





White Flint West Transportation. Phase 1. CIP No. 501116-1. Mandatory Referral No. 2015005

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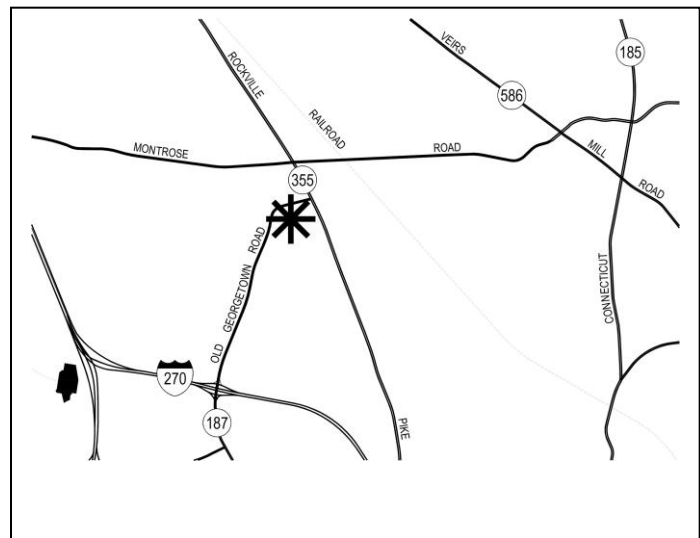
Completed: 03/4/15

Description

Mandatory Referral approval is requested for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation’s (MCDOT’s) project to reconfigure a portion of the existing roadway network in White Flint.

The project includes roadway realignment and construction of new road segments for Main/Market Street and Executive Boulevard extended.

The project is located within the White Flint Sector Plan area. See Vicinity Map to the right.



Summary

We recommend that the Board approve this project with the following comments to MCDOT:

1. Consider providing separated bike lanes on the realigned segment of Executive Boulevard, which could be accomplished by eliminating the proposed left turn lane in addition to reducing the proposed travel lane widths to meet the requirements of the recent Urban Road Code changes.
2. Provide curb extensions on Market Street to meet the requirements of the recent Urban Road Code changes and provide handicap ramps to cross all four legs of the Executive Boulevard/Market Street intersection. Locate the proposed handicap ramps to minimize pedestrian crossing distances.
3. All handicap ramps that accommodate bicyclists on shared use paths should be widened to ten feet wide (min.), including the handicap ramp in the proposed traffic island at the conference center driveway on the east side of Executive Boulevard.

Previous Board action

No direct action, however the Planning Board recently approved a Site Plan Amendment for the Conference Center that delineated the existing parking spaces for the conference center and

hotel. A new parking structure will be built in the near future on the Conference Center property that replaces surfacing parking spaces and it will support future mixed-use development. The subject project would be built on a portion of the Conference Center property.

Analysis

Street Network

Market Street: The Approved and Adopted (2010) White Flint Sector Plan recommends Market Street (B-10) as a two-lane business street in a minimum 70-foot right-of-way.

Montgomery County roadway standard 2005.02 would be modified to include the shared use path (LB-3), recommended in the Sector Plan. That ten-foot-wide path would be built on the north side of Market Street along with a six-foot-wide sidewalk on the south side. No ramps are shown to cross the north leg of Executive Boulevard but we recommend that they be included.



White Flint Sector Plan Roadways

Executive Boulevard: The Sector Plan recommends a realignment of Executive Boulevard (B-15), called Mid-Pike Spine Street in the Plan, as a four-lane business street with a minimum 80 foot right-of-way. In the future, Executive Boulevard will be renamed Grand Park Avenue

The County Council, via Resolution No. 18-21, approved the abandonment of a portion of Executive Boulevard (AB 739) as recommended in the White Flint Sector Plan. The subject proposed Western Workaround roadways are required for Phase 1 of the Sector Plan’s staging plan.

