MCPB
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Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

Frederick Vernon Boyd, Planner Coordinator, Area 3 Planning, fred.boyd@montgomeryplanning.org, 301.495.4654

John A. Carter, Chief, Area 3 Planning

Staff Report Date: 4-10-14

Description

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
Briefing by Committee members on the Committee's Purpose, Goals and Objectives, and a Presentation on its Design Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation: Discussion

Summary

This briefing will familiarize the Planning Board with the mission and work of the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee. Members of the Committee will outline its work program and discuss its development of Design Guidelines that provide an illustrative concept for the Olney Town Center and a concept for the civic commons that is a critical element in the Town Center's development. The briefing will be led by three members of the Advisory Committee.

Description

The Olney Town Center Advisory Committee consists of eleven Olney area residents nominated by local civic, homeowners, service and business organizations. The committee, recommended by the Montgomery County Council, and organized by the Planning Board, works towards creation of a common, community-based vision for redevelopment of the Olney Town Center as part of the implementation of the 2005 Olney Master Plan. The committee also works closely with landowners and developers planning projects in the Town Center, reviews resulting development proposals, provides comments for the Planning Board's use in its regulatory reviews for Town Center projects, and develops recommendations for Capital Improvement Projects in the Town Center.

The Committee meets six times a year to discuss specific projects, interact with elected and Executive Branch officials, and review ongoing monitoring efforts. Nine subcommittees, ranging from Redevelopment to Public Relations, enable members to focus on specific aspects of the Committee's mission and work program.

The Committee has prepared the attached Design Guidelines, which fulfill one of its primary charges: creation of an Illustrative Concept Plan for the Town Center. This concept reflects a series of principles— mixed-use development, tapering building heights, central public open space, enhancement of the pedestrian realm and clearly defined streetscapes—that will guide development in the mixed-use zone created for the Town Center by the Master Plan.

Three members of the committee—Jim Smith, current Chair, Helene Rosenheim, immediate past Chair, and Lydia Rappolt, Vice Chair, will lead this briefing on the Committee, its work program, the Design Guidelines, and other aspects of its mission.

Attachment:
Olney Town Center Advisory Committee Design Guidelines

Olney Town Center

Conceptual Illustration and Design Guidelines

Olney Town Center

OLNEY TOWN CENTER CONCEPT PLAN

Conceptual Illustration

Acknowledgements

The Olney Town Center Advisory Committee in 2008, was composed of the following members:

Jim Smith, Chair
Bob Beard
Joe Buffington, II
Eileen Cahill
Nancy DeLalio
Mark Feinroth
Joe Fritsch
Paula Kahla
Dorothy Kane
Walter Lee
Helene Rosenheim

This document is the result of the combined effort of many individuals. The committee wishes to express our sincerest gratitude to the following individuals and organizations for their support and contributions.

Khalid Afzal - Montgomery County Planning Department
Gina Angiola - Former Committee Member
Sunita Bhatia - Former Committee Member
Miche Booz - Architect
Dr. Joe Buffington
Bill Caldwell - Architect, Urban Designer at Edens&Avant
    (previously RTKL)
Carl M. Freeman Companies
Tom Gallagher - Former Committee Member
Olney Library Staff
Laura Rydland - Urban Designer at RTKL, Consultant

Furthermore, we would like to thank all members of the public who took the time to discuss this document with us or provide written comments. Your input has helped us improve this document so it more effectively achieves its purpose.

For further information, please see: http://olneytowncenter.org/

Table of Contents: Conceptual Illustration

Introduction

The Olney Master Plan, approved in 2005 after a four year public input process, dedicates one chapter to the town center. It is guided by the concept of Olney as a satellite town that functions as a local retail center rather than a regional shopping and employment center. The plan sets forth the following goal:

> Create an economically healthy, attractive, pedestrian-oriented, and well connected town center to be the commercial and civic heart of the community. Create a civic center in the town center through redevelopment of a major shopping center or a public-private partnership.

A key recommendation of the plan, to rezone all properties in the Olney Town Center to a single mixed-use zone, was adopted soon after plan approval. In addition, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) formed the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) and gave it the following charge.
- Create an Illustrative Concept Plan;
- Create a concept plan for a civic center/town commons; and
- Review development proposals for parcels within the town center and make recommendations to the Montgomery County Planning Board.

This document achieves the first of these objectives. It provides one of many possible development scenarios for the town center given the new mixed-use town center zoning. The redevelopment options illustrated herein should not be taken as a blueprint for development, but as a depiction of some of the opportunities that exist for the community and the property owners in the town center. A subsequent document containing design guidelines will provide standards by which the committee will review development proposals for parcels within the town center.

A public comment draft of this document was published in October 2007 and presented at several community events between November 2007 and June 2008. These events directly reached the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA), the Olney Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, homeowner associations, and individuals in the community. This document was revised to include input received from the community and this current version is prepared for the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee of the Montgomery County Council. Presentation of this document fulfills the first charge of the OTCAC's charter.

Olney's mixed-use town center provides new opportunities that have never been available before. We believe that the future holds exciting possibilities for commercial, housing, office, and civic-use development in the heart of our community providing new choices for the residents and the business leaders of Olney.

James A. Smith, Chair
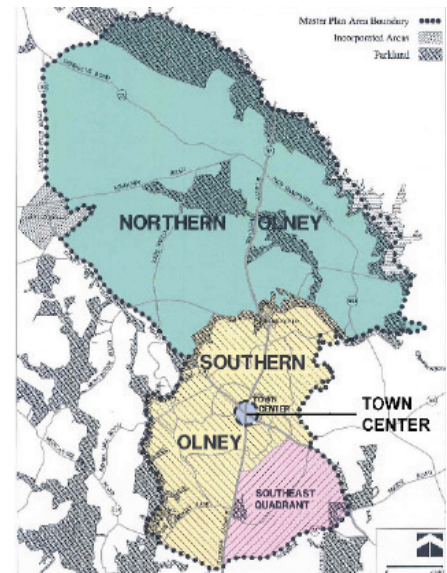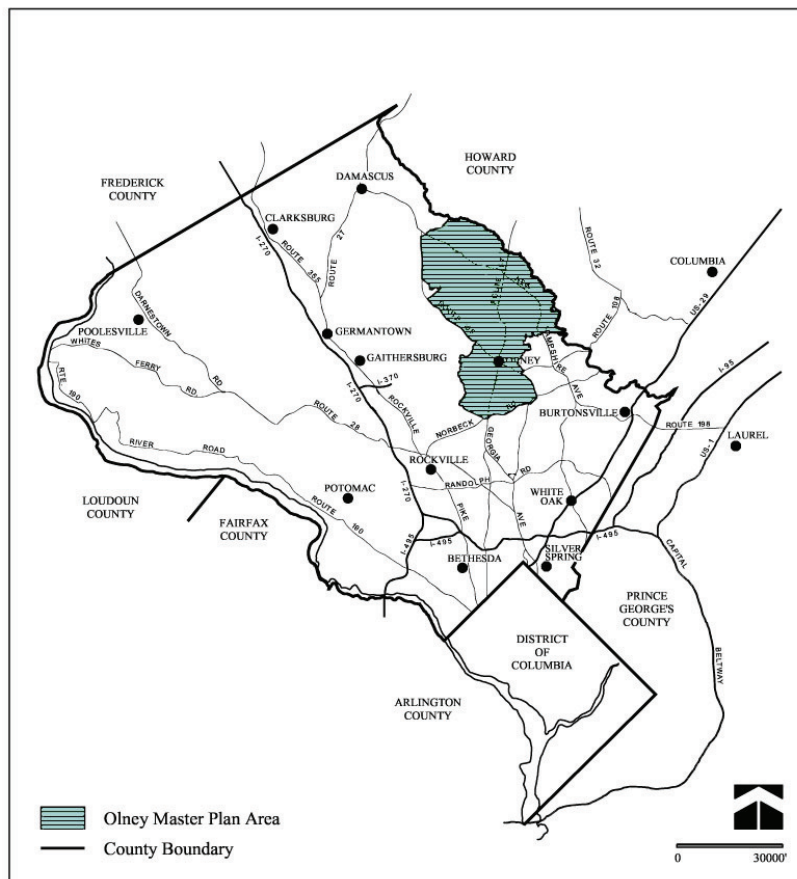
Location of Olney

Montgomery County, Maryland, was one of two counties in Maryland that adopted a master plan in 1964 based on the "wedges and corridors" concept, where major development was to occur along transit corridors while the rural areas in-between these corridors would be residential and open space. The 1964 General Plan designated Olney as a satellite community in the wedge area framed by the I-270 and I-95 corridors.

