



November 9, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Acting Chief, Vision Division *JK*
Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, East Transit Corridor Team *KA*
Vision Division

FROM: Sandy Tallant, Planner Coordinator (301-495-1329)
East Transit Corridor Team, Vision Division

SUBJECT: Worksession #3 – Wheaton Central Business District (CBD) and Vicinity Sector Plan: Continued Neighborhood Specific Issues and Urban Design.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Resolve district and parcel specific land use, zoning and design issues for the Sector Plan as summarized below.

INTRODUCTION

This is the Planning Board's third worksession on the proposed Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan. The Board held a public hearing on the Public Hearing Draft of the Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan on Thursday, July 29, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the MRO Auditorium. On October 7, 2010, the Planning Board held its first worksession which covered overarching issues. The Planning Board worksession #2 held on October 28 covered district and parcel specific issues. A table summarizing all of the oral and written testimony received during and after the hearing is provided as Attachment 1. The community can find copies of the submitted testimony on the Wheaton Sector Plan website at: www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/wheaton/index.shtm.

This report is a continuation of the discussion on the Plan's districts and individual parcels from worksession #2. The Board members should bring their copies of the Public Hearing Draft. This report is organized into two parts:

- A discussion of the issues and staff recommendations for the Planning Board's consideration and action; and
- A schedule of future worksessions to address additional issues in the Plan not covered in worksession #3.

WORKSESSION #3 ISSUES

District and Parcel Specific Issues

Core and Price Districts

Issue 12: Should Veirs Mill Road and University Boulevard (west of Veirs Mill Road) be designated as Priority Retail Streets?

Discussion:

Map 7 on page 18 of the Draft Plan identifies Priority Retail Streets. Testimony from the Montgomery County Department of General Services suggests that the Draft Plan should extend priority retail streets designation to Veirs Mill Road from Georgia Avenue to just northwest of University Boulevard, and along University Boulevard to just west of Veirs Mill Road. The testimony states that, "All of these roads are well within walking distance of the Metro, the Veirs Mill/University intersection will be an important gateway, further underscoring the need to include Veirs Mill Road as a priority retail street."

Under the general requirements of the CR Zone, developments located on a street identified as a priority retail street in the Sector Plan must be developed in a manner that is consistent with the recommendations and objectives of the Sector Plan and address any applicable design guidelines.

Of the three major State highways in Wheaton, Veirs Mill Road is the least pedestrian-oriented of the three due to the auto-dominant land uses that flank it. The block between Georgia Avenue and University Boulevard is dominated by the Westfield Wheaton Mall on one side, and the WMATA bus terminal on the other. Veirs Mill is also planned to be a Bus Rapid Transit route connecting Wheaton to Rockville, which may preclude curb side parking and thus make the streetscape less conducive to pedestrian-oriented retail. This stretch of Veirs Mill Road is not considered a prime location for retail uses that depend on pedestrian activity. Although the Plan recommends improvements such as lower speeds, enhanced medians, and street trees to encourage pedestrian activity (pages 40-41 of the Plan), Veirs Mill Road will likely retain much of the character of a major vehicular roadway.

University Boulevard west of Veirs Mill Road also has an auto-oriented character due to surrounding land uses, and will likely retain much of this character despite recommended improvements to convert it into a boulevard.

Staff does not recommend designating Veirs Mill Road and University Boulevard (west of Veirs Mill Road) as Priority Retail Streets. There is no strong economic reason to encourage retail uses in these locations; the market should dictate the uses in the ground floor of development along these sections of roadways. The lack of retail priority streets designation does not preclude retail uses from locating on the ground floor of any development along these roads.

Staff Recommendation:

No change to the Draft Plan.

Issue 13: Retain Veterans Park at its current location.

Discussion:

The 0.7-acre Wheaton Veterans Park is the only existing park within the Sector Plan boundary. The park is located on the edge of the Price District one block east of the Wheaton Metro Station on a steeply sloped parcel. It was completed in the early 1990's to serve the surrounding area and provide a site for Veterans and Memorial Day celebrations. Although the park provides a transition to the single-family detached Wheaton Forest neighborhood to the east, it is under-utilized and is in need of repair.

The Draft Plan on page 23 recommends a park in the Plan area to replace the existing Veterans Park if the current Veterans Park is used for development purposes. On page 58, the Plan recommends that if the Wheaton Veterans Park is not redeveloped per the County's public/private revitalization initiative, it should be renovated to be more visible and inviting from the surrounding streets. If redeveloped, the veterans memorial function of the park should be moved to a more central open space. Any relocation of the Veterans memorial should be closely coordinated with veterans groups.

The testimony submitted on this issue opposes any plans to develop or relocate Wheaton Veterans Park and supports the enhancement and better use of the park.

Veterans Park provides a green buffer between the CBD and the adjoining single-family detached neighborhood. Staff believes that options should be left open for an improved open space at this location through the County's revitalization program or replacement of the veterans memorial elsewhere in the Plan area.

Staff Recommendation:

No change to the Plan.

Issue 14: Increase the proposed height on the Standard Properties parcel to emphasize Wheaton's southern gateway and encourage a signature building (page 34, Lot A).

Discussion:

The 2.0-acre Standard Properties parcel is located at the southeast corner of Georgia Avenue and Prichard Road. This site is currently zoned C-2 with a maximum building height of 42 feet and recommended in the Draft Plan for a maximum FAR of 4.0 and 100-foot building height. The property owner requests 5.0 FAR and 150 feet maximum building height to provide a signature development on their site to complement the "landmark building" envisioned across the street at the WMATA triangle site.

The Draft Plan places the greatest densities and building heights in the core. The tallest development (up to 250 feet high) is recommended on the WMATA triangle site at the convergence of Veirs Mill Road and Georgia Avenue to encourage an iconic building at the southern gateway to Wheaton. Taller buildings are also allowed at the two other important nodes in Wheaton: the intersections of University Boulevard/Georgia Avenue, and University Boulevard/Veirs Mill Road, which serve as the northeast and northwest gateways to the downtown. The heights and densities decrease closer to the single-family residential communities surrounding Wheaton's commercial areas.

Staff has no objection to the proposed increase in the property's maximum density to 5.0 FAR and an increase in the maximum height from 100 feet to 150 feet, transitioning down to 45 feet along Amherst Avenue.

Staff Recommendation:

Increase the density of the site from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and the maximum building height to 150 feet along Georgia Avenue, transitioning down to a maximum height of 45 feet adjacent to the low-rise residential development along Amherst Avenue. This zoning approach would be similar to the block directly north of the site (Block J). The new proposed zoning is CR 5: C 4.5, R 4.5, H 150 feet.

In order to maintain consistent zoning and maximum building height along the east side of Georgia Avenue, staff recommends increasing the density and height of the portion of Block J (the Archstone at Wheaton Station building) from a maximum 4.0 FAR and 100-foot building height proposed in the Plan to an FAR of 5.0 with a maximum height of 150 feet should this site ever redevelop. The new proposed zoning is CR 5: C 4.5, R 4.5, and H 150 feet.

Surrounding Neighborhoods

Issue 15: Rezone the WTOP site on University Boulevard from the existing R-90 to higher mixed-use densities.

Discussion:

The County Executive has requested rezoning the 12.3-acre WTOP site to a higher density. Figure 3 and text (Block Q) on page 36 of the Draft Plan retain the existing R-90 zoning on the site, which includes the WTOP transmitter facility at 2015 University Boulevard West and a 1.4-acre parcel of land with a designated historic building and historic setting. The existing facility was commissioned in 1939, and consists of a concrete and block building and three radio towers. The transmission facility is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to operate a 50,000 watt directional signal at AM 1500, and serve as an auxiliary transmission site for FM 103.5.

The transmitter building is currently under consideration for federal grant money for Homeland Security purposes to serve as a broadcast center for the Washington D.C. area in times of disaster or national need. Emergency studios are currently under construction, and the facility will be able to operate independently from the electric grid for as long as 60 days.

