

# Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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

**Meeting Date:** Friday, March 27, 2026

**Meeting Location:** 2425 Reedie 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 Friday, March 27, 2026, beginning at 9:32 a.m. and adjourning at 12:24 p.m.

Present were Chair Artie Harris, Vice Chair Josh Linden (attended virtually), and Commissioner James Hedrick (attended virtually).

Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

Item 5, Item 11, and Item 12 were discussed in that order and reported in the attached Minutes.

Items 6,13, and 14 were postponed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2026, in the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, Maryland, and via video conference.

*Rachel Roehrich*

Rachel Roehrich  
Technical Writer/Legal Assistant

## MINUTES

### Item 5. FY27 Operating Budget Response

#### A. Parks Department

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendations for Non-Recommended Budget Reductions.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

#### B. Commissioners' Office

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendations for Non-Recommended Budget Reductions.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

#### C. Planning Department

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendations for Non-Recommended Budget Reductions.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

#### D. Central Administrative Services (CAS)

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendations for Non-Recommended Budget Reductions.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

Kate Bentley, Parks Budget Manager; Ilana Branda, Commissioners' Office Chief of Staff; Jason Sartori, Planning Director; and Terri Charles, Corporate Budget Manager, discussed their respective responses to the FY27 Operating Budget Non-Recommended budget reductions. Further information can be found under the Agenda for March 27, 2026.

#### Parks Department

Kate Bentley, Parks Budget Manager, offered a multi-media presentation and stated the Parks Department requested a Park Fund increase of \$8,795,887, which is a 6.3 percent increase over the FY26 Adopted Budget. The County Executive's Recommended Budget included \$5,641,079, or a 4.0 percent increase which leaves a shortfall of \$3,154,807. Ms. Bentley stated the Parks Department has identified upfront

cuts, Tier 1 Non-Recommended Reductions totaling \$2,669,348, and Tier 2 Non-Recommended Reductions totaling \$438,990. Ms. Bentley discussed the cuts and reductions in greater detail. Ms. Bentley also discussed the compensation lapse reduction and vacancies that will not be able to be filled due to the lapse reduction.

Ms. Bentley stated Staff is requesting approval from the Planning Board to transmit the Tiered Non-Recommended Cuts to the County Council for the FY27 Park Fund operating budget along with a change to the FY27 requested transfer from the County General Fund to the MCPS Ballfield Maintenance Special Revenue Fund.

The Board offered brief comments regarding Montgomery Parks budget approach and lapse reduction.

### **Commissioners' Office**

Ilana Branda, Commissioners' Office Chief of Staff discussed the Tier 1 Non-Recommended reduction of \$5,800 for internship program hours to meet the FY27 County Executive's recommendation as well as cutting \$3,300 for Staff training and conferences. The total of the Commissioners' Office Non-Recommended reductions will be \$8,800.

The Board offered comments regarding potentially losing the internship funding but hope the program can be restored.

### **Planning**

Jason Sartori, Planning Director offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the Development Review Special Revenue Fund (DRSF), Administrative Fund, and the Water Quality Protection Fund. Mr. Sartori noted the FY26 Adopted Budget included a \$1.5 Million transfer from the Admin Fund into the DRSF. The FY27 proposed increase was \$2.4 Million and Mr. Sartori stated the County Executive did not recommend any increase to the fund. Mr. Sartori discussed the Tier 0 restoration, Tier 1 restoration, and potential reduction for the DRSF in greater detail.

The Board asked for reasoning as to why the \$1.2 million reserve was originally set and Karen Warnick, Chief of the Management Services Division offered comments and responses.

Mr. Sartori continued by discussing the FY27 Proposed Operating Budget and the County Executive's recommendation of \$1,100,000. Mr. Sartori discussed the Tier 1 restoration, Tier 2 restoration, and reductions in greater detail.

Lastly, Mr. Sartori discussed the Water Quality Protection Fund and stated Planning requested an increase of \$2,082,985 and the County Executive recommended a 6.1 percent increase of \$30,301.

The Board asked questions regarding ranking of requested positions, impact of the loss of the cybersecurity position, and the DRSF balance reserve.

Staff, including Bridget Broullire, Deputy Director of Planning, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board also offered comments regarding the need to push for the cybersecurity position, the need to push for increased funding for the Water Quality Protection Fund, and to express to the County Council that the loss of position restorations could impact the length of time it takes to get work done.

### **Central Administrative Services (CAS)**

Ms. Charles offered a multi-media presentation and stated the County Executive's recommended budget contained a 3.8 percent increase for the Montgomery County portion of the Commission. As a result, the Commission must reduce the proposed budget for both the Administration and Park Funds. A total reduction of \$8,150,599 was recommended. Ms. Charles discussed the Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Non-Recommended reductions for Non-Departmental and Central Administrative Services in greater detail.