The 2005 Olney Master Plan confirms the concept of Olney as a Satellite town. Olney is envisioned as the focal point of the community, rather than a regional service or shopping area. By discouraging commercial development outside of the Olney Town Center and by encouraging density and development in the town center, the greater area of Olney will be able to preserve its semi-rural and residential character while allowing for the changes that will inevitably come as Montgomery County continues to grow its economy. As such, the newly adopted Olney Master Plan, the Olney Town Center's new mixed-use zoning, and this document are intended to guide Olney's growth into a vibrant town center.

Existing Conditions

The core of Olney is characterized by typical suburban development that is oriented around the car. From the aerial image below, it is evident that much more land is consumed by surface parking than by other uses. The town center is widely perceived as unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists in part because of this focus on car access.
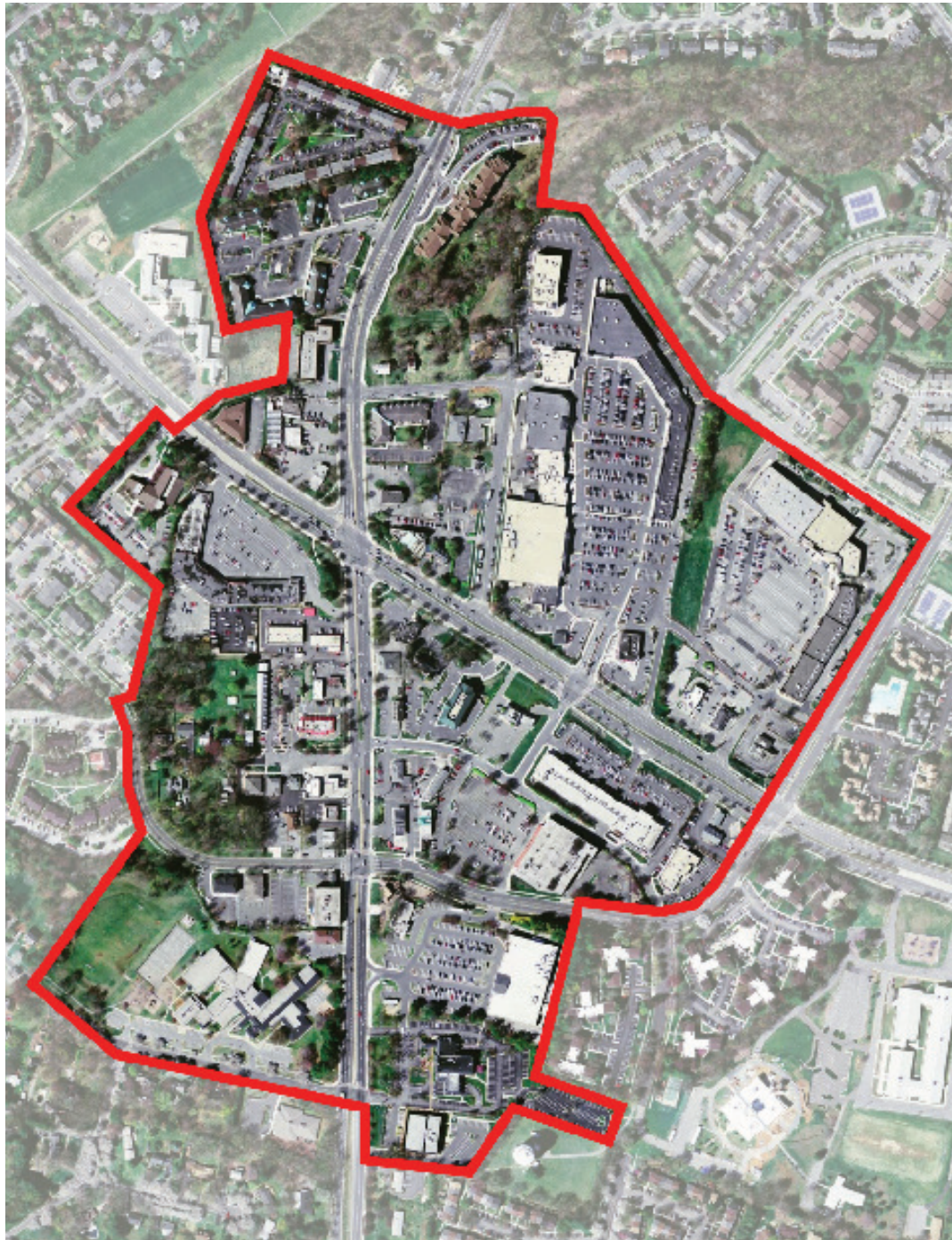
From the Master Plan to the Conceptual Illustration

Montgomery County has a General Plan that provides the framework for development across the entire county, which is also divided into smaller master plan areas to provide long term, broad guidelines for development in each unique area. Zoning indicates what and how much can be built on each property. Master plans recommend the zoning for each property. The Annual Growth Policy determines when something can be built based on the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. Every two years, revisions to the growth policy adjust the school and transportation tests that every development must pass before being approved. These reviews are required to insure there is infrastructure in place to support the new growth.

It takes several years to update a master plan and there are numerous opportunities for public input. The process to update the 1980 Olney Master Plan started in July 2001 and ended in April 2005. It began with a community wide survey followed by twenty public meetings of a Master Plan Advisory Group in which forty residents and business owners in the area participated. There was a public hearing before the Planning Board who then discussed the details of the plan in many work sessions. The plan then had a public hearing before the County Council, which was also followed by multiple work sessions. The final version of a master plan was approved by the County Council in April of 2005.

During the update of the Olney Master Plan, a mixed-use town center (MXTC) zone was created to encourage residential uses in the town center. (Creation of a new zone undergoes a similar public approval process as master plans.) This MXTC zone allows any of several specified uses throughout the zone and redevelopment of individual parcels may integrate more than one use such as office space or residential over retail space on the ground floor. The Olney Town Center Advisory Committee was formed to create an "illustrative concept plan" herein named Conceptual Illustration, as well as a concept plan for the civic center and town commons. The group is also charged with reviewing the development proposals and making recommendations to the Montgomery County Planning Board, a charge that lasts for the duration of the 2005 Olney Master Plan.
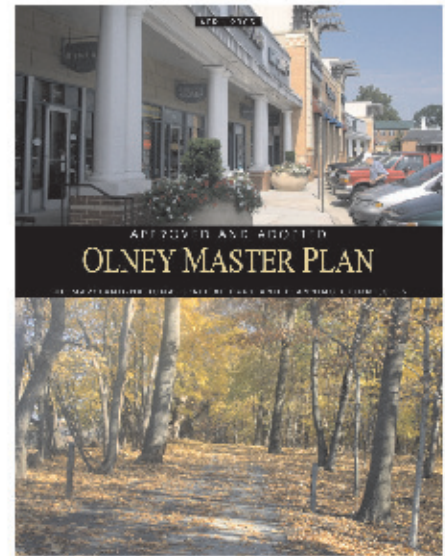
Town Center Concept: Olney Master Plan

