

Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED
MINUTES AND SUMMARY

SUMMARY
Thursday, November 21, 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 21, 2024, beginning at 9:03 a.m. and adjourning at 2:57 p.m.

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

Commissioner Shawn Bartley was necessarily absent.

Items 1 through 4 and Item 7 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

Item 6 was moved to Preliminary Matters.

The Planning Board recessed for lunch at 12:33 p.m. and reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 1:16 p.m. to discuss Items 8 and 10, as reported in the attached Minutes.

Item 9 was removed from the Agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Monday, December 2, 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

1. ELP Bethesda at Rock Spring, Site Plan No. 820240130 – MCPB No. 24-102
2. ELP Bethesda at Rock Spring, Site Plan Amendment No. 82022012A – MCPB No. 24-103
3. ELP Bethesda at Rock Spring, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20240740 – MCPB No. 24-104

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Adopted the Resolutions cited above, as submitted.

4. Kirk Farm Pre-Preliminary Plan No. 720240020 – MCPB No. 24-108

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 3-0-1

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent, and Commissioner Linden abstained due to being absent for the original vote.

Action: Adopted the Resolution cited above, as submitted.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes for October 31, 2024
2. Minutes for November 7, 2024
3. Minutes for November 14, 2024

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Approved Planning Board Meeting Minutes of October 31, 2024, November 7, 2024, and November 14, 2024, as submitted.

C. Other Preliminary Matters

Bethesda Design Advisory Panel Appointment

G. Bogdan

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the appointment of David Lieb for the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel cited above.

Ms. Bogdan stated Staff recommends appointment of David Lieb, a 14-year resident of downtown Bethesda with two decades of land use experience and a strong interest in urban design, to serve for a three-year term from November 2024 to November 2027.

Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)

Subdivision Plat No. 220250220, Woodhaven

R-90 zone, 1 lot; located on the north side of Thoreau Drive, 200 feet west of Whittier Boulevard; Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

Subdivision Plat No.220250200, Silver Spring Music Hall

CR zone, 2 lots; located on the east side of Georgia Avenue (MD 97), 275 feet north of Colesville Road (US 29); Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

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

Item 3. Regulatory Extension Requests (Public Hearing)

16998 Overhill Road: Preliminary Plan No. 120240060 – Regulatory Extension Request No. 4 - Request to extend the regulatory review period until January 9, 2025.

Application to create one lot for an independent living facility; located at 16998 Overhill Road, south of the Intercounty Connector (ICC)/MD 200, approximately 400 feet east of Redland Road, RE-1 zone, 3.78 acres, 2004 Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan to create 11 lots for 11 single-family detached

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request

K. Mencarini

Clarksburg Chase, Preliminary Plan No. 120240040, Site Plan No. 820240050 and Forest Conservation Plan No. F20240180, Extension Request No. 5 - Request to extend the regulatory review period until January 9, 2025.

An application for 101 dwelling units (49 single-family units and 52 townhouses); Located at 22600 Clarksburg Road, Northwest quadrant of the intersection of Gosnell Farm Drive and Clarksburg Road; 136.18 acres, RNC zone and Clarksburg West Environmental Overlay zone, 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area and the 2014 Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Amendment.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of extension request

K. Mencarini

Addition to Glen Hills, Section 3, Preliminary Plan No. 120240150, and Preliminary/Final Forest Conservation Plan No. F20240220 Regulatory Review Extension Request No. 2 - Request to extend the regulatory review period until February 13, 2025.

Application to create four lots for new single-family detached units; located at 12631 Circle Drive, Rockville, MD 20850; RE-1 Zone, 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request

M. Clayborne

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

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

Item 4. Briefing on COMSAT Adaptive Reuse Financial Feasibility Study and Adaptive Reuse Case Studies in support of the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan.

The COMSAT Adaptive Reuse Study analyzes the residual land value of three development scenarios including adaptive reuse for the COMSAT site in Clarksburg, and the Case Studies summarize projects that have adaptively reused historic sites for mixed use redevelopment around the country.

Staff Recommendation: Brief the Planning Board

B. Kraft

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Patrick Butler, Chief of Upcounty Planning, offered brief opening comments regarding the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan and the vision for the adaptive reuse of COMSAT Laboratories site. Clark Larson, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the COMSAT Adaptive Reuse Financial Feasibility Study and Adaptive Reuse Case Studies in support of the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan. Further information can be found in the Staff Report posted to the November 21, 2024 Agenda.

Mr. Larson gave an overview of the COMSAT Laboratories property and Fu Wilmer's feasibility analysis evaluation relating to potential development and adaptive reuse of the property. Mr. Larson stated Montgomery Planning also commissioned HR&A Advisors, Inc., a national real estate, economic development, and public policy consulting firm, to assess the real estate development feasibility of three scenarios for the COMSAT property, which included the adaptive reuse of the building and new development on the additional land.

Stan Wall and Solomon Abrams of HR&A Advisors, Inc., discussed their findings, case studies of comparable projects, and financial feasibility analysis. Mr. Solomon further discussed the case studies, as well as potential development scenarios and financial feasibility.

