

Chapter Four

LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN

Land Use Plan

Land Use Plan

Land Use Plan: Critical Parcels and Areas

Recommendations on the Most Critical Parcels and Areas

Green Corridors Policy

Commercial Revitalization

Existing land use has developed in response to Kensington-Wheaton's strategic location within the County and region. Focusing on the predominantly residential parts of Kensington-Wheaton, this Master Plan encourages the protection, stabilization, and continuation of current land use patterns.

Kensington-Wheaton is almost completely built out, and it possesses many characteristics of other "mature areas." These characteristics consist mainly of:

- A limited amount of vacant and redevelopable land remaining.
- A limited capacity of existing roads to accommodate present and future traffic volumes.

- An established character and density of development.

Housing accounts for most land use in the Kensington-Wheaton planning area. This use is characterized by a wide variety of housing types, from detached homes on large and small lots to townhouses and garden apartments within the sector plan areas. In terms of lifestyle preference and affordability, this housing stock serves the residents of the area well. Except in the sector plan areas, commercial uses in the planning area are limited in their extent and have shown very little tendency for recent growth. The commercial and service opportunities provided in the areas now covered by the sector plans and the commercial uses at Veirs Mill and Randolph Roads are sufficient to accommodate the needs of the community for the foreseeable future. Therefore, no additional commercial uses are needed within the area covered by this Plan.

It is recognized that the planning area is at a crucial location within the older, urbanized part of the County, located between the I-270 and US 29 corridors. (See Figure 3-1, General Plan Concept, and associated discussion on "wedges and corridors.") This Plan adopts a strategy that will balance the planning area's high transportation accessibility with the vulnerability created by its position within the region. The accessibility attributed to the planning area's location at the terminus of the Metro system and at the juncture of numerous regional highway facilities exacerbates the area's sensitivity to pressures for more intensive development and conversion to non-residential uses.

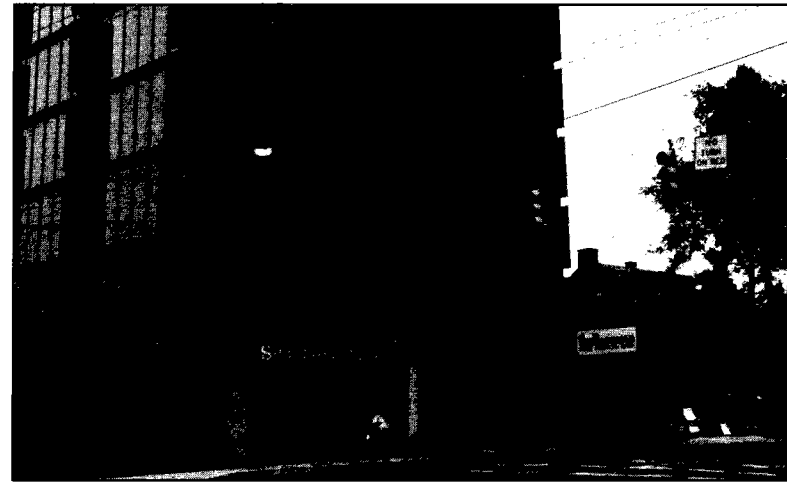
It is standard practice in all master plans adopted in Montgomery County since 1971 to designate a base "Euclidean" zone for every parcel and to indicate for some parcels an appropriate floating zone, which allows somewhat different development and sets a higher limit on the intensity of development than the base zone. Euclidean zones contain rigid requirements, such as lot size, setbacks, and height limits. Except when developed under the cluster option, the entire land area will be divided into approximately equal size lots.

Euclidean zones may be applied to an entire area by the County Council in a comprehensive rezoning following a master plan study. Piecemeal requests for Euclidean rezonings may be granted only upon a showing that there has been a change in the character of the neighborhood since the last comprehensive rezoning or there was a mistake in that comprehensive rezoning.

Floating zones have more flexible development standards, but they may be approved by the County Council only upon a finding that the development will be compatible with surrounding land uses and is in accord with the purpose clause of the zone. In all floating zones, development can only occur in accordance with a detailed site plan approved by the Planning Board.

The practice of following a master plan with a comprehensive rezoning through a sectional map amendment is a safeguard against piecemeal Euclidean rezonings which could, themselves, establish a precedent for even more rezonings. The comprehensive rezoning establishes the base against which "change or mistake" will be measured. Since the comprehensive rezoning conforms to the master plan, and floating zones cannot be considered changes in the character of the neighborhood, there is a strong safeguard against future Euclidean rezoning. This is an important element in assuring the stability of the area.

As noted earlier, this Plan does not address land use issues within



sector plan boundaries except in one case where changes unforeseen in the original sector plan have occurred. In this instance, a land use and zoning recommendation is made within the Kensington Sector Plan boundary (see Critical Area No. 16).

Objectives

To protect and stabilize the extent, location, and character of existing residential and commercial land uses.

To maintain the well established low- to medium-density residential character which prevails over most of the planning area.

Policies

Retain and reconfirm existing zoning for all undeveloped or underdeveloped land in the Kensington-Wheaton planning area, except for those individual parcels or groups of parcels recommended for a change by this Plan.

Maintain a range of housing types and prices throughout the planning area.

Implementation

After adoption of this Master Plan, the Planning Board will file a sectional map amendment to implement the base zoning recommendations of the Plan. The County Council will act on the sectional map amendment following an advertised public hearing.

Land Use Plan: Critical Parcels and Areas

As a general rule, development on vacant or redevelopable parcels surrounded by fully developed parcels is often preferable to similar development at the fringe areas of the County. It produces a more compact urbanized area that is more easily served by existing public infrastructure and amenities.

Undeveloped properties in long-established areas such as Kensington-Wheaton are that way for a variety of reasons. These include environmental or physical development constraints, poor access or visibility, complex or unresolved ownership problems, or decisions to hold the land as a speculative investment. Some of these constraints have been removed or have diminished, but others, such as environmental sensitivity or poor access, continue. Environmental and physical conditions are major constraints in deciding on the developability of a site. This Plan recognized these factors in its examination of "infill" development potential.

In looking at "infill" development potential, this Plan has identified all sites that appear to have a potential for future development and considered the kind of zoning and land use that would be consistent with the goals of land use stabilization and compatibility. Sites

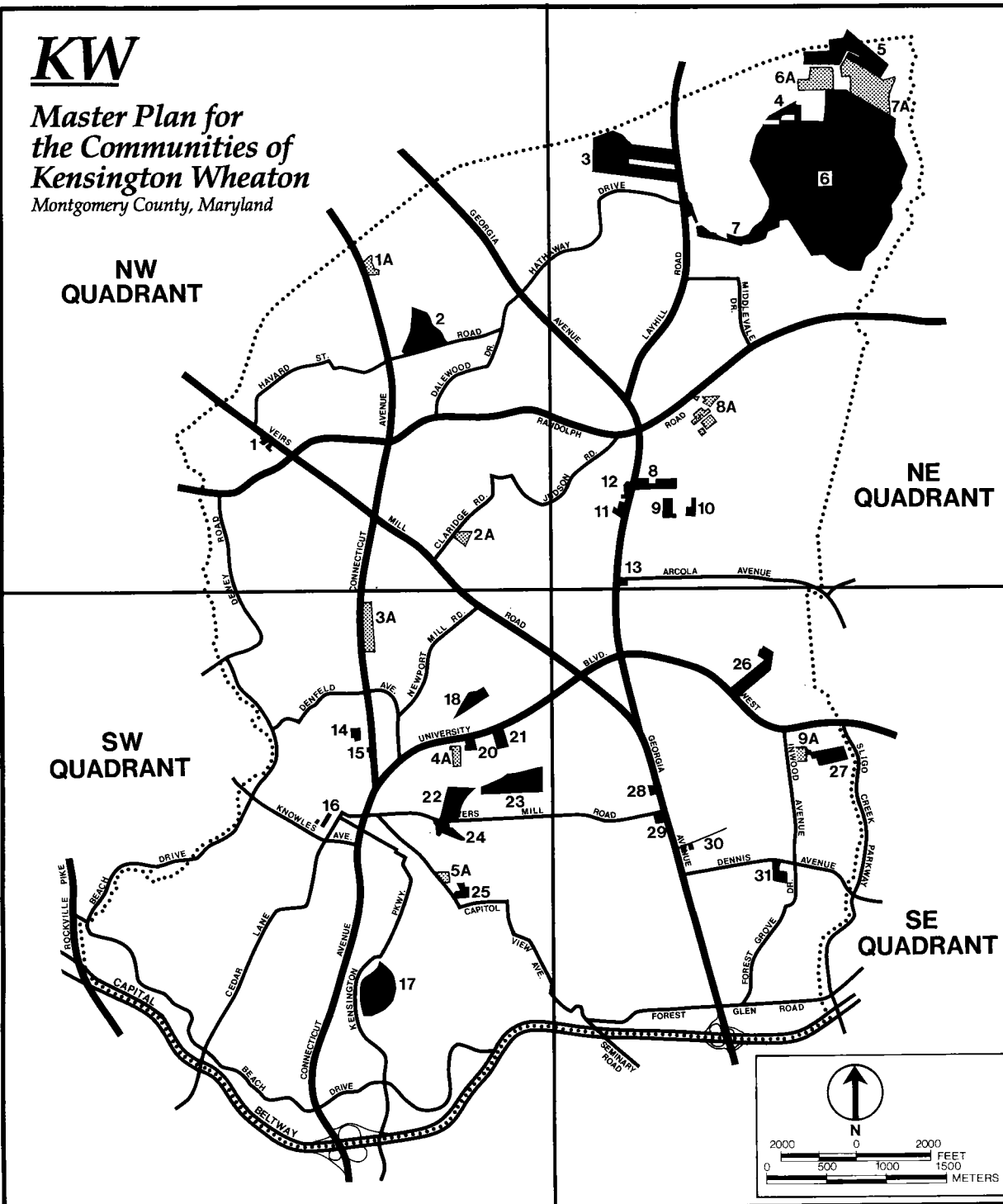
with infill development potential were those which were vacant or considered to be underdeveloped, as well as certain "critical" areas or groups of parcels where the current zoning is inconsistent with a stable and compatible land use pattern. Examples of underdeveloped sites are larger-than-normal parcels with some subdivision potential, even though they presently contain some development, and large tracts on which there is a use that may not prove viable during the life of this Plan. Even though the planning area contains over a thousand vacant and redevelopable pieces of land, this Plan considers only sites where the pressure for land use and zoning changes would be greatest, or sites where an alternate land use or zoning category would provide greater land use stability and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. In general, only sites above about an acre and a half were considered to be in this category. Smaller sites were considered: (1) if they were contiguous to other vacant or redevelopable parcels and could be assembled to a suitable size, (2) if they were in predominantly non-residential areas, or (3) if they were in areas in transition toward non-residential or higher density residential uses.

All of the individual parcels and groups of parcels investigated during this process are shown on Illustration 4-1. The parcels and areas on which some comment or recommended changes were made are listed in Table 4-1. Those parcels and areas on which no changes were recommended or no comments were made because of a subdivision action or some other reason are listed in "Appendix C." Those considered most critical, in terms of the need for a change in zoning or land use, are discussed in detail, with accompanying maps, in the section entitled, "Recommendations on the Most Critical Parcels and Areas."

The analysis of parcels and areas which are subject to redevelopment pressures revealed little justification for changes in land use or zoning, except in a limited number of cases. Therefore, this Plan recommends retention and reconfirmation of existing zoning for all

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



Parcels and Areas Reviewed by This Plan

- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- PARCELS AND AREAS WITH RECOMMENDED CHANGES (SEE TABLE 4-1)
- ◐ PARCELS AND AREAS WITH NO COMMENTS OR RECOMMENDED CHANGES (SEE APPENDIX "C")

Illustration 4-1

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

TABLE 4-1

PARCEL AND AREAS WITH RECOMMENDED CHANGES
Kensington-Wheaton Planning Area, 1986-1988

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
1.	Veirs Mill & Gridley Roads	Block Q Lots 12-16	.73 acres	Parking Lot	C-T	C-T	Site plan (#8-88009) for bank approved by the Planning Board on March 17, 1988.
2.	Goodhill Road & Weller Road	Parcel 59	20.26 acres	Belt Jr. High School	R-60	R-60	See text under "Public Schools," Chapter 6.
3.	Layhill Road and Fargrove Lane	Parcel 834	10.44 acres	Barrie Day School Camp	R-200	R-90	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 870	6.33 acres	"	R-90	R-90	"
		Parcel 875	3.93 acres	"	R-90	R-90	"
		Parcel 941	13.38 acres	"	R-200	R-90	"
		Parcel 978	6.00 acres	"	R-200	R-90	"
		Parcel B	4.00 acres	"	R-90	R-90	"
		Parcel 12	5.00 acres	Buddhist Association of Washington	R-90	R-90	"
4.	Alderton Road near Atwood Road	Parcel 526	2.65 acres	Vacant	R-200	R-200	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 582	1.00 acre	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 605	2.00 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	"
5.	Alderton Road & Rockville Facility Right-of-Way	Parcel N106	3.15 acres	Vacant	R-200	R-200	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel N134	8.26 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel N195	6.07 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel N223	9.97 acres	"	"	"	"
6.	Indian Spring Country Club Drive	Parcel 180	95.40 acres	Indian Spring Country Club	R-200	R-200	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas"
		Parcel 772	83.00 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 805	126.88 acres	"	"	"	"

(Table 4-1 Continued)

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
7.	Middlebridge Drive	Block A & C Miscellaneous pieces of land created by stream meanders	Unknown	Park	R-200	R-90	See text under "Proposed Zoning", "Minor Technical Issues", Chapter 4.
8.	Georgia Avenue and Jones Lane	Parcel 3	.40 acres	Vacant	R-90	R-60, TDR 12-15	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 43	.63 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	"
		Parcel 45	.31 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 47	.64 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 50	.52 acres	Vacant	"	"	"
		Parcel 60	3.07 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 65	.60 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 67	.50 acres	"	"	"	"
9.	Shorefield Road	Parcel 206	3.46 acres	Vacant	R-90	RT-8	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
10.	Shorefield Road at Wheaton Regional Park & Hallstead Street	Block 1-B Lots 13-16	Total Size 2.00 acres (.50 acres ea.)	Vacant	R-90	R-90	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
11.	Georgia Avenue & Weisman Road & Grandview Avenue near Weisman Road	Block A Lots 4 & 5	.46 acres	Vacant	R-60	C-T	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 241	.42 acres	Single-Family House	R-60	R-60	"
		Parcel 242	.55 acres	"	"	"	"
		Parcel 243	.24 acres	"	"	"	"
12.	Georgia Avenue between Lindell Street & Weisman Road	Block A Parcel 1	.38 acres	Parking Lot	R-60	C-4	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 2	.31 acres	Emergency Clinic	C-1	"	"
		Block A Lot 1	.61 acres	Office & retail & part of parking lot	C-1	C-4	"
		Lot 2	.21 acres	"	"	"	"
		Lot 3	.23 acres	"	"	"	"
		Lot 4	.20 acres	"	"	"	"
		Lot 5	.20 acres	Single-Family House	R-60	R-60	"

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
13.	Georgia Avenue & Arcola Avenue	Block 5 Part of Parcel 1 Part of Parcel 2	.67 acres .50 acres	Vacant "	R-90 "	R-90 "	This site is suitable for a special exception of moderate impact. Access should be from Arcola Avenue.
14.	Wexford Drive near Connecticut Avenue	Block A Part Outlot Block 17 Parcel 719	.52 acres 1.50 acres	Vacant "	R-60 "	R-60 "	The most appropriate form of development for these two parcels would be as either single-family or as an extension to either of the two adjoining special exception uses which are an elderly housing project and a private swim club. Access should be via Connecticut Avenue if the site becomes an extension of either or both of these two uses because it is where they gain their primary access. Because of steep slopes and a drainage channel, Wexford Drive should not be completed through to Connecticut Avenue. The best access would be from Lawrence Avenue if these sites are built as single-family, but this can only occur if these parcels are combined with two vacant lots lying between them and Lawrence Avenue.
15.	Connecticut Avenue between Decatur and Lawrence Avenues	Block 10 Lot 19 Lot 1	.32 acres .17 acres	Single-Family House "	R-60 "	R-60 "	Existing zoning is confirmed in order to stabilize this area which is confronted by commercial uses and a special exception on three sides.

