



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

**APPROVED
MINUTES**

The Montgomery County Planning Board met in regular session on Thursday, January 28, 2016, at 9:17 a.m. in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland, and adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Present were Chair Casey Anderson and Commissioners Norman Dreyfuss and Natali Fani-González.

Vice Chair Marye Wells-Harley was necessarily absent. Commissioner Amy Presley joined the afternoon session.

Items 1, 9, 3, and 4, discussed in that order, are reported on the attached agenda.

Item 2 was removed from the agenda.

The Board recessed for lunch at 11:55 a.m.

The Board convened in Closed Session at 11:56 p.m. to take up Item 8, a Closed Session Item.

In compliance with State Government Article §3-305(b), Annotated Code of Maryland, the following is a report of the Board's Closed Session:

The Board convened in Closed Session at 11:56 a.m. in the auditorium on motion of Commissioner Fani-González, seconded by Commissioner Dreyfuss, with Chair Anderson and Commissioners Dreyfuss and Fani-González voting in favor of the motion, and Vice Chair Wells-Harley and Commissioner Presley absent. The meeting was closed under authority of Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(13), to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

Also present for the meeting was James Parsons of the Commissioners' Office.

In Closed Session the Board approved Closed Session Minutes of October, November, and December 2015, and January 7, 2016.

The Closed Session meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

The Board reconvened in the auditorium at 1:16 p.m.

Items 5 through 7 are reported on the attached agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2016, in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland.

M. Clara Moise
Sr. Technical Writer/Editor

James J. Parsons
Technical Writer

Montgomery County Planning Board Meeting
Thursday, January 28, 2016
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760
301-495-4600

1. Consent Agenda

***A. Adoption of Resolutions**

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: There were no Resolutions submitted for adoption.

***B. Record Plats**

Subdivision Plat No. 220160410, Highlands at Clarksburg

R-200 zone, 1 parcel; located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Stringtown Road and Saint Clair Road; Clarksburg Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion: FANI-GONZÁLEZ/DREYFUSS

Vote:

Yea: 3-0

Nay:

Other: WELLS-HARLEY & PRESLEY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Record Plat cited above, as submitted.

***C. Other Consent Items**

1. Bedford Court Vestibule Renovation Minor Site Plan Amendment No. 81989012A --- Request for a 165-square-foot sun porch addition and the renovation of an existing 295-square-foot vestibule, on a 4.15-acre portion of the Rossmoor-Leisure World retirement community, zoned PRC, located at 3701 International Drive in the 1992 Aspen Hill Master Plan area.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions and Adoption of Resolution

2. Artery Plaza

A. Extension of Sketch Plan No. 320150050 --- for 60 days to March 19, 2016, CR-3.0 C 0.75 R 3.0, H 145T Zone, 3.02 acres, located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Bethesda Avenue, Bethesda Purple Line Station Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request

B. Extension of Site Plan Amendment No. 81984002B --- for 30 days to March 19, 2016, CR-3.0 C 0.75 R 3.0, H 145T Zone, 3.02 acres, located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Bethesda Avenue, Bethesda Purple Line Station Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the extension request

BOARD ACTION

Motion: 1 & 2. FANI-GONZÁLEZ/DREYFUSS

Vote:

Yea: 1 & 2. 3-0

Nay:

Other: WELLS-HARLEY & PRESLEY ABSENT

Action: 1. Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Minor Site Plan Amendment cited above, subject to conditions, and adopted the attached Resolution.

2. Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Sketch Plan and Site Plan Extensions cited above.

***D. Approval of Minutes**

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: There were no Planning Board Meeting Minutes submitted for approval.

9. Roundtable Discussion

- Parks Director's Report

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing.

Parks Department Director's Report - Parks Department Director Mike Riley offered a multi-media presentation and briefed the Board on the following ongoing and upcoming Parks Department events and activities: the status of snow removal work following Winter Storm Jonas, including the clearing of sidewalks adjacent to parkland, facility parking lots, the Capital Crescent Trail, and 12.6 miles of parkways; the rescue by Parks Department staff of a gentleman trapped on a snow-covered roadway in an immobilized motorized wheelchair on Friday, January 22; Chair Anderson's visit to an active snow-removal site on Tuesday, January 26; and the special recognition of Parks staff members Messrs. Stephen Chandlee and Jeff Brightwell, and Ms. Melissa Chotiner for their exemplary work during the blizzard.