The map below is from page 48 of the 2005 Olney Master Plan. It graphically displays several of the key recommendations of the plan including: increasing the number of street connections; tapering maximum building heights from 70 feet in the core to 42 feet to 56 feet at edge areas; creating "street facades" (building fronts up to the lot line); increasing safety measures through traffic calming and improved high-priority pedestrian areas; and new public open space.
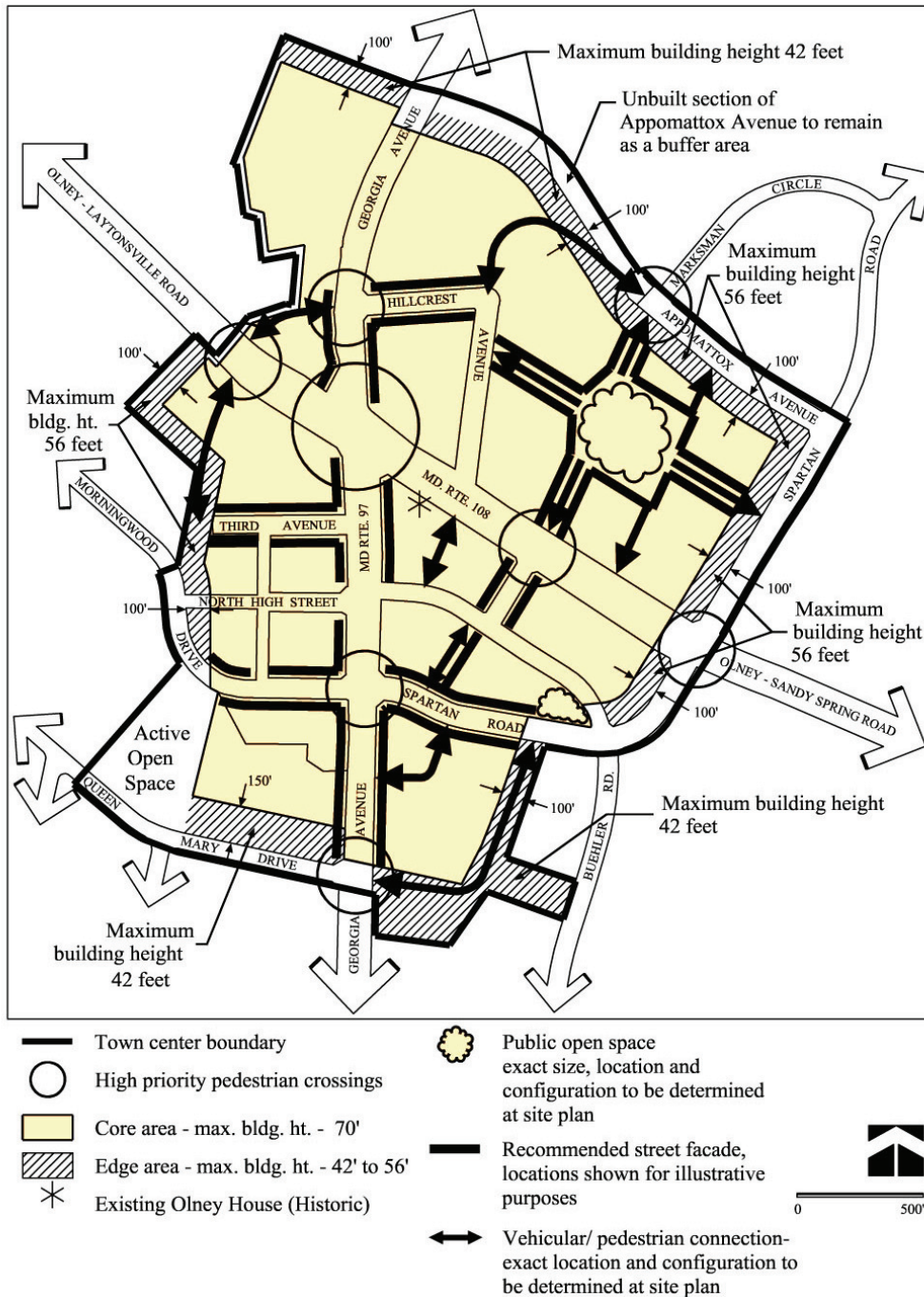
Conceptual Illustration

The illustration below shows how redevelopment could leverage the new mixed-use town center zoning. The location of uses are placed to provide a main street feel with open public spaces, signature buildings, structured parking, preservation of historic assets, and new residential development. Assembling smaller parcels into larger parcels can create new opportunities that do not currently exist with smaller parcels.

Option

PUBLIC SPACES

PUBLIC SPACE

NORTH

RTKL

0 100 200 900

Concept Plan
Guiding principles:
- Framework of pedestrian friendly streets
- Building heights tapered downward from core to surrounding areas

- Enhanced pedestrian safety
- Central public open spaces
- Mixed-use redevelopment
- Building facades up to sidewalk

LEGEND
- Retail
- Residential
- Civic
- Retail, Office
- Residential, Office, Retail
- Parking Garage
- Enhanced Pedestrian Safety
- Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities
- Historic Property
- Olney Town Center Boundary

PUBLIC SPACES

Option I

Option II

Top: Retail on the ground floor with wide side-walks helps to create pedestrian friendly streets.

NE Quadrant Plan Elements including Freeman Property

Option 1:
Internal public space to become the heart or center of downtown with a green-way linkage to community building at the corner.

Option II:
Public space on Route 108 creates a "window" making the public space more visible.

Common characteristics:
-Strengthen pedestrian crossings across Route 108.
-Explore "flex" or "live-work" development on smaller parcels. (Live-work units are typically two- or three-story townhouses with a first floor business - such as an office or coffee shop - where the owner of the business typically lives above it.)
-These pieces of development can create a small town character with residential or office above retail, all anchored by a community public space or park.

LEGEND

Retail	
Residential	
Civic	
Retail, Office	
Residential, Office, Retail	
Parking Garage	
Enhanced Pedestrian Safety	
Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities	
Historic Property	

LEGEND

▮ Retail	
▦ Residential	
▮ Civic	
▨ Retail, Office	
▨ Residential, Office, Retail	
▮ Parking Garage	
▱ Enhanced Pedestrian Safety	
▨ Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities	
▮ Historic Property	

SE Quadrant Plan Elements:

Orient commercial development along Georgia Avenue and Route 108 with residential development transitioning to neighborhoods.

Explore mixed-use grocery store model - grocery with residential/commercial above.

Create vehicular/pedestrian connections as indicated in concept plan. (Page 5 of this document.)

Provide public open spaces.

Olney Elementary School

LEGEND

- Retail
- Residential
- Civic
- Retail, Office
- Residential, Office, Retail
- Parking Garage
- Enhanced Pedestrian Safety
- Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities
- Historic Property

SW Quadrant Plan Elements:

Explore potential for consolidating Library/shopping center parcel to facilitate development of signature public building at gateway intersection of Georgia Avenue and Route 108.

Mixed-use development on remaining blocks with commercial uses located along Georgia Avenue and residential adjacent to existing neighborhoods.

Consider options for redeveloping existing light industrial uses.

NW Quadrant Plan Elements:

Limited opportunity for consolidation due to existing condominium development. (See grey-tone area.)

Explore "flex" or "live-work" development on smaller parcels.

The corner property, at the intersection of Route 108 and Georgia Avenue, will be important to redeveloping this quadrant.

