



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

**APPROVED
MINUTES**

The Montgomery County Planning Board met in special session on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland, and adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Present were Chair Casey Anderson, Vice Chair Marye Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Norman Dreyfuss, Amy Presley, and Natali Fani-González.

Item 1, Worksession on the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, is reported on the attached agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, December 17, 2015, in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland.

M. Clara Moise
Sr. Technical Writer/Editor

Montgomery County Planning Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 15, 2015
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760
301-495-4600

1. Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan – Worksession #5

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by Board discussion.

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and noted that this worksession is a continuation of the previous one, and will focus on the zoning and building height recommendations as outlined in the Public Hearing draft, along with the zoning and building height changes requested by various property owners. Staff presentation will be on a district-by-district basis, with property owners and/or their representatives offering comments. Staff briefly summarized the findings for each district. The Arlington North district is a transitional zone between the urban core and single-family neighborhoods to the west of the Sector Plan area. Houses used as offices are located along both Montgomery Lane and Arlington Road. The district is located between Woodmont Avenue and Arlington Road and extends from Hampden Lane to Moorland Lane. There are opportunities for both open space and connectivity improvements to enhance this area for residents. The Plan envisions to retain the district's mainly residential focus with a mix of low, mid, and high-rise residential development and to continue as a transitional zone between the more commercial urban core and residential neighborhoods west of Arlington Road. Arlington South is an emerging center of activity with potential for commercial and residential redevelopment. As an automobile-oriented retail district, convenience and abundance of parking will be critical for this district as redevelopment occurs.

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1. Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan – Worksession #5

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The Battery Lane district consists primarily of garden and mid-rise apartment buildings on either side of Battery Lane between Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, south of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus. The Plan envisions to retain the residential character of this district with a mix of low, mid, and high-rise residential development, and to improve access and connectivity for pedestrians. The South Bethesda district is an established residential neighborhood situated north of Norwood Local Park. It has a garden character with tree-lined streetscapes and planted setbacks. The Plan envisions to retain much of the residential character with a mix of low to mid-rise residential development, with improved access and connectivity for pedestrians.

Staff discussed the proposed recommended zoning and land uses for the Eastern Greenway districts north and south of East-West Highway. These transitional areas lie between the Wisconsin Avenue corridor and adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods, as well as parking lot districts 10, 24, and 25.

The following speakers offered testimony: Ms. Stacy Silber attorney representing St. John Church; John Cokinos of Chevy Chase Drive; Emily Vaias, attorney representing Mr. Hadjin Keshishian; Mr. Eric Hart of Chevy Chase Drive; Mr. Michael Fetchro of Battery Lane; Mr. John Freedman of Ridge Street; Ms. Pat Harris attorney representing Westlake LLC; Mr. William G. Fry of St. John Norwood Parish; Ms. Anne Derse of St. John Norwood Parish; Ms. Tricia Daniels of Elm Street and representing the Town of Chevy Chase Long Range Planning Committee; Mr. Federico Olivera-Sala of Murfield Court; Mr. Bob Dalrymple, attorney representing BF Saul Co.; Ms. Barbara Sears, attorney representing the Lebling Companies; and Mr. Al Roshdich and Mr. Jose Thommara of Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

Chair Anderson noted that due to the lengthy discussion and testimony on the Eastern Greenway districts, future worksessions in January and February 2016 will focus on zoning and height recommendations for Arlington North, Arlington South, Battery Lane, and South Bethesda districts, as well as affordable housing, density transfer incentives, parks and open space, and environmental recommendations.