

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY
Thursday, November 7, 2024
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 7, 2024, beginning at 9:07 a.m. and adjourning at 12:00 p.m.

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

Items 4 through 6, Item 9, and Items 7, 8 and 10 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2024, 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

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Resolutions submitted for adoption.

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)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Record Plats submitted for approval.

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: There were no Regulatory Extension Requests submitted for approval.

Item 4. Roundtable Discussion

Planning Director's Report
J. Sartori

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Jason Sartori, Planning Director, offered a multi-media presentation regarding recent updates for the Planning Department.

Mr. Sartori highlighted awards the Communications Division received from MARCOM including a platinum award, four gold awards, and five honorable mentions. Mr. Sartori discussed the recent Op-Ed published in Greater Greater Washington regarding the Attainable Housing Strategies as well as the other media coverage that has recently been covered by MoCo360, The Washington Post, and Montgomery Perspective. Mr. Sartori also recognized the retirement of Sarah Hanna-Jones and provided personnel updates for Khalid Afzal, Grace Bogdan, Alex Pemberton, and Bridget Broullire.

Ben Kraft, Planner III, and Colin McNamara, Senior GIS Specialist, gave an overview of the History of Housing interactive story map which illustrates the history and geography of housing development in Montgomery County since 1940. Mr. Kraft discussed how the development and percentage of dwelling units within the County has changed throughout the years and noted most housing units in the County are now townhomes or multi-family buildings, with fewer new single-family detached homes being built. Lastly, Mr. Sartori offered closing remarks regarding the housing development throughout the years within the County and future outlook.

Item 5. Parklawn Self-Storage, Local Map Amendment No. H-154 and Forest Conservation Plan No. F20241040 (Public Hearing)

- A. Local Map Amendment No. H-154 and Floating Zone Plan
- B. Forest Conservation Plan No. F20241040

Request to rezone 2.15 acres of land from the EOF-0.75, H-100' zone to an Industrial Light Floating Zone ILF-1.0, H-55', in order to redevelop the property into 104,628 square feet of self-storage use; located at 11900 Parklawn Drive, Rockville within the 2018 White Flint Sector Plan Phase 2 area.

Staff recommendation: Approval

P. Smith

A. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of Local Map Amendment No. H-154 and Floating Zone Plan, with binding elements and transmittal of comments to the Hearing Examiner.

B. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary 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.

Parker Smith, Planner II, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Parklawn Self-Storage. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 28, 2024.

Mr. Smith stated the Local Map Amendment proposes to change the zoning of the property from employment office (EOF-0.75, H-100') to light industrial (ILF-1.0, H-55') for the purpose of allowing the development of up to 104,628 square feet of self-storage use. Mr. Smith noted the Application proposes to construct a new three-story self-storage building with 34,118 square feet of additional cellar space (which is excluded from the calculation of FAR), consolidate site access to one vehicular access point from Parklawn Drive, include twenty parking spaces and four loading spaces, and provide amenity open space and frontage improvements including a sidewalk with buffer and landscaped area at the front of the site.

Mr. Smith also discussed the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan for the project noting a requirement for 0.35 acres of afforestation and a variance request for the removal of three trees. Mr. Smith stated that the Final Forest Conservation Plan will be submitted concurrently with a future site plan for the Property.

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Elizabeth Rogers of Lerch, Early, and Brewer offered a multi-media presentation and comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding the proposed redevelopment design and noted agreement with Staff's proposed conditions.

The Board asked questions regarding the need for a Floating Zone Plan and Staff offered comments and responses.

Item 6. Budget Transfer for Reclassification Marker

Staff Recommendation: Approval
T. Bacote-Charles

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation to approve the Budget Transfer Request cited above.

Terri Bacote-Charles, Corporate Budget Director, offered comments regarding the requested Budget Transfer totaling \$648,245 needed to fund the reclassification adjustments from the Non-Departmental section of the Administration and Park funds to the appropriate respective departmental budgets in the amounts of \$118,303 to the Administration Fund and \$529,942 to the Park Fund. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 1, 2024.

The Board asked if the transfer request would be reflected in the FY26 Base Budget and if the proposed FY26 budget increase will reflect negotiated salary increases.

Ms. Bacote-Charles and Nancy Steen, Parks Budget Manager, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Item 9. FY26 Operating Budget – Follow Up

T. Bacote-Charles

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Terri Bacote-Charles, Corporate Budget Director, offered comments regarding follow-up to October 10, 2024, FY26 CAS Proposed Budget presentation. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 30, 2024.

As requested from the Planning Board, Ms. Bacote-Charles discussed details for new position requests including the Senior Auditor and Purchase Card Administrator, and provided clarification on final numbers for the Office of the Chief Information Officer, including what would be the expected chargebacks to any departments, including the number of MS Copilot licenses.

The Board offered comments regarding the cost of the copilot licensing and AI usage within departments. Furthermore, the Board requested follow-up on how the copilot licenses contribute to work being done and data regarding usage.