Lastly, Mr. Larson discussed Staff's key takeaways in greater detail and next steps.

The Board asked questions regarding timing of the Fu Wilmer's evaluation, potential other buildings for adaptive reuse on the property, portions considered to be historic, reasoning for feasibility gaps between low density and medium density development, calculation of feasibility costs, types of MPDUs considered in analysis, acceptable thresholds for feasibility, ownership of the land/property, and if other zoning options were considered.

Staff, Mr. Wall, and Mr. Abrams offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Item 6. Removed - Bethesda Design Advisory Panel Appointment

G. Bogdan

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Moved to Preliminary Matters.

Item 7. Loehmann’s Plaza, Preliminary Plan No. 120240100, Site Plan No. 820240120, and Forest Conservation Plan No. F20240680 (Public Hearing)

The Overall Site is an existing strip shopping center with surface parking and a pad site on 9.74-acres of land; Located at 5200 Randolph Road at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Randolph Road with Parklawn Drive and west of Putnam Road; Commercial Residential (CR–1.75, C–0.5, R–1.5, H–75) Zone; within the Randolph Hills District of the 2018 White Flint II Sector Plan area.

A. Preliminary Plan No. 120240100: Request approval to subdivide the existing one lot shopping center into four lots for up to 710,000 square feet of residential uses and up to 40,000 square feet of commercial uses and five parcels for public and private roadways and open space.

B. Site Plan No. 820240120: Proposed infill development with up to 710,000 square feet of residential uses and up to 40,000 square feet of commercial uses for a cumulative density of up to 750,000 square feet of mixed-use development, with 15 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs), open space, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and associated public benefits to support incentive density.

C. Final Forest Conservation Plan No. F20240680: Proposed contribution to an offsite mitigation bank to meet the afforestation planting requirement for the mixed-use development.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

T. Graham

A. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plan cited above, subject to conditions as modified during the hearing and not requiring the undergrounding of utilities, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.

B. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the Site Plan cited above, subject to conditions as modified during the hearing and not requiring the undergrounding of utilities, which will be reflected in an associated draft Resolution to be adopted by the Planning Board at a later date.

C. BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

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

D. BOARD ACTION

Motion: **Hedrick/Pedoeem**

Vote: **4-0**

Other: **Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.**

Action: **Approved recommendation for transmittal of a letter to the Department of General Services requesting evaluation of opportunities related to the open space parcel located at the intersection of Macon Road and Putnam Road for potential community benefit.**

Tamika Graham, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding Loehmann's Plaza. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated November 8, 2024.

Ms. Graham discussed the three proposed phases for the project, and stated the Preliminary Plan proposes to subdivide the property into four buildable lots, create six parcels for roadways and open space, provide right-of-way dedications for Lauderdale Drive and Macon Road, easements for future road connections, and covenants for future road dedications. The Site Plan for Phase I of the east side of the site proposes removal of the portion of existing retail space to construct 89 townhouse units, portions of Longstone Way (private) and Lauderdale Drive (public), new alleyways for property access, upgrading the existing alley and provide a portion of Macon Road as a public street east of Lauderdale Drive, and constructing a portion of the common open space with amenities.

Ms. Graham gave an overview of the architecture and scale of the proposed townhouse units as well as the access and circulation for the project noting the road realignment concept, phased pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and phased open space locations.

Ms. Graham also discussed the Forest Conservation Plan noting an afforestation requirement of 1.57 acres, a variance request for three off-site specimen trees, and mitigation proposed for unavoidable stream valley buffer encroachment.

Lastly, Ms. Graham noted modifications to Preliminary Plan Condition Numbers 10 and 27, as well as Site Plan Condition Number 1, and Forest Conservation Plan Condition Number 6.

Alison Dewey of the Randolph Civic Association offered testimony regarding the need for additional traffic calming measures on adjacent roads to the redevelopment and the open space parcel at the intersection of Macon Road and Putnam Road. Ms. Dewey offered further comments regarding engagement and collaboration with Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) regarding traffic calming measures.

Robert Harris of Lerch, Early, and Brewer offered comments on behalf of the Applicant regarding potential future traffic calming provisions, the open space parcel at the intersection of Macon Road

and Putnam Road, and additional new housing the project will provide. Mr. Harris offered further comments regarding the infeasibility of undergrounding utilities.

Carole Twitmyer of MV+A Architects, the Applicant's consultant, offered comments regarding the back-to-back townhouse configuration, parking, length of each townhouse unit, and average square footage of the units.

Andy Brown of Stanford Properties, the Applicant, offered comments regarding potential for-sale townhouse units, range of cost for the utility undergrounding, and the possible additional cost per unit. Mr. Brown also offered comments regarding the conduit installation cost, Pepco clearance restrictions, and compliance.

Andy Bradshaw of Johnson Bernat Associates, Inc., the Applicant's consultant, offered comments regarding conduit installation.

Benet Tribble of Pepco offered comments regarding clearance requirements for undergrounding of utilities. Mr. Tribble offered further comments regarding the conduit plan, installation process, estimated cost for conduit installation, and substation reliability.