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations	
16.	Warfield Street between Howard & Brainard Avenues. <u>Town of Kensington Sector Plan Area</u>	Block 4						
		Lots 8-12	.77 acres	2 Single-Family Houses	R-60	C-T	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."	
		Lots 13-14	.34 acres	Vacant	I-1	C-T		
		Block 3						
		All of lot 12 and half of lot 11 (10524 Warfield St.)	.50 acres	Single-family House	I-1	"	"	
		All of lot 10 and half of lot 11 (18518 Warfield St.)	.44 acres	"	R-60	"	"	
17.	Kensington Parkway & Saul Road	Parts of lots 6, 7, 8, and 9, as shown on p.96, Montgomery Co. Land Records, Book 1	.39 acres	Vacant	"	"	See text under "Public Schools," Chapter 6.	
		South half of Joseph's Park	3,199 sq.ft.	"	"	"		
		North half of Joseph's Park	2,656 sq.ft.	"	"	"		
		Parcel 454	21.67 acres	Vacant (former Kensington Jr. High School)	R-60	R-60		
18.	Geiger Avenue and West Avenue	Parcel 452	2.48 acres	3 Single-Family Houses	R-60	R-60	The single-family detached cluster option would be appropriate if parcels of 1.5 acres or greater are assembled. A floodplain elevation will constrain development to the rear of these parcels. Access easements should be obtained along the unbuilt portions of Kensington Boulevard for a multi-use trail.	
		Parcel 470	1.87 acres	Single-Family House	"	"		
		Parcel 502	.62 acres	"	"	"		
		Parcel 556	.50 acres	"	"	"		
		Parcel 555	1.00 acres	"	"	"		

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
19	University Boulevard to Decatur Avenue	Part of Parcel 41	2.36 acres	Single-Family House & Outbuildings	R-60	R-60	Development should respect the heavy tree cover and be set back from University Boulevard in keeping with the Green Corridors policy. Access to the site should be from an improved Decatur Street. This site is suitable for the single-family detached cluster option.
20.	University Boulevard at Findely Road and Stella Court	<u>Block 13</u> Part of Lot 43	4.29 acres	Single-Family House & Outbuildings	R-60	R-60	A deep setback from University Boulevard to provide buffer is recommended. No new access from University Boulevard should be allowed. Principal access should be from Moore Lane, which is currently a paper street that connects to Hobson Street. This site is suitable for a special exception use so long as it is compatible in scale and character with the surrounding community. It is also suitable for the single-family detached cluster option.

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
21.	Drumm Avenue & Plyers Mill Road	Parcel 66	11.07 acres	Wholesale Nursery	R-60	R-60	Even though this site is large enough for the townhouse cluster option, it is not recommended because of incompatibility with the surrounding single-family neighborhood. Steep slope guidelines will have to be applied. Drumm Avenue may have to be built to County standards, with an easement for a multi-use trail provided in the right-of-way.
22.	McComas Avenue & Drumm Avenue	Part of: Parcels 4 & 5 Parcel 6 Parcels 7 & 9	6.39 acres 5.09 acres 7.82 acres	Single-Family House Nursing Home 2 Single-Family Houses	R-60 " "	R-60 " "	The single-family detached cluster option is preferred on these parcels because of environmental constraints, but not the townhouse option due to compatibility problems. A trail easement along McComas is needed.
23.	Plyers Mill Road, Oberon Street & Drumm Avenue	Part of: Parcels 8, 9, 25, 26	4.99 acres	Vacant	R-60	R-60	A 1986 master plan amendment designated this site as suitable for the townhouse cluster option. Adequate screening should be provided between development on this site and surrounding single-family development. Environmental limitations may prevent achievement of full density.
24.	Metropolitan View Avenue & Edgewood Road	Part of: Parcels 1, 2	1.92 acres	Single-Family House	R-60	R-60	A drainage easement through the property presents environmental problems.
25.	University Boulevard at Eascrest Drive	Parcel 379 Parcel 381	6.58 acres 5.97 acres	Vacant "	R-90 "	R-90 "	Mature trees should be preserved. Adequate pedestrian connections to the adjoining Sligo Creek Park should be provided.

No.	Location	Parcel Description	Size (Acres)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Land Use Recommendations
26.	Wheaton Lane at Jewett Street	Parcel 834	.52 acres	Single-Family House	R-60	R-60	Should Parcel 840 redevelop on its own, or as part of a larger assemblage, part of this parcel, which abuts Sligo Creek Park, should be considered for dedication to the park to provide sufficient buffer for any further residential development that may take place on this site. Some of these parcels contain sub-standard dwellings. Thus they are candidates for redevelopment. Nevertheless, the single-family detached character of this area needs to be maintained. Therefore, the existing R-60 zoning is confirmed.
		Parcel 840	2.07 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	
		Parcel 843	1.00 acres	3 Single-Family Houses	"	"	
		Parcel 844	.25 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	
		Parcel 845	.25 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	
		Parcel 883	.47 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	
		Parcel 884	.46 acres	"	"	"	
		Parcel 888	.25 acres	"	"	"	
		Parcel 889	.25 acres	Vacant	"	"	
		Parcel 895	.05 acres	"	"	"	
		Parcel 896	1.00 acre	"	"	"	
		Parcel 898	1.00 acre	"	"	"	
		Parcel 899	.25 acres	Single-Family House	"	"	
		Outlot B, Johnson's addition to Chestnut Hill	.58 acres	Vacant	"	"	
27.	Georgia Avenue & Windham Lane	Block G	1.47 acres	WMATA Substation	O-M	R-60	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel A					
28.	Georgia Avenue & Plyers Mill Road	Parcel A	1.87 acres	Medical Clinic	R-60	R-60	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
29.	Georgia Avenue at Evans Parkway	Parcel 450	.95 acres	Vacant	R-60	R-60	See text under "Most Critical Parcels and Areas."
		Parcel 500	.56 acres	"	"	"	
		Parcels 1, 2, 3	.75 acres	"	"	"	
		4, 5		"	"	"	
		Amherst Avenue Right-of-Way		.20 acres	"	"	
30.	Dennis Avenue at Huntley Avenue	Block A	4.16 acres	Vacant part of church property	"	"	Development with minimal impact on the stormwater management facility and the homes on Woodman Avenue is recommended. This site is suitable for the single-family detached cluster option.
		Parcel 658					

undeveloped or underdeveloped land in the Kensington-Wheaton planning area, except for those individual parcels or groups of parcels recommended for a change by this Plan.

Objective

To ensure that zoning and land use recommendations for sites which have a potential for future development are consistent with the goals of land use stabilization and compatibility with nearby existing development.

Policies

Provide that all infill residential development be similar in character and compatible in density with the immediate neighborhood within which it is contained.

Where appropriate, change the zoning classification to a category more in keeping with the existing uses of the property to assure that future proposed uses would not be out of scale and character with surrounding residential development.

Maintain a range of housing types and prices throughout the planning area.

Implementation

After adoption of this Master Plan, the Planning Board will file a sectional map amendment to implement the zoning changes contained in Table 4-1. The County Council will act on the sectional map amendment following an advertised public hearing.

Table 4-1 recommends several parcels as suitable for the Cluster Development Option. The land use analysis found many parcels undeveloped as a result of environmental constraints. The cluster provisions of the zoning ordinance are intended to provide more environmentally sensitive development through flexibility of sub-

division layout. Cluster development allows for more relaxed lot size and setback requirements than development under the conventional method of subdivision and therefore can make better use of topography and other natural features. The cluster method allows the developer to achieve the same (or slightly higher) density with lots of varying shapes and sizes, some of which are smaller than would be permitted under the conventional method. Cluster development can group houses in a way that is more sensitive to topography or environmental assets and it is permitted only if it also provides common open space for the community.

The use of the cluster method is optional on the part of the developer and may be approved by the Planning Board only if the proposed development plan satisfies the stated purpose of this option. In the RE-2C, RE-1, R-200, R-150, R-90, and R-60 zones, parcels larger than five acres or recommended for cluster development in the master plan are eligible to use this option for single-family detached development. In the R-90 and R-60 zones, attached units are permitted in cluster development if the parcel is at least ten acres in size, and they are permitted on parcels at least three acres in size if recommended for townhouse cluster in the master plan.

The Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) law requires that MPDU's be provided in every subdivision with 50 or more residential units. The development standards for MPDU subdivisions are similar to the cluster option and permit attached units, the number being subject to Planning Board approval at the time of site plan review.

Recommendations on the Most Critical Parcels and Areas

The "critical parcels and areas" are sites where significant land use and zoning changes have been recommended by this Plan or where changes with significant impacts can occur. The recom-

mentations described below are supported by Illustrations 4-2 through 4-8, showing details on existing land use, topography, general site conditions, and zoning. Additional background information on these sites is contained in Table 4-1. The numbering system used for these sites is keyed to Table 4-1 and the map in Illustration 4-1. The land use plan is shown in Illustrations 4-9, 4-10, 4-11, and 4-12.

#3 Layhill Road and Fargrove Lane

The total size of these seven parcels is 49.08 acres. Three of these parcels are zoned R-200 but are completely surrounded by R-90 zoning. Three of them also contain the Bel Pre Stream Valley with its associated 100-year floodplain. It covers approximately 25 percent of this total area. This, in addition to steep slopes and substantial tree cover, means considerable environmental sensitivity must be exercised in the development of these sites.

The recommendation is to confirm the existing R-200 and R-90 zoning on all the parcels. The Plan designates all but Outlot B as suitable for the cluster option. An easement for a multi-use trail along the stream valley should be considered. However, it should not be requested until the environmental impact of the trail is assessed.

The area within and adjacent to the Bel Pre Creek floodplain should be designated as a conservation area. Conservation areas on private land are designated in the master plan and are implemented through the subdivision regulations. Conservation areas are unsuited for building purposes and should be left in their natural state. To encourage their use as open space, the zoning ordinance generally permits these areas to be used in calculating the permitted number of units or percent of coverage and the averaging of lot sizes. This allows the area so designated by the master plan to be used for private recreational purposes or for the rear yards of single-family dwellings.

Fargrove Lane will have to be improved to County standards if these parcels develop.

#4 Alderton Road near Atwood Road

The total size of these three parcels is 5.65 acres in the R-200 zone. The area to the west is already developed at a density of two dwelling units to the acre. Lots to the east and north have recently been created and are developing under the cluster option in the R-200 zone.

The recommendation is to continue the existing R-200 zoning, and the Plan designates as suitable for the cluster option all or any of these parcels, with such development assuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

#5 Alderton Road and Rockville Facility Right-of-Way

The total size of these four parcels is 27.45 acres in the R-200 zone. Significant portions of two parcels are in the Rockville Facility right-of-way and all of the parcels have significant environmental constraints, such as steep slopes.

The recommendation is to confirm the existing R-200 zoning, and the Plan designates as suitable for the cluster option any of these parcels, or portions thereof, which are not located in the Rockville Facility right-of-way.

#6 Indian Spring Country Club

The total size of these three parcels is 305.28 acres in the R-200 and R-90 zones. There are currently no indications that this large tract is likely to redevelop.

The recommendation is to confirm the existing R-200 and R-90 zoning. This tract should be the subject of a special study should this facility ever become available for redevelopment. Any

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Critical Parcels and Areas No. 3

Showing Existing Conditions

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- - ZONING BOUNDARY
- ○ PROPOSED MULTI-USE TRAIL

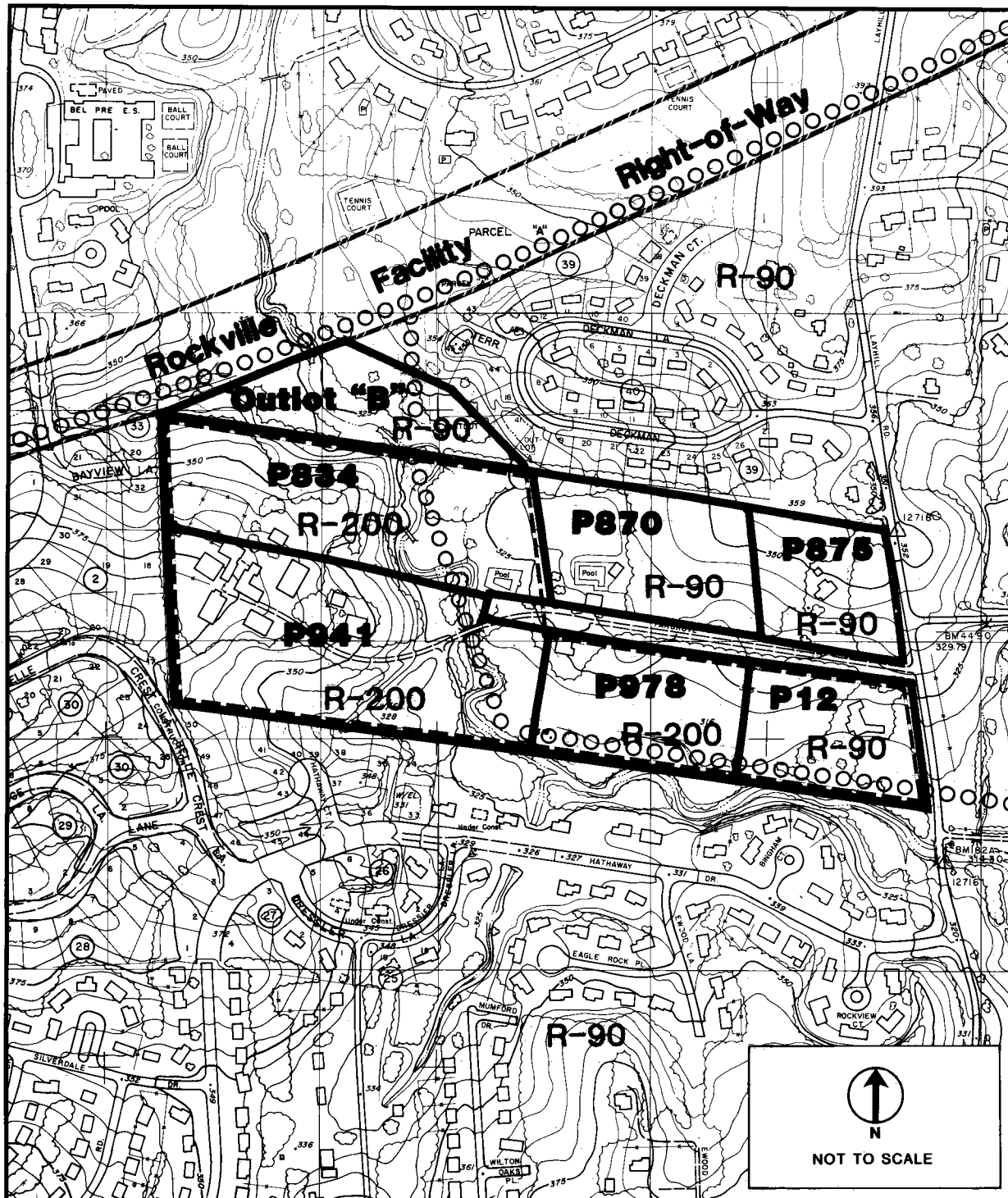
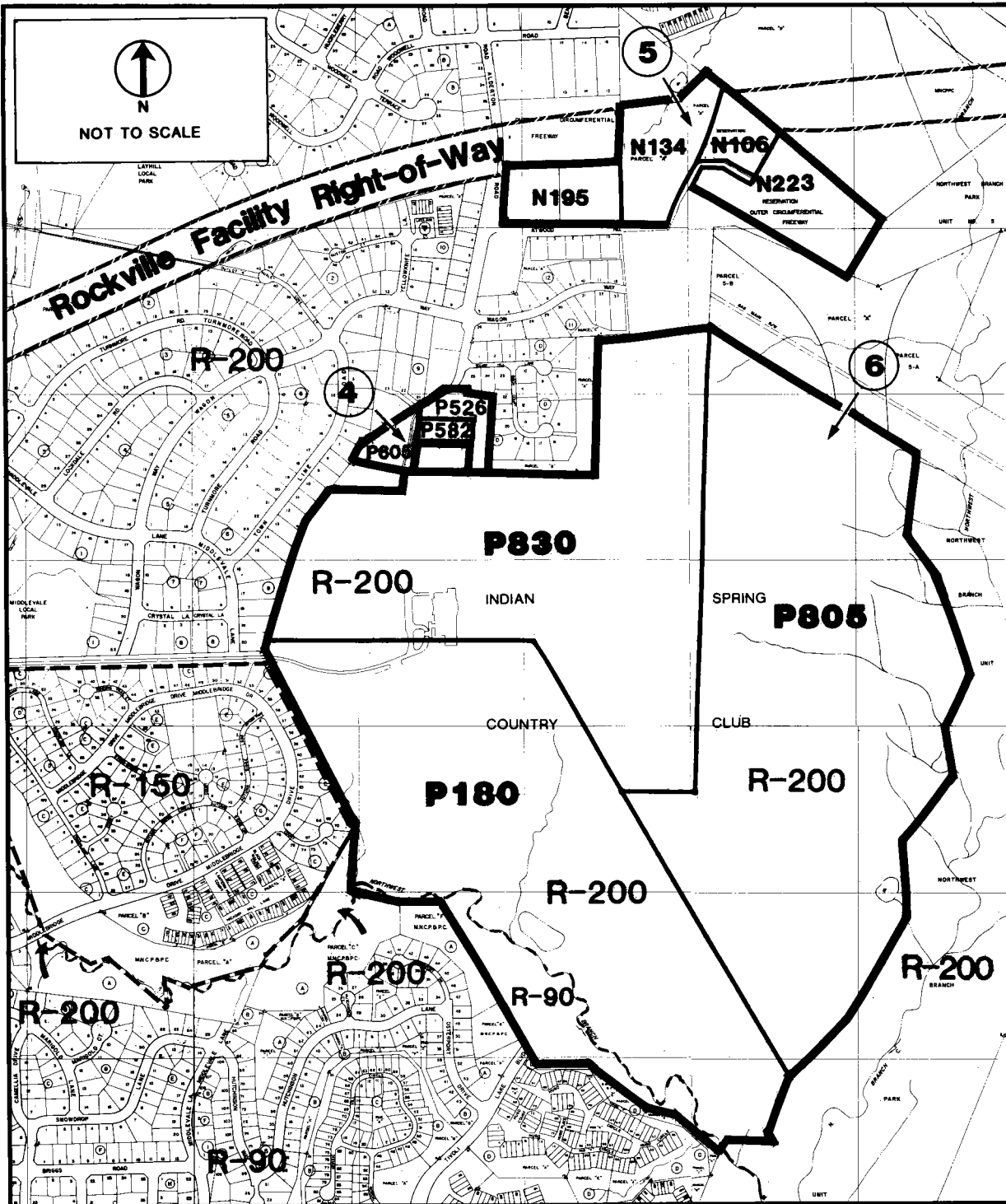