During the Draft Plan development process, the property owners asked that the site not be upzoned since they intend to retain the current use on the site, and that any upzoning would raise their property taxes. Staff recommends retaining the current recommendation.

Staff Recommendation:

No change to the Plan.

Issue 17: Consider preserving the four-acre Montgomery College Art and Design School (MCAD) property on Georgia Avenue south of the Sector Plan area as green space to offset CBD redevelopment.

Discussion:

The Draft Plan recommends providing an interconnected system of parks, trails, and public open spaces where people can gather, enjoy the outdoors, and conduct business. The Plan also recommends renovating Wheaton Veterans Park, providing a central, civic urban park in the Core, and improving connectivity to regional parks and trails such as Wheaton Regional Park and Sligo Stream Valley Park.

The MCAD property is not within in the Sector Plan boundary and will not be within walking distance to new residents and workers anticipated in downtown Wheaton by the Draft Plan. Any proposals for preserving the MCAD property as public parkland should be handled through other processes.

Staff Recommendation:

No change to the Plan.

Kensington View/Wheaton Hills District

Issue 20: Provide a pedestrian and bikeway only connection with no vehicular access for the unbuilt portion of Kensington Boulevard between East Avenue and Veirs Mill Road.

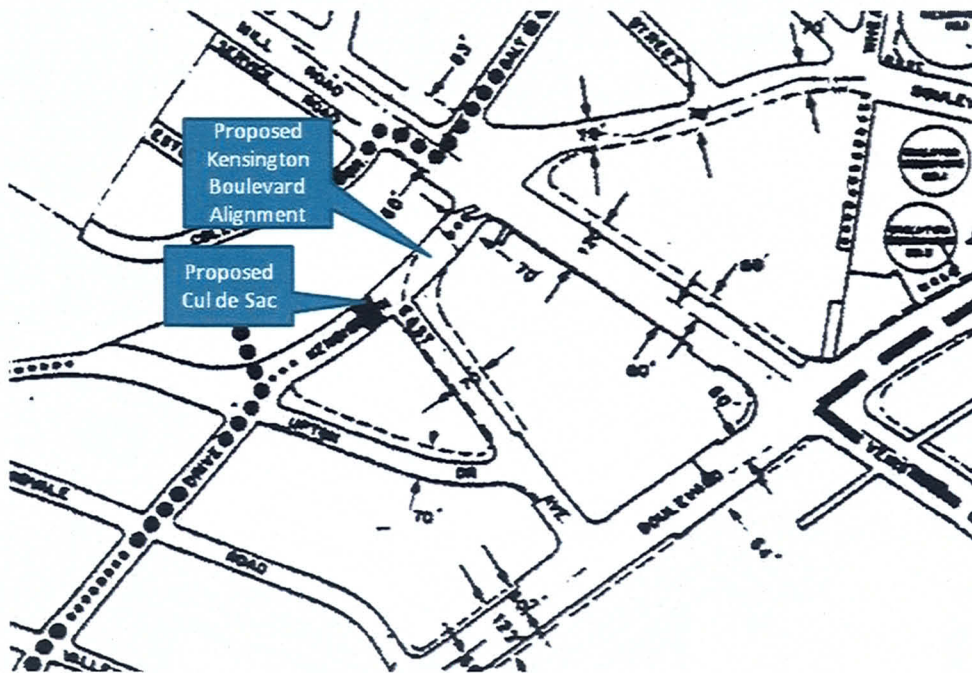
Discussion:

Testimony by residents from Kensington View requested that Kensington Boulevard be developed as a pedestrian and bicycle through-way only. The community strongly believes that the right-of-way (ROW) should not be opened to vehicular traffic simply to enhance the development potential of the southern Lindsay Ford property (lots 9-13) on the east side of East Avenue.

Chris Lindsay, owner of Lindsay Ford (the adjoining property owner), does not support a Kensington Boulevard connection from Veirs Mill Road to the existing Kensington Boulevard. He suggests a pedestrian/bike connection in the Kensington Boulevard paper ROW at this location if topographical conditions allow. Mr. Lindsay would like to see the road connection abandoned so that the right-of-way parcel could become a part of a future redevelopment of his property. He believes that the planned road connection cannot be made without negatively affecting the redevelopment potential of his property, in part due to the change in elevation and the 1990 Plan's recommendation to take additional ROW from the Lindsay property.

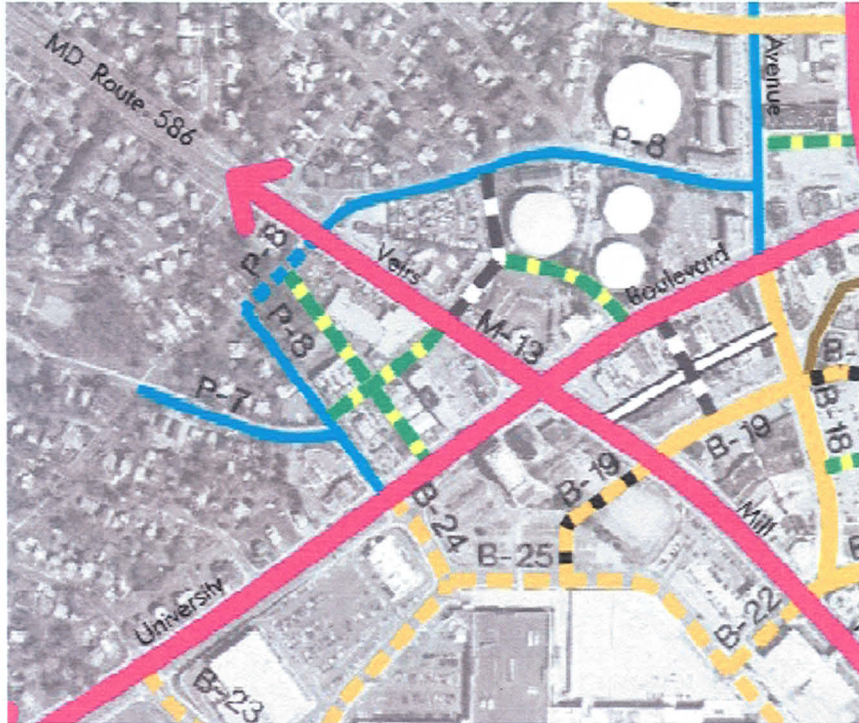
The 1990 Sector Plan for the Wheaton CBD and Vicinity includes a recommendation to connect Kensington Boulevard with Veirs Mill Road (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Map for the 1990 Wheaton Sector Plan



The June 2010 Public Hearing Draft Plan (Map 16) retains this Proposed Draft Plan recommendation for a primary street designation (P-8) as shown in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2



A 2010 aerial of the existing condition showing the proposed Master Planned connection, an existing stairway on private property used by pedestrians to negotiate the change in elevation, and the adjacent outlot is shown in Figure 3.

View of Kensington Boulevard ROW showing existing private stair and grade change to Veirs Mill Road. Photo is looking east from East Avenue to Veirs Mill Road. Photo by M-NCPPC, August 2009.



Figure 3



There are numerous challenges related to the planned connection including:

- There is about a 25-foot drop in elevation from Veirs Mill Road to the planned connection with East Avenue – a distance of about 240 feet.
- There is an adjacent outlot (Outlot A above) that would likely have no access if the connection was constructed (due to the necessary construction of retaining walls).
- The 1990 Plan envisions the connection being made by: (1) taking any required additional area needed for the connection from the Lindsay property on the east side of East Avenue in order to lessen any potential impacts to the residential area west of East Avenue; and (2) terminating Kensington Boulevard in a cul-de-sac east of East Avenue to prohibit cut-through traffic. (See Figure 1.)

In April 2008, Lindsay Ford property owners submitted a request to the County for abandonment of the unbuilt portion of Kensington Boulevard between East Avenue and Veirs Mill Road. The abandonment case was heard by the Planning Board in August 2008 and the Planning Board recommended denial of the request citing the inclusion of the roadway in the existing Sector Plan, the ongoing Sector Plan process and concern about access to Outlot A. A public hearing officer heard the case in July 2009 and also recommended denial of the request. The County Council has deferred decision on the abandonment until completion of the current sector plan process. Staff believe that the right-of-way should be retained.