Jason Sartori, Planning Director, and Mazen Chilet, Chief Information Officer, offered comments regarding a copilot licensing check-in briefing and a training program rollout of the Microsoft AI program.

Item 7. Montgomery County Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems – County Executive’s September 2024 Amendment Transmittal to the County Council – Three Service Area Category Change Requests (Public Testimony Accepted)

Staff Recommendation: Transmit recommendations to County Council

J. Pratt

A. WSCCR 24-CLO-01A: Logos Homes

Staff Recommendation: Approve W-1; deny S-1 (revised below)

B. WSCCR 24-TRV-01A: David Mohebbi

Staff Recommendation: Deny S-3; maintain S-6

C. WSCCR 24-TRV-03A: Mohamed Alesh

Staff Recommendation: Defer action pending an agreement between DEP and WSSC Water to study the capacity issue in the Palatine low-pressure sewerage system.

A. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff’s recommendation to Approve W-1; and Approved revised recommendation to Approve S-1 upon meeting one of the conditions listed below, and to transmit comments to County Council, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

B. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Linden/Hedrick

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for Denial and to transmit comments to County Council, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

C. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation to defer action pending an agreement between DEP and WSSC Water to study the capacity issue in the Palatine low-pressure sewerage system, and to transmit comments to County Council, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

Jamey Pratt, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Water/Sewer Service Category Change Requests. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 31, 2024.

Mr. Pratt gave a brief overview and discussed the water/sewer category changes listed above in greater detail.

WSSCCR 24-CLO-01A: Logos Homes

Michele Rosenfeld of the Law Office of Michele Rosenfeld offered testimony on behalf of the Applicant regarding the request for connection to public sewer. Ms. Rosenfeld offered further comments in support of approving the requests regarding the soil characteristics of the property, the septic failures of the surrounding properties, and concurrent share in cost with adjacent property owners to redevelop the shared driveway if sewer service is granted.

The Board asked questions regarding reasoning for allowance of connection to public sewer for the surrounding properties, approximate age of properties with septic failures, clarification of Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) process, and potential length of time needed to conduct a septic survey.

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

Alan Soukup of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) also offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion and agreed with Staff's recommendation to Approve W-1. The Board also voted on a revised recommendation to Approve S-1, subject to one of the following conditions being met:

- MDE approves the current category change request;
- The County establishes an onsite systems survey area that includes the property and confirms an area-wide septic system concern; and/or
- The County's 10-Year Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan is updated to create an exception to allow public water and/or sewer service for properties in the same situation as the owner's property.

WSSCCR 24-TRV-01A: David Mohebbi

Susanne Lee of West Montgomery County Citizens Association offered testimony for this Application expressing support for Staff recommendation for denial.

The Board asked questions regarding upgrading the capacity, timeline of suggested study, and what an active holding tank would hold. Mr. Soukup offered comments and responses.

WSSCCR 24-TRV-03A: Mohamed Alesh

Susanne Lee of West Montgomery County Citizens Association offered testimony for this Application suggesting denial/disapproval and noted concerns with sewer sprawl.

Transmittal to the County Executive

On the motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Commissioner Linden, the Planning Board voted to transmit Staff recommendations and comments to the County Executive, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date, with a vote of 5-0, with Chair Harris, Vice Chair Pedoeem, and Commissioners Bartley, Hedrick, and Linden voting in favor.

Item 8. Wheaton Regional Park, Forest Conservation Plan Amendment No. F2023009B (Public Hearing)

The Application proposes to amend a condition of approval associated with the previously approved Forest Conservation Plan; located on approximately 538.66 acres zoned R-90; within the 1989 Master Plan for Kensington-Wheaton and 2001 Kemp Mill Master Plan

Staff recommendation: Approval with Conditions

A. Lindsey

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Bartley

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Forest Conservation Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.

Amy Lindsey, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the Forest Conservation Amendment for Wheaton Regional Park. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 28, 2024.

Ms. Lindsey stated on May 4, 2023, the Planning Board approved Forest Conservation Plan No. F20230090, which established a process to allow for a forest conservation plan framework to implement the 2022 Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan and maintenance of existing facilities, permanently protected 330 acres of forest, and set up forest areas of protection and potential clearing.

Forest Conservation Plan Amendment No. F2023009B proposes to replace Condition 2.c regarding projects in forested areas with a condition allowing for increased flexibility of future amendment approvals by the Planning Director without allowing additional forest clearing.

Item 9. Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – Setting of Public Hearing

Staff Recommendation: Set Public Hearing Date
S. Aldrich

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Linden

Vote: 5-0

Other:

Action: Approved Staff recommendation to set a third Public Hearing date for January 9, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Sofia Aldrich, Transportation Planner IV, requested that the Planning Board set an additional third Public Hearing for the Master Plan of Highways for January 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Aldrich noted that the Public Hearing would be held in-person at the Upcounty Regional Services Center.

The Board asked for reasoning for hosting an in-person only meeting, and Staff, including Dave Anspacher, Chief of Countywide Planning and Policy, offered comments and responses.