Illustration 4-2

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission



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*Master Plan for
the Communities of
Kensington Wheaton
Montgomery County, Maryland*

*Critical Parcels and Areas
Nos. 4, 5, & 6
Showing Existing Conditions*

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- - ZONING BOUNDARY

Illustration 4-3

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

redevelopment of this tract should provide Class I bicycle and pedestrian access to the nearby park trails. A primary road will be needed to provide traffic access to the arterial roads. (See the Transportation chapter for a more detailed discussion of this requirement.)

#8 Georgia Avenue and Jones Lane

The total size of these eight parcels is 6.67 acres. Four are vacant and four are occupied by well maintained single-family residences. The vacant parcels are much more likely to develop. All parcels in this group are surrounded by apartment development in the R-20 zone. There are no significant environmental constraints.

The recommendation is to rezone all of these parcels to the R-60/TDR zone, which establishes a base density equal to the R-60 zone with an option to increase the density using Transferable Development Rights (TDR's). If all parcels were assembled they would be suitable for a density of up to 15 dwelling units per acre, using TDR's, subject to further review at the time of subdivision and site plan review. In such cases, multi-family dwellings are recommended. If only the parcels that are currently vacant are assembled, the maximum density should be 12 dwelling units per acre; multi-family units are recommended. A zoning text amendment will be needed to allow these zoning densities in the R-60/TDR zone. The TDR program is described more fully in the Planning Board publication *Plowing New Ground*, 1986 edition.

#9 Shorefield Road

This parcel is 3.46 acres in the R-90 zone and it contains a healthy tree cover. A drainageway is on its western side. To the west, it abuts RT-8 townhouse development. Development to the south and east is in the R-90 zone, but at approximately 2 dwelling units per acre. Further to the east is R-60 development. Across Shorefield Drive is R-20 apartment development.

The recommendation is that this parcel is suitable for no more than 24 units, subject to careful analysis to assure an appropriate transition from higher to lower densities. This can best be achieved with RT-8 zoning, provided it is granted in conjunction with a schematic development plan.

#10 Shorefield Road at Wheaton Regional Park and Hallstead Street

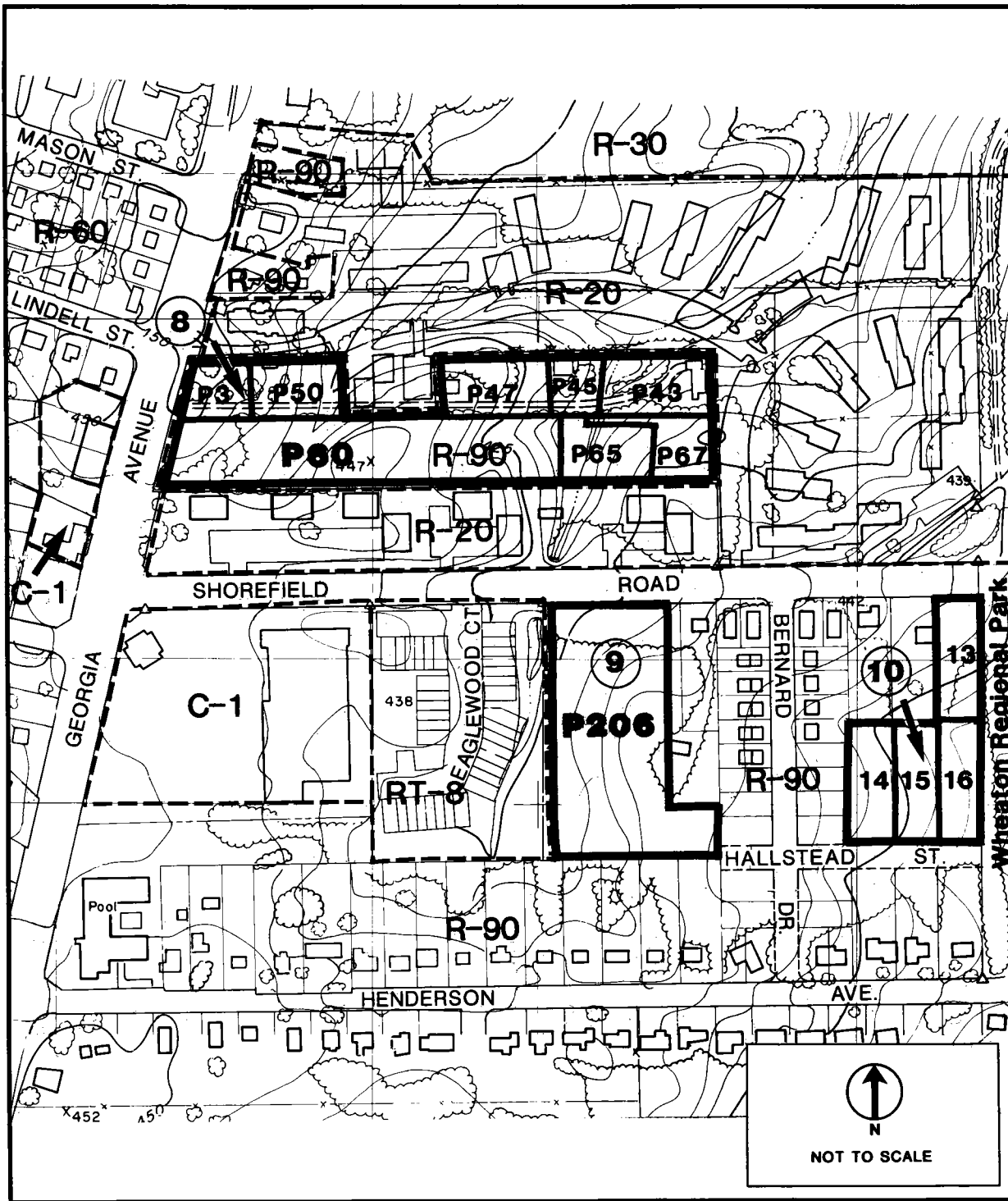
The total size of these four lots is two acres and they are zoned R-90. Two of them abut Wheaton Regional Park. The park's parking lot is very close to them. Three of these lots would have to be served by Hallstead Street. It is currently unbuilt, except for small stubs at the end of Bernard Drive.

The recommendation is to confirm the existing zoning, but if the owners are willing to sell, lots 13 and 16, nearest the park, should be acquired for the park to buffer single-family development of adjacent lots from the effects of activity in the park.

#11 Georgia Avenue and Weisman Road and Grandview Avenue near Weisman Road

These five parcels and lots total 1.67 acres in the R-60 zone. To the north, across Weisman Road, these tracts are faced by low-intensity commercial development in the C-1 and R-60 zones. To the east, across Georgia Avenue, they are faced by C-1 development. To the west and south, however, they abut stable residential development. The three southernmost parcels are of an unusual shape and size and present redevelopment possibilities even though they contain houses. No subdivisions have been recorded on these latter three parcels.

The Plan designates the two northernmost lots as suitable for C-T zoning to provide an appropriate transition between the neighboring commercial uses and abutting residences. New development on



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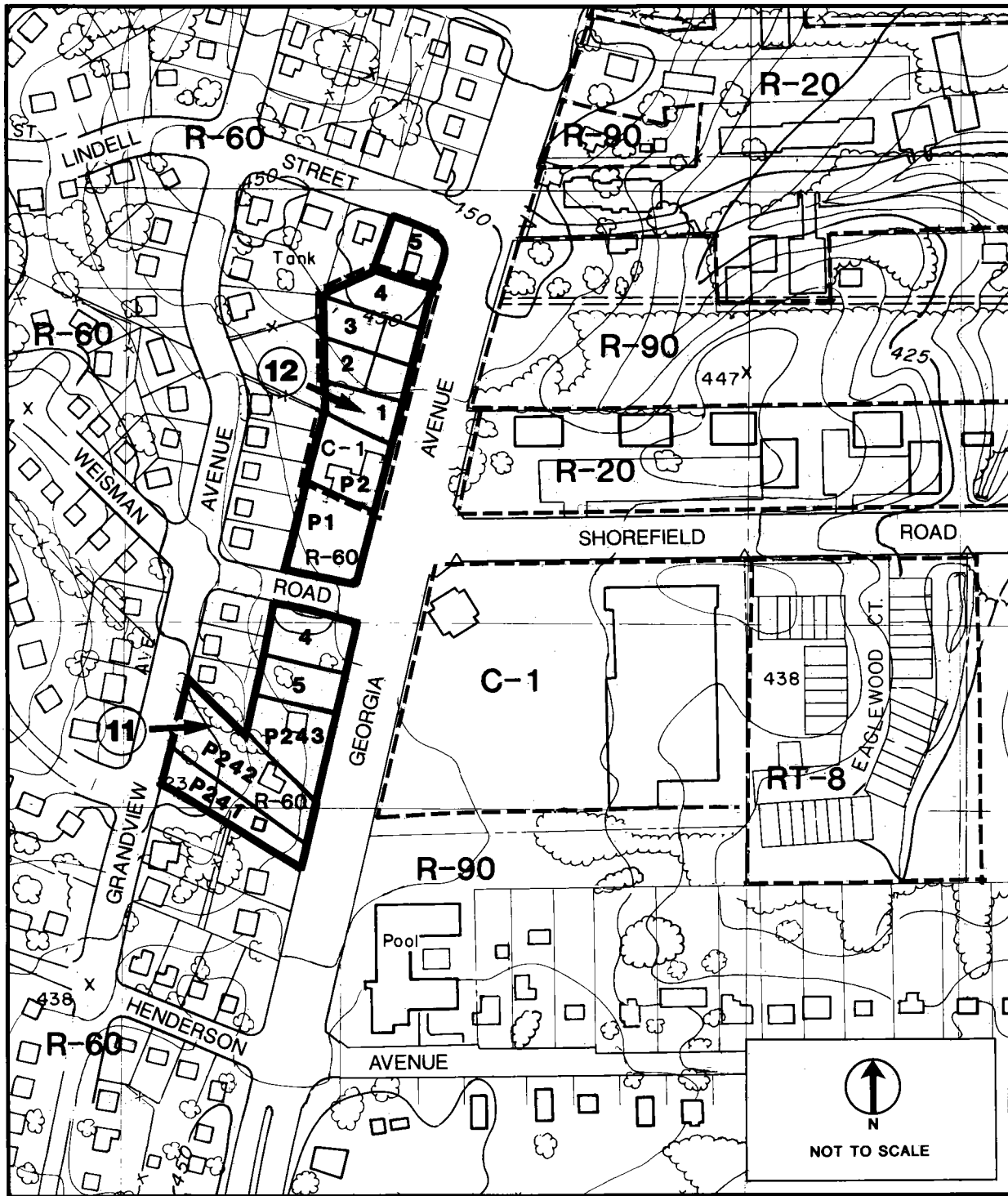
Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Critical Parcels and Areas
Nos. 8, 9, and 10
Showing Existing Conditions

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- - ZONING BOUNDARY

Illustration 4-4

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission



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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Critical Parcels and Areas
Nos. 11 and 12
Showing Existing Conditions

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- ZONING BOUNDARY

Illustration 4-5

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

this site should have a residential appearance. The three southernmost parcels should remain in R-60 zoning. The Plan designates them as suitable for a non-resident professional office use as a special exception.

#12 Georgia Avenue between Lindell Street and Weisman Road

These six parcels and lots total 1.5 acres in size. All but the southernmost and northernmost parcels are zoned C-1. They are zoned R-60. The southernmost parcel serves as a parking lot for the adjoining commercial building.

The recommendation is to rezone all properties, except the end lot at the corner of Lindell Street and Georgia Avenue, from R-60 and C-1 to C-4. The end lot of Georgia Avenue and Lindell Street is designated as suitable for the non-resident professional special exception. The C-4 zone is more in keeping with the development density of this block, which has a current FAR (floor area ratio) of less than .25, the maximum in the C-4 zone, whereas C-1 has only height, setback, and coverage limits, which would allow these properties to develop further. Further, higher intensity development can also take place in the C-4 zone through an optional method of development if on a site of at least two acres and if there is no contrary recommendation in the applicable master plan. Accordingly, this Plan recommends that development beyond the .25 FAR limit not take place at this location. Expansion of commercial uses in the Georgia Avenue corridor is inconsistent with the "Green Corridors" land use policy, discussed elsewhere in this Plan. The current on-site uses are allowed in the C-4 Zone.

#16 Warfield Street, between Howard and Brainard Avenues – Kensington Sector Plan Area

This is the only area studied that was within the boundaries of a sector plan. The total size of the lots to the west of Warfield Street is 1.33 acres. One of these lots is zoned I-1 and the rest are zoned R-60. On the east side there are seven lots totaling 1.11 acres, two of

which are zoned I-1 and the rest zoned as R-60. Most of these lots are abutted on the east and west by C-2 and I-1 zoned properties, which have been developing with uses incompatible with single-family residential use. Only two of the houses on Warfield Street are still used as residences. Single-family homes still exist to the south across Brainard Avenue, and to the southwest, the lots are abutted by the parking lot for the Kensington Park Library.