The Board asked questions regarding the back-to-back townhouse configuration, length of the townhouse units, parking, potential for-sale units, street scape improvements, utilities of surrounding properties, Pepco clearance requirements, average townhouse square footage, potential cost of undergrounding utilities, estimated cost for conduit installation and process, substation reliability issues within the area, potential long-term CIP projects for undergrounding of utilities, community engagement with MCDOT for additional traffic calming measures, and ownership of the open space parcel at the intersection of Macon Road and Putnam Road.

Staff, including Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director of Planning, Matt Folden, Regulatory Supervisor, and Richard Brockmyer, Planner III, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion regarding the undergrounding of utilities and decided to remove the proposed conditions requiring the undergrounding of utilities based on consideration of the information and testimony provided by the Applicant.

The Board also discussed the potential usage for the open space parcel at the intersection of Macon Road and Putnam Road and recommended transmittal of a letter to the Department of General Services (DGS) to evaluate opportunities for using the open space parcel for potential community benefit.

Item 8. Brief the Planning Board on the Development Review Process Workgroup recommendations

The Development Review Process Workgroup (DRPW) provided recommendations to the MD Delegation in October 2023 and Planning has made significant process in implementing these recommendations. The briefing is to provide the Planning Board an update on the actions taken to implement the DRPW recommendations.

R. Kronenberg/C. Sorrento

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director of Planning, and Christina Sorrento, Chief of the Intake and Regulatory Coordination Division, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the progress of implementing the recommendations from the Development Review Process Workgroup. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated October 28, 2024.

Mr. Kronenberg gave an overview of the Development Review Process Workgroup recommendations and discussed the recommendations sent to State Legislation that passed and did not pass. Ms. Sorrento continued by discussing the recommendations and actions the Planning Department has completed to date, and Mr. Kronenberg discussed current Planning actions in progress including: updating the Lead Agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), evaluating the potential for a streamlined review of the administrative review process, evaluating and addressing the representation of East County, establishing a Planning and Development Citizen's Academy, and investigating how to improve notice and inclusion practices for the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) Community.

Ehsan Motazedi, Department of Permitting Services (DPS) Deputy Director, offered a multi-media presentation and gave an overview of the recommendations assigned to DPS including the implementation of the DPS Dashboard, Right-of-Way bond improvements, and improved coordination between DPS and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to ensure consistency.

The Board asked questions regarding State Highway Administration (SHA) review time, importance of the Lead Agency MOU, the digital plat and signature system, potential for one Planning/DPS dashboard, and documentation of the intake process.

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

Item 9. Removed - Forest Conservation Law Changes

Staff is recommending changes to 22-A of the Montgomery County Code, Forest Conservation Law to bring the County law into compliance with recent State amendments and minor clarifying edits.

Staff Recommendations: Approval to transmit to County Council

K. Desmond/C. Sorrento

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Other:

Action: Removed.

Item 10. Approval of FY26 Operating Budget including Enterprise, SRF, ISF – Planning, Central Administrative Services (CAS), the Commissioners’ Office, and Parks

J. Sartori/T. Charles/I. Branda/N. Steen

BOARD ACTION

Motion: Hedrick/Pedoeem

Vote: 4-0

Other: Commissioner Bartley was necessarily absent.

Action: Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the FY26 Operating Budgets for Planning, Parks, Commissioner’s Office, and CAS, including Enterprise, SRF, and ISF.

Staff from the Planning Department, Central Administrative Services (CAS), the Commissioner’s Office, and the Parks Department offered multi-media presentations regarding the FY26 Operating Budget for their respective departments. Further information can be found in the Staff Reports dated November 19, 2024 (for Planning and CAS), November 15, 2024, and November 14, 2024 respectively.

Planning

Karen Warnick, Chief of the Management Services Division, stated the Planning Department’s updated FY26 Proposed Budget request is \$28,082,947, which is an increase of \$1,517,162, or 5.7%, over the FY25 Adjusted Adopted budget.

The Board asked questions regarding the revenue shortage and the request for a Placemaker Planner II position.

Staff, including Jason Sartori, Director of Planning, offered comments and responses to the Board’s questions.

Parks

Nancy Steen, Parks Budget Manager, stated the revised total for the Park Fund excluding compensation and OPEB is just under \$6.2 million or 4.6% above the FY25 adopted budget. Adding in costs for the compensation markers and OPEB results in an overall total proposed Park Fund budget increase of 7.2%.

The Board asked if the sustainability programs will affect the utility costs, and Staff offered comments and responses.

Commissioner’s Office

Ilana Branda, Chief of Staff for the Commissioner’s Office, stated the recommended Commissioners’ Office FY26 proposed budget is \$1,427,614. This is an increase of 13.2%, or \$166,304 above the FY25 adopted and adjusted budget.

CAS

Terri Bacote-Charles, Corporate Budget Manager, stated the revised total for CAS departmental budgets and internal service funds proposed budget request is an increase of 4.2% \$29,043,667 overall, which will be split between \$13,795,412 for Montgomery County and \$15,248,256 for Prince George's County and 4.2% over FY25.

The Board asked questions regarding the Montgomery County capital equipment increase, and Staff offered comments and responses.