Staff Recommendation:

Retain the paper ROW for the Kensington Boulevard connection to Veirs Mill Road until otherwise determined through the development review process for a future project on the Lindsay Ford properties.

Staff further recommends including language in the Draft Plan that recommends that the Kensington Boulevard ROW connecting East Avenue to Veirs Mill Road be retained as a pedestrian/bike connection. If the roadway is constructed, its design should limit the impact upon the adjacent residential properties. The needed ROW should come from the larger block on the east side of East Avenue.

Issue 25: The proposed Veirs Mill Road right-of-way would negatively impact the redevelopment potential of the Lindsay Ford properties.

Discussion:

The proposed Draft Plan recommends a 120-foot right-of-way for Veirs Mill Road. The 1989 Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan as well as the 1990 Wheaton Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan have a 120-foot right-of-way recommendation for Veirs Mill Road. The 120-foot right-of-way designation is in accordance with the current County Road Code provisions for roadways designated as Major Highways (such as

Veirs Mill Road) in the Master Plan of Highways. Planning staff carefully considered options for roadway widths throughout the planning area when selecting this street standard, the narrower of the two options for an Urban Major Highway. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (DOT) staff recommended that the right-of-way be expanded to 150 feet in order to accommodate future Bus Rapid Transit service. The Draft Plan recommends BRT be accommodated on Veirs Mill Road via curb lanes.

Property lines are tight to the sidewalk edge along Veirs Mill Road. The existing ROW ranges from approximately 100 to 110 feet although it is narrower near the WMATA bus station. A 120-foot right-of-way would impact properties along Veirs Mill Road between Georgia Avenue and Kensington Boulevard. The Lindsay properties are among these properties, but they would not necessarily be impacted more adversely than other properties along this roadway. A loss of ten feet of frontage for the length of the southern Lindsay properties would leave a depth ranging from 80 to more than 200 feet, which would not put any unreasonable burden on this property.

A 120-foot width along Veirs Mill Road in the Wheaton Plan area acknowledges the function of this important connection between Rockville and Wheaton, particularly for buses. It will accommodate planned Bus Rapid Transit along Veirs Mill Road with wide outside lanes which are also planned for shared use with bicycles.

Although the impact on properties along Veirs Mill Road should not be downplayed, the proposed right-of-way width would allow for significant improvements to the pedestrian realm along long blocks (at least 750 feet). Although sidewalks exist, there is no buffer from the roadway; there are numerous curb cuts, and no street trees. The recommended 120-foot section would include sidewalks of at least six feet with a planting buffer of similar width. These modifications, together with a planted median, would begin the transformation of Veirs Mill Road to the urban boulevard envisioned in the proposed Wheaton Plan.

Staff Recommendation:

Retain the 120-foot right-of-way recommendations for Veirs Mill Road as set forth in Table 2 of the Public Hearing Draft Plan.

Issue 25A: The two conceptual pedestrian connections shown bisecting the southern Lindsay Ford property on pages 41 and 42 of the Draft Plan would restrict the ability to redevelop the property: The one parallel to Veirs Mill Road is unnecessary, and both would reduce the redevelopment potential of the property.

Discussion:

The Draft Plan recommends pedestrian connections and local streets to help achieve walkability and connectivity goals. The Plan proposes three pedestrian connections and one local road on the Lindsay properties on both sides of Veirs Mill Road (page 42 in

the Draft Plan). Location of the connections is conceptual, and would be implemented during redevelopment of the subject properties.

The Draft Plan illustration of the proposed connections on the Lindsay property is consistent with other large blocks in the Plan area (e.g. the block at the southeast corner of the intersection of University Boulevard and Veirs Mill Road). The pedestrian connections would reduce long blocks along Veirs Mill Road west of University Boulevard (950 feet on the south side, and 750 feet on the north side) and provide more pedestrian alternatives to the State highways.

After reviewing the testimony and meeting with the property owner on-site to assess the need and feasibility of providing a pedestrian connection on this block, staff is convinced that the proposed connections do not need to be delineated on map 16 on page 42 of the Draft Plan, and can be recommended as a desirable alternative through text only.

Staff Recommendation:

On Map 16, page 42 of the Draft Plan, replace the lines denoting pedestrian connections on the Lindsay property south of Veirs Mill Road with asterisks and a note that local streets and pedestrian connections are not designated in the Master Plan of Highways. Their exact location and alignment would be determined during the development review process.

Add language to the Plan to acknowledge that any development on the southern Lindsay property must provide for adequate pedestrian circulation, neighborhood compatibility, and consideration of public access to remaining parcels.

Issue 25b: The proposed local street depicted on the northern Lindsay Ford properties on page 42 and described on page 41 of the Draft Plan would overtake the northern Lindsay Ford property at this location and effectively preclude its development.

Discussion:

Lindsay Ford owns two groups of properties on the north and south sides of Veirs Mill Road (Figure 3). The Draft Plan recommends a local street on the north Lindsay Ford property providing an internal connection on the block between Veirs Mill Road and Kensington Boulevard.

The Draft Plan recommends the implementation of local street connections with specific alignment to be determined during the development review process. Location for these streets is marked on Map 16 in the Draft Plan. Text in the Plan on page 41 and a note on Map 16 identify these local streets as roadways that would not be designated in the Master Plan of Highways. The streets could be either private or public including service access and local vehicular circulation. Exact location for the streets is to be determined during the development review process.

One of these local streets marked on Map 16: Existing and Proposed Street Network (page 42) falls on two properties owned by Lindsay Ford north of Veirs Mill Road. Testimony on behalf of Lindsay Ford states that, “Lindsay does not... support roadways, pedestrian/bike connections or open spaces that overtake a property and effectively preclude its redevelopment.”

Local street recommendations in the Plan are critical to meeting the goal of, “Connecting people to places... [via an] expanded network of streets, bikeways and public spaces.” (Draft Plan page 9.) Montgomery County’s recent inclusion of a similar local street network in the adopted White Flint Sector Plan has garnered recognition for its walkability improvements from the development and planning community alike - including the “Greater Greater Washington” blog and the Coalition for Smart Growth.

Local street connections delineated in the Draft Plan are intended to increase walkability within the Plan area, improve vehicular circulation and provide better access to large blocks within the Plan area. The two lots in the Lindsay Ford north group of properties referenced in testimony above are located on a block with numerous curb cuts and long distances between intersections (750 feet along Veirs Mill Road and 700 feet along University Boulevard), and are therefore out of sync with the Plan’s connectivity goals. Long term redevelopment of this block without this connection would necessitate loading and unloading on Kensington Boulevard, adjacent to residential communities to the north.

Although pedestrian connections could be accomplished through text recommendations in the Plan alone, proposed local street connections should remain on the Plan maps in some format in order to better communicate – and reinforce - the Plan vision. Specific alignment of the local streets should be determined during development review. Their locations have been carefully coordinated by staff to reflect needs for service access, transitions between commercial and residential uses and breaks in long blocks throughout the Plan.

Staff Recommendation:

Retain the local street connections as marked in the Draft Plan on Map 16 and as reflected in the Urban Design Guidelines.

Blueridge District

Issue 22: Increase the residential and commercial densities on the Weinberg property from 3.5 to 4.0 FAR.

Discussion:

The approximately 5,600 square-foot Weinberg property is located near the northwest corner of Blueridge Avenue and Elkin Street (Block L, Parcel 8 on page 36 of the Draft Plan). The Plan recommends rezoning Block L, Parcel 8 from C-O to CR 4: C 3.5, R 3.5, H 100 which is consistent with the proposed zoning on the southern portion of the block.

The Weinberg family supports the CR Zone on their property but requests that the recommended commercial and residential density be increased from 3.5 to 4.0 FAR because it would give additional flexibility to a larger development project with respect to market-driven demand for residential over commercial space, and vice versa.