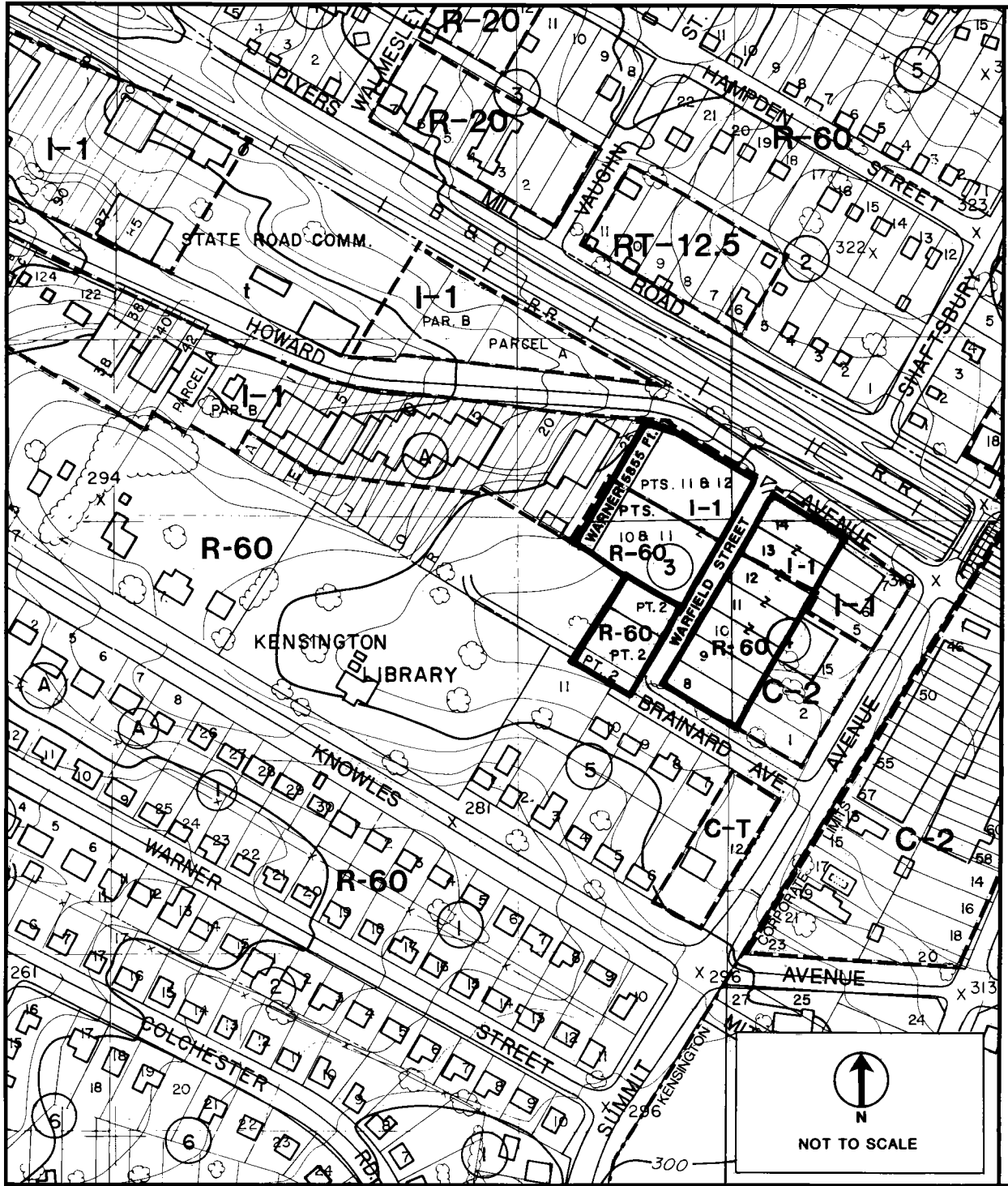
The recommendation is to designate these lots as suitable for the C-T Zone. This will provide a transition between residential and commercial areas on land no longer considered viable for single-family use.

Any or all of these lots can be changed to C-T zoning through the sectional map amendment (SMA) process at the written request of the property owner. However, if the I-1 lots are not zoned C-T at the time of the SMA approval, the property owner could file a local map amendment to request the rezoning of these lots from I-1 to C-T at some later date. In effect, this recommendation gives the property owner the option of developing the parcels currently zoned I-1 for an industrial use or rezoning these parcels to the C-T Zone upon the filing of a zoning application.

#28 Georgia Avenue and Windham Lane

This site is 1.47 acres in the O-M zone and it sits on the boundary of the Wheaton Sector Plan area. To the north is a medium density apartment complex in the R-20 category and to the south is a church and its associated parking lot. To the east and west, R-60 zoning with single-family homes predominates. The only improvement on the site is a power substation for the Metrorail line. The rest of the site is vacant but owned by Metro.

The recommendation is to rezone this property to R-60, since O-M zoning at this location is out of place in an area which is predominantly residential. Limited access to the site makes further



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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Critical Parcels and Areas No. 16 Showing Existing Conditions

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- ZONING BOUNDARY

Illustration 4-6
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

development very difficult. However, Windham Lane will soon be extended across Georgia Avenue and provide access from the northern side of the site to the substation. Access to any new development on the site should also be from Windham Lane. Since the site is not suited for single-family residential development, this Plan designates it as suitable for a special exception use in character and scale with the surrounding residential uses, such as a group home or day care center.

#29 Georgia Avenue and Plyers Mill Road

This 1.87-acre site, which is currently zoned R-60, was investigated for the possibility of O-M zoning and found not suitable for this kind of development. The existing building was built as a medical clinic under a special exception. The owner claims that it is now obsolete as a clinic and would like to convert it to general office use.

This Plan recommends against any change from R-60 to O-M zoning and finds the current use as a special exception in the R-60 Zone a reasonable option. Otherwise, this site is appropriate for R-T zoning as a way of extending the townhouse development which surrounds it to the corner of Plyers Mill Road and Georgia Avenue. The exact density of the R-T Zone should be determined based on a development plan which should show how the development of townhouses on this site can best relate to the surrounding RT-12.5 development and also avoid placing units too close to Georgia Avenue or Plyers Mill Road.

#30 Georgia Avenue at Evans Parkway

The total size of these parcels is 2.46 acres and they are zoned R-60. This parcel group was approved as a special exception for the construction of a service organization, but the special exception has since expired. A dedicated right-of-way for Amherst Avenue cuts through the center of this area, but it remains unbuilt. Abandonment of the right-of-way was approved to accommodate construc-

tion of the special exception, but it can still be executed if a new plat is filed. These parcels abut the Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park, which lies just to the east. One of the parcels is actually a 30-foot wide unbuildable right-of-way running from Georgia Avenue in an east-west direction, along the full length of the northern edge of the park.

The recommendation is to retain the existing R-60 zoning. A portion of the Amherst Avenue right-of-way will be needed to provide for a multi-use trail. The 30-foot right-of-way will also be needed for this purpose. Any question about abandonment of the remaining portions of the Amherst Avenue right-of-way should be resolved at the time of subdivision.

This site is a suitable location for a community service organization as a special exception. If a service organization is not constructed at this location, these parcels should be acquired for possible future use as a local park or open space.

This ends the discussion of the "critical parcels and areas." Maps showing the Land Use Plan and Zoning Plan for the entire planning area follow.

Minor Technical Issue

One small technical zoning issue did not appear in the previous maps and discussions on individual parcels and critical areas. East of Layhill Road along Bel Pre Creek, just north of the Glenmont Sector Plan area, are some very small pieces of land zoned R-200 that are sandwiched between R-150 zoning on one side and R-90 zoning on the other. The area affected is shown in Illustration 4-15 and partially again next to parcel group 6 in Illustration 4-3. These pieces of land are defined by the intersection of a meandering stream bed and R-150 boundary lines which coincide with existing property lines. This came about when the R-200 area north of the

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Critical Parcels and Areas Nos. 28 and 29

Showing Existing Conditions

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- - ZONING BOUNDARY

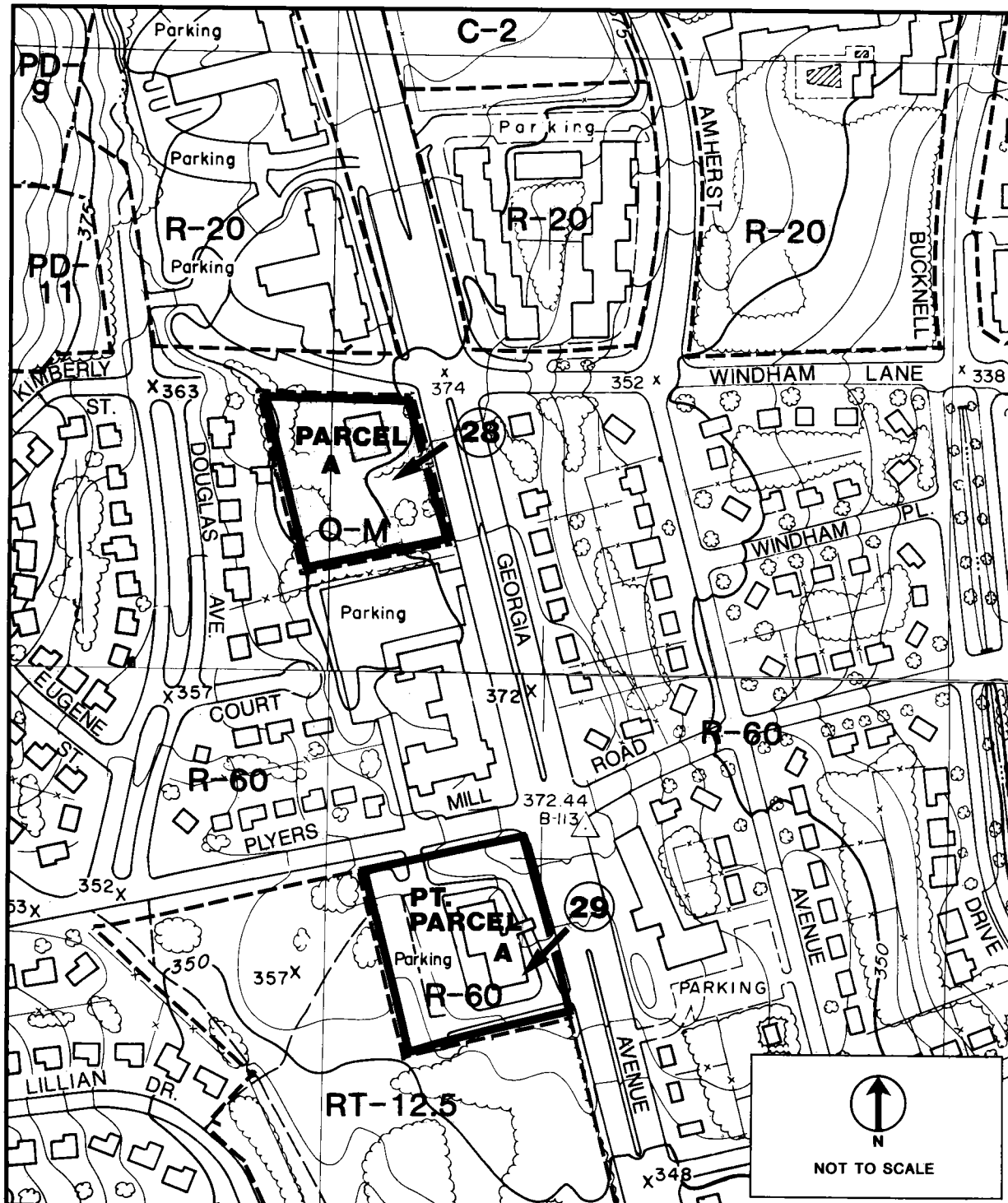
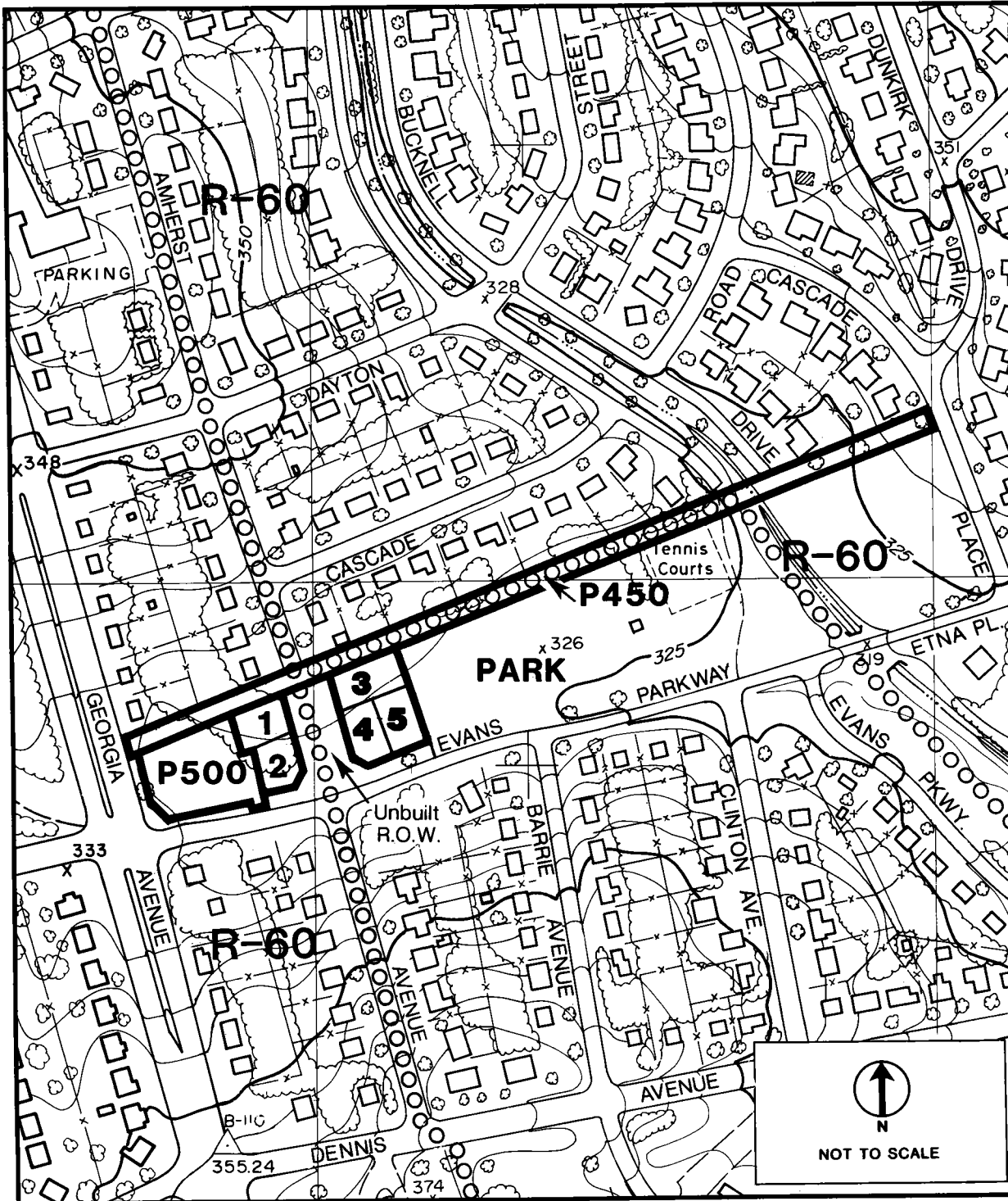


Illustration 4-7

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**Master Plan for
the Communities of
Kensington Wheaton**
Montgomery County, Maryland

