230140 (Public Hearing)

Application to consolidate four parcels and a driveway into one lot for the construction of a primary church building and surface parking; located at 4115 Muncaster Mill Road, Rockville; RE-1 Zone; 5.41 acres; 2005 Olney Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions
J. Server

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary 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: Hedrick/Pedoeem

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.

Jeffrey Server, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the HBKY Metmiq Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 17, 2023.

Mr. Server described the vicinity and property. Mr. Server stated the Applicant proposes to consolidate four parcels and a driveway parcel into one lot for the construction of a primary church building (up to 450 seats) and surface parking (142 spaces), while retaining an existing parsonage and church. The existing parsonage is to remain its current state, however the existing garage attached to the parsonage will be removed to meet the side setbacks for the RE-1 zone. As part of the Application, parking will be located behind the existing house and at the rear of the property, next to the Forest Conservation easement. An access easement will be provided to accommodate access to the lots to the north, and frontage improvements are proposed including a 6-foot-wide sidewalk and a 5-foot-wide bikeable shoulder along the property frontage on Muncaster Mill Road.

Mr. Server discussed the Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan which shows 0.29 acres of existing forest, a reforestation requirement of 0.79 acres, and a stream with an associated stream buffer along the northeast portion of the 5.41-acre property. Mr. Server noted the Applicant will satisfy this requirement by providing 0.79 acres of reforestation plantings within and adjacent to the unforested stream valley buffer on the Subject Property.

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Lastly, Mr. Server noted a change to Preliminary Plan Condition Number 12 and Condition Number 6.b of the Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan will be deleted and replaced with Condition Number 7.

Peter Ciferri of McMillan Metro, P.C. offered brief comments and introduced the Applicant.

Malack Belachew, of HBKY Metmiq Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (the Applicant) offered comments regarding the history, community, mission, and purpose of the church.

The Board asked questions regarding the access easement, and Staff offered comments and responses.

Item 8. Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center: Mandatory Referral No. MR2023015 and MHP-Amherst: Sketch Plan No. 320230030 (Public Hearing)

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.

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

B. Sketch Plan: 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 1.61 FAR for a total of 485,000 sq. ft. to include 423,000 sq. ft. of residential uses (including a minimum of 25% MPDUs) and 62,000 sq. ft. of commercial uses residential uses; on approximately 6.14 acres.

Staff recommendation: Approval of with Conditions

T. Leftwich

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 4-0

Other: Chair Harris recused himself from the matter.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval to transmit comments to the Department of General Services for the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center, as stated in a transmittal letter to be drafted at a later date.

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 4-0

Other: Chair Harris recused himself from the matter.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Sketch 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.

Chair Harris recused himself and noted Vice Chair Pedoeem will be overseeing the presentation.

Troy Leftwich, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding MHP-Amherst and the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 17, 2023.

Mr. Leftwich described the site vicinity, property, and existing conditions. Mr. Leftwich stated the Mandatory Referral includes the site selection of the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center (WACC) and the corresponding disposition of public land at 11507 Georgia Avenue. The Department of General Services (DGS), the Applicant, is co-locating the WACC with the proposed affordable housing development by Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) at the Subject Property (MHP-Amherst) in the Wheaton Arts and Entertainment District. MHP will develop the

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Subject Property and the adjacent property MHP currently owns with affordable rental and for sale housing units, as well as a parking garage. The WACC will be included on the ground floor of MHP-Amherst Building 1, which will front on Georgia Avenue. The WACC is anticipated to include two performance spaces, classrooms, gallery space, back of house support space, and administrative offices.

Mr. Leftwich discussed the Sketch Plan and stated the Applicant proposes to replace the existing aging multifamily units with up to 320 new multifamily units and up to 39 townhouses, including a minimum of 25 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs). The maximum height of the Project will be 75 feet, and will provide one new private street from Georgia Avenue to Elkin Street which will be the primary access to the Subject Property. The proposed structured parking garage will front on the private street and have a rear access drive from Elkin Street to the loading area. It will also have approximately 590 vehicle spaces and the total development is expected to have 673 vehicle spaces. The final number of parking spaces will be determined at Site Plan.

The open space will exceed the 10 percent requirement by providing approximately 57,100 square feet (21 percent) of public and common open space, and the land exchange between the Applicant and the County/M-NCPPC will result in a new future public park as well.

Mr. Leftwich also described the urban design next steps for the project including: activation of open spaces, location of the stormwater management facilities, frontage improvements along streetscapes, architectural features for Georgia Avenue façade, and future site connections enhancements. Mr. Leftwich noted the Applicant will be providing public benefit points for the following categories: Transit Proximity, Diversity of Uses and Activities, and Quality Building and Site Design.

Mr. Leftwich stated correspondence was received from the President of the Leesborough Condo Association with concerns, and Mr. Leftwich addressed the concerns raised.

Mr. Leftwich also discussed the redline changes to Condition 4: Public Open Space, Page 5: Mandatory Referral, Page 12 Bullet Number 2, and the Land Exchange Summary in the Staff Report on Page 11.

Dan Thompson of Wheaton Arts Parade offered testimony regarding overall support of the housing that will be provided, but asked questions and offered concerns regarding the business plan for the Arts Center. Mr. Thompson further asked who would be running the space, noted concerns with the compatibility, pedestrian traffic concerns, parking, and who will occupy the Arts Center.

Ronnie Warner of Montgomery County DGS offered comments regarding the vision for the Arts Facility, what is needed for the Arts center, community outreach, co-location with MHP, and timeline. Ms. Warner offered further responses regarding lease space and potential for continued community outreach.

Pat Harris of Lerch, Early and Brewer offered comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding the affordable housing MHP will bring to the County through the project noting the 359 new affordable housing units that will be brought to Wheaton. Ms. Harris further noted future

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conditions identified as areas for concern include undergrounding of utilities, the sidewalk to the northern community and sidewalk along the southern property line. Ms. Harris offered comments regarding the pedestrian improvements, timing of Parcel B, and amount of parking.

The Board asked questions regarding grading concerns, future plans for connections from the metro to the Arts Center, potential for continued community outreach, lack of consideration for a potential road connection to the Leesborough Community, timeline for Parcel B, if the building will be leased, and reasoning for the amount of parking spaces.

Staff, including Regulatory Supervisor Matt Folden, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.