Staff does not support the proposed increase in the Maximum FAR. An increase in the C or R portion of the zoning designation for this property from 3.5 to 4.0 should have the maximum total FAR of more than 4.0 (to encourage mixed use development, a major goal of the CR Zones), which staff believes would be excessive. The proposed zoning on this property is consistent with the proposed zoning on the entire block. A maximum FAR on this property higher than the rest of the block would be odd, and rezoning the entire block to a higher maximum FAR would be too high for this location. Staff believes that the Draft Plan's recommended zoning for this property is adequate and should not be changed.

Staff Recommendation:

No change to the Draft Plan.

Issue 23: Allow Hickerson Drive to be closed permanently to vehicular traffic to achieve a vibrant retail corridor and pedestrian circulation within the Blueridge District.

Discussion:

The Aaronson family owns approximately 2.86 acres on two blocks N and O (Figure 3, page 36) at the northeast corner of Georgia Avenue and University Boulevard. A large part of Block N is occupied by the County Parking Lot 14. The two blocks are separated by Hickerson Drive between Georgia Avenue and Elkin Street.

The Aaronson family requested deemphasizing Hickerson Drive as a vehicular right-of-way and emphasizing its importance for pedestrian connectivity so that it could become the "spine" or retail corridor of an integrated mixed-use development within walking distance to the Wheaton Metro Station. The testimony requested that the following text be added to the Plan:

"The permanent closure of Hickerson Drive may be considered if by doing so a vibrant retail corridor is achieved in its place and pedestrian circulation with the Blueridge District is enhanced."

Since a large part of the two blocks is owned by the Aaronson family (66 percent) and the County Parking Lot 14 (25 percent), the potential for assemblage and a public/private partnership is greater than in some other areas within the CBD core. It is reasonable to assume that a combined development of the two blocks would result in better design if Hickerson Drive were abandoned and designed as a private street. Staff has no objection to the proposed abandonment of Hickerson Drive as a public street if it will provide greater flexibility in the design of a public/private partnership development

project of the two blocks. Staff does not support closure of Hickerson Drive to vehicular traffic as part of this abandonment. It should accommodate both vehicular and pedestrian circulation. The staff is in support of the proposed revision as suggested. It is consistent with the overall vision for the Wheaton CBD.

Staff Recommendation:

Modify Map 16 on page 42 of the Draft Plan to designate Hickerson Drive as a proposed local street. Modify the Draft Plan's text to reflect that the abandonment of Hickerson Drive may be considered if a private street designation would provide flexibility in creating a vibrant retail corridor with enhanced pedestrian and vehicular circulation within the Blueridge District. The abandonment of Hickerson Drive as a public street should be considered only if a combined development of the two blocks is proposed. A through block pedestrian connection should be maintained with retail as shown on Map 7, Priority Retail Streets, on page 18 of the Draft Plan.

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE WORKSESSIONS

In the next worksession, the Board and staff will discuss the remaining parcel-specific issues and urban design guidelines.

Worksession #3	November 18	Continued Neighborhood Specific Issues
Worksession #4	December 9	Continued Neighborhood Specific Issues
Worksession #5	January 2011	Continued Neighborhood Specific Issues and Urban Design Guidelines

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Attachment 1: Summary of public hearing testimony (revised 11/9/10)

**Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan July 29, 2010 Public Hearing Testimony Digest and Correspondence Received After
the August 13, 2010 Closing of the Public Hearing, September 2010
Worksession #3 Revised 11/8/10**

ISSUE (SPEAKER)	STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
<p>WORKSESSION #1, OCTOBER 7, 2010</p>		
<p>Issue 1: The Plan should promote more office growth in Wheaton. The proposed jobs/housing balance should be significantly revised to emphasize Wheaton as a major employment center instead of a bedroom community. (Pages 7-9, 23)</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>The estimated jobs/housing ratio in the Draft Plan is adequate. See staff report for detailed discussion.</p> <p>The small businesses will be supported by a combination of the proposed CR Zone's incentives for on-site space for small stores, a possible retail action plan, expanding the streetscape program, and creating a community development corporation to help implement revitalization strategies along with the small business help programs by the County's Department of Economic Development and Wheaton Redevelopment Office.</p>	<p>Insert revised table and explain it better (e.g., how the estimate relates to the low and high scenario, and the zoning envelope). Emphasize that the market will determine the J/H ratio and the proposed zoning provides sufficient flexibility – it does not constrain the potential for office development if there is a market for it. More office is desirable and the CR zone permits it.</p> <p>Include text in the Plan that encourages landowners and developers to come to Wheaton, NOT discourage them.</p>
<p>Montgomery County Sierra Club, Pamela Lindstrom – The plan does not inspire growth; it describes the un-dynamic place the growth forecast sees. Should envision the Georgia Avenue corridor becoming a “complete community” and not just a bedroom community for the I-270 Corridor. Wheaton’s residents should not be expected to commute to the I-270 Corridor if they want to better their lot. The need for balanced land use among the corridors was a major conclusion of the 2001 Transportation Policy Report (TPR).</p> <p>The goal should be growth in professional jobs in downtown Wheaton near transit access for the workforce. Such jobs would be the foundation for better incomes in the area, more demand for new urban housing and more prosperous retail.</p> <p>Upper Sligo Civic Association, Kathleen Michels – Wheaton could be a 24/7 destination with more jobs and entertainment opportunities in the evening than a bedroom community. Would like Wheaton to be a unique model of urban greening. Could be more innovative at the mall, including re-purposing. Current model with anchor stores is very 20th century.</p> <p>Housing Opportunities Commission, Maryann Dillon – Emphasize the need for additional commercial development in Wheaton’s core.</p> <p>Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Jonathan Fink – The Plan must promote Wheaton’s potential as an office and employment hub. It is essential to Wheaton’s future that the office real estate market be expanded to ensure Wheaton can attract a large employer(s) to enhance Wheaton’s daytime economy.</p> <p>Audubon Naturalist Society, Diane Cameron – Wheaton should become a green business and job center, not a bedroom community. The jobs/housing balance in the draft should be flipped so that Wheaton will grow many more jobs and fewer new residential units. Grow enough jobs in Wheaton that more people are commuting “in the opposite flow path” (north in the morning and south in the evening) on the Red Line.</p> <p>Sligo Headwaters Civic Association, Leah Haygood – Concerned that not enough is done to encourage and develop jobs in Wheaton. Value diversity of small businesses in Wheaton and it’s not clear how the Plan helps preserve them and encourage new ones to locate in Wheaton.</p>		

<p>Issue 2: The goal of 30 percent non-auto driver mode share seems low compared to Silver Spring and Bethesda (other Metro-served CBDs in the County). (Pages 40-49)</p>	<p>County Executive – The 30 percent non-auto driver mode share goal seems low compared to other Metro-served CBDs (Silver Spring, Bethesda).</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan. The proposed 30 percent mode share is an appropriate goal for Wheaton. See the staff report for a detailed discussion.</p>	<p>Explain how we got the NADMS percentage in the text of the Plan.</p>
<p>Issue 3: The Plan’s jobs/housing ratio will result in Wheaton residents boarding an already over-crowded Metro Red Line at peak hours in Wheaton instead of coming to jobs in Wheaton. (Pages 40-49)</p>	<p>Sligo Headwaters Civic Association, <i>Leah Haygood</i> – Plan’s current J/H ratio will result in Wheaton residents boarding an already over-crowded Red Line at peak hours instead of working in Wheaton.</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan. The proposed jobs/housing ratio is an appropriate goal for Wheaton as discussed in the staff report.</p>	<p>No change to Plan text.</p>
<p>Issue 4: Existing school facilities in the area may not be adequate for the projected student population generated by new development in Wheaton. (Page 58)</p>	<p>Kensington Heights Citizens Association, <i>William Houston</i> – Can the projected additional elementary students generated by new development in Wheaton be absorbed down the road into middle school and high schools when the time comes? Kensington Heights, <i>Jane Folsom</i> – An increased number of residents associated with infill development has affected the schools which has caused overcrowding at Oakland Terrace Elementary School.</p>	<p>The estimated number of students in the Plan is in error. Change the incorrect number of projected elementary school students as revised by the MCPS staff. The middle and high schools in the area have capacity to absorb the amount of development proposed for Wheaton. See discussion in the staff report.</p>	<p>Change the text on page 58 of the Draft Plan to reflect that the proposed residential development could yield up to 386 elementary school students, 310 middle school students, and 300 high school students. There are no capacity issues for middle and high school students, but an additional elementary school site may be needed if actual development is higher than the development estimated in this Plan.</p>
<p>Issue 5: The proposed CR Zone may be a disincentive to redevelop properties in Wheaton. (Pages 33-39)</p>	<p>Aaronson Family, <i>Jody Kline, Miller, Miller & Canby</i>, <i>commercial property owners</i> – The CR Zone will be a disincentive for redevelopment because the zone is complicated and costly for standard method of development, the likely development for most properties. This Plan may actually stifle interest in redevelopment, by reducing the standard method of development threshold from 2.0 to .5 FAR, in effect, a down zoning that requires buying back that density and going through the sketch plan review process.</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan. See discussion in the staff report.</p>	<p>Revisit the CR zone during the October 28 Planning Board Worksession to further discuss how the proposed zoning does or does not incentivize redevelopment.</p>