*Critical Parcels and Areas
No. 30*

Showing Existing Conditions

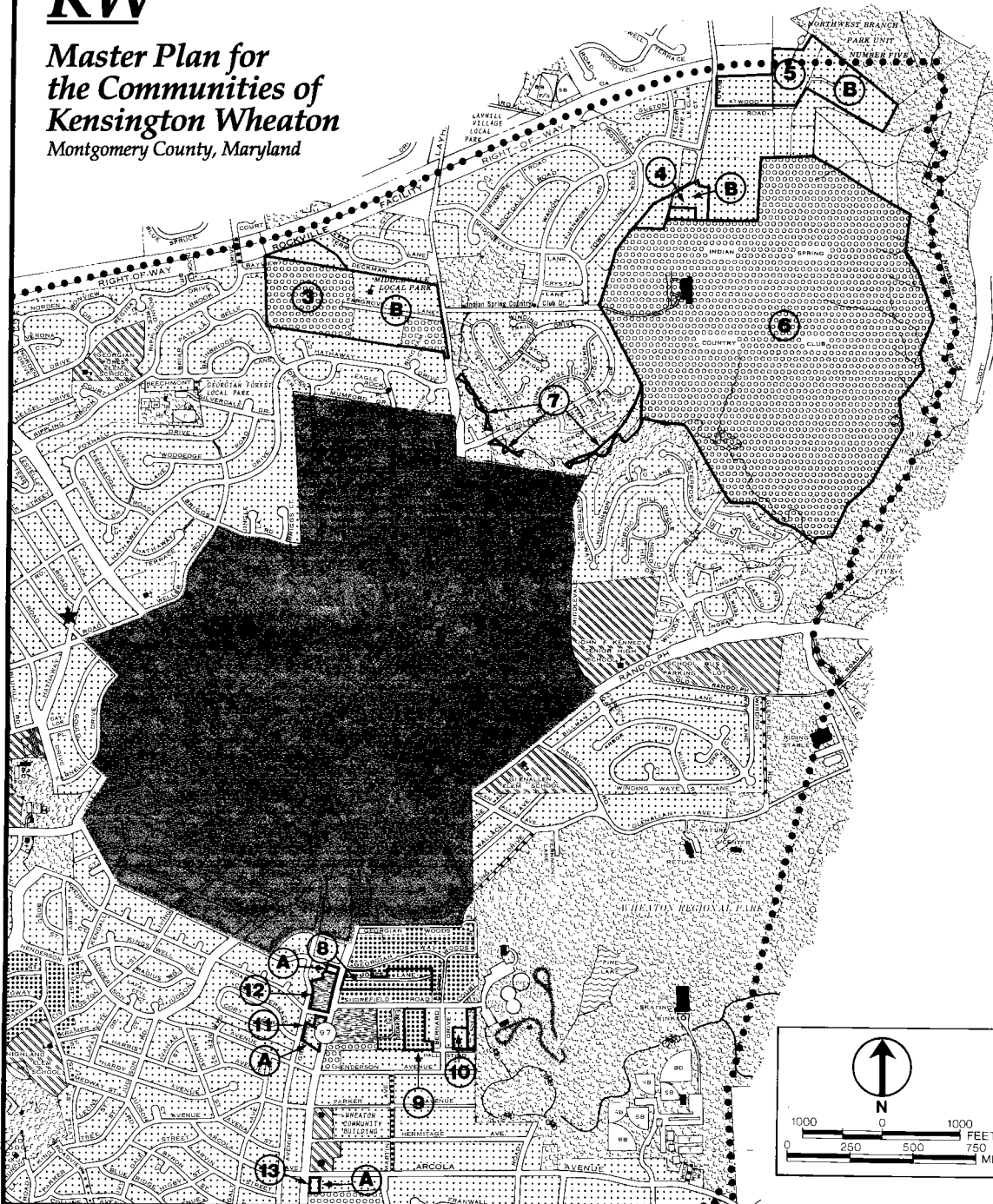
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- ○ PROPOSED MULTI-USE TRAIL

Illustration 4-8

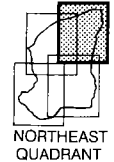
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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



Land Use Plan



- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- RESIDENTIAL**
 - LOW DENSITY
 - ◐ MEDIUM DENSITY
- COMMERCIAL**
 - ◑ GENERAL
 - ◒ OFFICE
- PUBLIC & QUASI-PUBLIC**
 - ◓ PUBLIC PARK
 - ◔ QUASI-PUBLIC
 - ◕ PUBLIC
 - ★ UTILITIES
- Ⓐ SUITABLE FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓑ SUITABLE FOR THE CLUSTER OPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- ⑦ NUMBERED AREAS REFERENCED TO TABLE 4-1

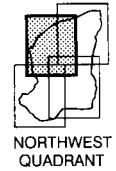
Illustration 4-9

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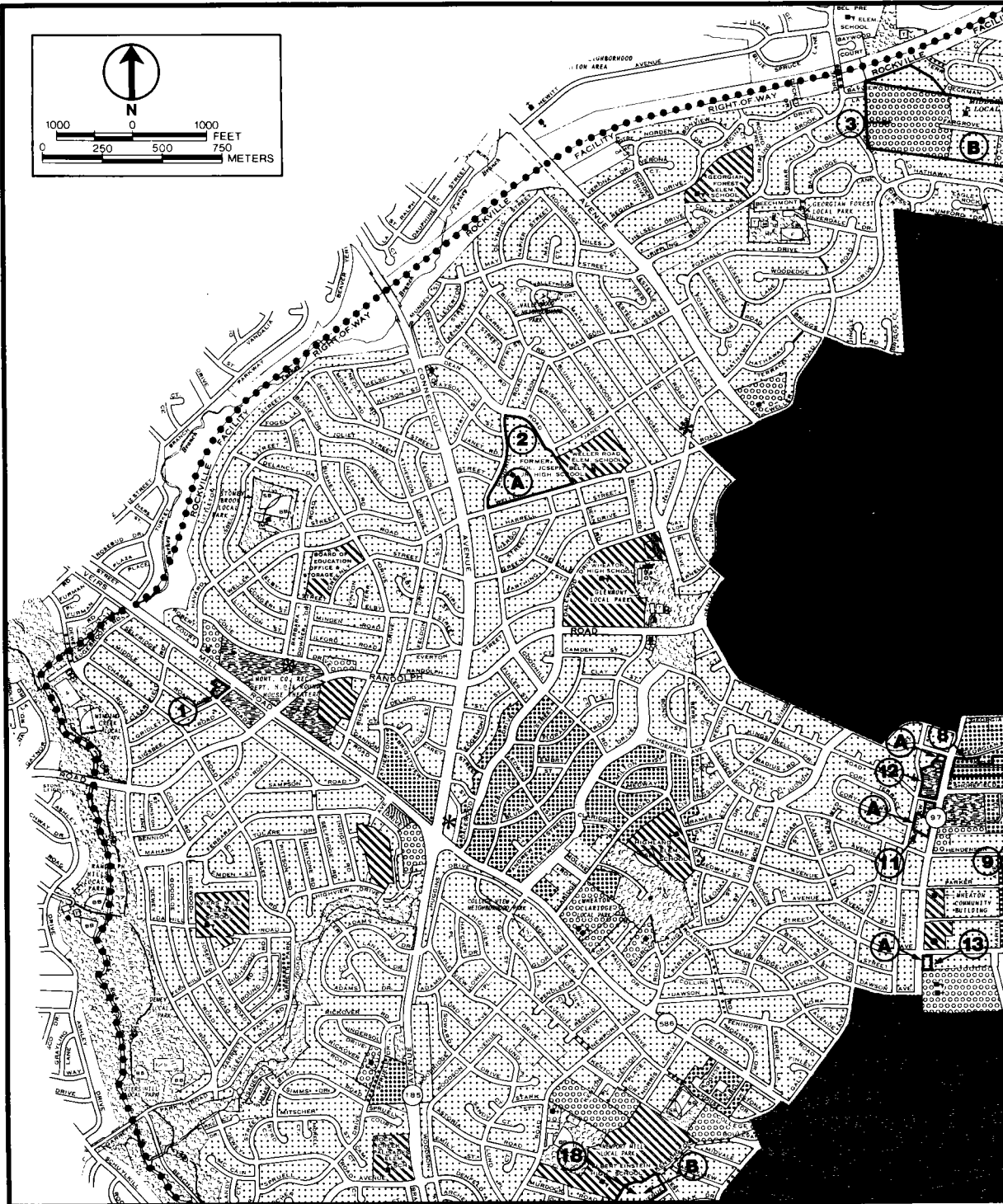
Land Use Plan



- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- RESIDENTIAL**
 - LOW DENSITY
 - ◐ MEDIUM DENSITY
- COMMERCIAL**
 - ◑ GENERAL
 - ◒ OFFICE
- PUBLIC & QUASI-PUBLIC**
 - ◓ PUBLIC PARK
 - ◔ QUASI-PUBLIC
 - ◕ PUBLIC
 - * UTILITIES
- Ⓐ SUITABLE FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓑ SUITABLE FOR THE CLUSTER OPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓒ NUMBERED AREAS REFERENCED TO TABLE 4-1

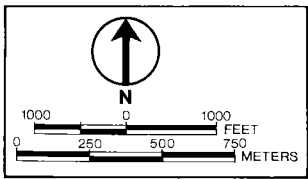
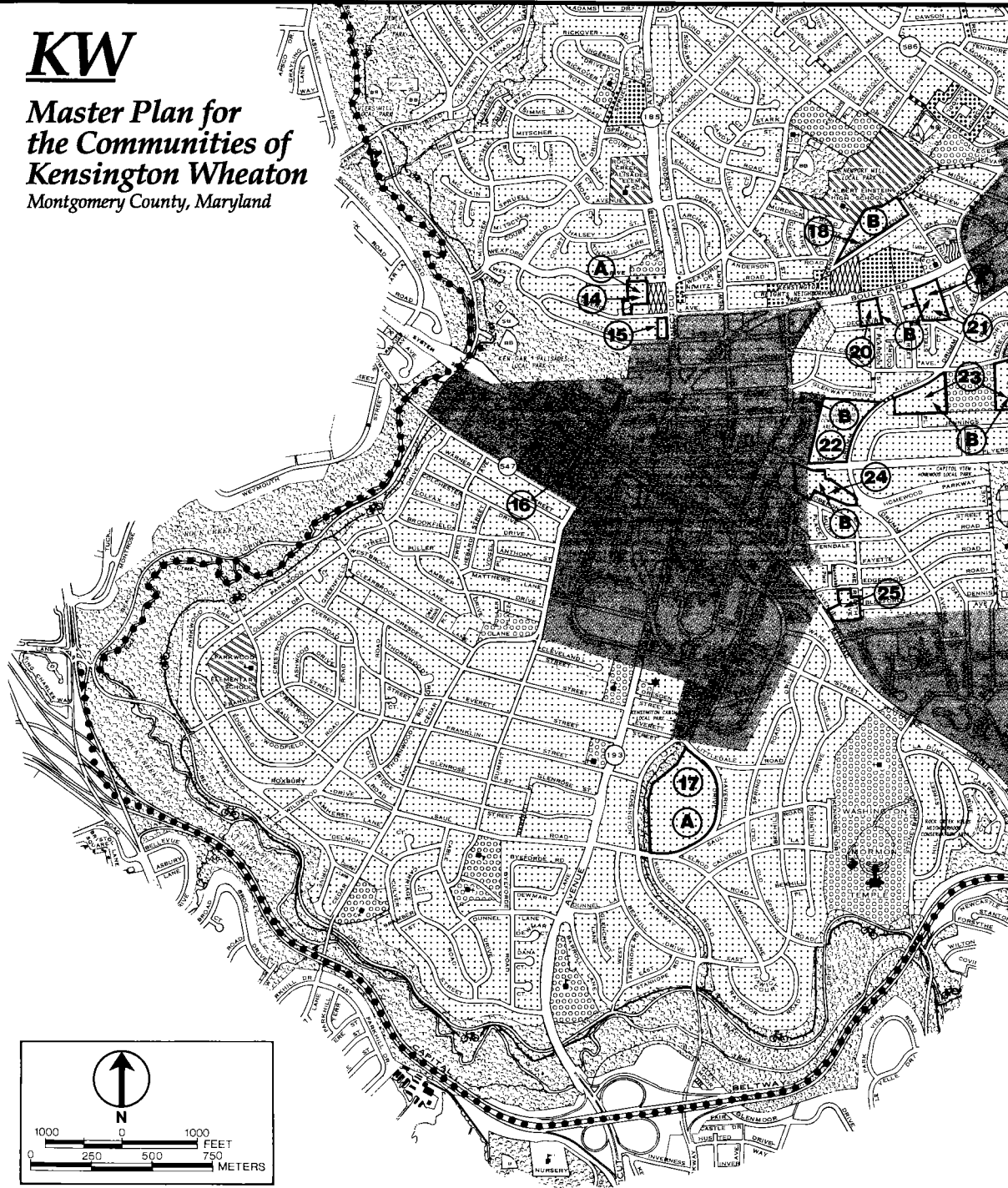
Illustration 4-10

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

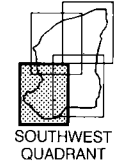


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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



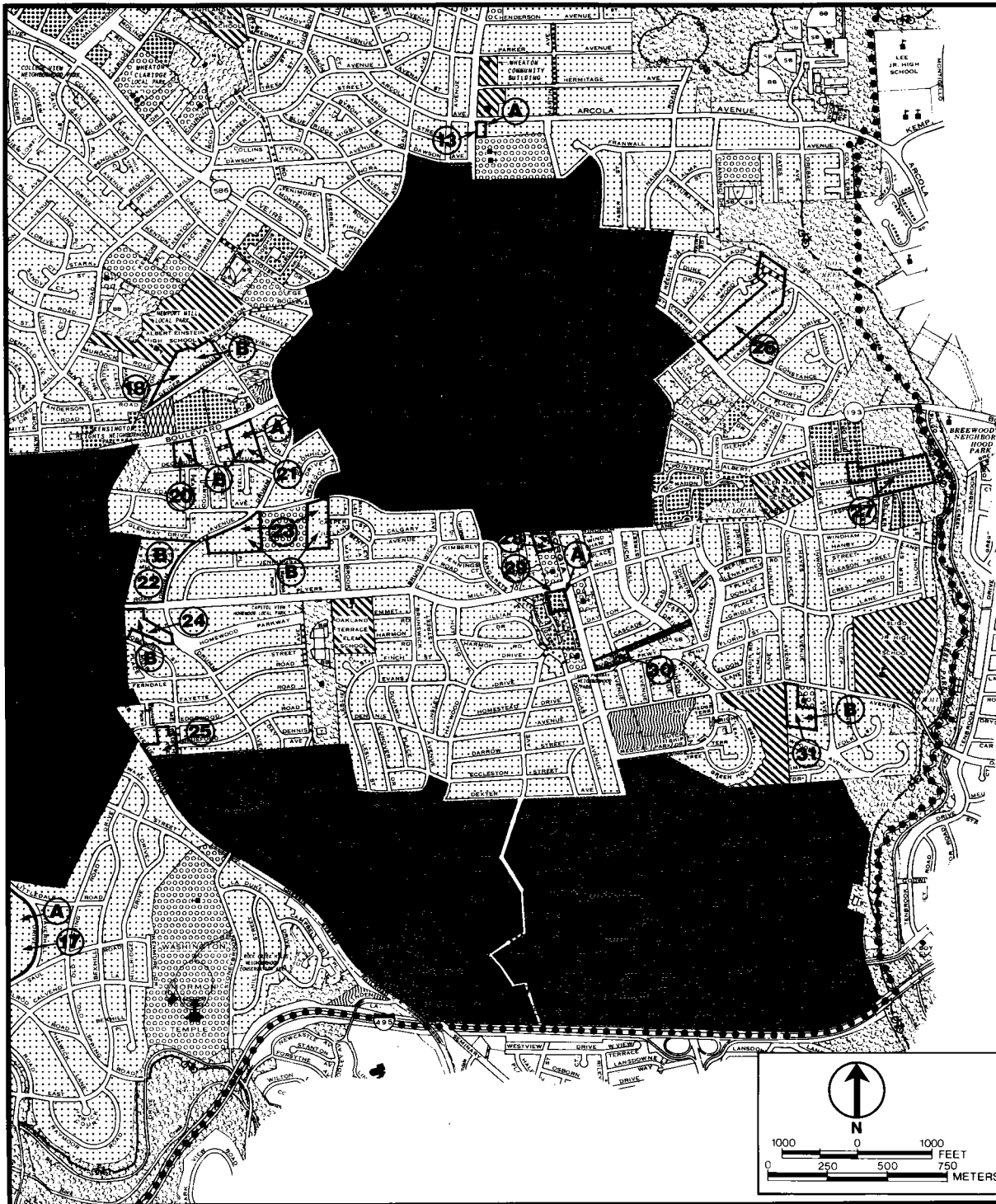
Land Use Plan



- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- RESIDENTIAL**
 - LOW DENSITY
 - ◐ MEDIUM DENSITY
 - ◑ HIGH DENSITY
- COMMERCIAL**
 - ◒ GENERAL
 - ◓ OFFICE
 - ◔ INDUSTRIAL
- PUBLIC & QUASI-PUBLIC**
 - ◕ PUBLIC PARK
 - ◖ QUASI-PUBLIC
 - ◗ PUBLIC
- Ⓐ SUITABLE FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓑ SUITABLE FOR THE CLUSTER OPTION, SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓘ NUMBERED AREAS REFERENCED TO TABLE 4-1