MCDOT would modify MC roadway standard 2004.01 for realigned Executive Boulevard to add a left turn lane and provide an additional nine feet of right-of-way, for a total of 89 feet.

The plans reflect an intent to allow non-peak on-street parking on the west side of Executive Boulevard. This



White Flint Sector Plan Bikeways

parking would serve the proposed Gables Residential development (476 residential dwelling units and 31,000 sq.ft. of non-residential development) west of Executive Boulevard, south of Market Street and north of Wall Local Park/Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center.

The Sector Plan makes no recommendation for bike accommodation on Executive Boulevard, but based on input from the White Flint Implementation Committee, MCDOT's proposed typical section of realigned Executive Boulevard would also include a ten-foot-wide shared use path on both sides of the street. While we believe that it is important to have a good bike connection between Wall Park and Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center, as well as the future community center, it would be beneficial to reconsider what type of bike accommodation is most appropriate given recent developments in regard to providing separated bike lanes:

- The bike guidance that the Board reviewed last fall puts much more emphasis on providing separated bike lanes to accommodate more types of bicyclists in urban areas.
- The County Council's T&E Committee expressed a strong preference for separated bike lanes in their review of the Goldsboro Road Bicycle Improvements project rather than the proposed shared use path.
- MCDOT implemented separated bike lanes on Woodglen Drive rather than the shared use path recommended in the sector plan.

Rather than provide a five-lane typical roadway section, we recommend that MCDOT consider building only the four travel lanes recommended in the master plan without the proposed left turn lane, and instead allocating the space for the turn lane – along with the space gained from implementing the narrower travel lane widths called for in the recent Urban Road Code bill – to provide separated bike lanes. The proposed 57-foot curb-to-curb pavement width could thereby be reallocated to achieve four ten-foot-wide travel lanes with six-foot-wide bike lanes separated by 2.5-foot buffers (see graphic on following page).

