

# Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD APPROVED PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, February 5, 2026

**Meeting Location:** 2425 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902

### **SUMMARY**

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, February 5, 2026, beginning at 11:37 a.m. and adjourning at 8:26 p.m.

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

Item 1, Item 3, Item 9 and Items 5 through 8, were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes. Item 4 was removed.

Vice Chair Linden was necessarily absent for Items 1 and 3, and joined the meeting at 11:35 a.m. at the start of Item 9.

Commissioner Pedoeem left the meeting during Item 8 at 4:15 p.m. and was necessarily absent for the remainder of the meeting.

The Planning Board recessed for dinner at 4:56 p.m. and reconvened in the auditorium and via video conference to return to open session at 6:32 p.m. to host a joint meeting of the Montgomery County Planning Board and Historic Preservation Commission, as reported in the attached Minutes.

Commissioner Hedrick offered a brief introduction, left the meeting at 6:35 p.m., and was necessarily absent for the remainder of the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, February 12, 2026, 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. Cabin John Park, Preliminary Plan No. 120250080, MCPB No. 25-146
2. Cabin John Park, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250330, MCPB No. 25-147

**Board Action:** Adopted the Resolutions above, as submitted

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 4-0

**Other:** Vice Chair Linden was necessarily absent.

#### B. Approval of Minutes

There were no Minutes submitted for approval.

#### C. Other Preliminary Matters

There were no other Preliminary Matters submitted for approval.

### Item 2. Record Plats (Public Hearing)

There were no Record Plats submitted for approval.

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

**Hassnain Residence, Preliminary Plan No. 120230140:** Regulatory Review Extension Request No. 7 to extend the regulatory review period until May 7, 2026

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval of the extension request

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the extension request, as submitted

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 4-0

**Other:** Vice Chair Linden was necessarily absent.

### Item 4. REMOVED - Roundtable Discussion

The Parks Director's report was removed from the Board's agenda.

**Item 9. Legislative Update**

**A. SB 36/HB 239 Starter and Silver Homes Act**

**Staff Recommendation:** Support with amendments

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to support with amendments

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 4-0-1

**Other:** Commissioner Bartley abstained.

**B. SB 389 Land Use – Transit–Oriented Development – Alterations (Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act)**

**Staff Recommendation:** Informational/Support with amendments

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to support with amendments

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**C. SB 325/HB 548 Land Use – Permitting – Development Rights (Maryland Housing Certainty Act)**

**Staff Recommendation:** Informational/Support with amendments

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to support with amendments

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

**D. HB 381 State Highway Administration – Urban Core and Urban Center Traffic Control Devices**

**Staff Recommendation:** Informational/Support with amendments

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to support with amendments

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 5-0

**E. HB 243/SB 197 Comprehensive General Plans**

**Staff Recommendation:** Informational/Support with Amendments

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to support with amendments

**Motion:** Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:** 5-0

Debra Borden, General Counsel, and Jordan Baucum Colbert, Senior Government Affairs Analyst, gave an overview and briefed the Board on Bills SB 36/HB 239, HB 243/SB 197, SB 325/HB 548, HB 381, and SB 389.

**SB 36/HB 239 - Starter and Silver Homes Act**

Ms. Borden gave an overview of SB 36/HB 239 noting Staff's support for the bill's overarching goal of expanding housing options and reducing barriers to starter homes. Ms. Borden also discussed Staff's recommended amendments regarding alternative definitions for minimum lot size, clarifying the scope of preemption, preserving local

authority to manage growth in a manner consistent with adopted Master Plans, allowing reasonable design and element standards, and providing implementation timelines.

Jason Sartori, Planning Director, offered a multi-media presentation regarding applicable zones and associated minimum detached house lot sizes in Montgomery County, water and sewer applicability by zone, and four different scenarios for Water and Sewer applicability by zone, Priority Funding Area applicability by zone, Priority Funding Areas and Water and Sewer applicability by zone, and transit buffer applicability by zone. Mr. Sartori discussed the differences between the four scenarios for applicable land area and applicable average lot size, as well as Staff's recommended comments and amendments.