Illustration 4-11

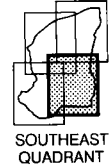
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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Land Use Plan



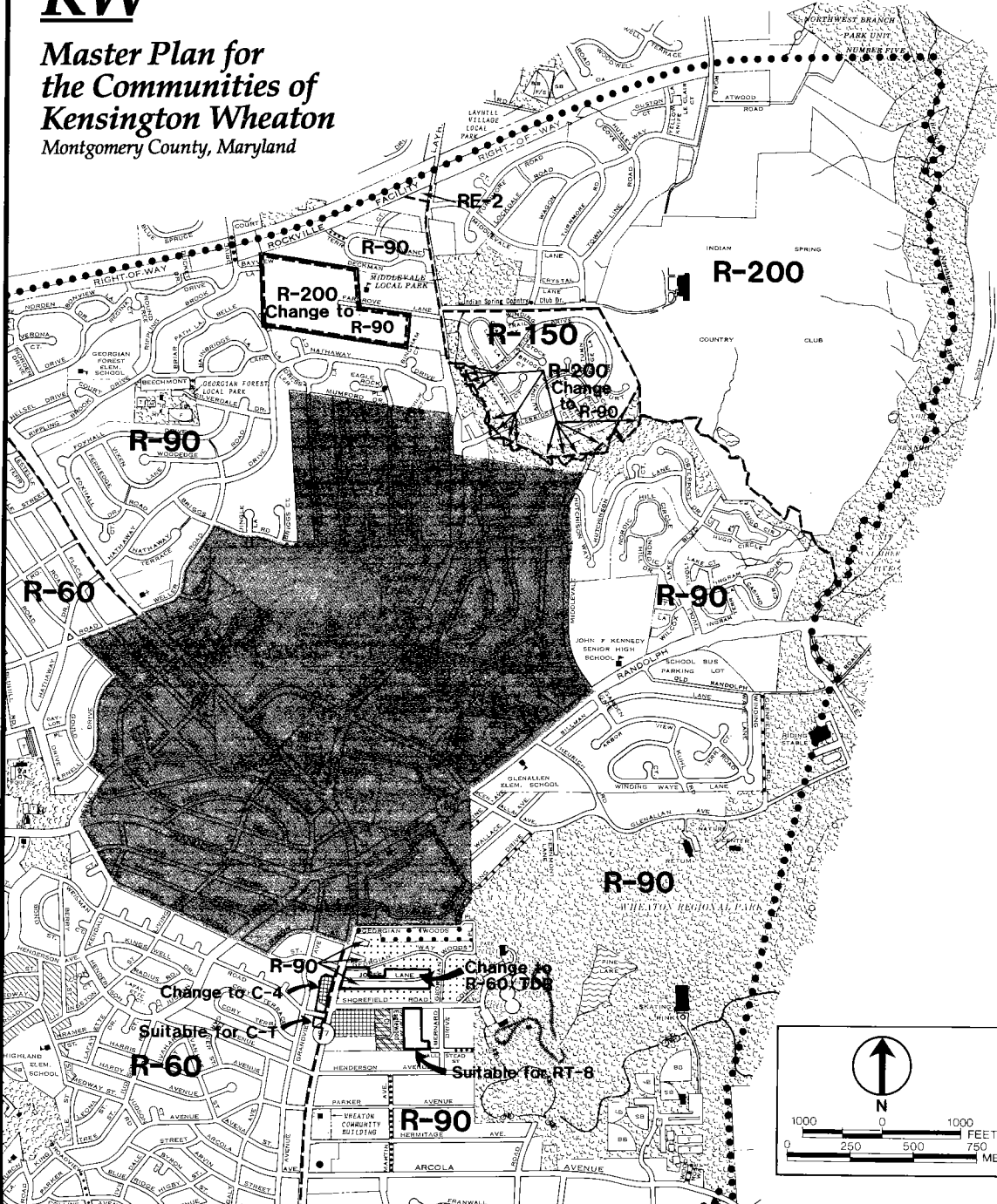
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- RESIDENTIAL**
 - LOW DENSITY
 - ◐ MEDIUM DENSITY
 - ◑ HIGH DENSITY
- COMMERCIAL**
 - ◒ GENERAL
 - ◓ OFFICE
- PUBLIC & QUASI-PUBLIC**
 - ◔ PUBLIC PARK
 - ◕ QUASI-PUBLIC
 - ◖ PUBLIC
- Ⓐ SUITABLE FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION,
SEE TABLE 4-1
- Ⓑ SUITABLE FOR THE CLUSTER OPTION,
SEE TABLE 4-1
- ⑨ NUMBERED AREAS REFERENCED TO
TABLE 4-1

Illustration 4-12

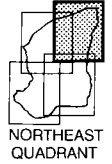
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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



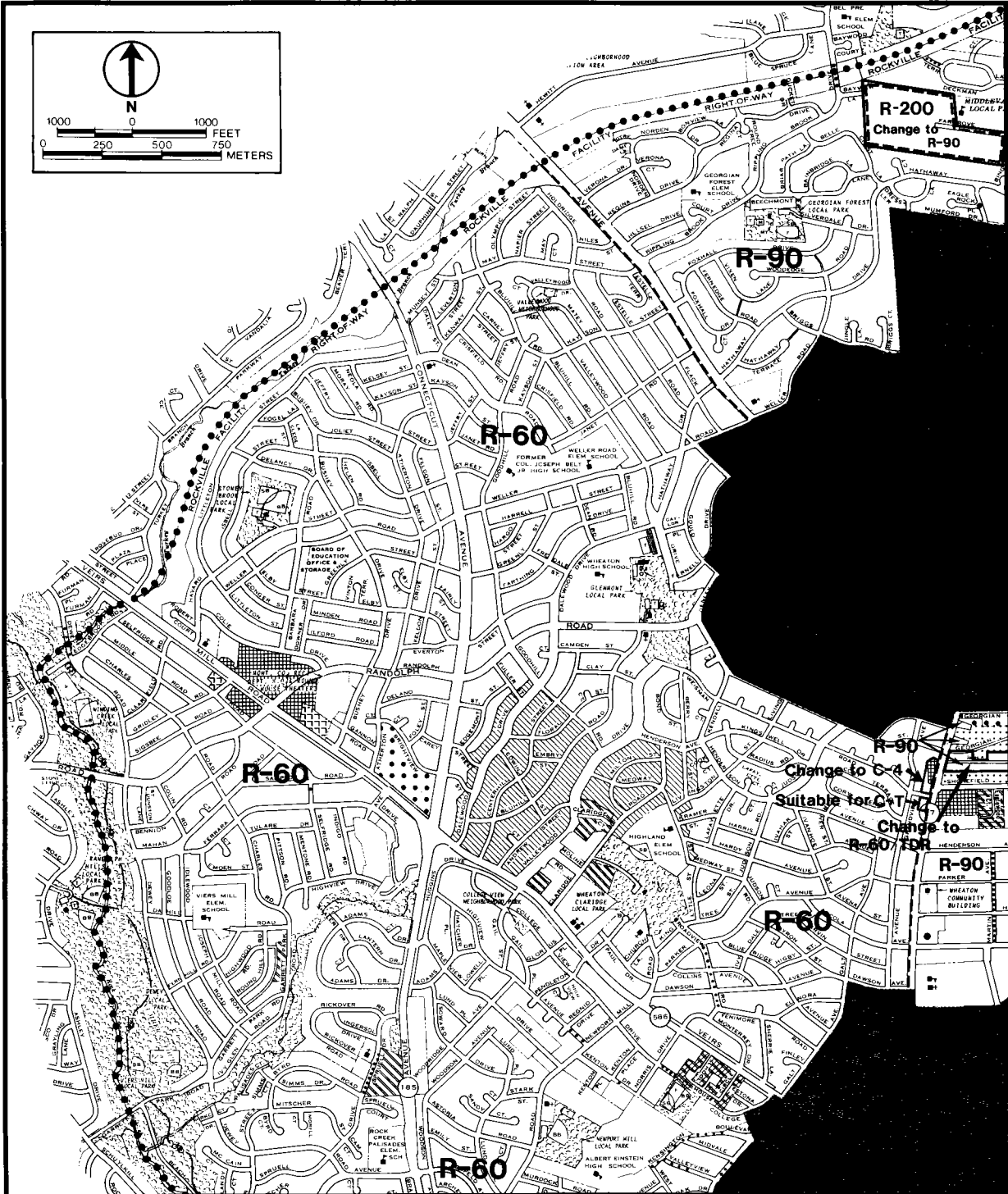
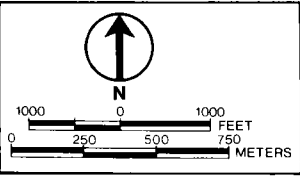
Zoning Plan



- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)
- EXISTING PARKLAND
- RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, 2 ACRE TWO ACRES PER DWELLING UNIT (RE-2)
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, LARGE LOT (R-200)
- ONE-FAMILY CONTROLLED DENSITY (R-150)
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED RESTRICTED RESIDENTIAL (R-90)
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL (R-60)
- ONE-FAMILY SEMI-DETACHED & TWO-FAMILY DETACHED (R-40)
- TOWNHOUSES (RT-8)
- MULTIPLE-FAMILY LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-30)
- MULTIPLE-FAMILY MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-20)
- LOCAL COMMERCIAL (C-1)

Illustration 4-13

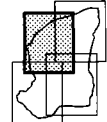
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission



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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Zoning Plan



NORTHWEST
QUADRANT

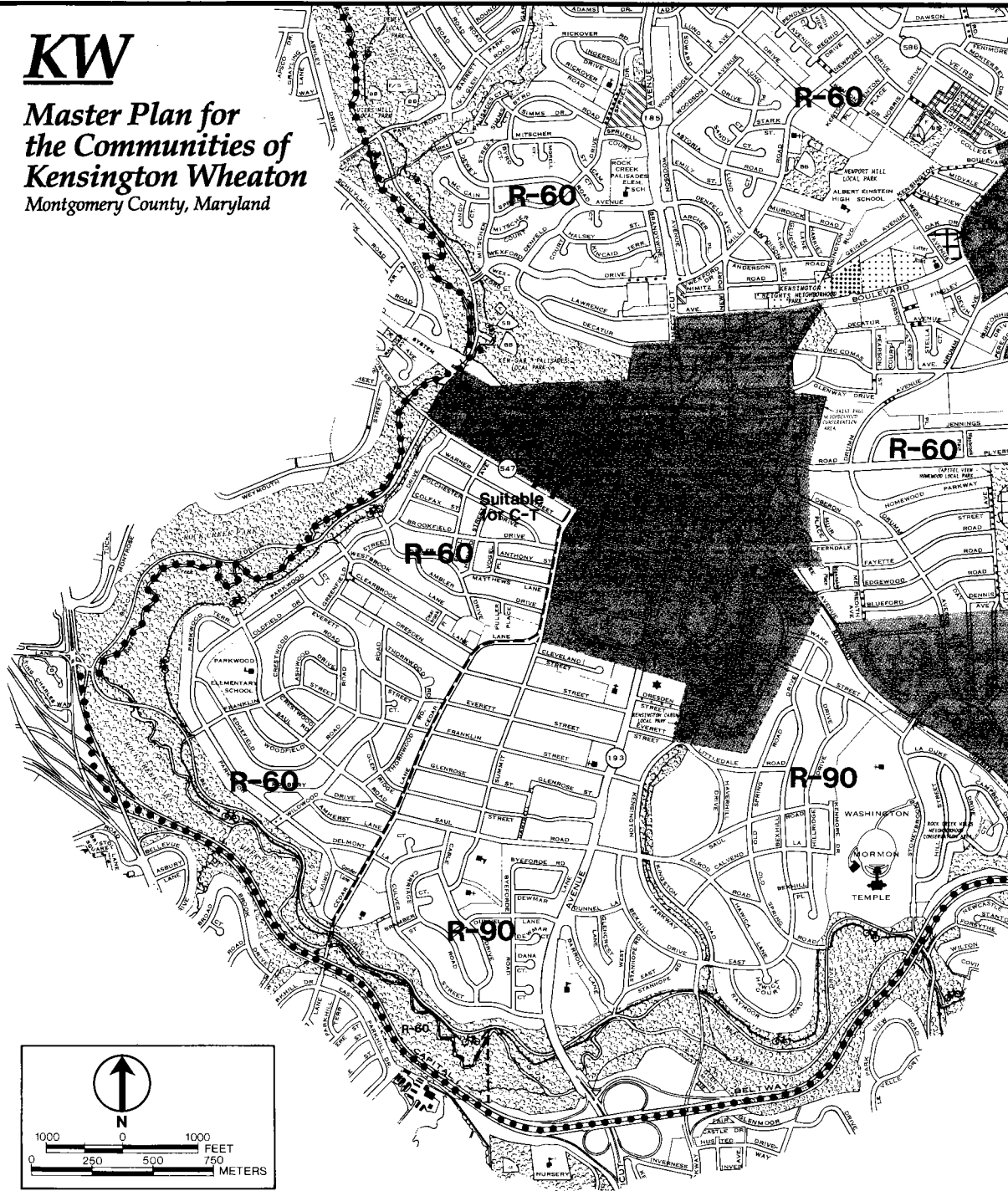
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TDR
- ◌ EXISTING PARKLAND
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, LARGE LOT R-200
20,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED RESTRICTED RESIDENTIAL R-90
9,000 PER SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL R-60
6,000 SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT
- ◌ ONE-FAMILY SEMI-DETACHED & TWO-FAMILY DETACHED R-40
4,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- ◌ TOWNHOUSES RT-8
8 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- ◌ TOWNHOUSES RT-10
10 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- ◌ TOWNHOUSES RT-12.5
12.5 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- ◌ MULTIPLE-FAMILY LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL R-30
3,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- ◌ MULTIPLE-FAMILY MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL R-20
2,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- ◌ LOCAL COMMERCIAL C-T
- ◌ GENERAL COMMERCIAL C-1