ISSUE (SPEAKER)	STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
<p>The Use Table in the CR Zone is confusing, some uses specifically designated in the CBD zones are not permitted in the CR zone. Owners of commercial retail properties may not be “grandfathered” for existing uses and may have less flexibility to re-lease their property to fill vacancies. The lack of consistency may cause questions about nonconformity of uses.</p> <p>Virginia Sheard, residential property owner – The CR Zone may not be the most appropriate for small properties due to a burden to provide public space and the like.</p> <p>Thomas Martin, residential property owner – supports the CR zones recommended in the Plan.</p>		<p>Conduct outreach (community seminars/forums) for small business owners/property owners to explain how the proposed CR zone works in layman’s terms and compare it to how existing zoning works.</p>
<p>Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, Jeannette Feldner – Supports the use of the new CR zones and the removal of the Overlay Zone. Should place more emphasis on including small retail in new construction along the arterials to create street level activity and long-time identity as a “small retail” downtown at the same time attracting some office development with the creation of a signature building.</p> <p>Chris Lindsay, commercial property owner – Transfer of density within the Sector Plan area should be permitted for all properties in order to foment a more cohesive implementation to the Sector Plan’s proposals.</p> <p>Existing permitted and special exception uses should continue to remain permitted under the zone and the Plan without the stranglehold that can be brought about by nonconforming or similar designations.</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>Street level activity is encouraged in the core and even required on some streets.</p> <p>No change in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>Transfer of density can only occur on abutting and adjacent properties within the CR zone.</p> <p>Existing uses are grandfathered in the CR zone.</p>	
<p>Issue 6: Rezone existing single-family detached homes within one mile of the Metro station to higher densities (pages 16-23).</p> <p>Leonard Greenberg, CBD property owner/developer – Incentivizing the redevelopment of existing single-family homes adjacent to the Core by recommending townhouses and multi-family zoning within one mile of the Metro entrance.</p> <p>Elizabeth Chaisson, Wheaton resident – Increase density within walking distance of the Wheaton Metro Station. Retrofit small single-family detached homes in the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown thus enhancing their desirability for future generations. Allow by-right conversion of homes to include accessory dwelling unit or home office.</p>	<p>No change in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>See discussion in the staff report.</p>	<p>The Plan should include text that supports accessory apartments even if the comprehensive zoning re-write doesn’t make them a permitted use in the residential zones.</p>
<p>Issue 7: The Plan’s vision should include the concept of sustainability. It should include economic development tools to promote “green businesses” in Wheaton. (Pages 7-9, 16, 23, 49-51)</p> <p>Audubon Naturalist Society, Diane Cameron – Green infrastructure should be an integral part of revitalization because it will increase property values and business profitability.</p> <p>Elizabeth Chaisson, Wheaton resident – Wheaton should be the first green district in the County that markets and attracts green businesses and implements going green.</p>	<p>Add language to the Draft Plan to better highlight the sustainable aspects of the Plan.</p>	<p>Include modified language in the Planning Board Draft to add emphasis on sustainable development, green infrastructure and environmental best management practices.</p>

<p>Sligo Headwaters Civic Association, Leah Haygood –The Plan needs a stronger vision-one based on Wheaton being unique and evolving into a green economy center of Montgomery County. Create a “sustainable district,” like the arts and entertainment district. Provide incentives for green businesses, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, residences and public amenities.</p> <p>Kensington Heights Citizens Association, William Houston – Supports the plan’s recommendations on environment.</p>		
<p>Issue 8: The Plan should provide more east-west bike connections in Wheaton. (Pages 40-49)</p> <p>Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Jonathan Fink – supports the proposed Bikeway Network, however, the design of any future pedestrian and bicycle path network should not impede the redevelopment of large lots, or interfere with the assemblage of smaller lots.</p> <p>Washington Area Bicycle Association, Casey Anderson – Support the plan’s bikeway network and explicit commitment to make all the streets bikeable. Would like a couple more east-west connections.</p> <p>Montgomery Bicycle Advocates, Jack Cochrane – A number of business district streets need to be identified as shared roadway bikeways or having bike lanes: Blueridge Avenue (B-15), Realigned Ennalls Avenue and Price Avenue (B-19 and B-20), entire Mall ring road (B-25), bike route parallel to University Blvd. on north side (B-8, etc.), Reedie Drive (B-22), Galt Avenue, Pritchard, Horde Street (P-34), Alberti Drive, and at least one (two would be better) bike-friendly mall entry at Ennalls (B-19) and the existing mall entry (B-22) would be useful for bikes.</p> <p>State Highway Administration – Prefer Wheaton be designated as a Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Area rather than a requirement for development.</p>	<p>Revise the Draft Plan to include more bike connections.</p>	<p>Modify the proposed Draft Plan (text and graphics, pages 44-45) to include the following streets as shared roadway bikeways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Blueridge Avenue (B-15) - From Galt Avenue to Amherst Avenue. b. Entire mall ring road (B-25) around Wheaton Mall, not just the north and east portions. c. Bike route parallel to University Boulevard on north side (B-8, etc.) – Along Geiger Avenue to West Avenue to Oak Drive to Hillsdale Drive. Then take the most expedient route to the best crossing of Veirs Mill Road, ideally at Kensington Boulevard. d. Pritchard Road (B-27, P-33) – from Amherst Avenue to Horde Street – this will provide a better connection between the park facilities on the eastern edge of the Sector Plan area and the CBD. e. Galt Avenue – Extend the bikeway designation southward to University Boulevard to connect to other routes.

Other: Additional Planning Board Directives to Staff - Planning Board Worksession #1

Page 13 describes Wheaton and lists the public sector revitalization programs/projects. Describe the projects further and locate the maps on page 16, 17 and 18 closer to the text.

Page 15 identifies the usefulness of the overlay zone as an issue. Cross-reference the RETAIL overlay zone to the other pages referencing the overlay zone in the Plan.

Strategically reorganize the following pages: page 24 Existing Land Use (map), page 28 Proposed Land Use (Map) and page 25: Existing Zoning (Map)

Include text in the Plan that open spaces that are proposed are suggestions and not site specific places (open spaces and parks) and that there may be others not shown on maps. Staff will revisit this issue with the Planning Board when open spaces are discussed in each district in upcoming Worksessions 2 and 3 for additional direction.