LEGEND

- ▮ Retail
- ▦ Residential
- ▮ Civic
- ▨ Retail, Office
- ▨ Residential, Office, Retail
- ▯ Parking Garage
- ▱ Enhanced Pedestrian Safety
- ▱ Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities
- ▯ Historic Property

Olney Gateway

The "Gateway" to Olney is situated at the intersection of Route 108 and Route 97. This is a point of convergence in the town center from which each quadrant is accessible and through which residents and visitors will pass during their travels around Olney.
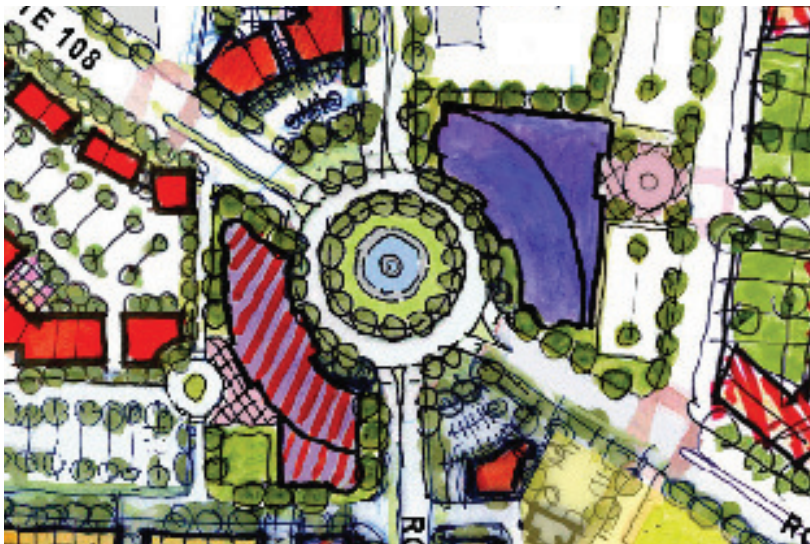

Example of a signature building that creates a public space in front of itself.

Option I:
Create signature urban design elements at Route 97 (Georgia Avenue) and Route 108 to include a distinctive open space (park, special paving), signature buildings, and traffic calming measures.

Traffic circle with a unique community identifying element.

Option II:
Create signature urban design elements at Route 97 (Georgia Avenue) and Route 108 to include a traffic circle, signature buildings, distinctive open space, and traffic calming measures.

Sample Opportunity for Transforming Small Parcels into Mixed-Use Development

This page shows a two-block area of Olney. The top image shows how assembling many smaller parcels into larger ones before redevelopment can enable transformation of the area into a mixed-use development capitalizing on the full potential allowed under the new zoning. The bottom image illustrates how the development of a smaller portion of the same two-block area has fewer uses that can be accommodated in the redevelopment.

Full Development Yield (2 acres recommended minimum)
-40 dwelling units (du) (20 du/acre) + 1.0 FAR Commercial
-Recommended two acre minimum - block size approx. 200' x 400'
-Density requires structured parking of 2-3 levels
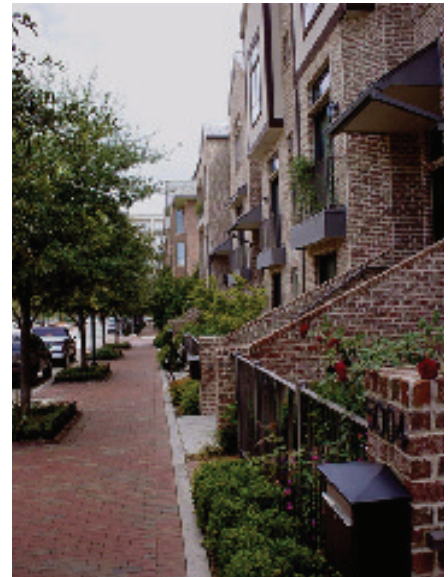-Office above retail - approx. 80,000 sf.

Existing Conditions

One Acre Development Yield - Townhouses
-Residential at 20 du/acre
-Density allows surface parking

Example of full development yield.
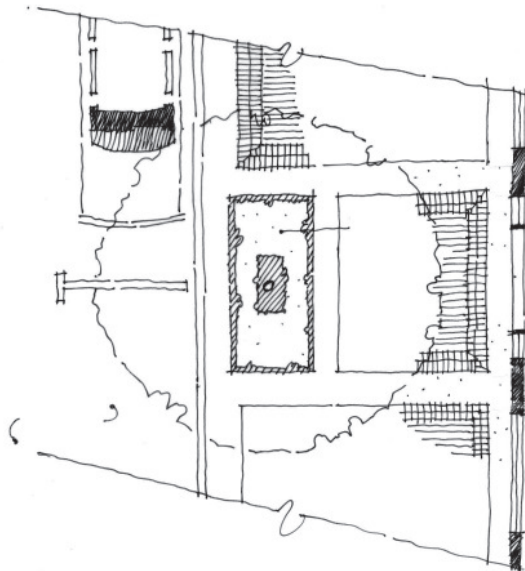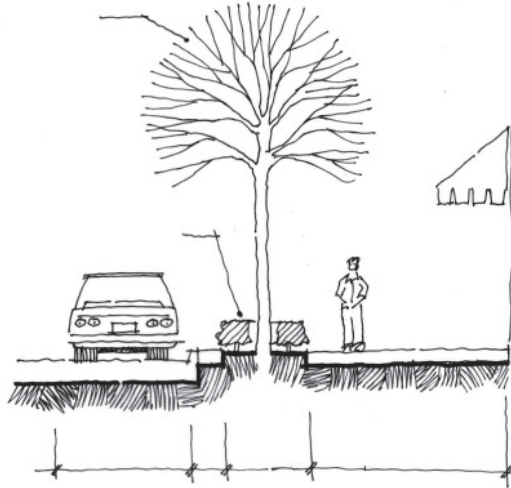

Example of 1 acre development yield.

LEGEND
	Existing Buildings
	Residential
	Residential, Office, Retail
	Parking Garage

Appendix: Outreach Events and Venues

Date	Event Name	Location	Outreach Effort	Approx. # Attended/ Engaged	Description of Audience
8/7/2007	Information Table at National Night Out, Olney	Olney Town Center Shopping Center	Promoted by host organization	50	General Public
8/23/2007	Information Table at Community Concert	Olney Town Center Shopping Center	Promoted by host organization	30	General Public
9/11/2007	GOCA Meeting - status report	Olney Community Room	Promoted by host organization	20	GOCA Delegates and general public
9/17/2007	Olney Neighborhood Network	Olney Community Room	Promoted by host organization	3	Olney Organization Leaders
10/4/2007	Information Table at Olney Community Night	Longwood Recreation Center, Olney	Promoted by host organization	50	General Public
10/8/2008	Presentation to Annual Meeting of Oatland Farm HOA	Rosa Parks Elementary School, Olney	Promoted by host organization	14	Members of Oatland Farm HOA.
11/6/2007	Presentation to Greater Olney Toastmasters	Sandy Spring Bank, Olney	Promoted by host organization	16	Members of Greater Olney Toastmasters Club
12/5/2007	Community Outreach Meeting	Olney Library	Article in Gazette, signs posted in public areas, notice on GOCA.org and OTCAC website	17	General Public
12/8/2007	Community Outreach Meeting	Olney Library	Article in Gazette, signs posted in public areas, notice on GOCA.org and OTCAC website	12	General Public
12/11/2007	Presentation to GOCA	Olney Community Room	Article in Gazette, signs posted in public areas, notice on GOCA.org and OTCAC website	25	GOCA delegates are from Olney HOAs, concerned citizens and representatives of civic organizations also attended
1/22/2008	Presentation to Town Center Land Owners	Olney Library	Special mailing to land owners.	14	Primarily land owners and business owners.
2/19/2008	Presentation to Olney Chamber of Commerce	Inn at Brookville Farms, Olney	Fax to chamber members, notice on GOCA.org, chamber website, OTCAC website,	45	Primarily chamber members
4/24/2008	Homeland Village HOA	Homeland Village Community Room	Promoted by host organization	8	Members of Homeland Village HOA and residents
4/28/2008	Presentation to Hallowell HOA	Olney Community Room	Promoted by host organization	30	Members of Hallowell HOA
4/30/2008	Presentation to Community	Olney Community Room	Mailed invite to land owners, business owners, and residents within the town center. Posted on GOCA.org, OTCAC website. New article in Gazette.	40	Mix of land owners/ business owners/general public
5/17/2008	Olney Days Forum	Oakdale Emory Church, Olney	Mailed invite to land owners, business owners, and residents within the town center. Posted on GOCA.org, OTCAC website. New article in Gazette.	30	General Public
8/5/2008	Information Table at National Night Out, Olney	Olney Town Center Shopping Center	Promoted by host organization	50	General Public
8/21/2008	Presentation to Norbeck Hills	Olney Community Room	Promoted by host organization	14	Members of Norbeck Hills HOA
8/21/2008	Information Table at Community Concert	Olney Town Center Shopping Center	Promoted by host organization	35	General Public
10/2/2008	Information Table at Olney Community Night	Longwood Recreation Center, Olney	Promoted by host organization	25	General Public
			Total individuals	**528**	

Olney Town Center

Design Guidelines

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To the Olney Community:

The Olney Master Plan, adopted 2005, recommended the creation of the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee. The Montgomery County Council clarified the purpose of the committee stating, "The formation of the Committee is an opportunity for the Olney community to create a set of principles and an illustrative understanding of what a future town center would look like, which can then serve as a guide for future redevelopment proposals and ultimate implementation of the Master Plan."

