



July 15, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Acting Chief *GK*
Vision Division

FROM: Sue Edwards, Team Leader (301-495-4518)
North Central Transit Corridor
Vision Division

Eric Graye, Transportation Planning Supervisor *EG*
Move Division

Nancy Sturgeon, Planner Coordinator *NS*
Vision Division

SUBJECT: Status Report: Implementing the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan

BACKGROUND

The Montgomery County Council approved the Great Seneca Science Corridor (GSSC) Master Plan on May 4, 2010 (Council Resolution #16-1325). The approved and adopted Master Plan includes a biennial monitoring program as well as a rigorous four-phased staging plan for the Life Sciences Center (LSC) with "triggers" that must be completed before the Planning Board can approve development. The Council, Executive Branch, and Planning Board share responsibilities for each of these Plan elements. This memo describes the biennial monitoring program, the staging requirements, and the status of the implementation advisory committee. The Life Sciences Center area covered by these implementation requirements and activities is shown on Attachment 1.

The following language was added to the Plan by Council Resolution 16-1325:

Develop a monitoring program for the Master Plan within 12 months of adopting the sectional map amendment that addresses the following:

- *The Planning Board must develop a biennial monitoring program for the LSC. This program will include a periodic assessment of development approvals, traffic issues (including intersection impacts), public facilities and amenities, the status of new facilities, and the CIP and Growth Policy as they relate to the LSC. The program should conduct a regular assessment of the staging plan and determine if any modifications are necessary. The biennial monitoring report must be submitted to the Council and Executive prior to the development of the biennial CIP.*
- *The Planning Board must establish an advisory committee of property owners, residents, and interested groups (including adjacent neighborhoods in Gaithersburg and Rockville), with representation from the Executive Branch, the City of Rockville, and the City of Gaithersburg that are stakeholders in the redevelopment of the Plan area—to evaluate the assumptions made regarding congestion levels, transit use, and parking. The committee’s responsibilities should include monitoring the Plan recommendations, monitoring the CIP and Growth Policy, and recommending action by the Planning Board and the County Council to address issues that may arise, including, but not limited to, community impacts and design, and the status and location of public facilities and open space.*
- *Dependent on availability of outside funding, the Planning Board must initiate an ongoing health impact assessment of development in the Plan area, with the participation of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, the City of Gaithersburg, and the City of Rockville.*

BIENNIAL MONITORING PROGRAM

Responsibility: Planning Board

Status: In progress, estimated time of completion of program fall 2010 with first biennial report completed spring 2011.

Council Resolution 16-1325 allows the Planning Board 12 months from the time of the Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) approval to establish the monitoring program. Approval of the SMA is expected this month.

The Planning Department already prepares a biennial Master Plan Status Report for all approved and adopted master plans and sector plans. The Department is coordinating efforts between the divisions to develop a new, more graphic approach to this report. The report will include data on approved private development for each master plan area. The Master Plan Status Report is due in spring 2011. The monitoring reports for the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan can be incorporated into the overall Master Plan Status Report.

The biennial monitoring program for the LSC must be submitted to the Council and Executive prior to biennial CIP. The monitoring program must include:

- Periodic assessment of development approvals
- A review of traffic issues, including intersection impacts
- Status of new public facilities and amenities
- Review of Capital Improvements Program and Growth Policy
- Regular assessment of staging plan and determination of any necessary modifications

The biennial monitoring program for the LSC will build upon the most current traffic data and Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) collected by the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District (TMD). Under Section 42A-27 of the County Code, this report will be delivered by the first of December each even-numbered year. The analysis of surveyed mode share data will be used to define progress toward the Master Plan NADMS prerequisites for each phase of development.

At this time, staff expects that the first biennial report will not have the benefit of this information from the Executive Branch because the Greater Shady Grove TMD has not yet been funded. The establishment of a survey-based NADMS is a prerequisite for moving to Stage 2 of the Plan, and Stage 1 has only 400,000 commercial square feet available. **The funding for the Greater Shady Grove TMD is therefore the most important element in the implementation plan and should be established as an out-of-cycle element so that the TMD can begin operations during FY 11.**

The Planning Department proposes to assess intersection impacts using a Comprehensive Local Area Transportation Review (CLATR). The CLATR will include all signalized intersections located within the general boundary of the LSC area. CLATR will consider the following scenarios:

- Existing conditions
- A ten-year to fifteen-year development horizon (rounded to the nearest five years, consistent with the philosophy in the Executive's Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR report) considering:
 - approved development within LSC area
 - the latest round of cooperative forecasts submitted by the Planning Department to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) for the rest of Montgomery County (including the municipalities)
 - the latest round of cooperative forecasts approved by MWCOG for the rest of the region
 - the latest Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) transportation network approved by MWCOG for the rest of the region
 - additional projects in Montgomery County if approved by the County Council as part of the Subdivision Staging Policy/CIP process
 - local infrastructure programmed by the State, County, or private sector for the specified horizon year.

The biennial monitoring program and staging plan for the LSC portion of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Plan will be patterned to some extent after similar efforts being developed to implement the White Flint Sector Plan. The key differences between the two plans are:

- The White Flint Sector Plan proposes a new development/special taxing district through which contributions could replace the LATR/PAMR elements of the APF test; no similar mechanism is being considered in the Life Sciences Center area.
- The portion of the GSSC plan subject to staging is a combination of zones (predominantly CR and LSC), rather than predominantly CR-zoned properties as in White Flint.

Therefore, at this time, the staging mechanism being considered for all zones would rely on assessment of an adequate staging capacity determination at time of preliminary plan, rather than at time of site plan as is contemplated in White Flint.

STAGING PLAN

The following includes the changes made to the staging plan for the Life Sciences Center by Council Resolution 16-1325.