Illustration 4-14

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



Zoning Plan



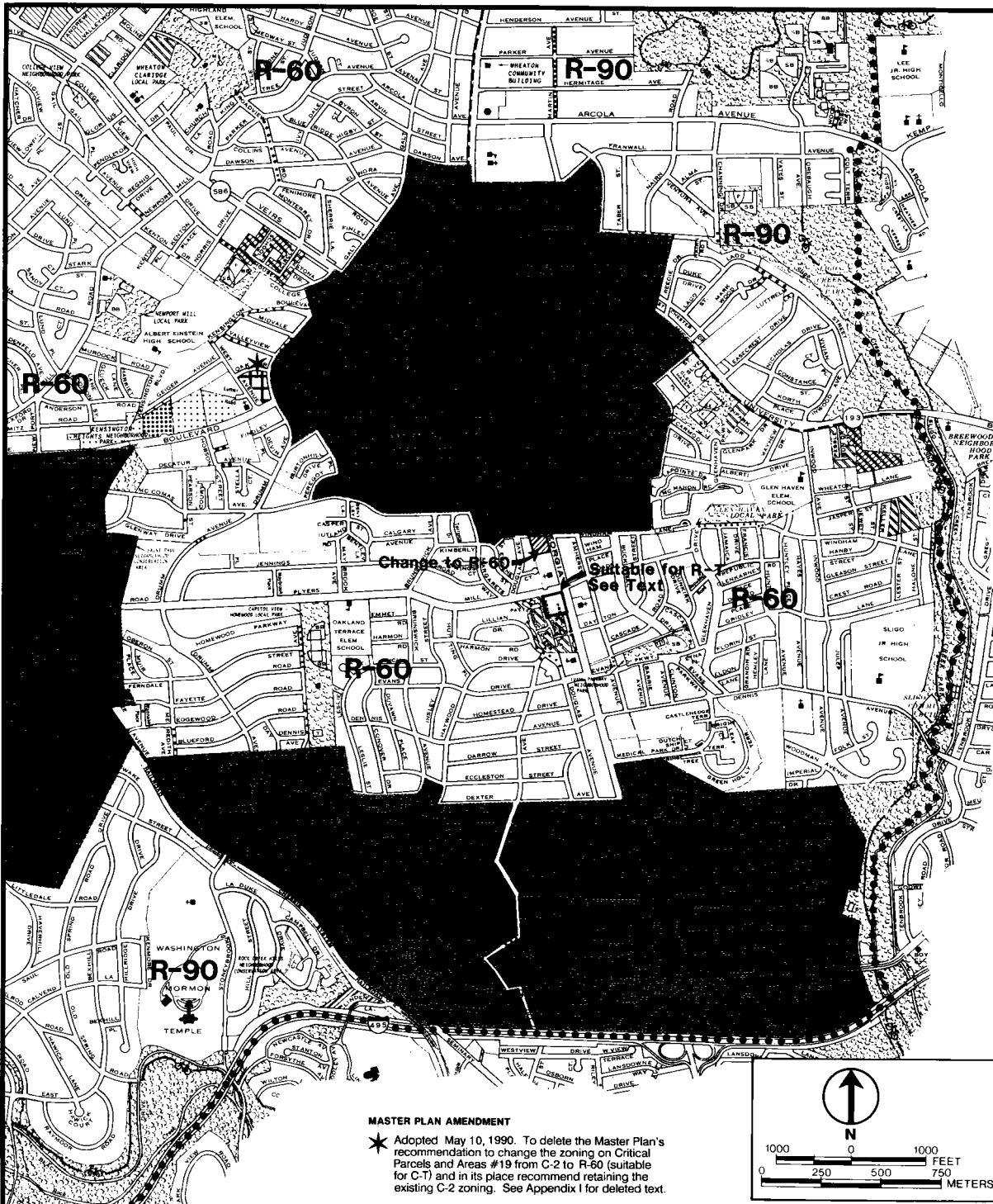
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TDR
- EXISTING PARKLAND
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, RESTRICTED RESIDENTIAL 9,000 SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT R-90
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, RESIDENTIAL 6,000 SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT R-60
- ▨ TOWNHOUSES 10 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE RT-10
- ▨ TOWNHOUSES 12.5 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE RT-12.5
- ⊙ MULTIPLE-FAMILY MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL 2,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT R-20
- ⊙ MULTIPLE-FAMILY HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL 1,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT R-10
- ⊕ COMMERCIAL TRANSITION ZONE C-T
- ⊕ GENERAL COMMERCIAL C-2
- ⊙ LIGHT INDUSTRIAL I-1

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

★ Adopted May 10, 1990. To delete the Master Plan's recommendation to change the zoning on Critical Parcels and Areas #19 from C-2 to R-60 (suitable for C-T) and in its place recommend retaining the existing C-2 zoning. See Appendix I for deleted text.

Illustration 4-15

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission



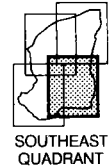
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland

Zoning Plan



- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- SECTOR PLAN AREA
- TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TDR
- EXISTING PARKLAND
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, RESTRICTED RESIDENTIAL R-90
9,000 SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT
- ONE-FAMILY DETACHED, RESIDENTIAL R-60
6,000 SQUARE FEET AVERAGE PER DWELLING UNIT
- ONE-FAMILY SEMI-DETACHED & TWO-FAMILY DETACHED R-40
4,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- TOWNHOUSES RT-8
8 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- TOWNHOUSES RT-10
10 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- TOWNHOUSES RT-12.5
12.5 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
- MULTIPLE-FAMILY MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL R-20
2,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- MULTIPLE-FAMILY HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL R-10
1,000 SQUARE FEET PER DWELLING UNIT
- OFFICE BUILDING-MODERATE INTENSITY O-M
FLOOR AREA RATIO OF 1.5
- LOCAL COMMERCIAL C-1
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL C-2

Illustration 4-16

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

stream was rezoned to R-150. However, these R-200 pockets remained because the R-150 rezoning followed a property line which did not conform to the line of the stream. Instead, it bisected it in a number of places, thus setting up small unusable pockets of land with a different zoning category than the parcels that surround them. They are owned by the Park and Planning Commission, as is the R-150 zoned stream valley to the north and R-90 zoned stream valley to the south. In order to create a more logical zoning boundary, the Plan proposes that all of the land pockets now zoned R-200 be changed to R-90. The location for these changes is shown in Illustration 4-14. This would establish the existing property lines as the sole zoning boundary between the various zones in this area.

Green Corridors Policy

All the major highways in the Kensington-Wheaton planning area have single-family homes abutting them between commercial areas. Where residential areas along these highways meet the commercial centers, there is no transition that clearly separates the commercial uses from residential areas. As indicated in Illustration 4-18, the major highways in the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan area are:

Connecticut Avenue
University Boulevard
Veirs Mill Road

Randolph Road
Georgia Avenue
Layhill Road

The neighborhoods behind the corridors are intimate and cohesive, defined by tree lined streets, low traffic volumes, culs-de-sac, green parkways, and well maintained dwellings. For the most part, in the Kensington-Wheaton area, the relationship between the homes and the highways that pass them works fairly well. However, the intensity of highway traffic tends to threaten the long-term residential viability of houses which front on these highways. It is a basic

tenet of this Plan that to allow further changes in the residential character of the corridors, either through neglect or by allowing for more conversions to non-residential use, would erode the interior neighborhoods that abut them.

To ensure the identity and integrity of residential areas along major highway corridors and that commercial areas do not fade from one into the next without a clear sense of place, the Plan proposes a "green corridors" policy that addresses land use changes, including special exceptions, and the visual effects of the highways and abutting properties.

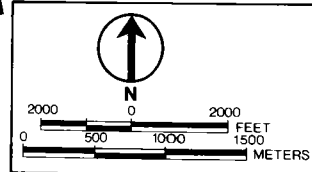
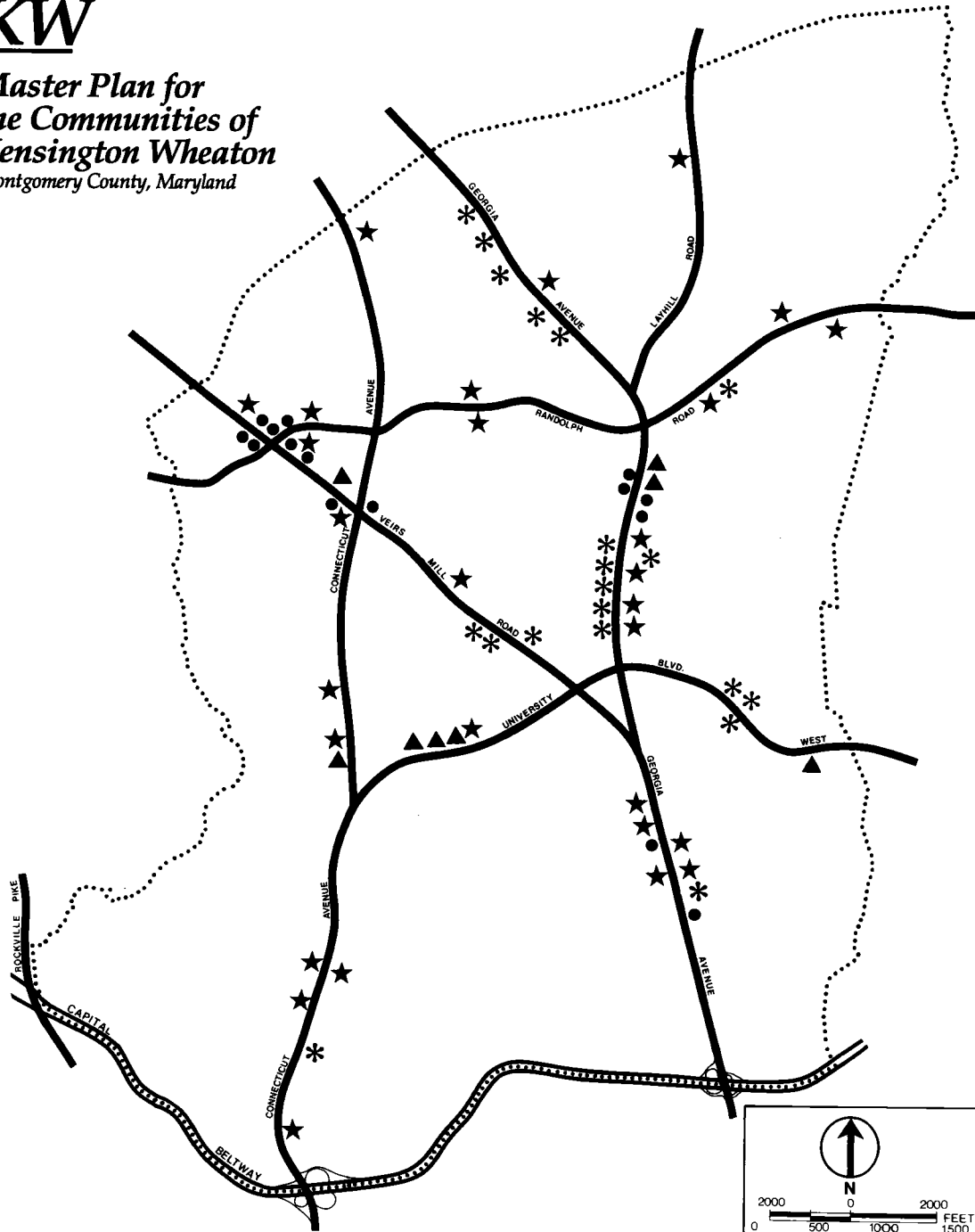
Major Highway Corridor Characteristics

The zoning along highways in the Kensington-Wheaton area is typically R-60 and R-90. The only major exception is Layhill Road, which is R-200 and R-90. Minimum front yard setbacks to the right-of-way in R-90 and R-60 zones are 25 and 30 feet. The minimum house-to-house separation is 16 feet.

Traffic on the major highways in the Kensington-Wheaton area has increased since the area was developed after World War II; so has car ownership in modest homes on small lots abutting the highways. Therefore, homes facing the major highways experience a situation very different than it was with the lesser traffic of 30 and 40 years ago. There is increased access conflict between single-family properties and the heavy traffic along the corridors. This aspect of the problem is typified by individual driveways entering directly onto the main lanes of traffic. As there is no longer any on-street parking and the roadbed is so close to the right-of-way line, some homeowners have widened their driveways or paved all or part of their front yards so that they can avoid backing into traffic. In addition, reduced setbacks and landscaping often preclude the possibility of buffering homes from traffic noise.

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Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



Non-Single-Family Uses Along Major Highways

(Outside Sector Plan Area)

- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- * HOME BASED BUSINESS OR
NON-RESIDENT MEDICAL/DENTAL
OFFICE
- ▲ MULTI-FAMILY
- COMMERCIAL OR OFFICE
- ★ INSTITUTIONAL / RELIGIOUS

Illustration 4-17

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At the same time that the growth in highway traffic changed the attractiveness of homes facing the highway, the growth in demand for conveniently located, inexpensive office space for small businesses and professionals has resulted in partial or complete use of homes along major highways for non-residential uses. Increased use of front yards for parking and maneuvering is often associated with these uses. Finally, unauthorized non-residential uses are not unknown.

Non-residential uses in single-family homes along major corridors, if the houses are not maintained properly, can detract from the overall residential image of the community to those passing on the highway. The image presented by a major highway through the single-family neighborhoods of the Kensington-Wheaton area is also affected by large buildings along it, such as multi-family housing, elderly housing, or schools, particularly if these buildings are not screened with trees or shrubs. Often, it is not only the use itself that needs screening, but also the parking. Many of these properties are now adequately landscaped and contain well screened parking lots due to development controls specified in the zoning ordinance. Large buildings along the corridors, if landscaped and screened properly, can also offer a substantial buffer from traffic for the neighborhoods that lie behind them.

Illustration 4-18 shows the distribution of the major or more easily identified non-residential uses along the major corridors in the Kensington-Wheaton area. In some cases, they are the result of a different zoning from the prevailing R-60 and R-90 categories. Other cases result from special exceptions or represent permitted uses in single-family zones, such as churches and publicly-owned and operated uses. This illustration does not show the extent of resident professional use, which is permitted but harder to trace. It is useful to compare Illustration 4-18, Non-Single-Family Uses Along Major Highways, with Illustration 4-19, which summarizes the existing landscape features along major highways. The comparison shows that Georgia Avenue north of Wheaton, and Geor-

gia Avenue south of Wheaton are both areas that combine scant landscaping along the highway with relatively high concentrations of non-residential uses. In these areas, there are no service roads, and there is no landscaping in the median.

Illustration 4-20 is a detailed map of the Georgia Avenue corridor, between the sector plan areas, which shows the locations of all zoning categories and residential and non-residential uses. A survey of owner occupancy versus renter occupancy rates, maintenance and landscaping levels, and price stability in the single-family residential parts of the Georgia Avenue corridor shows clearly that despite the problems cited above, the cases of property stability far outnumber the cases of instability. Even though there has been some conversion to non-residential use in single-family homes, the corridor is still viable as a residential district.

Objective

To preserve the identity and integrity of residential areas along major highway corridors, to soften the impact of major highways on adjacent homes, and to strengthen the distinction between commercial and residential areas.