The Board asked questions regarding whether the minimum lot sizes would apply to MARC station locations in the Agricultural Zone, Historic Preservation exemptions, possible impacts to Master Plans, and the engagement process with Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

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

The Board held further discussion regarding the four different scenarios presented by Staff, as well as the potential for including additional language regarding Historic Preservation exemptions. The Board agreed with Staff's comments and amendments. A motion was made to support SB 36/HB 239, with amendments, including using the scenario of Priority Funding Areas with Water and Sewer.

### **SB 389 - Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act**

Ms. Borden gave an overview of SB 389 stating the bill provides automatic designation of certain transit-oriented developments as enterprise zones and would significantly expand the State's role in transit-oriented development (TOD), automatically grant certain TOD areas enterprise zone status, shift some local land use authority, and delay certain development fees. Ms. Borden discussed Staff's comments and amendments.

The Board asked questions regarding infrastructure implementation and potential impacts to Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) proportionality payments and school Utilization Premium Payments.

Staff, including Mr. Sartori, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board agreed by consensus with Staff's amendments and a motion was made to support SB 389, with amendments.

### **SB 325/HB 548 - Maryland Housing Certainty Act**

Ms. Borden discussed SB 325/HB 538 and stated Staff supports the bill's overarching goal of expanding housing options and reducing barriers and delays for housing

projects. Ms. Borden also discussed comments and recommendations including considering 20 days for initial application determination of completeness and 30 days before it is deemed complete; providing flexibility so that local timelines, deadlines, and review windows which are more stringent or meet minimum requirements are allowed to continue and remain intact; eliminating the use of the term “vesting” to avoid constitutional and other legal issues; and extending the effective date to July 1, 2027.

Mr. Sartori offered brief comments regarding Montgomery County’s deadlines for accepting applications and terminology for substantially complete applications versus fully complete applications.

The Board asked questions regarding whether the timelines apply to Montgomery County, potential impact to legacy provision for previously accepted applications, and if characteristics of substantially complete applications are defined.

Staff, including Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director of Planning and Emily Vaias, Principal Counsel, offered comments and responses to the Board’s questions.

The Board authorized Planning Staff to incorporate comments and recommendations from the Planning Department and moved to support SB 325/HB 548, with amendments.

### **HB 381 - Urban Core and Urban Center Traffic Control Devices**

Ms. Borden discussed HB 381, which requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to install traffic control devices prohibiting a vehicle from making a right turn while facing a steady red signal at certain intersections on State highways in urban cores and urban centers by July 1, 2029. Ms. Borden noted the bill also authorizes SHA to choose not to install a certain traffic control device at a specific intersection if SHA determines that the installation would significantly impair public safety. Ms. Borden also discussed Staff’s comments and recommendation.

The Board asked questions regarding SHA’s potential criteria for determining intersection locations that would create safety concerns for no turn on red signage.

Staff, including Eli Glazier, Transportation Planner III, offered comments and responses to the Board’s questions.

The Board moved to support HB 381 with amendments.

### **HB 243/SB 197 - Comprehensive General Plans**

Ms. Borden discussed HB 243/SB 197 noting Staff’s initial concerns and comments regarding places of worship. Ms. Borden also noted that Staff recently met with the State Department of Planning to discuss the legislation. Mr. Sartori also offered brief

comments regarding the elements of the bill and reasoning for inclusion of comments regarding places of worship.

The Board asked questions possibility for adding language to elevate climate resilience and mitigation.

Staff, including Emily Vaias, Principal Counsel, offered comments and suggested additional comments regarding elevating climate resilience be included in a future phase of the bill.

The Board moved to support HB 243/SB 197 with amendments.