To date we have created and approved two volumes: a "Conceptual Illustration" that puts forth a development scenario for the town center employing mixed-use town center (MXTC) zoning, and "Design Guidelines" that will serve as a resource to our committee in its role of providing recommendations to the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission on proposed developments in the Olney town center as well as to developers and to the public. The committee reviews proposals for design considerations, pedestrian safety and access, adequacy of the public use space under the "set-aside" requirement, and parking and transportation issues.

During a series of meetings to collect community feedback on these documents, our committee met with, and sought comments from the stakeholders - citizens, landowners, business owners, and community organizations. These are now the established design guidelines against which our committee will review future redevelopment proposals.

We thank the Olney community for its help in fulfilling the Master Plan goal of making Olney Town Center "…an economically healthy, attractive, pedestrian-oriented, and well connected town center..."

Sincerely,

Helene Rosenheim, Chair
Olney Town Center Advisory Committee
www.olneytowncenter.org
Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

Architectural Design

Buildings must exhibit a commitment to quality of design, materials and color, respecting the regional character, natural environment and geography of Olney and Montgomery County. Please reference the Resources section of our website at www.olneytowncenter.org for two phases of a study, by local architect Miche Booz, of local building traditions particular to Olney, Maryland, and its surrounding region. The first phase, Report on Local Building Traditions, History and Analysis, provides an "...exploration into the particular architecture, both formal and vernacular, of Olney, Maryland, and its surrounding areas." This volume should be a reference when considering architectural and building design features. The second phase, Local Villages, Towns, and Mixed-Use Centers, should be a reference for redevelopments of large parcels and centers, where the project will have a significant impact on the overall character of the town center. The Olney Town Center Advisory Committee will look favorably on efforts to coordinate the architecture and design characteristics of a development proposal with the local building and village center characteristics documented in these two documents.

In addition to the standards described under the Urban Design section of the Town Center Chapter in the Master Plan, architectural projects will conform to the following standards:

Each building should complement its neighbors and be sensitive to the use of materials, color and scale. New developments should recognize the importance of a collective impression that will be distinctive to the image of Olney. The thematic constraints for architecture will be organized under the three topics of design, material and color.

Design - Look to the natural setting and heritage of the region as points of departure for design development. Diversity is an inevitable result of time and fashion but should be seen as an important hallmark of a cosmopolitan community. The issue is to select architectural design that has the integrity and resolution to be compatible with surrounding buildings and achieve an appearance that will extend beyond fashion and contribute to the distinct and cohesive setting and sense of timelessness and sustainability.

Materials - Look to the local geographic character for material references. The use of architectural materials and colors shall be limited to one or two colors for the major portion of the building.

Color - The primary building colors utilized shall be earth tones and colors found in the local landscape. Garish or fluorescent colors shall be reserved for retail show windows and not used permanently on buildings. Accent colors (brighter hues and values) may be used to complement the building color(s) and may be applied to window mullions, cornices and other architectural elements.

Buildings here complement each other and their colors reflect the earth tones of the region.

Parking garages should include other uses as often as possible. Here, ground floor retail activates the base of the garage and creates a pedestrian friendly streetscape.

Parking garages will be interpreted as architectural features and relative issues of design, material, color, and urban design constraints will apply.   It is preferable to have garage development be laminated with residential, office, or retail uses. These additional uses should be located along 'A' (primary) streets and at highly visible locations. Additional improvements such as terracing of elevations and landscaping of building elevation and rooftops that increase the garages compatibility with surrounding architecture and active uses will be encouraged. See section on Parking Garage Design.

Building Heights - Proposed structures will be respectful of adjacent structures, especially along the transition zone, while allowing variety and interruptions in roof forms and skyline treatment that will enhance the sense of pedestrian scale and visual interests. The variation of building heights is part of the diversity of many attractive urban centers and should be acceptable in Olney.
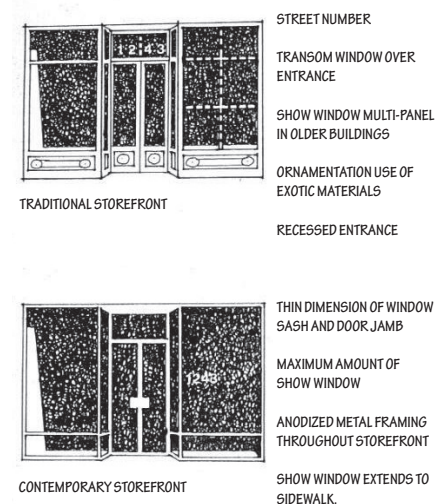
Side, Rear and Service Elevations - All elevations will have the same design elements and materials as the street facade. However, the primary street façade will maintain a hierarchy and contain the main building entrance. Buildings that face more than one street will maintain the same architectural treatment, design, materials, and colors compatible to the front façade.

Building Orientation - Buildings should be oriented with the main building entrance on to the primary street. Corner lot buildings must orient to the street on streets with higher pedestrian activity and are encouraged to orient towards both streets. Secondary entrances should serve the side and rear elevations, parking and rear yards.

Security - Commercial office tenants may require special security precautions. These precautions may include building access, special material and construction technologies. The security concerns will have to be balanced against the over-arching goals of a pedestrian friendly mixed-use community with desire for diversity and street activity.

Window Openings - Window openings help to create a friendly environment and are critical in establishing a building's architectural character and proportions. Windows should be encouraged on all elevations, including those facing parking and service areas, when feasible. Buildings facing onto 'A' street should have windows on the ground floor. All street level exterior windows will use clear glass. Highly reflective glass will be discouraged and window proportions will be kept to a human scale.

Storefronts - Should be contained within an architectural framework of the larger building and should respect these design conditions. Each storefront within a building should compliment the character of its neighbors, contributing to the distinctive image of the greater

STREET NUMBER

TRANSOM WINDOW OVER ENTRANCE

SHOW WINDOW MULTI-PANEL IN OLDER BUILDINGS

ORNAMENTATION USE OF EXOTIC MATERIALS

RECESSED ENTRANCE

TRADITIONAL STOREFRONT

THIN DIMENSION OF WINDOW SASH AND DOOR JAMB

MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF SHOW WINDOW

ANODIZED METAL FRAMING THROUGHOUT STOREFRONT

SHOW WINDOW EXTENDS TO SIDEWALK.

CONTEMPORARY STOREFRONT

Example of Storefronts

Mechanical/Electrical Equipment - Rooftop and building mounted equipment should be screened from view in a manner that is architecturally compatible with the building design. All roof mounted mechanical equipment and duct work which projects vertically more than 1.5 feet above the roof or roof parapet will be screened by a permanent enclosure that uses materials, design and color that are consistent with the building.

Service Areas - Dumpsters and loading areas should be located away from major streets towards a rear yard and be screened from view from adjacent roadways, sidewalks and trails using either dense evergreen landscape materials or masonry and wood frame walls, 6' to 8' high, matching the adjacent architecture.

Pedestrian Movement - Can be encouraged through building details, which enclose or enhance the first and second floors. Entries, awnings, canopies, windows, covered or partially covered walkways, upper floor setbacks, lower floor setbacks, landscaping and other architectural details are all appropriate.

Public use space - public use space shall be provided as described by the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance section 58-C-11. Location of the public use space on the site is preferred to be consolidated in one area for the maximum benefit of use.