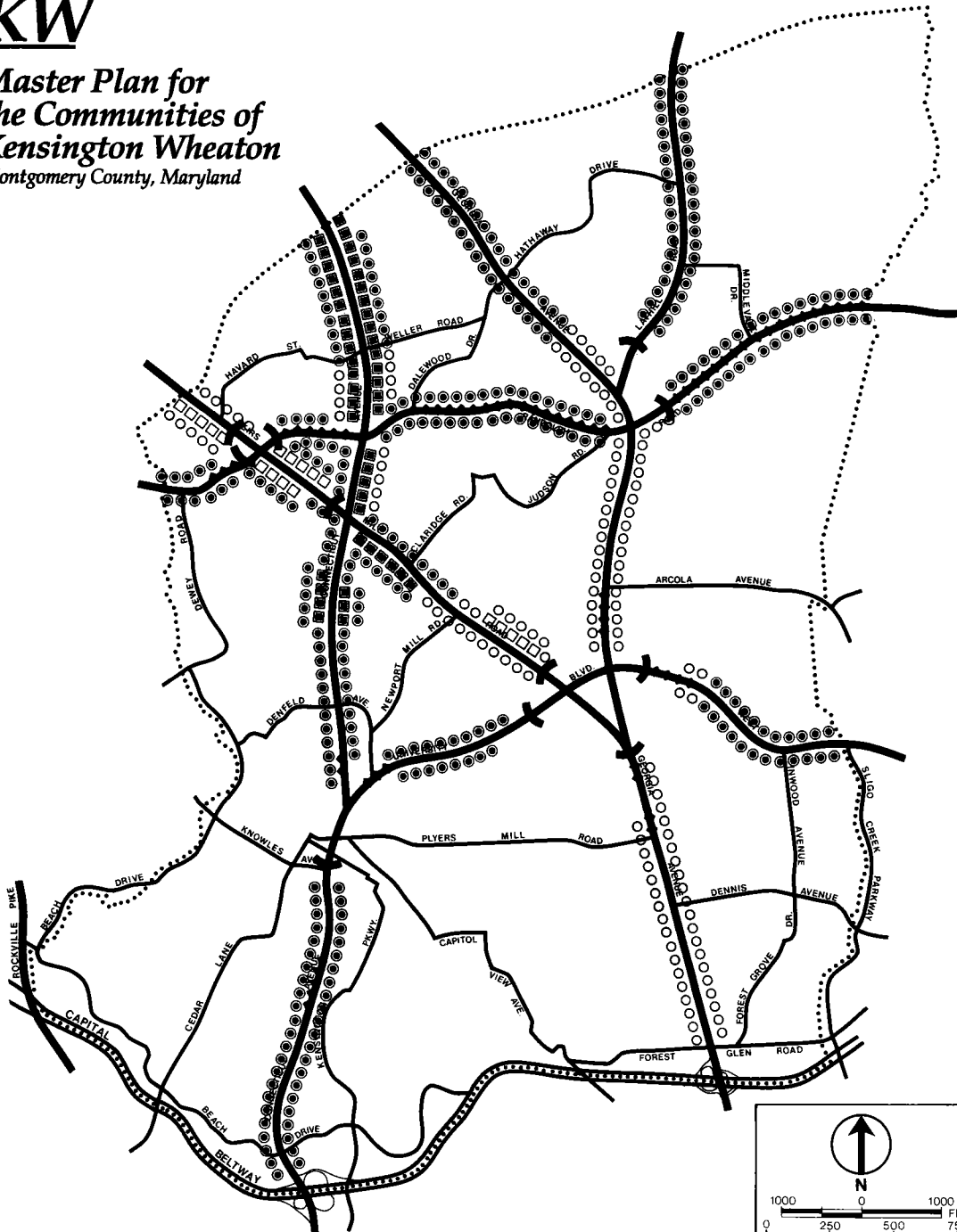
Policies

Confirm existing zoning of residential properties abutting major highways and the properties beyond them. The limited exceptions to this policy are described earlier in this chapter.

Establish "green corridors" guidelines as an implementation mechanism to ameliorate the impact of residential areas abutting major highways and to strengthen community stability by creating attractive highway corridors.

KW

Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington Wheaton Montgomery County, Maryland



Green Corridors: Visual Survey of Existing Conditions

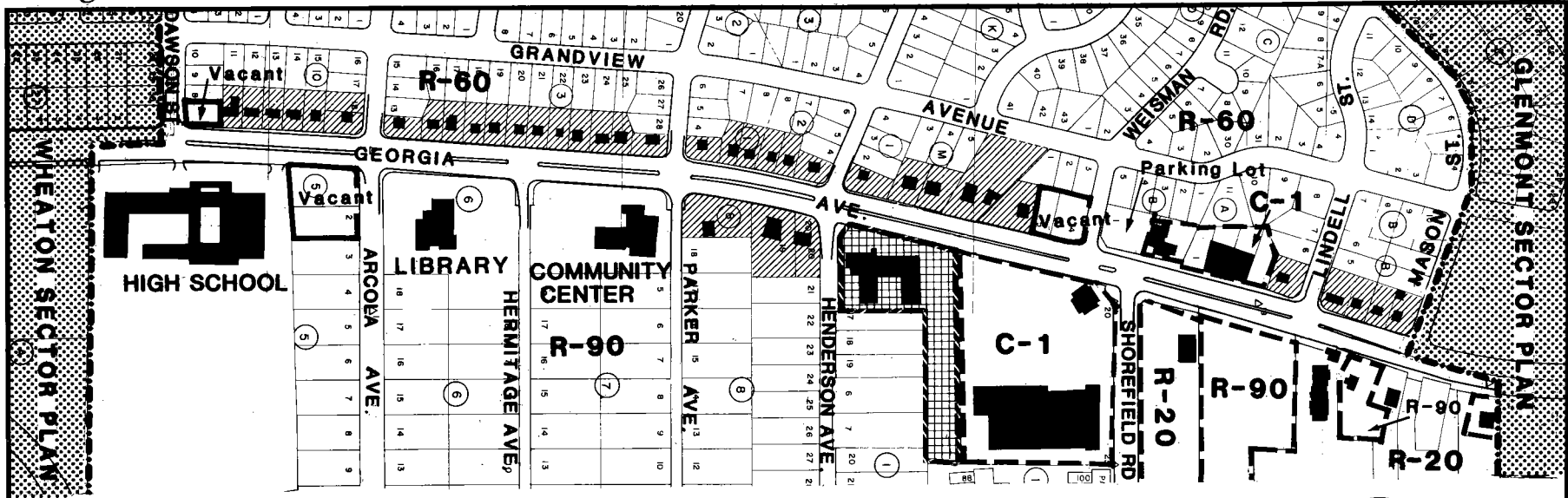
- PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
- ◆◆ MEDIAN WITH TREES
- MEDIAN WITH GRASS
- ■ ■ SERVICE ROAD MEDIAN WITH TREES
- □ □ SERVICE ROAD MEDIAN WITH GRASS
- ● ● HIGH DENSITY FOLIAGE ON ABUTTING PROPERTIES*
- ○ ○ MODERATE DENSITY FOLIAGE ON ABUTTING PROPERTIES*
- ⌋ EDGE BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS

*PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE CATEGORIES ARE NECESSARILY SUBJECTIVE.

Illustration 4-18

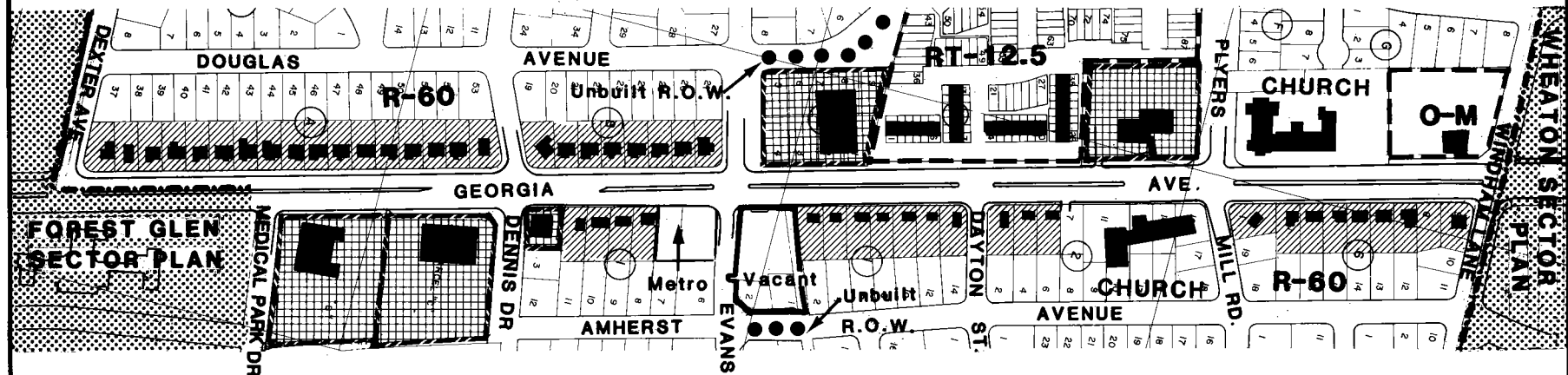
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Georgia Avenue Corridor Conditions





WHEATON TO GLENMONT SECTION

NOT TO SCALE



FOREST GLEN TO WHEATON SECTION

-  SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES AFFECTED BY CORRIDOR CONDITIONS
-  SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS IN SINGLE-FAMILY ZONES

Illustration


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Illustration 4-19

Provide continuous sidewalks throughout each corridor within the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan area to improve overall pedestrian circulation. A map showing sidewalk needs along major corridors and the accompanying discussions are located in Chapter 5, Transportation and Mobility Plan, Map 5-8.

With regard to special exceptions:

- Only four parcels in two critical areas are recommended for non-residential professional offices, as described earlier.
- Petitions for home occupations and non-resident medical practitioners should be reviewed with care to avoid undermining the residential fabric of the community, especially with regard to their cumulative effect.
- All special exceptions should adhere fully to the development guidelines for implementation of the "green corridors" policy.

Implementation

The Planning Board will file a sectional map amendment to implement the zoning recommendations of the Plan, reconfirming existing zoning except as noted earlier.

The Planning Department and Office of Planning Policies should review the zoning ordinance to assess the adequacy of landscaping, screening, parking, and access controls for resident professional uses or special exceptions in single-family homes abutting highways and to evaluate the criteria for special exceptions.

The County Department of Housing and Community Development should continue to conduct systematic inspections of property upkeep and maintenance in the "green corridors" and other selected areas, as well as in response to citizen complaints.

The County Department of Environmental Protection is encouraged to conduct routine zoning compliance inspections.

The Board of Appeals should require full adherence to the following guidelines for special exceptions in the "green corridors":

- Screening should be required for parking, even when less than six parking spaces are involved.
- Green space should be retained, particularly when it provides trees that screen buildings.
- Existing buildings should be screened with plant material.
- Any addition to existing buildings should be compatible with the existing residential architecture and adjoining neighborhoods. Visibility of buildings to residents of nearby communities should be taken into account. Any new construction or building that would indicate substantial expansion should be placed where it will add as little as possible to the visible size of the building, and should be landscaped to provide as much screening as possible.
- At least some of the plantings used to screen parking and buildings should conform to the choices of characteristic plantings made for each highway under the green corridors policy as noted later in this chapter.

The Plan recommends the following guidelines for consideration by the State Highway Administration, the County Department of Transportation, and PEPCO for the landscaping and maintenance of highway rights-of-way in the Kensington-Wheaton area.

- Trees which are dead, diseased, hazardous, or in any other condition contrary to the standards included in State and County regulations may require removal. Trees in a condition which conform to State and County regulations which nevertheless conflict with overhead utility lines should be sensitively pruned.
- Road widenings occasionally may require the removal of trees to provide for roadway safety and traffic visibility. Plans for road widenings should include efforts to replace displaced trees where sufficient space exists in the right-of-way and with the approval of the adjacent property owner.

- Best management practices, as described in the County Road Code, shall be used for all right-of-way planting. The best landscaping construction details will provide a better growing environment for trees.
- Plant species selected should be urban hardy and pollution tolerant, as specified in the County Road Code's list of approved trees and in State Highway Administration (SHA) policies. They should be high branching with moderate to smaller width trunks. Plant species and placement should provide safe visibility throughout the right-of-way.
- Street trees and selected flowering trees contained in the County Road Code's approved list should be planted in center medians, service road medians, and next to sidewalks, where feasible, given visibility and maintenance concerns.
- A landscaping plan, with characteristic plants for each highway, should be developed by the SHA or the County Department of Transportation, as resources permit.

The public rights-of-way are maintained and built by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and the Maryland State Highway Administration. They have developed guidelines and regulations which can affect planting designs within the right-of-way. These agencies must play a major role in the task force to review highway safety issues, utility easements, and maintenance. Roadway improvements by these agencies should always contain a landscaping plan.

Illustration 4-19 indicates whether central medians and service road medians have any tree plantings. It also indicates where there are service roads and where other landscaping features exist. Roughly speaking, the more symbols along a section of highway in Illustration 4-19, the better shape it is in terms of the goals of the "green corridors" policy, and in terms of its ability to absorb, without major impact, the frequent problems of abutting uses listed above. Service roads, even without trees on their medians, push

homes back far enough from the highway so that they are less susceptible to the highway's impact. They also ease the need to pave over lots for parking and turnaround space because residents can park and maneuver on the service road.

Appendix E illustrates conceptual cross-sections and plans of highways with appropriate plantings and the location of paved areas.

Design consideration for utility lines, signage, and retaining walls should include:

- Utility poles that are new or being relocated should be located to allow for optimum street tree or shrub plantings and to reduce visual clutter within the highway corridors.
- Where possible, large directional signs should be located to minimize being viewed from residential areas.
- Retaining walls, fences, or any other highly visible roadway-related construction should be designed or renovated to be as attractive as possible when viewed from the roadway. Often, the utility of a retaining wall overshadows any attempt to consider it an element that is viewed daily by residents. For example, retaining walls along Connecticut Avenue north of Kensington could be attractive if vines or shrubs were planted next to them.

Roadside and median landscaping and design activities should conform to State and County regulations and operating procedures. The State and County will assess the fiscal feasibility of funding roadside and median landscaping and design projects during annual budget reviews.

Commercial Revitalization

The only significant commercial development within the planning area, outside the sector plan areas, exists at the intersection and immediate vicinity of Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road. This small commercial area includes Colonial Plaza Shopping

Center at the northwest corner and Veirs Mill Village Shopping Center at the southwest corner. These uses are on property zoned C-1, Local Commercial. Some of the shopping centers' parking has remained in the R-60 zone and was formerly permitted as a special exception, which allows for periodic review of community impact. Other parking is in the R-60 zone as a continuing non-conforming use. This prevents significant improvement to the parking unless the zoning is changed.

Other commercial and non-residential uses are located in the other quadrants, such as a fast food restaurant, several free-standing banks, gas stations, a church, and a nursing home. The southeast corner and areas surrounding the commercial and office developments remain residential.

While the commercial development located here provides some desirable community shopping and service outlets, storefront vacancies deprive the community of additional retail and service outlets. Windows are boarded to prevent vandalism, detracting from the vitality of the center and the community. Underutilized parking areas have become dumping areas for stripped and abandoned vehicles.

The shopping centers are inefficient in their design, both in terms of access and internal circulation. Shopping center driveways do not integrate well into traffic patterns. Parking areas and internal pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns are defined poorly. Sidewalks are discontinuous and blocked by telephone poles. Bus stops have inadequately defined paved waiting areas.

Inefficiencies created by the conflict between residential, commercial, and commuter traffic have resulted in the incorporation of adjoining residential streets in the intersection circulation pattern. The shopping centers lack proper buffering from adjoining residential property. Transition between commercial and residential areas

generally is abrupt. Service and loading dock areas lack proper screening from confronting residences.

Objective

To re-establish vibrant and attractive commercial centers at the intersection of Veirs Mill and Randolph Roads in a manner compatible with adjacent residential communities.

Policies

Encourage the establishment of a public-private partnership with community support to facilitate revitalization efforts at the Colonial Plaza and Veirs Mill Shopping Centers and adjacent commercial properties.

Create a mix of commercial operations which enhances the economic viability of the area and which provides goods and services desired by residents of nearby neighborhoods.

Encourage upgrading of the physical appearance of the shopping centers through reopening of closed stores, facade and signage improvements, better building and property maintenance, landscaping, and other actions as determined by a public-private feasibility study.

Encourage improvement of shopping center vehicular and pedestrian circulation, including private parking areas, sidewalk linkages, and other measures as determined by a public-private feasibility study.

Provide effective buffering between commercial activities and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The provision of a park-and-ride lot here, constructed under the parking facility standards in the zoning ordinance, has the potential to improve the appearance of the site and its present condition.

Implementation

The County's Department of Housing and Community Development should conduct feasibility studies and planning for revitalization of the two shopping centers. With the participation of the private sector and representatives of nearby communities, this effort will provide for further planning and initial design for parking areas, lighting, signage, facade improvements, and streetscaping. The study will also consider the feasibility of utility relocation, consolidation, and/or undergrounding.

Appendix D contains an Urban Design Study which includes recommendations for a revitalization effort.

With the assistance of the Planning Board (through the mandatory referral process) and representatives of the adjoining neighborhoods, the County Departments of Transportation and Housing and Community Development should review the plans for the park-and-ride lot's lighting, landscaping, and hours of operation to assure compatibility with adjoining neighborhoods.