Stage 1

Stage 1 allows an additional 400,000 square feet of commercial (nonresidential) development and 2,500 additional dwelling units. Existing and approved development totals 10.7 million square feet and Stage 1 allows 400,000 additional square feet for a total of up to 11.1 million square feet. Health care services are exempt from the requirements of Stage 1. Stage 1 allows 2,500 additional residential dwelling units.

7,000,000 existing development
3,700,000 approved development
400,000 additional new development
11,100,000 Total Stage 1 commercial development

3,300 existing and approved dwelling units
2,500 additional new dwelling units
5,800 Total Stage 1 residential dwelling units

Stage 2

Stage 2 allows a total of 13.4 million square feet of commercial development and 7,300 dwelling units, of which up to 11.1 million square feet of commercial development and 5,300 dwelling units may have been built in Stage 1. After all the prerequisites required before Stage 2 have been met, development above 11.1 million can proceed, including an additional 2.3 million square feet of additional commercial development, up to a total of 13.4 million square feet. Stage 2 allows 2,000 additional residential dwelling units.

11,100,000 Stage 1 development
2,300,000 Stage 2 additional development
13,400,000 Total Stage 2 commercial development

5,800 Stage 1 dwelling units
2,000 Stage 2 additional dwelling units
7,800 Total Stage 2 residential dwelling units

Stage 3

Stage 3 allows a total of 15.7 million square feet of commercial development and 9,000 dwelling units, of which 13.4 million square feet of commercial development and 7,300 dwelling units may have been built in Stages 1 and 2. After all the prerequisites required before Stage 3 have been met, development above 13.4 million square feet can proceed, including an additional 2.3 million square feet of new development, up to a total of 15.7 million square feet. Stage 3 allows 1,200 additional residential dwelling units.

13,400,000 Stage 2 development
2,300,000 Stage 3 additional new development
15,700,000 Total Stage 3 commercial development

7,800 Stage 2 dwelling units
1,200 Stage 3 additional dwelling units
9,000 Total Stage 3 residential dwelling units

Stage 4

Stage 4 allows a total of 17.5 million square feet of commercial development and 9,000 dwelling units, of which 15.7 million square feet of commercial development and all the residential development may have been built in the previous stages. After all the prerequisites required before Stage 4 have been met, development above 15.7 million square feet can proceed, including an additional 1.8 million square feet of new commercial development, up to a total of 17.5 million square feet.

15,700,000 Stage 3 development
1,800,000 Stage 4 additional new development
17,500,000 Total Stage 4 development at full buildout

9,000 Stage 3 dwelling units
No Stage 4 additional dwelling units
9,000 Total Stage 4 residential dwelling units

Staging Definitions

One of the questions unique to GSSC at this time is whether pipeline development (which is not subject to staging) can be switched from commercial to residential or vice-versa. Given the interest to improve the jobs-to-housing balance in the Plan area, staff is considering a proposal to allow any pipeline commercial FAR to be exchanged into residential FAR on a per-square foot basis. The number of vehicle trips generated by high-rise residential development is generally about 25 percent that of office development on a per-square foot basis (rates differ depending on types and sizes of residential units and for other types of commercial development, but residential trip generation rates are lower than nearly all types of commercial development, with some institutional and industrial uses excepted).

This type of pipeline development exchange would not affect the additional development allowed in each stage, but would require an administrative adjustment to the total amount of development at the end of each stage. For instance, if the Planning Board were to support the conversion of 100,000 gross square feet of commercial to residential (and 1,000 new dwelling units resulted) then the amounts of additional development in each stage would remain the same, but the total amount of Stage 1 commercial development would drop from 11,100,000 square feet to 11,000,000 square feet and the total amount of Stage 1 residential development would increase from 5,800 dwelling units to 5,900 dwelling units. Similar adjustments would be made to the totals for Stages 2, 3, and 4.

Road Code Urban Area Designation

The County Council staff will be introducing a resolution to designate the LSC Central, West, Belward, and North Districts as a Road Code Urban Area.

PROPOSED LSC IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Planning Department is soliciting letters of interest from civic associations and commercial property owners to participate in the future development of the LSC. The letters requesting nomination to an advisory committee were sent to 13 area civic organizations, 10 LSC property/business owners, two area-wide organizations, as well as the County Executive, City of Rockville, and City of Gaithersburg.

The request for letters of interest expressed the expectation that the LSC Implementation Advisory Committee will meet quarterly with additional meetings scheduled when the planning staff identifies specific items that the Committee needs to discuss. Interested parties are asked to respond to the Planning Board Chair by August 13, 2010.

Staff expects the Planning Board to appoint the committee members in September and begin holding meetings in October. The initial members would be appointed for two years. The Council resolution approving the GSSC Master Plan describes the responsibilities of the committee. (The full, verbatim portion of the County resolution related to implementation issues is on page 2 of this memo.)

A recent precedent for advisory committees to assist with Plan implementation is the Shady Grove Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee. The Planning Board approved the Shady Grove Implementation Plan in October 2006 and appointed a 10-member advisory committee in December 2006. Since that time the advisory committee has met regularly, depending on the amount of development activity proposed. Participation in the advisory committee has fluctuated over time; new activists have come forward with some of the original members now serving a third, two-year appointment.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA)

The Planning Department and the Department of Health and Human Services continue to explore areas of mutual interest as begun in 2006 with inter-agency discussions. The Council resolution for this Master Plan calls for an "ongoing health impact assessment of development in the Plan area" if outside funding is obtained for this activity. The initial grant request for such funding was not successful.

NS:EG:ha: M:\GSSC\Implementation\Final 7-22-10 PB Status Report.docx

Attachment: LSC Vicinity Map

ATTACHMENT 1

Life Sciences Center Districts