<p>WORKSESSION #2, OCTOBER 28, 2010 Optional Method CR v Standard Method CBD-2: Continuation of Issue #5 from Worksession #1</p>	<p>Powerpoint illustration of Standard Method CBD v Optional Method CR for a 2.0 FAR development on Aaronson properties</p>	<p>Agree with staff's recommendation – no change in the Draft Plan</p>
<p>Issue 9: Should Parking Lot 13 be specifically designated as the location for a major public space? Should the proposed public space on Parking Lot 13 be owned by the Department of Parks? (Pages 16-23)</p>	<p>Executive Branch – Support the recommendation of a civic urban park, but are concerned about the recommendation that the current Parking Lot 13 be the designated location for this public use space. The County needs to assess whether this would be in the best interest of an overall strategy for redevelopment. Rather than focusing specifically on Parking Lot 13, the Plan should recognize the need for an urban park to be included as a part of the redevelopment plan, without reference to how it is done.</p> <p>Department of Economic Development – Suggest eliminating/modifying recommendation that the Department of Parks should own and operate the major civic space recommended for the Core District as part of a public private partnership to better maintain flexibility and consider alternate management options as appropriate.</p> <p>Audubon Naturalist Society, Diane Cameron – Applauds creation of parkland out of some of the existing surface parking lots; would like to see a proposed park in the core (triangle park) to include a beautiful public plaza and amphitheater.</p> <p>Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Jonathan Fink – Believe that creating active use public open spaces will be vital in promoting Wheaton's potential as a lively and safe urban center. The use of County owned land must be used to spur development of "activity generating people places." Endorse the Plan's emphasis on redeveloping land currently used for surface parking. Agree that Parking Lots 13, 14, and 17 could be transformed to include active use public spaces. In particular, Parking Lot 17 holds potential as an inexpensive interim open space for dramatic and musical performances.</p> <p>Elizabeth Chaisson, Wheaton resident – Supports five or six public or private 1-acre sites scattered within a mile of the Metro, each with its own iconic green 12-plus-story elevator building fronting a small half-acre public park or space. This would allow the rent in the older one and two-story commercial buildings in Wheaton to remain affordable to the smaller businesses while providing room for middle to upscale businesses, housing and retail in the newer high rent towers.</p>	<p>Confirmed staff's recommendation to include text in the Plan that expands upon the recommendation that the major civic open space for Wheaton in the Core District should be centrally located in the vicinity of Parking Lot 13. The exact location of the major open space should be determined during the development review process for a public/private project that incorporates Parking Lot 13.</p> <p>Modify the Draft Plan indicating that the ownership by the Parks Department may be one of the options, and that the final status of ownership, management, and operation will be determined as part of the development review process.</p>

Issue 10: Should Ennalls Avenue be realigned to connect with Price Avenue?

One of the property owners impacted by the proposed extension of Ennalls Avenue sent in a letter opposing the proposed extension.

Ennalls Avenue extension is needed to improve mobility and connectivity in the Core. Retain the Draft Recommendation.

Retain the proposed Ennalls Avenue realignment in the Plan at this time. Additional information requested by Commissioner Dreyfuss. Will be discussed further at a later worksession.

Issue 11: Clarify the purpose of extending Price Avenue to Amherst Avenue through private properties and the County garage. (Pages 41-44)

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, Jeannette Feldner – Supports the proposed extension of Price Avenue across Georgia Avenue creating a more logical grid for the downtown.

County Executive – The proposed extension of Price Avenue towards east will go through the Garage 45 structure, which was not designed nor constructed to accommodate the extension of Price Avenue. The Plan should include additional text to explain a rationale and justification for this proposal, recognizing that such plans are not always feasible. An alternative should be described in the Plan.

The proposed extension is needed to improve mobility and connectivity in the core. Retain the Draft Plan recommendation.

Retain the proposed extension in the Draft Plan at this time. Will be discussed at a later worksession.

WORKSESSION #3, NOVEMBER 18, 2010

Issue 12: Should Veirs Mill Road and University Boulevard (west of Veirs Mill Road) be designated as Priority Retail Streets? (Pages 16-23)

Executive Branch – Extend Priority Retail Streets to include Veirs Mill Road from Georgia Avenue to just northwest of University Boulevard and along University Boulevard to just west of Veirs Mill Road. The Plan should foster flex office and rental residential space at street level that can be converted to retail space when the market allows.

Issue 13: Retain Veterans Park at its current location. (Page 58)

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, Jeannette Feldner – Support the enhancement and better use of Veterans Park.

Wheaton Forest Civic Association, Diane Lynne – Oppose any plans to develop the Wheaton Veterans Park.

Issue 14: Increase the proposed height on the Standard Properties parcel to emphasize Wheaton’s southern gateway and encourage a signature building (page 34, Block A). (Pages 33-35).

Standard Properties, Inc., Stuart Barr, Learch Early & Brewer, Chtd. – Provide the opportunity for a signature development to complement the “landmark building” envisioned across the street at the WMATA triangle site. Increase maximum density from CR4 to CR5 and an increase in the maximum height from 100 feet to 150 feet. Envision the tallest buildings on the property located along Georgia Avenue with the height tapering down towards Amherst Avenue.

<p>Issue 15: Rezone the WTOP site on University Boulevard from the existing R-90 to higher mixed use densities. (Page 60)</p>	<p>Executive Branch – Consider increasing zoning for the non-historic portion of the WTOP property.</p>
<p>Issue 17: Consider preserving the four-acre Montgomery College Art and Design School (MCAD) property on Georgia Avenue south of the Sector Plan area as green space to offset CBD redevelopment. (Pages 55-58)</p>	<p>Beverly Sobel, resident, Pipers Mill Crossing in Wheaton – Request consideration of preserving the 4-acre MCAD property as green space to offset CBD redevelopment. The Parks Department should explore opportunities for large parks outside, but near the Plan area, to meet the standards established in the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.</p>
<p>Issue 20: Provide a pedestrian and bikeway only connection with no vehicular access for the unbuilt portion of Kensington Boulevard between East Avenue and Veirs Mill Road.</p>	<p>Stephanie Savolaine, residential property owner, Kensington View – Pedestrians and bicyclists should have a safe network of routes that allow access to key amenities within our increasingly urban neighborhood.</p> <p>The currently un-built ROW of Kensington Boulevard should be developed as a pedestrian and bicycle through-way, made safer and better able to serve all members of the community consistent with the specific staff recommendations. This would retain the ROW in public ownership in the possible future event that the County needs to relieve vehicular traffic at the south-bound intersection of Veirs Mill Road and University Boulevard. Strongly believes that the ROW should not be opened to vehicular traffic simply to enhance the development potential of lots 9-13 on the east side of East Avenue.</p> <p>Chris Lindsay, commercial property owner – Owner does not support a Kensington Boulevard connection from Veirs Mill Road to the existing Kensington Boulevard. Suggest a properly stepped pedestrian/bike connection in the paper Kensington Boulevard right-of-way at this location if contours allow.</p> <p>Does not support pedestrian connections on Lindsay property located south of Veirs Mill Road and north of University Boulevard due to its encroachment on Lindsay's property making it notably smaller and reducing redevelopment potential. Suggest extending it along East Avenue from Upton Drive westward toward Kensington Boulevard.</p>