## **Item 5.           Montgomery Parks Athletic Field Use Permit Policy Update**

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve the Athletic Field Use Permit Policy

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation for approval of the 2026 Athletic Field Use Permit Policy with a policy update within 2 years after implementation in the Fall 2027.

**Motion:**       Hedrick/Pedoeem

**Vote:**         5-0

Miti Figueredo, Montgomery Parks Director, offered brief comments regarding the need for updating the Athletic Fields Policy. Darren Flusche, Deputy Director of Parks, also offered comments regarding the policy update process and community engagement. Carl Weber, Athletic Field Planner, offered a multi-media presentation regarding an update to the Montgomery Parks Athletic Field Use Permit Policy. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated January 20, 2026.

Mr. Weber stated the Athletic Field Use Permit Policy serves as the primary framework for managing and permitting Montgomery Parks' athletic fields. The Policy outlines eligibility for field use, the types and classifications of fields available for reservation, permitted field use timeframes, and the process for securing a field use permit. Mr. Weber stated the revised policy is intended to create a clear policy that is easy to understand, address challenges faced by user groups, improve community equity and access to permitted athletic fields, and expand field capacity by limiting unused permitted hours.

Mr. Weber gave an overview of the specific revisions to the 2013 Policy including: field naming and classification, permitting order of consideration, priority use, the Go-Live Event online platform, field closure, and conditions of use in greater detail. Retained policy elements included: practice use of game only fields, holiday use of game only fields, special events and tournaments, and extended season. Mr. Weber also discussed the stakeholder engagement process that included an initial survey distributed winter/spring 2024, pop up events, focus groups, a draft policy review survey.

The Board asked questions regarding tracking of field usage cancellations, changes made to the original draft due to community feedback, community special events, field requests by Takoma Park Soccer League and Montgomery Department of Recreation, ghost permitting, team makeup, the Go-Live event, potential for additional turf fields, and timeline for full implementation.

Staff, including Melanie Huggins, Montgomery Parks Permitting and Information Supervisor, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board offered comments regarding policy implementation and requested Staff return late 2029 or early 2030 to provide an update on the policy.

**Item 6. Wheaton Placemaking Initiative: Wheaton Placemaking Toolkit**

**Board Action:** Received briefing

Carrie Sanders, Chief of East County Planning, offered brief comments regarding the Wheaton Placemaking Initiative and introduced Sophie Kotzker, Planner II, who offered a multi-media presentation regarding the completed Wheaton Placemaking Toolkit. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated January 16, 2026.

Ms. Kotzker stated the Wheaton Placemaking Toolkit was developed specifically for the Wheaton Urban District to provide a comprehensive set of placemaking strategies and best practices tailored to the unique context of Downtown Wheaton. Designed as a practical resource, the toolkit equips the Urban District with guidance to plan, implement, and sustain future placemaking efforts that enhance community engagement and public space activation. Ms. Kotzker stated the toolkit organizes strategies into four primary categories: plans and strategic goals, connectivity and safety, enhancing public space, and activations. Ms. Kotzker noted each category also includes actionable strategies, regional examples, and practical tips for implementation. Additionally, the toolkit features maps identifying potential locations in Downtown Wheaton where these strategies could be applied, accompanied by illustrative imagery to help visualize possibilities.

Lastly, Ms. Kotzker stated the goal of the toolkit is to serve as a resource for the Urban District to build on the momentum of the Wheaton Placemaking Initiative.

**Item 7. Burial Sites Inventory Historic Context Briefing**

**Board Action:** Received briefing

Brian Crane, Cultural Resources Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the development of a historic context for sites in the Burial Sites Inventory. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated January 22, 2026.

Mr. Crane noted presently there is no thematic historic context specific to cemeteries within which to evaluate potential amendments to the Master Plan for cemeteries or that would identify important characteristics of cemeteries that merit preservation. A historic context for cemeteries will provide a framework for evaluating which cemeteries should be listed in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation based on how their physical characteristics convey their connection with the County's historical themes.

