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Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, Work Session #12

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Completed: 05.05.16

Description

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan: Work Session #12

Summary

Work session #12 will begin with the summary of the density that has been added to the Plan to-date through previous work sessions with the Planning Board, as well as an analysis of density that has been realized between the previous two Sector Plans.

Staff will then present the transportation sensitivity analysis prepared as a result of increases in density throughout the Plan during the previous work sessions with the Board. Following the transportation presentation staff will provide options for addressing the overall density in the Sector Plan as well as provide a detailed view of the building heights and density approach as recommended in the May 2015 Public Hearing Draft (working draft).

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan

Work Session Density Results as Recommended by the Board as of April 28, 2016

DISTRICT	Square Feet (SF) Reduced	Square Feet (SF) Added to Plan							
Wisconsin Ave	-35,069	549,002							
Bethesda Row		4,196							
Woodmont Triangle	-56,119	97,214							
Pearl District		252,804							
Arlington North		95,488							
Arlington South		257,492							
Battery Lane		1,093,621							
Eastem Greenway		651,153							
South Bethesda		0							
TOTAL	91,188	3,000,970							
NET ADDED DENSITY		2,909,782							

DISCUSSION

Vision

In 2035, Bethesda residents will have a downtown that is a model for sustainability, accessibility, equity and innovation. There will be more affordable choices of housing in close proximity to jobs, shopping and recreation. They will safely walk and bike along shaded streets to stores and offices, past new energy-efficient buildings and familiar landmarks. New parks and open spaces will provide green, tranquil places for the residents, their families and friends to gather, socialize and relax. Nearby Metrorail and new Purple Line stations will be quickly reached via green corridors that line streets and sidewalks to meet the needs of both the residents and visitors to Downtown Bethesda.

This vision stems from the goals and recommendations within this Sector Plan to enhance Downtown Bethesda over the next 20 years. The aim of the Plan is not to radically transform the community but to achieve a truly sustainable downtown through incremental measures addressing its economic, social and environmental future.

Planning Framework

Overarching Goals:

Specifically, the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan builds on the past successes of Downtown Bethesda to create a truly sustainable downtown by focusing on recommendations to increase:

- Affordable Housing
- Parks and Open Space
- Environmental Innovation
- Economic Competitiveness

Strengthened Centers of Activity:

Bethesda is distinguished by multiple downtowns within its greater Downtown. Identified in Chapter Three are nine districts, including the established centers of the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor, Bethesda Row and Woodmont Triangle; emerging centers of the Pearl and Arlington South Districts; and residential and edge districts of Battery Lane, Eastern Greenway, South Bethesda and Arlington North. The Plan explores ways to strengthen these centers of activity through the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

Transportation

As a result of the Planning Board's work sessions on the Plan's land use vision through February 5, 2016, an additional 2,873,528 square feet of gross square footage has been tentatively added to the plan area beyond the land use density recommended in the Working Draft. This increase over the Working Draft vision raised concern that additional density may jeopardize implementation of the plan. As a result, staff outlined several points for the Board to consider as additional land use increases were discussed in subsequent work sessions. Those points included:

- Additional traffic analyses may be required by the County Council if the Planning Board Draft land use density is substantially different from that evaluated in the Working Draft.
- Staff may need to identify vehicular capacity improvements within the limits of the Downtown
 Plan area if the Planning Board land use density exceeds the anticipated 2040 transportation
 capacity. Currently, the Working Draft does not require, and staff does not recommend, any
 intersection improvements specifically designed to add automobile capacity within the Plan area
 due to the negative impact such improvements have on the built environment including
 mobility, safety, and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Operational scenarios, such as the one-way/ two-way street conversion and Arlington Road "road diet" may not be feasible with increased vehicular traffic demand.
- From a regulatory perspective, adding more land use density than the transportation network
 can accommodate could also leave development potential "on the table" for potential
 developments unable to mitigate intersection congestion to the applicable CLV.