<p>Issue 22: Increase the residential and commercial densities on the Weinberg property from 3.5 to 4.0 FAR (pages 35-36)</p>	<p>Weinberg Family property, Michele Rosenfeld, Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld – Supports the CR Zone on the Weinberg property (Block 7, parcel 8) but requests that the recommended commercial and residential density be increased from 3.5 to 4 because it would give additional flexibility to a larger redevelopment project with respect to market-driven demand for residential over commercial space, and vice versa.</p>	<p>Issue 23: Allow Hickerson Drive to be closed permanently to vehicular traffic to achieve a vibrant retail corridor and pedestrian circulation within the Blueridge District. (Pages 41-44)</p>
<p>Jody Kline for the Aaronson Family, commercial property owners – Deemphasize Hickerson Drive as a vehicular right-of-way and emphasize its importance for pedestrian connectivity so that it could become the “spine” or retail corridor of an integrated mixed use development within sight and walking distance of the Wheaton Metro Station.</p>		<p>Issue 25: The proposed Veirs Mill Road right-of-way would negatively impact the redevelopment potential of the Lindsay Ford properties. (Pages 41-46)</p>
<p>Chris Lindsay, property owner – Oppose pedestrian connections on Lindsay property located south of Veirs Mill Road and north of University Boulevard. Instead, extending it along East Avenue from Upton Drive westward toward Kensington Boulevard. Does not support a Kensington Boulevard connection from Veirs Mill Road to the existing Kensington Boulevard, but suggests a properly stepped pedestrian/bike connection in the unbuild Kensington Boulevard right-of-way at this location if feasible.</p> <p>Does not support the Master Plan ROW of 120’ for Veirs Mill Road or the proposed local street bisecting the subject block, which will reduce the amount of developable land.</p> <p>Stephanie Savolaine, residential property owner - Kensington View – The currently un-built ROW of Kensington Boulevard should be developed as a pedestrian and bicycle through-way, retaining the ROW in public ownership in case the County needs to relieve vehicular traffic at the south-bound intersection of Veirs Mill Road and University Blvd.</p>		<p>Issue 25a: The two conceptual pedestrian connections shown bisecting the southern Lindsay Ford property on pages 41 and 42 of the Draft Plan would restrict the ability to redevelop the property: The one parallel to Veirs Mill Road is unnecessary, and both would reduce the redevelopment potential of the property.</p> <p>Issue 25b: The proposed local street depicted on the northern Lindsay Ford properties on page 42 and described on page 41 of the Draft Plan would overtake the northern Lindsay Ford property at this location and effectively preclude its development.</p>
<p>WORKSESSION #4, DECEMBER 9, 2010</p> <p>Issue 16: Is the CR Zone the appropriate zone on properties in Kensington View and Wheaton Forest that serve as transitional areas between commercial and single-family residential uses? (Pages 34-36, 38-39)</p> <p>Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Jonathan Fink – Agrees that certain Will be discussed at a later Planning Board</p>		

<p>lots at the edges of residential neighborhoods have the potential to sustain small-scale, non-residential uses but need to ensure that adjacent residential neighborhoods are not adversely impacted.</p> <p>Judy Higgins, Eleanor Duckett, Stephanie Savolaine – Kensington View Strengthen language to protect the neighborhood from retail development on transition sites along East Avenue, and on University Boulevard (Block S –East Avenue between Kensington Blvd. and University Blvd.). A far more compatible and limiting zone should be assigned to these properties instead of the proposed CR Zone on the properties currently zoned R-60, C-0, and C-2.</p> <p>Virginia Sheard, residential property owner – Proposed zoning for edge communities like Kensington View is not adequately addressed. The CR zoning recommendations, particularly on East Avenue and parts of University Blvd. and between Valley View and East Avenue, do not protect the adjacent residents from adverse impacts. Specific language must be written to ensure that only low impact activities can occur within the 45 feet height limits, and only a minimum commercial component should be allowed.</p> <p>Wheaton Forest Civic Association, Diane Lynne – The CR Zone adjacent to our residences may be inconsistent with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Oppose the proposed CR designation on these properties.</p>	<p>worksession</p>
<p>Issue 18: The proposed building height and density on the Wheaton Mall property: the adjoining community thought it was too high but the County staff thought it was too restrictive. Also, the adjoining community raised concerns about existing stormwater management (SWM) issues on the property. Wheaton Mall owners raised issues regarding the existing LATR approvals and agreement, site plan review requirement under the proposed CR Zones, the creation of a Wheaton Mall overlay zone, and related edits to the Draft Plan text.</p>	<p>worksession</p>
<p>Executive Branch – Encourage the transformation of the mall to an urban town center with strong synergies to the rest of Wheaton. Consider increasing both height and density on the Westfield property while stepping down beyond the ¼ mile station boundary towards the existing communities. The proposed height of 75 feet and FAR could be too restrictive.</p> <p>Westfield Corporation, Inc., Jim Agliata and Furey, Doolan, & Abell – Seek assurances that a new Sector Plan for Westfield will have no effect on contractual rights per a July 2001 LATR agreement. Mixed use zoning requirements should be optional and should be implemented gradually to accommodate the existing structures and uses in the mall. Requests consideration of an overlay zone for the Mall property to provide greater flexibility of site plan review. Recognize its unique characteristics such as the ring road configuration, surface parking requirements, and existing structures and parking commitments. The Plan must recognize the place and function of regional malls and of Westfield Wheaton in particular as a key to the success of Wheaton.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>

ISSUE (SPEAKER)		STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
Issue 19:	Retain the existing green buffer along the ring road on the Wheaton Mall property to reduce the impact of future Mall redevelopment on adjacent residential areas.	Retain the existing green buffer along the ring road on the Wheaton Mall property to reduce the impact of future Mall redevelopment on adjacent residential areas.	
Kensington Heights Citizens Association	– Retain a green buffer between the neighborhood and the ring road surrounding the Mall to reduce the impact of new development on Mall property adjacent residential areas. Reduce the allowable height of buildings along the edge of the Mall property to 35 feet stepping up to 45 feet, then to 75 feet to reduce the issues of scale, privacy, and access to natural light and air on residential properties.	Revise the Draft Plan text to include recommendations for retaining the existing green buffer. Building height transition will be addressed at the Planning Board Worksessions.	
Danila Sheveiko, residential property owner	– Include a green buffer zone between the Westfield Mall ring road and their property line abutting residential uses.		
Issue 21:	Retain the CBD-2 zoning on the Wheaton Crossing Shopping Center properties (Draft Plan, page 36, Blocks N and O). (Pages 35-36)		
Aaronson Family property, commercial property owners, Jody Kline	– Oppose the proposed CR zoning for their property. The first wave of development could be encouraged by the standard method of development in the existing CBD-2 zone and would probably be discouraged by the CR zone's maximum 0.5 FAR for standard method development.	Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession	
Issue 24:	Should Wheaton have a Transportation Management District (TMD) to encourage more people to take transit? (Pages 48-49)		
The County Department of Transportation	– Given the current lack of office employment, and the fact that this Plan states Wheaton "is not envisioned to be a major office hub", the success of a TMD effort in achieving the employee mode share goals is questionable.	Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession	
Issue 26:	Road designation should be in conformity with community context. (Pages 40-49)		
Issue 27:	Re-evaluate the minimum Sector Plan rights-of-way widths including all major highway segments given their bikeway and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) potentials. (Pages 40-49)		
County Department of Transportation	– Reevaluate the minimum master planned right-of-way widths for all Major Highways segments, given their BRT and bikeway potentials.	Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession	
Issue 28:	Should the Urban Design Guidelines be in the Sector Plan as they used to be in the past?		
Montgomery County Civic Federation	– Do not support the idea of master plans and design guideline as separate documents. Design guidelines should be in master plans as they have been in the past.	Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession	
Other Testimony			
Executive Branch	– The Plan captures the Executive's stated vision that Wheaton's future is a major mixed-use market center in the mid-county region. Strongly support the vision of high density, mixed-use town center development with its protection of surrounding neighborhoods and the accompanying grid work.	Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession	