Mr. Crane discussed the relationship between the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and the Burial Sites Inventory, the types of cemeteries and associated historic contexts of burial grounds in the County, and the results of a field survey of selected burial sites in greater detail. Mr. Crane also discussed the context survey lessons learned for cemetery styles and features, as well as marker types and materials. Lastly, Mr. Crane discussed the next steps for the historic context.

The Board asked questions regarding the benevolent societies and whether Staff maintains the inventory for Rockville.

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

**Item 8. Germantown Sector Plan Amendment – Emerging Ideas**

**Board Action:** Received briefing and provided policy direction

Jamey Pratt, Planner III, offered a multi-media presentation regarding the emerging ideas for the Germantown Sector Plan Amendment. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated January 29, 2026.

Mr. Pratt discussed the Plan area and community feedback for housing, environment and sustainability, parks, recreation and open space, and transportation. Mr. Pratt also gave an overview of the overall themes of the community feedback. Mr. Pratt discussed the goals of the Plan, the Plan framework organization, town center focus area, possible activity centers, and strategies to reach the goals in greater detail.

Roberto Duke, Planner III, discussed the multimodal priority corridor, the potential for reclaiming a portion of the previously dedicated Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) right-of-way, upgrading street crossings, redeveloping Germantown to encourage infill development and promote zoning flexibility, Parks and Open Space, the possibility for a community building, and developing one or more community gateway landmark features along Germantown Road to enhance community identity.

Eli Glazier, Transportation Planner III, discussed transportation for the Plan area including building out the street grid area, improving the bike and pedestrian infrastructure, providing wayfinding, and the creation of greenway connections to Parks. Mr. Pratt discussed enhancing parking design within the Plan area and Mr. Glazier gave an overview of the areawide framework for transportation. Lastly, Mr. Pratt gave an overview and discussed additional strategies in greater detail as well.

The Board asked questions regarding whether reclaiming of the CCT right-of-way would interfere with future BRT lines, if completion of the street grid would occur through redevelopment, engagement with property owners for potential opportunity sites, structured parking opportunities, zoning flexibility, laws and legislation introduced regarding State owned land, potential for an enterprise zone, whether there was consideration for connectivity to the MARC station to the south of the Plan Area, if Ride On Reimagined was incorporated, reasoning for possible relocation of the transit center, commuter Park and Ride center trends, and the possibility of incremental transit recommendations.

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

The Board also offered suggestions regarding scheduling a bus tour for the Board to attend earlier in the process, adding short-term and long-term strategies in the implementation section, and showing the likelihood of roadways coming to fruition.

**Minutes for the Joint Meeting of the Montgomery County Planning Board and  
Historic Preservation Commission**

**Montgomery County Planning Board**

Artie Harris, MCPB, Chair  
Josh Linden, MCPB, Vice-Chair  
James Hedrick, MCPB, Commissioner  
Shawn Bartley, MCPB, Commissioner  
Ilana Branda, Commissioners' Office, Chief of Staff

**Montgomery Planning, Director's Office**

Jason Sartori, Montgomery Planning Director (Attended Virtually)  
Robert Kronenberg, Montgomery Planning Deputy Director

**Montgomery Planning, Historic Preservation Office**

Rebecca Ballo, Historic Preservation Division Chief  
John Liebertz, Cultural Resources Planner III  
Serena Bolliger, Cultural Resources Planner II  
Devon Murtha, Cultural Resources Planner II  
Dan Bruechert, Cultural Resources Planner III  
Brian Crane, Cultural Resources Planner III

**Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission**

Jeffrey Hains, HPC, Chair  
J. Michael Galway, HPC, Vice Chair  
Karen Burditt, HPC, Commissioner  
Saundra Prather, HPC, Commissioner  
Marc Dominianni, HPC, Commissioner  
Zara Naser, HPC, Commissioner  
Carly Bond, HPC, Commissioner  
Jonathan Kaplan, HPC, Commissioner

The meeting started at 6:50 p.m.