February 2016 Transportation Sensitivity Test Methodology

In an attempt to bring the Board's increased density closer to the density recommended in the May 2015 Public Hearing Draft, the Planning Board directed staff to evaluate a maximum future development total of 33.8M GSF. The February 2016 sensitivity test included a new analysis of the regional traffic model with the same ratio of Jobs-to-Households (J/HH), tested as part of the Working Draft traffic analysis, increased proportionally to the 33.8M GSF scenario. Due to the interim nature of the requested analysis (an in-process plan), the February 2016 analysis did not go into the same level of detail as the Working Draft analysis for either conceptual intersection improvements or operational analysis using the Synchro tool. This methodology can best be characterized as a sensitivity analysis of the most congested intersections within the Bethesda Downtown study area so the Board can make informed decisions about the potential for increased density as the Plan moves forward. Additional traffic analysis will likely be required for any increased density beyond the 32.3M GSF recommended in the Working Draft before the plan is transmitted to the District Council.

Staff will present its findings to the Planning Board and provide options and recommendations at the request of the Planning Board for their use in making informed decisions regarding future density discussions on the Plan.

Land Use and Zoning Approach

The work session on July 20, 2015 provided a brief recap of the zoning strategy (as outlined in Work Session #1) as it relates to the recommended density and height increases across the Sector Plan area. Transportation analysis and school capacity was a factor in determining how much density may be increased without over-burdening the infrastructure in the Downtown. A comparative analysis was prepared with other similar urban downtown areas (White Flint, Silver Spring, Wheaton and Friendship Heights) in terms of acreage of planning area; Sector Plan vision build-out and vision build-out square feet per acre. Strategy objectives included:

- Accommodate projected growth over the next 20 years.
- Incentivize redevelopment in the expanded centers of activity and emerging centers (priority
 areas in the Plan) by increasing density and maximum allowable heights in the expanded centers
 of activity around proposed civic gathering spaces, such as the areas immediately around the
 Farm Women's Market, the Bethesda Metro Station, and Veteran's Park (the major civic
 gathering spaces).
- Balance opportunities for redevelopment and compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.

Attachments

Board decisions on property owner zoning requests from April 28, 2016 work session Recent Correspondence between April 21 – May 5, 2016