Street Design

The emphasis will be on creating a pleasant environment for the pedestrian that can be characterized by wide landscaped sidewalks, attractive and well designed street furniture, pedestrian-scale lighting, interesting ground floor uses and slow-moving vehicular traffic. The automobile, with appropriate traffic calming initiatives (narrower streets, on-street parking, clearly defined sidewalks and special paving at critical locations), can be compatible with, and contribute to, a pedestrian friendly environment. Streets will be connected in a grid pattern to distribute traffic evenly throughout the community. The street framework will support a wide range of land uses, and create a public infrastructure that encourages pedestrian activity, street life, and a sense of community and place.

STREET STANDARDS
Turning Radii - Intersection and entrance drive radii dimensions associated with the public and private streets will be kept to minimum sizes to reduce traffic speed and make pedestrian crossings less daunting.

Curb Radii - Design speeds of 25-mph require a curb radius of 15 feet for intersections with secondary and private streets. Connections to regional roads in the MDOT / County may require larger curb radii. All curb radii will be subject to the Montgomery County Road Code.

Alleys - Alleys will occur primarily within development blocks providing alternative service routes and access to parking garages. The use of alleys fosters an urban landscape by providing an alternative to driveway interruptions, garage entrances and breaks in the urban street fabric. Furthermore, alleys reduce the hazards of vehicles moving across sidewalks.

An alley between residential development.

Curb Cuts - Curb cuts are the entrances and driveways that interrupt the street curb line. Curb cuts should be minimized on the regional roads through the use of shared entrances and alleys that separate driveway traffic from normal street traffic. Fewer curb cuts also improve traffic safety.

On-Street Parking - Throughout the community, on-street parking may help reduce the number of on-site parking spaces. On-street parking acts as a traffic calming device and also enhances the sidewalk environment for pedestrians by providing a buffer between pedestrians and moving cars. Informal parking refers to on-street parking permitted along residential streets, but not designated or marked. Formal parking refers to parking that is marked, signed or otherwise clearly designated.
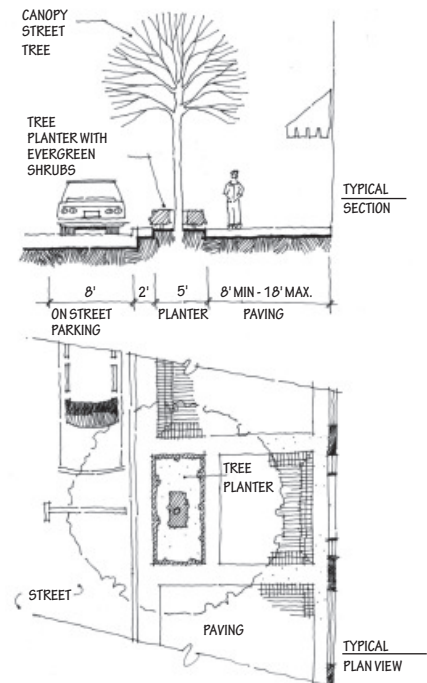
Streetscape Design

The implementation of a continuous streetscape is vital to the visual organization and unification of the Olney Town Center, linking public areas and architectural features.

The following streetscape guidelines address improvements between the street and the building line including sidewalk treatment, landscaping, lighting, utilities, signs, and other design items. Through simple improvements and organization, this relatively narrow area can improve the quality of the pedestrian experience and enliven the community.

Crosswalk - Demarcation of crosswalks through paint striping, textured pavement or alternative materials shall be provided at all legs of street intersections persuant to SHA or County approvals where necessary or required.

Sidewalks - Sidewalks will be provided on both sides of all streets and roadways. The walk should be a minimum of 10' wide on Arterial streets and a minimum of 5' wide, on tertiary streets. The sidewalk material should be concrete, or a paving material acceptable to the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee, and separated from the curb by a minimum 6' wide lawn / planting zone. Sidewalks should typically be positioned straight and parallel to the roadway curb. In special instances, such as within public open spaces or when significant vegetation occurs, sidewalks may meander gently.

Sidewalks

Walkways - Access to building entrances should be provided by walkways adjacent to or around buildings, from parking areas and/ or the sidewalk network. Walkways should be designed as part of the individual building streetscape and should support pedestrian accessibility among and between buildings.

Street Trees - Both sides of a street should contain street trees occurring in a continuous and regimented fashion. Canopy trees should be placed between the sidewalk and curb in a minimum 5'-6' wide planting zone. Only high canopy trees should be used to improve visibility, security and ease of maintenance. Once established, trees should be limbed to about 12-15' above grade. Avoid using flowering trees with low branching habits and evergreens within the right-of-way.

Streetscape Furniture - The whole of Olney Town Center should have harmonious streetscape furniture, including, but not limited to, benches, trash baskets, newspaper dispensers, bike racks, kiosks and telephones. Elements should be strong and durable, as quality will provide savings over the life expectancy of cheaper fixtures.

Special paving materials, sculptures, water features, banners and flags can be used for visual interest and to create memorable images.

Walls, Fencing and Screening - Where parking and rear yards occur along the parkways, walls, fencing and screening shall be encouraged.

Parking Garage Design

Design - Parking garages should be wrapped with retail, residential or office buildings. If that is not feasible, they must be harmonious with the design of adjoining architecture. The garage proportions and massing should be compatible and complement those of neighboring buildings. Because parking structures will likely have different floor plate and building height then office, residential and retail uses it will be impractical to replicate this architecture. The garage exteriors can be designed to reflect the vertical proportions of taller buildings rather than the horizontal proportions of a generic garage with a flat façade and ribbon openings. Articulations of the skyline, corner and mid-building stair towers, columns, window openings, the introduction of railing and trellises and other ornaments will provide a less utilitarian appearance.

Materials and Colors - These should be compatible with adjoining architecture. For garages that are linked and are an integral part of the architecture (tenant use building) materials and colors should continue those used in the building.

Ground Floor Uses - Where garages front streets ground floor uses along a main street should be devoted to retail. The garage can be designed to provide for possible future leasable space on other ground floor portions of the garage that front secondary streets.

Roof-top Uses - Uses such as a private recreation center or apartments may be appropriate on top of a parking structure. Such uses as these will be able to capitalize on shared-parking opportunities. Also the large garage floor plate offers opportunities for roof-top gardens and play areas while offering a visual amenity to the taller surrounding uses.

Security - Garages should be designed to provide good view corridors and visibility of all areas. Dead end corridors should be avoided. Lighting levels should be maintaned to provide a secure environment.

The exterior of parking garages can be designed to have different appearances from resembling a building to incorporating natural vegetation. (Also see example of parking garage on page 13 in Architec-
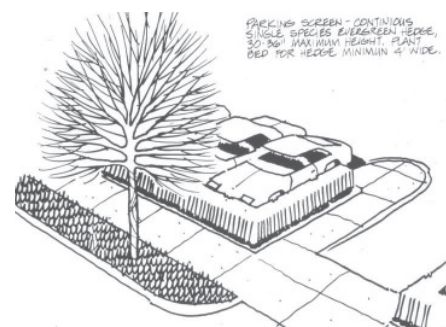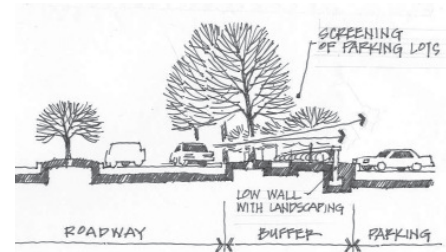
Parking Lots

Adequate parking should be provided without sacrificing the ambiance of the public realm and pedestrian-scaled setting. The location of parking and its design treatment must be planned to reduce the visual impact of parking for both the community and visitors. This design approach can be achieved utilizing the following elements:

Surface Parking Cells - Large parking lots shall be divided into smaller, visually contained areas through the use of perimeter landscaping that will provide views and pedestrian ambiance. The typical size of a parking cell should range from 80 to 120 cars (for example, two double loaded isles, with 25 cars per side, equal 100 cars).

