



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item #6
April 14, 2011

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 6, 2011

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Dan Hardy, Chief *DKH*
Functional Planning and Policy Division

Mary Dolan, Natural and Community Resources Supervisor *MD*
Functional Planning and Policy Division

FROM: Frederick Vernon Boyd, Community Planner *FVB*
Area 3 Planning Team

SUBJECT: Master Plan Assessment

This memorandum offers a brief overview of planning staff's ongoing efforts to prepare an updated compilation of capital improvement projects proposed in approved and adopted master or sector plans. On April 14, planning staff will review these efforts and offer the board a glimpse of its work towards a more visual, GIS-based method of providing information on the relationships among master plan recommendations, capital projects and development approvals.

As part of the discussions for the current growth policy, the County Council directed the Planning Board to prepare an implementation status report for the master plans. The report is to describe "how development was proceeding and whether the public actions and facilities in the plan are occurring in a timely way." The Planning Department last prepared a comprehensive Master Plan Status Report in 2008, which provided a summary of the plans' visions, goals and objectives as well as lists of policy and project recommendations. The Report indentified projects that had been completed, those included in the Capital Improvements Program and, importantly, those that remained unplanned or programmed. The Report was designed to assist decisionmakers in devising Planning Board work programs and setting priorities for the Capital Improvements Program.

The current master plan assessment effort attempts to provide information on the relationship between the pace of development and the provision of public facilities in ways that use new technologies to make the information more accessible and easier to visualize. The project's aim

is to create maps that will enable the viewer to see capital projects in the context of other elements of the county's growth policy mechanism, such as priority funding areas and conditions in public school clusters. It draws on analytical work done as part of the 2009-2011 Growth Policy, which created a table that set priorities for public facilities by ranking them based on five criteria: sustainability, master plan goals and objectives, connectivity, design excellence and diversity.

Planning Department staff has begun to map capital projects, and will show the Planning Board projects compiled for the 2008 status report and for the four plans—Twinbrook, Germantown, Great Seneca Science Corridor and White Flint—approved since the last status report. Against these projects, planning staff will also show the county's priority funding areas and those areas where school facility payments and Policy Area Mobility Review mitigation are required to offset the impacts of inadequate public facilities. As information from the "pipeline" of approved residential and commercial projects is added to the mapping, planning staff expects patterns to emerge that will show how development approvals relate to planned, programmed or contemplated projects that will improve public facilities and environmental stewardship.

Planning staff expects to use these maps to analyze the existing inventory of capital projects and then offer recommended priorities that should help direct resources to those areas where ongoing development clearly demonstrates they are needed. Next steps include the addition of pipeline information and the status of staging in various master plans. Then the analysis will allow us to develop comparative priorities for projects. A comprehensive set of priorities for all capital projects in areas where development is underway or imminent, expressed in the context of policies for funding and exactions in specified areas, will help the Council direct scarce capital project dollars to the places they are most needed.

Planning staff expects to have the assessment developed for staff review of the CIP in May and ready for Planning Board review in June. Because the primary review and analysis tool is likely to be a map, additional thought will be given to the best way to present the assessment to the County Council. Staff welcomes Planning Board guidance on this and other elements of the assessment.

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