A	С	D	E	F	G	Н	I	J
	MAP LOCATOR	PROPERTY OWNER/DEVELOPER/ATTORNEY	PROPERTY LOCATION/ADDRESS	CURRENT ZONING	SECTOR PLAN ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPERTY OWNER REQUESTED ZONING	STAFF RECOMMENDATION	PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION April 28, 2016
Hold -Over Properties (properties that have been discussed before)	1	Bethesda Land LLC ATTY: Barbara Sears	7820 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, H-120T	CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-5.75, H-250	CR 8.0, C-8.0, R-7.5, H-290	CR 8.0 if 15% MPDUs and 10% workforce is developed	CR 8.0 and 290 feet if 15% MPDUs and 10% workforce is developed and the block is assembled
	2	David Goldberg	7800 Wisconsin Ave. Union Hardware	CR 3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, H-120T	CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-5.75, H-250	CR 8.0, C-8.0, R-7.5, H-290	CR-8.0 if Park is dedicated as extension of Veterans Park	CR-8.0 and 290 feet if Park is dedicated as extension of Veterans Parl and the block is assembled
	3	The Jaffe Group ATTY: Stacy Silber	6801, 6807 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20815 (Eastern Greenway)	CR-3.0, C-2.0, R-2.75, H-75T R-60	CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-120 CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70	CR 4.0, C-2.5, R-3.75, H-145 CRT 1.0, C-0.25, R-1.0, H-70	Retain zoning recommended by Board CR 2.25, C-2.25, R-2.25, H-120	Entire Property = CR 2.25, C-2.25, R-2.25, H-145 (Design Guidelines t address step down to 70 feet max height adjacent to Town of Chevy Chase)
	4	Old Georgetown Office Park Condominium ATTY: Steve Robins	7960 Old Georgetown Rd. Bethesda, MD 20814	CRN-0.5, C-0.5, R-0.25, H-35	CRN-0.75, C-0.75, R-0.25, H-35	CRT 1.75, C-1.75, R-0.75, H-60	No Change due to compatibility issues with SF neighborhood - Board concurred with Public Hearing Draft	CRN-1.25, C-1.25, R-1.25, H-50
	5	ZOM Mid-Atlantic	4816, 4820, 4910 Moorland Lane, Bethesda MD 20814		CR 2.75, C-0.75, R-2.5, H-40			
9		ATTY: Heather Dihopolsky	7505, 7507, 7509, 7511 Arlington Rd. Bethesda MD 20814	CR-2.25, C-0.5, R-2.0, H-35T	CR 1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-50	CR 4.0, H-75	2.75 FAR for all and max height of 60 feet	CR 2.75 C-0.25, R-2.75, H-60
Properties that have come into the	6	Clark Building ATTY: Jody Kline	7500 Old Georgetwon Road, Bethesda, MD 20814	CR 8.0, C-6.0, R-7.5, H-200T	CR 8.0, C-6.0, R-7.5, H-240/290	Request Height of 290 feet for entire prope	Recommend 290 feet for entire Clark property	CR 8.0, C-6.0, R-7.5, H-290
process late (after	7	Cullen Property ATTY: Tim Dugan	7625 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814	CR 5.0, C-4.0, R-4.75, H-90T	CR 6.0, C-4.75, R-5.75, H-110	CR 7.0, C-7.0, R-7.0 H-195	No Change	CR 6.0, C-4.75, R-5.75, H-110
the close of the Public Hearing Record) 7 8 9 9 11 12 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 18 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19	8	NOVO Properties ATTY: Heather Dlhopolsky	4816, 4820, and 4828 Auburn Avenue	CR 3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, 90T	CR 3.5, C-1.25, R-3.5, H-50	CR 3.5 or 4.0, H-120	Board recommended retaining existing zoning for properties along Norfolk Ave, CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-90	CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-90 and retain as priority sending site
	9	Conley Property ATTY: Todd Brown	4860 Cordell Avenue	CR 5.0, C-1.0, R-5.0, H-145T	CR 6.0, C-1.25, R-6.0, H-175	CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0, H-225	Equalize C and R, No Change to height	CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0, H-225
	10	White Flint Express Realty Group ATTY: Todd Brown Radhakrishnan Property	Lot 667, Woodmont Triangle	CR 5.0, C-1.0, R-4.75, H-145T	CR 6.0, C-1.25, R-5.75, H-250/ CR 6.0, 1.25, R-5.75, H-175	C- CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0 - Equalize C and R	Equalize C and R	CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0
	11	ATTY: Jody Kline	4332, 4334, 4336 Montgomery Avenue	CRN 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.5, H-35	CRT 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.5, H-35		No change - No Change - Board concurred with Sector Plan	CRT 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.5, H-35
	13	Chase Avenue - Todd Binder Lantian Development Property ATTY: Steve Robins	Lot 21, 22 (owned by Huron Associates) 4341 Montgomery Ave	R-60 EOF 1.5, H-45	Lot 21, 22 - CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-7 CR 2.0, C-1.75, R-2.0, H-120	0 2.5, R-3.25, H-90 CR 3.5, C-3.5, R-3.5, H-120	recommendation CR 3.5, C-3.5, R-3.5, H-120	Lot 21, 22 - CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 CR 3.5, C-3.5, R-3.5, H-120
	14	Ourisman Honda	4800 Bethesda Avenue	CRT 2.25, C-1.5, R-0.75, H-45	CRT 2.75, C-1.75, R-1.0, H-70	Increase Height to 90 feet	No Change	Defer to next work session
Proportios asking		ATTY: Robert Brewer						
Properties asking the Board for a reconsideration of		Aldon Management - South Bethesda properties	Propoerties on Bradley Boulevard, Wellington Drive, Chase Ave	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130	No Change	Board voted to retain staff recommendation - Aldon may provide a list of affordable housing tools to staff
the Board's previous decision		Starr Capital and Offuit Properties	6936, 6950, 7000 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20815, 6903 Strathmore Street, 6930 and 6932 Wisconsin Ave		CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-90, Strathmor Street = CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70.	e CR 5.0, H-120	No Change	CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-110, Property on Strathmore Street = CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-90,

