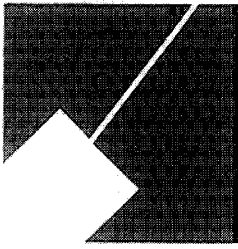


M-NCPPC



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760  
301-495-4500, [www.mncppc.org](http://www.mncppc.org)

June 30, 2005

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Jeff Zyontz, Chief  
Countywide Planning Division

VIA: John Carter, Chief *JAC*  
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Sue Edwards, I-270 Team Leader *Sue*  
Community-Based Planning Division

Karen Kumm Morris, Urban Designer *KKM*  
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Work Session (Preliminary) Draft Amendment to the Approved and  
Adopted *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*: COMSAT Laboratories,  
22300 Comsat Drive, Clarksburg, MD

---

**BACKGROUND**

The Master Plan assumes a maximum build-out potential of 5 million square feet of employment in the Transit Corridor District depicted in Figure 1. "In the northernmost portion of the Transit Corridor District...Gateway 270, an office park approved for one million square feet, will be the major employment center" (page 54).

The Master Plan caps development on the COMSAT site at 2.3 million square feet of employment (page 56) but recommends the option of increasing development to 4.0 million square feet if the development pattern in transit-oriented (within ¼ mile of the proposed transit station on the COMSAT property).

The Master Plan further notes that "a mix of residential uses at this stop will occur only if vacant land on the COMSAT site is developed for residential uses other than office or research" (page 54).

The Planning Board requested staff to analyze development potential under four conditions:

- MXPD Zone with COMSAT building (contributing elements) and environmental setting retained (Figure 2)

- MXPB Zone without COMSAT building (Figure 3)
- I-3 Zone with COMSAT building (contributing elements) and environmental setting retained (Figure 4)
- I-3 Zone without COMSAT building (Figure 5)

A set of general assumptions govern these concept studies (e.g. forest conservation area, setback from I-270, parking ratio, etc). Staff also supplied land use conclusions for each concept study. Generalized land bays are shown for concepts where housing is allowed by the Zone.

Staff finds residential potential for the property in accordance with the Maximum End State Development Potential for the Transit Corridor District (2,790 units) shown on page 39 of the Master Plan.

An analysis of slope on the COMSAT property is included as Figure 6. Gentle slopes of less than 15 percent occur in the foreground of the COMSAT building; more extensive and limiting topography occurs in the stream valley buffers that incorporated in the property's environmental constraints.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff concludes that the 4.0 million s.f development program under the MXPB Zone and the 2.3 million s.f. development program under the I-3 Zone can be physically accommodated on the COMSAT site either with or without the contributing elements of the COMSAT building and environmental setting. The MXPB Zone in section 59-C-7.50 (f) states that "structured parking is encouraged within mixed-use planned developments is encouraged to help achieve the open space and amenities objectives of the zone. Where surface parking is necessary, the purpose of this zone may be achieved by the provision of additional landscaping".

For the MXPB Concept Study with COMSAT, a portion of the northern edge of the environmental setting is encroached upon to better frame the COMSAT setting as seen from I-270 south.



## **COMSAT** **Development Concept Studies**

### **Assumptions**

- Employment is the primary use as per MP.
- Residential units should meet Master Plan's mix of unit types and should not exceed net density of adjacent property.
- Retail should stay within master plan limits, 50,000 sf (This is not a retail center).
- Office buildings typically range between 100,000 to 150,000 sf and not be higher than 6 stories.
- Parking structures range from 2 - 4 floors (permit up to 5 floors at Transit Center).
- Public transit parking is shared between properties in the Transit Corridor District. COMSAT should have some of the public spaces, approx 325 sp. A total of 650 public spaces, shared between properties, is feasible.
- Office parking is provided at 2.5 spaces per 1,000 sf., This is an appropriate level for transit served areas. Will require amending the parking ordinance, as recommended in SGSP.
- Higher parking ratios (e.g. 3 spaces/100 s.f.) results in taller parking structures.
- Residential parking is provided at 1.25 spaces per unit.
- Retail parking is provided at 5 spaces per 1,000 sf.
- Structured parking is calculated at 325 sf per space.
- Surface parking is calculated at 400 sf per space.
- No underground parking is assumed.
- Layouts may have to be adjusted to respond to underground utilities.
- Meets green space requirement of 40 percent in accordance with the MXPDP Zone.
- A 200 ft. building setback is shown from I-270.
- A 125 ft. stream valley buffer is shown along all streams. Steep slope setbacks are reflected.
- 20% forest conservation area is provided.
- Conceptual SWM space has been integrated into layouts.

## **MXPD with COMSAT**

Land Uses: Four Million sf of Employment Uses, 50,000 sf retail and 200 residential units

- Achieves allowable employment density and preserves original COMSAT building.
- Some encroachment of the environmental setting occurs to the north to help frame the COMSAT building seen from I-270 south.
- Frames COMSAT with trees along I-270 and with taller office development behind.
- Office development is clustered at Transit Station and along I-270
- 100 residential MF units are located at Transit and 100 units near Eastside, the residential property to the east.
- Office buildings typically range from 4 to 6 stories with some flex-space type buildings near Gateway Center Drive.
- Residential units include 100 MF (50%), 90 SFA (45%), 10 SFD (5%) per the Master Plan.
- Parking structures are typically 4 to 5 floors.
- More residential uses are possible if less office space is provided.