Landscaping - Parking lot landscaping should be simple in design and easy to maintain. Hearty canopy trees, low evergreens and ground cover will achieve the required results. Planting areas should be a minimum of 6' to 8' wide. Canopy trees should be of a variety that allows pruning from 12' to 15' above grade. Trees utilized should be able to withstand summer heat rising from paving. Planting areas will be concentrated where they will have the greatest visual and formal impact.

Security - An important consideration in landscaping a parking lot is maintaining a "view horizon" located between 3' and 12' above grade which should be kept free of landscape material to allow for surveillance. The location of low flowering trees and evergreens with low branching habits should be considered with regard to important surveillance corridors.

Lighting - Parking lot lighting should provide adequate illumination for security. The pole and fixture shall be coordinated with the design and color chosen for pedestrian fixtures throughout the development. All fixtures should be the "cut-off" type to reduce night sky pollution and meet the requirements of Montgomery County.

Paving - Either bituminous or concrete parking is required for all drives and parking lots. Masonry pavers are an optional, decorative opportunity. Dirt, gravel and other unpaved surfaces are inappropriate.

Concrete Curbs and Striping - Concrete curbs, 6" to 8" high, will be required for all drives and parking lots. The use of timber wheel stops and asphalt for curbing will not be allowed because of appearance, short life span and vulnerability to trucks. Striping will be required to identify all parking spaces.

Screening - Parking lots will have adequate screening. A low wall or evergreen edge (maximum 30" height) will screen bumpers, wheels and paving, while allowing for surveillance. Screening could also be effectively used between parking lots and buildings. Berming alone should be discouraged.

Landscape Architecture

Landscaping is one of the rare site investments that improves with age and is therefore an important component in enhancing the community.

Three basic rules apply to all landscaping:
Keep the design simple — Landscaping should emphasize simplicity of design. Quality and durability are much easier to achieve with simple, straightforward designs.
Use quality materials — Quality materials age well, stand up to abuse, are easier to maintain, and have a comparatively long life expectancy. Provide easily maintained installations — The best design, implemented with quality materials, is ineffective if it is not maintained properly.

Subject to the Montgomery County standards, the following items should be considered:

Color and Specimen Material - To be efficient, color and specimen material should be used generously in a few key locations. Selecting a few highly visible locations is more effective than sprinkling color in small patches over the total site.

Massing and Grouping of Plant Material - Large groupings of a single species is preferred to planting a large area with numerous species. Trees and shrubbery should be respectful of the surrounding scale of both street and building dimensions.

Maintenance Edges - Maintenance edges provide an important sense of orderliness. Lawn areas should be separated from landscaped beds with edging such as concrete walks, steel edging or curbing.

Security and Surveillance - Plant material should be confined to 36" and lower, and tree canopy (tree limbs and leaves) should begin at 12' and above to allow for visual surveillance and a sense of security.

LANDSCAPE MATERIALS

The following guidelines shall apply to the major categories of landscape materials in order to create the desired visual harmony among the individual development sites. All plant material shall be selected from varieties visually compatible with, or directly from, the native vegetation, and all shall be odorless and free of messy fruits and seeds. Species with chronic diseases, pest problems and/or structural weaknesses shall be avoided. A plan demonstrating environmental responsibility and sustainability should be considered.

Deciduous Shrubs - Deciduous shrubs should be used as accents to create seasonal color interest. Due to their informal appearance, they should not be used in high image areas where a manicured formal presentation is desired instead they should be maintained with a "natural" growth habitat. The maximum preferred size is 3'-4' in height in urban areas.

Edging Material - Plant bed edging, mowing strips or other edging materials are encouraged. Acceptable materials include steel (black), concrete, stone and brick.

Evergreen Shrubs - Evergreen shrubs shall be selected from varieties of winter-hardy shrubs commonly found in the mid-Atlantic region. They may be used where a low-level screen or hedge is desired, such as parking lots, sidewalks or as mass plantings in the landscape; they may also be used as effective erosion prevention ground covers on slopes. The minimum preferred size is 18"-24" spread.

Evergreen Trees - Evergreen trees shall be used in strategic locations, and designed into group plantings to enhance "winter" seasonal interest, screen objectionable views of service areas and parking, and act as a backdrop for ornamental (flowering) trees. Evergreen trees shall be selected from species native to the area or similar in appearance.

Indigenous Plant Material - Indigenous plant material shall comprise a significant portion of all new landscape improvements, thus demonstrating environmental responsibility.

Ornamental Trees - Normally 12' to 25' tall at maturity, ornamental trees should be planted for accents and visual emphasis. The flowering habits of ornamental trees are very effective in providing seasonal visual variety.

Streetscape & Canopy Trees - Used between the building zone and the street edge, streetscape and canopy trees shall be major deciduous trees. They may be located either within sidewalk planters or in planting zones between the sidewalk and curb. Street trees should be located at approximately 30' to 35' on center. Canopy trees shall be used in parking islands and lawn areas, where they do not interfere with the design intent of streetscape plantings. In the interest of security, trees should be free of limbs between 3' and 12' above grade. The minimum preferred size is 3"-3 1/2" caliper (diameter) or as required by State Highway Authority whichever is larger.

Turf - Lawns and other turf zones within the street right-of-ways and other development areas may be seeded, or planted with sod as an optional substitute. A standard turf shall be established for the entire project, which may be modified by the Design Review Committee. Where sod is employed, it shall be of a quality meeting the certification requirements of the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

LANDSCAPING PRACTICES

Planting practices should be standardized. All plants should be nursery grown in accordance with the highest standards of horticultural practices, and under climatic conditions similar to those of Montgomery County.

Plants shall be typical of their species or variety with normal growth habits. Plants shall be disease-free and have healthy, well-developed root systems. All plants shall conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock as published by the American Association of Nurserymen.

Signage Standards

A sign has two primary functions: to identify a business or place and/or to provide direction. Sensitive design and appropriate placement of signs contributes to a community's image and facilitates easy travel across streets, sidewalks, trails and bikeways. To successfully achieve these functions, a sign must be eye-catching without being offensive. Signage must also conform to the County's sign standards. A comprehensive signage plan should be submitted for OTCAC review when detailed site plan process is followed.

FREESTANDING SIGNS
Design of freestanding signs should be simple and architectural in appearance, continuing the design theme of the adjoining architecture. There should be ample dimension, length and thickness to give the appearance of solidity. Signs should sit on grade or be attached to an appropriate base. Complicated shapes and silhouettes should be avoided.
Type - Impermanent and permanent freestanding (ground or pole mounted) signs.

Materials - Stone, Brick and mortar, lattice frame, sign foam (or other industry standard materials), PVC (or other industry-standard materials for posts, columns and lattice work), cedar or copper caps and exterior industrial sign grade paints, and other high quality materials complimentary to the surrounding elements.

Materials for Impermanent Signs - MDO plywood, Sentra (extruded PVC), Aluminum panels, PVC (or other industry- standard materials for posts) and exterior industrial sign grade paint.

Color - Primarily white and/or off-white and green with accent colors. Colors on Banners and flags will vary.

Lighting - The entrance signs, builders' site identification signs, builders' sales center signs and model home identification signs shall incorporate down lighting that will point directly onto sign.

Method of Measurement - The maximum height of the signs shall be calculated as the distance from the ground to the top of the supports and/or sign, whichever is greater.

Landscaping - Low-lying shrubs and/or flowering plants will be provided around the base of permanent signs.

Location - Signs should be in proximity to the main vehicular entrance or activity. The sign should not project over public property.

Height and Size - Signs may vary in height and size, reflective of traffic speed and volume, but lower profile or ground level signs are preferred and should be used whenever possible. Height and size of signs should be limited.

Sign Copy and Message - Information should be limited to the name of the business or place and other pertinent information related to the bona fide business conducted on the premises. Advertising material or product manufacturers and suppliers should not be permitted on any exterior sign except as the primary identification for the place of business. The sign should not be used for franchise product advertising. Simplicity is the key to legibility and elegance. Bold, simple lettering styles are most effective. Symbols and graphic shorthand can express more concisely the ideas which signs seek to communicate.