There followed a brief Board discussion with questions to staff.

2. ——— Purple Line Memorandum of Agreement --- Authorization to approve the Purple Line Project Memorandum of Agreement between the Commission's Montgomery County Parks and Planning Departments and Maryland Transit Administration. **REMOVED**

Staff Recommendation: Approval

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: **This Item was removed from the Planning Board agenda.**

3. Scope of Work for the MARC Rail Communities Plan

Staff Recommendation: Approve Scope of Work

BOARD ACTION

Motion: FANI-GONZÁLEZ/DREYFUSS

Vote:

Yea: 3-0

Nay:

Other: WELLS-HARLEY & PRESLEY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation for approval of the Scope of Work for the MARC Rail Communities Plan.

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the proposed Scope of Work for the MARC Rail Communities Plan. The 461-acre plan area, which is comprised of the areas immediately surrounding existing MARC stations in Boyds and Germantown, is located in the upper portion of the County, west of Interstate 270, and approximately 15 miles north of Interstate 495 along the CSX railroad tracks within the Boyds Master Plan, Germantown Master Plan, and Germantown Employment Sector Plan areas. The existing Boyds station is approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the Germantown station. The 240-acre Boyds portion of the plan area is bounded by Little Seneca Lake to the north, and incorporates the industrial land south of the CSX railroad tracks and north of Clopper Road, Boyds Local Park, and the historic district. The 221-acre Germantown portion of the plan area is bounded by Wisteria Drive to the northeast, Waters Road and Germantown Road to the northwest, Dawson Farm Road to the southwest, and Great Seneca Highway to the southeast. Staff stated that the proposed plan responds to the significant Upcounty growth that has occurred over the last 50 years; addresses insufficient parking at both existing MARC stations; links proposed and ongoing parking and circulation studies by Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) with Commission land use studies; recommends better pedestrian, bicycle, bus, and auto connections to the stations; ensures compatibility with each historic district; and addresses additional concerns raised during the planning process.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2015, staff conducted a series of site visits and meetings with representatives from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, MCDOT, Maryland Transit Administration, and SHA. During this same time, staff promoted the plan at regularly scheduled meetings of the Boyds Civic Association, Germantown Alliance, Upcounty Citizens Advisory Committee, and Germantown Historical Society. Community response from these meetings included requests to expand the plan boundaries in Germantown to

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3. Scope of Work for the MARC Rail Communities Plan

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include Seneca Valley High School, located on Middlebrook Road, in order to address pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety issues. Staff stated that rather than expanding the plan boundaries, these issues are already addressed by the current Germantown Master Plan recommendation for clearly marked crosswalks for safe pedestrian crossing. Upcoming community outreach efforts include public workshops scheduled for March, April, and May. Staff noted that all workshops will be held in Germantown to facilitate ease of attendance for residents.

The next steps for the plan include analysis and concept refinement scheduled for February, March, April, and May 2016; the staff draft scheduled for completion in June or July 2016; a Planning Board public hearing scheduled for September; Planning Board worksessions scheduled for September, October, November, and December 2016; and transmission of the plan to the County Executive and Council in December.

Following extensive discussion with questions to staff, the Board recommended that in order to address traffic and pedestrian safety issues, staff should consider the possible expansion of the plan to include Middlebrook Road.

4. Subdivision Staging Policy --- Briefing on Transportation Modeling Tools & Analysis (Fehr & Peers)

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by discussion.

Planning Department staff and transportation consultants from Fehr & Peers offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the Subdivision Staging Policy, specifically transportation tests, analysis tools, and system performance metrics. Mr. Alex Rixey of Fehr & Peers stated that in order to recommend new metrics and evaluation tools, a case study of the Bethesda Master Plan area, including the proposed Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan area, was conducted that analyzed County policy goals and assessed existing metrics. The results were then organized by mode, such as auto, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian; and function, such as land use, network, function or quality, usage, and safety. The study yielded six recommendations for transportation metrics by mode, including accessibility, traveler experience, intersection performance, person trips, mode share, and collisions per person trip. Mr. Rixey stated that traveler experience measures vehicle hours of travel per capita, per person trip, and in congestion; frequency, span, and reliability of transit; bicyclist comfort; and pedestrian comfort. Intersection performance measures delay for users of all modes. Person trips tracks raw person trips by mode, as well as person trips per capita, per hour of travel, and per vehicle mile traveled. Mode share is the expression of person trips by mode in percentage terms. Collisions per person trip measures reported collisions by mode. The next steps include Board recommendations for the recommended metrics and for additional tools.