**Item 11. Proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), Accessory Residential Uses – Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (Public Testimony Accepted)**

**Staff Recommendation:** The Planning Board transmit a request to the District Council to introduce the ZTA.

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to transmit a request to the District Council to introduce the ZTA, with additional comments regarding parking studies and parking restrictions, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

Bhavna Sivasubramanian, Planner II, offered a multi-media presentation regarding proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), Accessory Residential Uses – Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated March 19, 2026 and posted to the March 27, 2026 Agenda.

Ms. Sivasubramanian gave an overview of the history of ADUs in Montgomery County, the ADU production in Montgomery County, and the purpose of HB 1466/SB 891. Ms. Sivasubramanian discussed Staff's proposed changes to the ZTA including: the Use Table, definition changes, Use Standards, parking requirements, density calculations, and rear and side setback changes in greater detail.

Lastly, Ms. Sivasubramanian stated Staff recommends the Planning Board transmit a request to the District Council to introduce the proposed ZTA as it promotes and encourages the creation of accessory dwelling units on land with single-family detached dwelling units, which is in line with bill HB 1466/SB 891.

The Board asked questions regarding the limited use standards for ADUs, focus of the State bill, parking requirements, potential code changes, reasoning for lack of success of the ADU program, owner occupancy requirements, and if ADUs were considered a limited use in EOF zones.

Staff, including Lisa Govoni, Housing, Infrastructure and Zoning Supervisor and Ben Berbert, Planner IV, offered comments and responses to the Board's questions.

The Board held further discussion regarding parking requirements and restrictions. The Board agreed to moving forward with Staff's recommendations with an additional comment regarding studying parking studies and parking restrictions. The Board also requested further information regarding how other Counties/jurisdictions are doing with ADU production.

**Item 12. Proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), Solar Collection System – Standards (Public Testimony Accepted)**

**Staff Recommendation:** The Planning Board transmit a request to the District Council to introduce the ZTA.

**Board Action:** Approved Staff recommendation to transmit a request to the District Council to introduce the ZTA, as stated in a transmittal letter to be prepared at a later date.

**Motion:** Hedrick/Linden

**Vote:** 3-0

**Other:** Commissioners Bartley and Pedoeem were necessarily absent.

Benjamin Berbert, Planner IV, offered a multi-media presentation regarding proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), Solar Collection System – Standards. Further information can be found in the Staff Report dated February 12, 2026 and posted to the March 27, 2026 Agenda.

Mr. Berbert stated this ZTA is proposed in response to State legislation, Senate Bill 931/House Bill 1036, that passed in 2025, which limits the ability for counties or municipalities to require regulatory review for Solar Collection Systems deemed eligible for a Distributed Generation Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. The proposed ZTA would not amend the code sections pertaining to Solar Collection Systems between 2 – 5 megawatts (MW) in the AR zone but acknowledges the State preemption legislation by only applying the standards of Section 59-3.7.2.B.2. if a project is not otherwise allowed by the State.

Mr. Berbert stated the ZTA proposes amendments to Solar Collection Systems in other Zones, regulating systems up to a maximum of 1 MW of energy, by creating a distinction between ground and rooftop mounted systems and generally reducing the requirements and standards for rooftop mounted systems. Mr. Berbert stated the ZTA would modify the use standards for Solar Collection Systems to make it easier to install rooftop mounted solar across the entire County and acknowledges the recently passed State legislation preempting local control over systems between 1 and 5 MW of AC power generation.

Lastly, Mr. Berbert stated Staff recommends the Planning Board support this proposed ZTA, modifying the use standards for Solar Collection Systems, and sending the ZTA to the District Council requesting introduction.

The Board asked questions regarding the current ordinance, the five percent cap in the AR Zone, whether rooftop solar on a large farm structure would count towards the five percent cap in the Priority Preservation Area (PPA), and possible potential for reducing acreage requirements for ground mounted solar.

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

The Board held further discussion regarding potentially reducing the acreage requirement for ground mounted solar and need for clarity for the five percent cap in the Agricultural Reserve.

**Item 13. POSTPONED - Update of the Montgomery County Planning Board Regulation on Administrative Procedures for Development Review (Public Testimony Accepted)**

This Item was postponed.

**Item 14. POSTPONED - Proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), Notice Required – Standards (Public Testimony Accepted)**

This Item was postponed.

**Item 6. POSTPONED - In Response to a Forest Conservation Law Violation; Forest Conservation Plan Amendment F20241060 (previously SC2003001), Joseph and Cindy Cacace Property, 3721 Flintridge Court, Brookeville, MD 20833 (Public Hearing)**

This Item was postponed.