BUILDING MOUNTED SIGNS
If improperly located or out of scale with a building, building-mounted signs can cheapen the appearance of the establishment and lower the standards for surrounding developments. Signs and graphics should not dominate a building's architectural appearance. Signs should not be higher than 12" below the second story window sill or top of one story building .

Location - Storefront sign locations should be monitored. Retail storefront signs should be prohibited on the fronts of buildings above the ground floor level, a sign should not be lower than top of storefront windows or 8' above sidewalk grade. Building signs should not be permitted on the roof or project above the vertical wall area of the facade.

Projecting Signs - Projecting signs can add vitality to the visual environment if they are in scale with the pedestrian. There should be only one projecting sign per shop and it should not exceed 12 square feet in area. They should not be located any higher than 12' or lower than 8' above grade, and should not project more than 4' from the building face. A sign attached to a building facade should not project above the wall area of the facade.
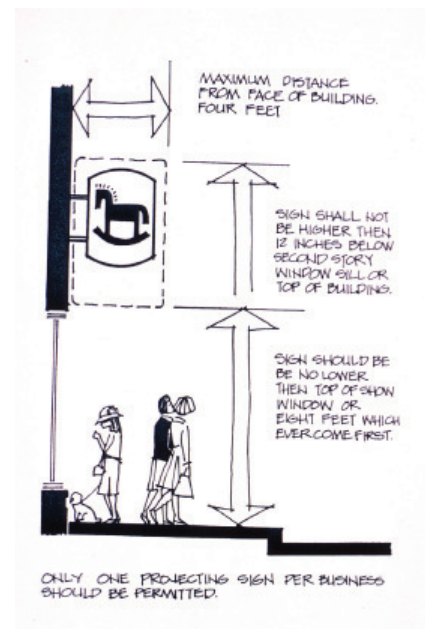
Flat Signs - Flat signs should be placed parallel to the face of the building and not project beyond the primary surface of the building.

Size - Signs should be in proportion to the storefront and the building facade as a whole. Signs should never be allowed to obscure or overwhelm the basic architectural character of the building. (A ratio of two-square-feet of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage is a good rule of thumb in determining total sign areas.)

Color - Signs should generally be limited to no more than three colors. Bright colors are entirely appropriate for signs, but the use of too many colors is distracting and should be avoided.

Awning Signs - Lettering and symbols, or designs painted or sewn onto awnings will be permitted. There should only be one sign for the front facade and one smaller sign for commercial uses with entrances from a side or rear elevation.

SCREENING

The goal of screening is to visually integrate and, where necessary, screen those elements that, though essential, can become unsightly. There are components to any development that should be screened from public view. A majority of these elements, such as services and utility functions, can be hidden through a selective location out of easy view by the visitor. The objective is to locate an element where the fewest number of people see it for the least amount of time. Relocation of the object to an area out of the public's view should be the first preference, especially for service and utility elements that are visible from the standard streets. Elements such as dumpsters, services and storage units should not be seen from the public realm.

There are, however, elements and activities which are necessarily located in the public area. Visually integrating and meshing the service or utility component into the public environment is the goal of screening, not hiding or camouflaging the element. For example, the additional attention created by trying to conceal an electrical transformer may be worse than the unscreened appearance. Screening is a last resort, but a very functional solution when appropriate. All proposed screening designs must meet County requirements. Sight lines need to be maintained for pedestrian and vehicular safety. Maintenance of this needs to be provided and continued or materials should be selected with a low growth habit.

Full Screening - Areas where, if exposed, would require constant maintenance should have full screening. Screening design and durability are important. Solutions such as chain link or wooden fencing may be inappropriate if they will fall into disrepair. Dumpsters require full screening when the refuse is unsightly and soils the dumpster itself (i.e. restaurants). Full screening, however, should be designed to require little maintenance, and be compatible with architectural and site development themes.

Partial Screening - The introduction of landscape and design elements as partial screening provides a setting and sense of upkeep without the necessity of fully hiding the element or activity. Partial screening serves the same purpose as foundation planting around a building -- it provides a setting and visually anchors elements to the ground plane.

Low Screens - The most effective treatment of parking lots is with low screens (max 42" height). This is preferred to full screening (72" to 96" height) for both aesthetic and security reasons.

No Screening - If service elements are only marginally obtrusive, no screening is required. Some utilities and surface elements may be less of a blight if they are not decorated. A meter box, which is not close to a sidewalk, may only require a coat of color to blend with its background, whereas a fussy landscape would draw unnecessary
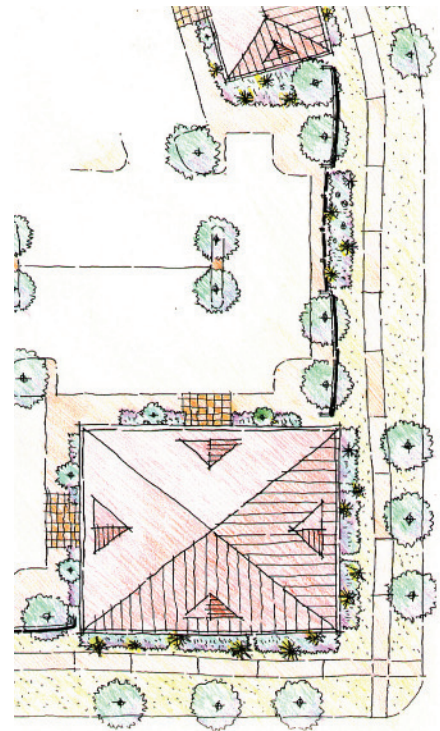
Service Areas - Full screening should be required for dumpsters to provide a sense of maintenance to the property. Loading and other service areas should be located where least visible, but may not require full screening unless the dock area is excessively soiled, thus requiring constant maintenance. Generally, partial screening providing boundaries between public and service areas should be sufficient.

Transformers and Utilities - Transformers and utilities which are not underground and are not close to walkways should be painted a color to blend with the background instead of being accentuated with a landscape screen.

Design Review Process

Owners of property in the town center are advised to present their development plans to the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) and the OTCAC redevelopment review sub-committee before going before the Planning Board. Contact the committee chair at least five months prior to your planned appearance before the Planning Board. In advance of the meeting with the OTCAC, provide a narrative and map describing your proposed development. Include the location (address) of properties affected, description of the development planned, and identify the land owner(s) and developer(s) that are party to the proposal.

The committee chair will advise you of the date of the meeting. At the meeting present your development plans. The committee will provide a written recommendation to the Planning Board at least two weeks prior to your scheduled appearance. A representative from the committee will be present for your appearance before the Planning Board to present the committee's recommendation.

Community Outreach for Review of OTCAC Design Guidelines,
Draft Document for Public Viewing and Comments

August, 2008	National Night Out at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center Grounds
October, 2008	Community Night at Longwood Recreation Center
August, 2009	National Night Out at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center Grounds
October, 2009	Community Night at Longwood Recreation Center
August, 2010	National Night Out at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center Grounds
October, 2010	Community Night at Longwood Recreation Center
July, 2011	Presentation to Greater Olney Civic Association
August 2011	National Night Out at Fair Hill Shopping Center
September, 2011	PowerPoint presentation to OTCAC to approve for outreach meetings to community organizations
October, 2011	Community Night at Longwood Community Center
January, 2012	Community Outreach Meeting featuring Design Guideline Update; Presentation to Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Owners featuring Design Guideline Update
June, 2012	Presentation and discussion with Camelback Village Condominium Association Board of Directors
July, 2012	Presentation and discussion with Homeland Village HOA Board of Directors

August, 2012   National Night Out at Fair Hill Shopping
                      Center;
                      Presentation and discussion with Environs
                      HOA Board of Directors; Presentation and
                      discussion with Fair Hill Farm HOA Board of
                      Directors; Olney Farmers' Market at MedStar
                      Montgomery Medical Center Grounds

October, 2012   Community Night at Longwood Recreation
                      Center

April 2, 2013   Final document approval for publication