Messrs. Nat Bottingheimer and Matthew Ridgway of Fehr & Peers offered comments.

Following extensive discussion with questions to staff and Messrs. Rixey, Bottigheimer, and Ridgway, the Board recommended demonstrating in future analyses how the recommended metrics have worked in other areas and how they will work with existing area master plans.

8. CLOSED SESSION

According to MD ANN Code, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(13), to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

The topic to be discussed is the approval of Closed Session Minutes

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Discussed in Closed Session. See State citation and open session report in narrative minutes.

5. Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) - Update --- Project update and staff comments on CCT Preliminary Engineering Plans

Staff Recommendation: Approve comments to be forwarded to Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)

BOARD ACTION

Motion: PRESLEY/DREYFUSS

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: WELLS-HARLEY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation to forward comments to the Maryland Transit Administration and Montgomery County Department of Transportation, as stated in the attached transmittal letter.

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) project update and staff comments on the preliminary engineering plans, which will be forwarded to the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). Staff noted that MTA has recently completed 30 percent of the preliminary engineering plans for the phase one segment of the CCT between Shady Grove Road, the Metrorail red line station, and the MARC station at Metropolitan Grove. Although the Great Seneca Science Corridor (GSSC) Master Plan and the approved preliminary plan amendment for Johns Hopkins University's Belward Campus show the CCT alignment through the Belward Farm, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Maryland Historic Trust do not consider the Belward Farm as otherwise disturbed. The MTA preliminary engineering plans therefore do not show the CCT on Belward Farm in response to FTA review and comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment. The FTA review noted that a feasible and prudent alternative alignment for the CCT that would avoid disturbing the Ward House/ Belward Farm, a property eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), exists along Darnestown Road. The road network on the Belward Campus is planned to also accommodate the CCT and the Life Sciences Center/ Belward CCT station in the median.

The GSSC Master Plan includes three different but related staging or triggers that must be met before Phase two of the development can begin. They are: a fully funded CCT; funding of the LSC loop trail; and attainment of an 18 percent non-auto driver mode share. Staff noted that the next steps include: discussion of the Draft Environmental Assessment report and Public Hearing; MTA value engineering analysis; the final design for the CCT; potential re-evaluation of the Belward property for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places; the bicycle and Life Sciences Center loop planning; and identification of project funding sources.

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5. Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) - Update

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At the Board's request, Mr. Rick Kiegel, CCT Project Manager at MTA, and Ms. Leslie Ford Weber representing Johns Hopkins University, offered comments.

The following speakers offered testimony: Ms. Lisa Cline of Upshire Circle and representing "Sensible CCT"; and Ms. Donna Baron of Dufief Drive and representing the Scale-It-Back Group.

There followed extensive discussion with questions to staff, Mr. Kiegel, and the speakers.

6. Amendment to the 2010 Urban Design Guidelines for the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan --- Provide more detailed design recommendations for the Life Sciences Corridor (LSC) Loop Trail.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the proposed Amendment and transmittal of funding recommendation to the County Council.

BOARD ACTION

Motion: DREYFUSS/PRESLEY

Vote:

Yea: 4-0

Nay:

Other: WELLS-HARLEY ABSENT

Action: Approved staff recommendation to amend the 2010 Urban Design Guidelines for the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan to provide more detailed design recommendations for the Life Sciences Corridor (LSC) loop trail and forward funding recommendations to the County Council, as stated in the attached transmittal letter.

In keeping with the January 20 technical staff report, Planning Department staff and Ms. Becky May, consultant from Rhodeside & Harwell of Alexandria, Virginia, offered a multi-media presentation and discussed the proposed amendment to the 2010 Urban Design Guidelines for the Great Seneca Science Corridor (GSSC) Master Plan in order to provide detailed design guidelines recommendations for the Life Sciences Corridor (LSC) loop trail. One of the GSSC Master Plan key recommendations is to create the LSC loop as the organizing element of the open space plan to connect districts and destinations, incorporate natural features, and provide opportunities for recreation and non-motorized transportation. The proposed trail is intended to be both a place-making amenity feature as well as a functional transportation and recreation facility. The loop importance to the functioning of the transportation infrastructure of the LSC is underscored by the inclusion of a master plan staging element that requires funding of the LSC loop prior to the opening of stage II.