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

Montgomery County Planning Board (MCPB) Chair, Artie Harris, offered opening remarks and introduced Jeffrey Hains, Historic Preservation Commission Chair, who 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. Rebecca Ballo, Chief of Historic Preservation, also gave brief opening remarks and the remaining members of the HPC, Planning Board, Planning Department, and HPO gave brief introductions.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of HPC, MCPB, and HPO**

Ms. Ballo offered a multimedia presentation and discussed the different roles and responsibilities of the HPC, MCPB, and HPO. Ms. Ballo noted the HPO staffs both the HPC and Planning Board and described a few notable roles including applying for grant funding for 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.

## **Racial Equity and Social Justice**

Ms. Ballo highlighted projects including the rehabilitation of the Scotland AME Zion Church, the Timberlawn site, the Clarksburg Heights Historic District and Community of Faith United Methodist Church and Cemetery, and the Rose-Budd House. Serena Bolliger, Cultural Resources Planner II, also offered brief comments regarding the Timberlawn site.

## **FY27 Budget Requests**

Ms. Ballo discussed the FY27 budget ongoing/recurring items for Master Planning and other projects, as well as requested items for Master Plans and staffing. Ms. Bolliger offered comments regarding the other projects requested within the FY27 budget and stated the three markers will be for the Scotland AME Zion Church, Heffner Park and Community Center, and the Edward U. Taylor School.

Chair Harris offered brief comments regarding the budget process with the County Executive and County Council and noted community advocacy is also important to help with the requested budget. Jason Sartori, Planning Director, also offered comments regarding the budget process and staffing needs for the department.

Ms. Ballo asked questions regarding upcoming opportunities to submit testimony or testify, potential possibilities to meet with the County Executive or County Council members to advocate for HPO requests, and whether any HPC commissioners had experience advocating to the County Executive and County Council.

Staff, including Ilana Branda, Chief of Staff to the Commissioner's Office and Robert Kronenberg, Deputy Director of Planning, offered comments and responses.

Sandra Prather, HPC Commissioner, also offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

Lastly, Ms. Ballo discussed the Untold Stories Historic Markers installations, and Karen Burdit, HPC Commissioner, shared her experience attending the Romeo and Elsie Horad House Untold Stories Historic Markers unveiling.

## **Examples of Successful Adaptive Reuse**

Chair Hains discussed examples of successful adaptive reuse including the Bethesda Community Store, the Takoma Park Bank Building, and the Warner Manor in the Kensington Historic District. Chair Hains also discussed 900 Spring Street, Silver Spring and noted the building was demolished. Chair Hains also suggested touring Warner Manor.

Chair Hains and Chair Harris asked questions regarding the Takoma Bank Building and Dan Bruechert, Cultural Resources Planner III offered comments and responses.

Chair Harris and Commissioners Linden and Bartley asked questions regarding the Warner Manor units, whether other jurisdictions raise funds for adaptive reuse of historic buildings, and if tax credits or other tools have been used to incentivize developers to adaptively reuse historic buildings.

Ms. Ballo and Mr. Kronenberg offered comments and responses.

Ms. Burdit and J. Michael Galway of the HPC also offered comments regarding adaptive reuse of historic buildings and encouraging developers to understand the value of historic resources.

## **Joint Outreach Efforts**

Ms. Ballo discussed previous joint outreach efforts including bike tours, Montgomery Modern bus tours, and asked for potential new ideas for outreach.

Discussion was held regarding potential new avenues or ideas for outreach including offering a speaker series with architects or engineers to provide insight for adaptive reuse, possible garden/historic house tour, partnering with advocacy groups to offer an awards program, and potentially hosting a virtual walking tour of historic buildings and/or cemeteries.

Chair Harris offered brief closing remarks noting the importance of historic preservation within Montgomery County.

The meeting ended at 8:26 p.m.