Intersection Design

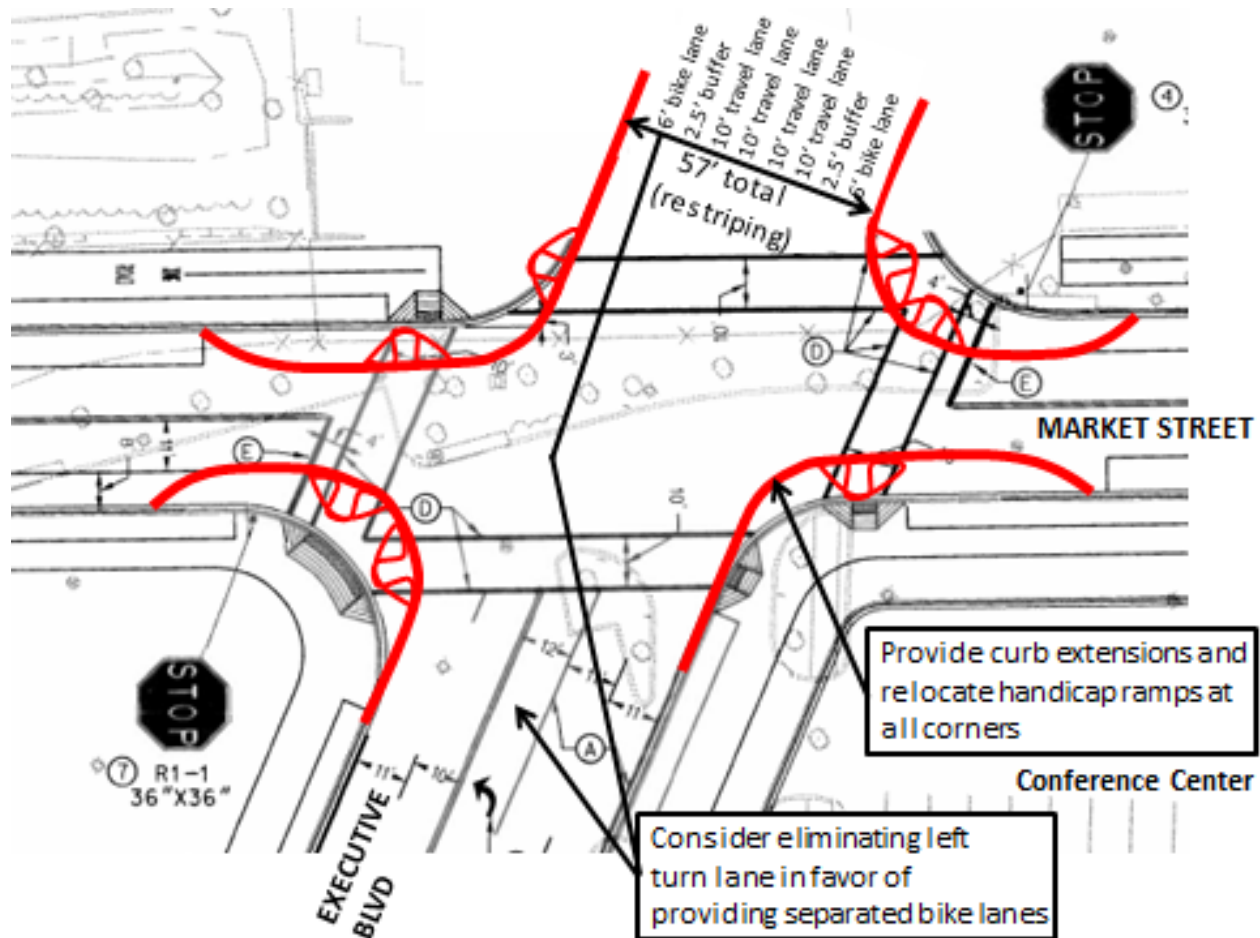
The proposed intersection design is incomplete in regard to pedestrian and bicyclist accommodation in that adequate handicap ramps are missing from the northeast and northwest corners of the Executive Blvd/Market Street intersection and the ramps connecting shared use paths are insufficiently wide to accommodate bicyclists. Ramps connecting to shared use paths should be ten feet wide (min.), the same width as the proposed paths, per Section 5.3.5 of the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials' *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* (2012).

In addition to generally narrowing the travel lanes in Urban areas to ten feet, the recent Urban Road Code bill set requirements intended to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance at intersections. Section 49-32(h) reads as follows:

The curb radius at the corner of each intersection of two urban roads must not exceed 15 feet except where:

- 1) *there is only one receiving lane;*
- 2) *a curb extension is located; or*
- 3) *for a road improvement required as a result of approving a subdivision or site plan, the Executive or Executive's designee concludes that applying this standard at a specific site would significantly impair public safety.*

We believe that the best resolution of the above requirement at the intersection of Executive Blvd/Market Street would be to provide curb extensions on Market Street (see graphic below).



Once the necessary changes are made to the travel lane widths, curb extensions, and curb radii and a decision is made on providing separated bike lanes vs. the proposed left turn lane, the location of the proposed handicap ramps should be adjusted to minimize pedestrian crossing distances.

Environment

A Forest Conservation Exemption was granted for this project on July 30, 2014. The project does not disturb streams or their buffers, wetlands or their buffers, 100-year floodplains or significant steep slope areas. The project, therefore, is in compliance with Chapter 22A and conforms to the Environmental Guidelines.

Shared use paths and sidewalks would be constructed of pervious concrete to minimize stormwater runoff.

Outreach

A notice of the Mandatory Referral was sent to area citizens associations. In addition, MCDOT has undertaken:

- Presentations of the project to the White Flint advisory committee
- Periodic updates at the monthly White Flint Downtown advisory committee meetings and coordination meetings with MNCPPC staff to modify the typical section per input from advisory committee.
- Coordination meetings with Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, Office of Special Projects and Maryland Stadium Authority – Conference Center parking garage project, as well as adjacent property owners.

Conclusion

We recommend that this project be approved with the comments enumerated above.