Urban design guidelines are companion documents to master plans that help implement a plan's overall vision as well as specific recommendations. The design guidelines are more flexible than master plans and are intended to be revised and updated as necessary. While the 2010 GSSC Guidelines provide some information for the LSC loop trail, it is insufficient to create cost estimates to include in the County's six-year Capital Improvements Program or to guide developers in designing and constructing any portion of the trail they may become responsible for as part of their development approval. Staff noted that in order to create cost estimates and provide better guidance to developers, staff recognized that a more detailed concept plan for the LSC loop trail is needed. The additional detailed information will assist staff in the review and approval of site plans where the loop may be a component of the plan.

There followed a brief Board discussion with questions to staff.

7. Worksession: Draft Life Sciences Center Bicycle Network Proposal

Staff Recommendation: Briefing

BOARD ACTION

Motion:

Vote:

Yea:

Nay:

Other:

Action: Received briefing followed by Board discussion.

Planning Department staff offered a multi-media presentation accompanied by a short video, and discussed the draft Bicycle Network proposal for the Life Sciences Center. Staff noted that the proposed bicycle network would create a low-stress bicycling network that circulates throughout the Life Sciences Center area, connecting to the proposed Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) stations, major destinations such as Crown Farm and Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, future activity centers such as the proposed Johns Hopkins University Belward Campus, the redeveloped Public Safety Training Academy (PSTA), and the surrounding residential neighborhood. The proposal also includes two long-term bicycle storage facilities at future CCT stations. The Bicycle Master Plan team is advancing work both in the White Flint Sector Plan area and Life Sciences Center area due to the fast pace of change in these areas so that opportunities to construct segments of a separated bike lane network can be pursued in conjunction with development and capital projects before the Bicycle Master plan is approved. At the request of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Implementation Advisory Committee (GSSC/IAC), the Bicycle Master Plan began with an early focus on the Life Sciences Center in April 2015.

Traditionally, bicycle planning in Montgomery County has consisted of two types of bikeways: conventional bike lanes, and shared use paths. However, each has drawbacks that limit their ability to encourage bicycling, especially in urban areas. Over the past five years, separated bike lanes or protected bike lanes have been embraced in urban areas as a preferred bikeway because they provide dedicated space for bicycling that is physically separated from motor vehicles and pedestrians. The proposed bicycle network will include separated bike lanes, share use paths, and bike lanes. It will also include the master-planned alignment for the CCT with the stations and secure bicycle parking stations. The proposed separated bike lane network is composed of four major corridors: The Northway Separated bike Lane that would travel along the proposed Belward Campus Drive and Decoverly Drive between Muddy Branch Road and Shady Grove Road; the Southway Separated Bike Lane is an east-west bikeway that would travel along existing and proposed segments of Blackwell Road between Darnestown Road and Shady

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7. Worksession: Draft Life Sciences Center Bicycle Network Proposal

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Grove Road; the Midway Separated Bike Lane is a north-south bikeway that would travel along the proposed Broschart Road and Diamondback Drive between Medical Center Drive and the proposed Broschart Road and Diamondback Drive between Medical Center Drive and the City of Gaithersburg; and the Lower Loop Separated Bike Lane is a crescent-shaped bikeway that would travel along Johns Hopkins Drive, Medical Center Drive, and Omega Drive between the future Johns Hopkins Belward Campus and the City of Gaithersburg. In addition, there is a recommendation for two-way separated bike lanes on the east side of Muddy Branch Road, and several spurs connecting the proposed network to the surrounding area.

Staff also noted that comments have been received from Montgomery County Department of Transportation and Montgomery County Department of General Services, which have been forwarded to the Planning Board. The bikeway network recommended by staff and comments and recommendations received from the Planning Board will be incorporated into a working draft of the Bicycle Master Plan in late 2016.

There followed a brief Board discussion with questions to staff.