ISSUE (SPEAKER)	STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
<p>Recommends that references to the bus transit includes all the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes under study. Further, we recommended the recently completed WMATA Station Access Study be cited and that the Plan recognize the critical role of the existing and extensive bus network.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession</p>	
<p>State Highway Administration, Pages 40-49 – Further study is needed regarding the placement of signals, and the lowering of speed limits.</p> <p>Supports short-term on-street parking, provided that parking does not generate increased operational and safety concerns along state roadways.</p> <p>Supports the Plan's efforts to revitalize the area. Encourage Montgomery County to coordinate developer-improvements in order to properly mitigate traffic and support transportation vision as outlined in the Plan.</p> <p>The recommendation of BRT on the outside curb lane is too specific.</p>	<p>Will be corrected in the Planning Board Draft</p>	
<p>The County Department of Transportation, Pages 40-49 – There is a discrepancy between the total numbers of parking spaces as shown in table 5.</p> <p>County Department of Environmental Protection – The Plan does not mention solid waste and recycling requirements for future development and for retrofits. The Plan should include language to lay the groundwork for adequate solid waste management infrastructure in the CBD.</p> <p>As part of raising awareness of water flow through increased visibility, we recommend including a commitment to daylight streams when possible during the redevelopment process.</p> <p>Clarify how encouraging small properties to redevelop together to facilitate shared use minimizes and mitigates impervious surfaces.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession and language will be added to the Planning Board Draft as needed.</p>	
<p>County Fire and Rescue Services, Pages 40-49 – Roundabouts slow responding fire-rescue vehicles more than smaller vehicles. If any are to be included in the CBD, they must be designed to accommodate easy traversing by fire-rescue vehicles to minimize delays for essential life and property saving efforts.</p> <p>Reduced traffic speeds, and street closure for events will slow response time of emergency vehicles due to traffic congestion.</p> <p>Page 49-The newer proposal of planting trees on roof-tops would present a long-term maintenance concern and may require changes to the Life Safety Code in order to be able to provide firefighting water supply directly to rooftops.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board</p>	
<p>Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, <i>Jonathan Fink</i> – Support the draft</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board</p>	

<p>Plan's vision: the urban density all along Wheaton's three main thoroughfares, the proposed CR Zone, the recommended mix of office, retail, and residential uses, and the overall economic and environmental sustainability of Wheaton.</p> <p>Supports reducing the targeted speeds of Wheaton's main thoroughfares through the use of attractive traffic calming modifications.</p> <p>Supports improving pedestrian access to Westfield Wheaton Mall at every egress.</p> <p>Agrees that redevelopment is friendly to the environment, that incentives are needed to ensure future buildings are built with energy efficient design, building a pedestrian and bicycle network, reduction in impervious services and an increase in tree canopy, and encouraging small properties to redevelop together to facilitate shared use helps achieve goals for a greener Wheaton.</p> <p>Page 58 – If the County's property housing the Crossways Community becomes an elementary school, make every effort to relocate the program within Wheaton.</p> <p>Supports the Plan's proposal for an additional elementary school and agrees that the County-owned former elementary school building used by the Crossways Community is a good option.</p> <p>Supports design modifications to Wheaton's existing streetscape to increase pedestrian traffic and street level activity.</p> <p>Page 26 – Agrees that the Wheaton Retail Preservation Overlay Zone should be removed.</p>	<p>worksession.</p>	
<p>Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, Jeannette Feldner – Page 59 – Bring some amenities or recreational facilities such as an indoor pool to the downtown.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Silgo Headwaters Civic Association, Leah Haygood – Pages 49-53 – Wheaton should model how a degraded urban environment can transform into one that improves the environment through green building, environmental site design, etc.</p> <p>Audubon Naturalist Society, Diane Cameron, Pages 49-53 – The County's ability to meet the restoration challenge, contained in the 2010 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit to restore 20% of uncontrolled imperviousness by 2014, depends in part on the direction taken by the Wheaton Plan.</p> <p>Would like to see environmental site design applied through retrofits to parking lots, roofs and yards, and integrated into the County's considerable economic development resources. Suggest inclusion of the new Environmental Site Design requirements for all projects.</p> <p>Hope that a green direction will be woven throughout the entire Plan including</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	

ISSUE (SPEAKER)	STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
<p>economic development and transportation components.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Anacostia Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee, Michael Smith – Applauds the draft plan’s call to raise awareness of water flow through increased visibility. Asks that the Plan go beyond these aspirations by using the Anacostia Restoration Plan as a kick start to make Wheaton a nationally recognized showcase of Environmental Site Design. The Plan should make explicit mention of both Sligo Creek and the Anacostia Watershed.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Supports creating green linkages with plantings and signage along Windham Lane to Sligo Creek Park and along Blueridge Avenue to Wheaton Regional Park.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Washington Area Bicycle Association, Casey Anderson – The land use component makes this a place where you’d actually want to ride your bicycle and walk. Additional mixed use, and more density is done in a way that activates the street and makes it more appealing to be out on the street, which in turn will give drivers the idea that this is a place for people and not just for cars.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Kensington Heights Citizens Association, William Houston, pages 40-49 – Consider redirecting a portion of Veirs Mill Road beneath the current ground level, and creating a vibrant pedestrian-only plaza between the Mall and the CBD.</p> <p>Should consider what responsibility we have for ensuring that the services provided by Crossways Community Center continue if a new elementary school is located to this site.</p> <p><i>Jane Folsom resident</i> – Infill development has caused increased traffic on residential streets many of which do not have sidewalks.</p> <p>Where would the services provided at Crossways Community go?</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	
<p>Housing Opportunities Commission – The Plan should have a dedicated section on housing. Housing is a fundamental element in any community and deserves a discreet discussion.</p> <p>Virginia Sheard, Kensington View, pages 40-49 – While a 30% mode share goal is desirable, plans must accommodate parking and accessibility, the high number of drivers who converge on Wheaton for bus and transit services, which is likely to increase if the BRT becomes a reality; the number of outside Wheaton patrons and shoppers who will be necessary to sustain the expected new restaurants, services, and events.</p> <p>The proposed town center on part of Parking Lot #13 will have limited visibility from the bounding highways. Development on corners such as Reedie and Veirs Mill and Georgia and Veirs Mill should be set back sufficiently and limited in height to provide a visual</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession.</p>	

BOARD DECISION

STAFF RESPONSE

ISSUE (SPEAKER)

<p>connection to the outside world. 150' and 200' buildings to the lot lines will block all invitation to enter the activity area.</p> <p>Guidelines should be available for review concurrently with the Sector Plan.</p> <p>Strongly request that until a document is approved for final distribution, drafts and associated reports be formatted only as black and white, portrait oriented, documents. Graphics should be made readable with best use of black and gray tints, and variation in line weights.</p> <p>Questions the importance of the information in the Appendices and why they exist, and hopes they go away before transmitted to the Council. Need to use clear simple English to make documents more understandable.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession</p>
<p>Chris Lindsay, commercial property owner, pages 40-49 – Has State Highways Administration vetted the proposed roadways in the context of Veirs Mill Road and University Boulevard as State Roads?</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession</p>
<p>How and by whom proposed local streets will be maintained since they are not on the Master Plan of Highways?</p> <p>Danila Sheveiko, residential property owner, pages 41-42 – Plan a path to the Metro across the south and southeast parking lots that has some shade by converting some of the Mall's surface parking to pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle use with curbing to protect people from cars and trucks.</p> <p>The Plan should fully embrace Environmental Site Design (ESD) requiring that ESD be applied to the maximum extent practical on all development projects in accordance with state and local regulations.</p>	<p>Will be discussed at a later Planning Board worksession</p>
<p>Elizabeth Chaisson, Wheaton resident – Plan should show how to retrofit what we have so that it will be sustainable in the years to come such as: Painting roofs white to cool it, improving stormwater runoff with rain barrel and a garden, building living edible walls with fruit trees, composting, converting basements to legal one bedroom accessory dwelling units.</p>	
<p>Safeway, Steve Robins, Lerch Early & Brewer, pages 34-35 – Staff's recommendations for the property are entirely consistent with what already has been approved by the Planning Board. Proposed zoning is from CBD-3 to CR6: C 5.5, R 5.5, H 200. The project is consistent with the CR 6 zone.</p>	
<p>Washington Properties Company, Heather Dihopolsky, Linowes and Blocher LLP, page 37 – Need to ensure that the proposed project at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Veirs Mill Road (245 multi-family dwelling units on 1.76 acres) adheres to the proposed</p>	

ISSUE (SPEAKER)	STAFF RESPONSE	BOARD DECISION
vision and recommendations in the Draft Sector Plan.		
Thomas Martin, residential property owner – Agree with the Draft Sector Plan’s purpose of transforming Wheaton into a beautiful, walkable urban center, with an active streetscape.		
Marian Fryer, residential property owner – support the draft Plan.		

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