

# Appendix 5

## Community Outreach, 2008 and 2010 meeting minutes



### Green Space Guidelines for the Silver Spring Central Business District

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Site “Progress Place” and Ripley Site

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May 9, 2008, 11 am, Teleconference between John Marcolin  
And Mel Tull, of Silver Spring Urban District

## Meeting Minutes

➔ Mel Tull expressed various concerns:

### 1. Process:

- a. Mel expressed the opinion that the Green Open Space Plan would result in the opening up of the Sector Plan which would result in property owners being required to designate their property as green space, driving down the value of their investment.
- b. The lag time involved in developing the Green Open Space Plan would slow down development in the recommended areas.

### 2. Content

- a. Mel was concerned that Progress Place would be displaced at that there was no other good site in the CBD.
- b. Progress Place would have to be included in the program. But be incorporated in such a way that the green space would not become a loitering place for the homeless that would drive away patrons.
- c. Mel stated that the Silver Spring Urban District sees Downtown Silver Spring as one leg of a three pronged approach to retail in Silver Spring, the area around Studio Plaza and Ripley District being the other two. They believe that Fenton Village needs additional height in order to make feasible the development needed. In Ripley they see the frontage along Georgia Avenue between Bonifant St. and the fire station as potential for new retail development (They question the scheme we show that fronts a large green space on a section of Georgia Ave). The retail should include national “Big Box” stores mixed with smaller local or regional retailers. The big box would provide an anchor and regional draw that would help the local retail stores. Big Box retail, such as *Crate and Barrel*, *Bed Bath and Beyond*, was mentioned.

### 3. Next Steps

- a. Expressed concern that the time required to get to a final plan would be long.
- b. Getting owner and community consensus would be difficult.

➔ MNCPPC Staff responded to these concerns:

### 1. Process

- a. Staff was tasked with identifying potential site for large green open space in the CBD. At this time, staff is not encouraging the opening up of the Sector Plan. The draft is simply a

study at this time that staff is presenting to the community, including property owners, to which many of which are responding positively.

- b. Regarding the concern about driving down property values, staff responded that at least two owners that were contacted are interested in discussing the favorable aspects of the draft plan for their properties in terms of a long term vision that would improve the value of their properties.
- c. Regarding increasing lag time for the development process in recommended areas, the plan at this point is simply a draft with no regulatory power over any project that may be submitted for the SS CBD.

## 2. Content

- a. Staff responded that progress place could stay on site or be re-located; it was too early to say what the specific plans would be.
- b. Staff agreed that Progress Place could be incorporated in the design in such a way in a new joint-venture development so that it would not hinder the successful use of a green space or associated retail uses. However, that was far out into the future and that a larger hurdle was the formation of team of land-owners that could work together for the success of a joint venture project.
- c. Staff agreed that retail is need in Fenton village, but did not agree that it required ZTA amendments for additional height. Staff agreed with Mel regarding retail use in Ripley, but stated that is really the purview of the developer(s). The graphic image shown was not a proposal, but meant to act as a vision for what a green space in the Ripley District could look like. It is not intended to rule out other potential scenarios.

## 3. Next Steps

- a. Staff reiterated that process would follow typical path of community outreach and that the new project submittals for recommended areas would not be affected, but it would be encourage by staff that applicant take into consideration the Green Open Space Plan's recommendations.
- b. Staff stated that already two owner in two different areas have expressed positive feedback.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Site “Montgomery County Parking Lot 3”

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May 5, 2008, 11 am, MNCPPC Atrium conference room

In attendance: Bob Hillerson (Property Owner), Bob Dalrymple (Attorney),  
Robert Kronenberg, John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira, Elza Hisel-McCoy

## Meeting Minutes

➔ The Property Owner expressed various concerns:

### 1. Process

Lack of awareness about the Green Space Plan until it was discussed with the Planning Board on April 24, 2008. Staff should have brought this study to the Property Owner’s attention since the study:

- a) identifies his property as a priority site for a potential large green space,
- b) makes specific recommendations illustrated through 3-D graphics,
- c) The Owner has already been working on a development scheme for the site (“Studio Plaza”), which differs from the “potential layout” presented in the study.

### 2. Content

- a) Images – Future development of the site will be expected to follow the “potential layout” images presented in the study. The community will assume this is what will get built and will most likely demand it.
- b) Density – Because the potential layout does not max out density on site, the scheme would never be financially viable. The proposal for Studio Plaza (as stated by the Property Owner) would exceed the standard 60-90 feet as prescribed by the Fenton Village Overlay Zone. The proposal is assuming a greater height of 143 feet, and counting on a ZTA, which was not contemplated in the conceptual images produced by Staff. Staff did not have the opportunity of reviewing a plan by the applicant for his vision of the site.
- c) Green Space – as shown, the green space is too large, further preventing the scheme from maxing out on the needed density to make it financially viable.
- d) Parking – the recommendation to have underground parking dramatically increases cost for the project since underneath the site is all bedrock.

### 3. Next Steps

How will this study affect the proposal for Studio Plaza in terms of community outreach and timeline?  
Will it delay the approval process for Studio Plaza?

➔ MNCPPC Staff responded to these concerns:

### 1. Process

Staff was tasked with this study by the Chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Board. This draft study was produced internally without any public outreach up to this stage. On April 24, 2008, Staff received approval from the Planning Board to circulate the draft study for public review and comment.

Staff now will initiate the process of public outreach, in which Staff will meet with as many Property Owners and Civic Groups and Associations as possible to discuss the plan.

## 2. Content

The images presented are conceptual only. They illustrate a visionary concept for the sites and they help to visualize potential layouts. They will be further developed during the next phase of this study. The concerns associated with density and the green space are linked to the images and the misconception that these images establish the final layout.

## 3. Next Steps

This study should not delay the “Studio Plaza” project, rather it should foster collaboration between MNCPPC staff and potential developers to achieve a layout that meets the needs of the community, the recommendations of the Green Space Plan and the developer’s goals. Studio Plaza should proceed its normal course to submission and during the review process, Staff might make suggestions consistent with the Green Space Plan recommendations.

Lastly, Staff recommended that the Property Owner prepare a letter of response to the Draft Plan with his concerns.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Site “Lots South of Ripley District”

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**May 14, 2008, 1:30 pm, MNCPPC Atrium conference room  
In attendance: Charles K. Nulsen III and Jonathan Meyers  
with Washington Property Company (Property Owner), &  
MNCPPC staff – Robert Kronenberg, John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira**

## Meeting Minutes

The meeting started with a brief overview of the process and recommendations on the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD. Staff explained that the site identified as “Lots South of Ripley District” was approved by the Board to be discussed as a priority site for a potential large green space. Staff has now initiated the process of public outreach, in which Staff will meet with as many Property Owners and Civic Groups and Associations as possible to discuss the Draft Plan.

➔ The Property Owner offered several comments and suggestions:

### 1. General

- a) The potential layout for “Lots South of Ripley District” is perceived as positive for this area. It will not negatively impact the 1050 Ripley Street project, which will be presented to the Planning Board in the next few weeks. The green space envisioned is understood to be an asset for the surrounding properties.
- b) Property Owner is willing to compromise to achieve a greater good. However, in order to give in something they need something in exchange. It was clearly stated that in order to provide the type of green space that the county envisions, the county needs to provide an incentive (density/height) for the proposed projects.

### 2. Content

- a) The potential layout resembles the concept presented in the old master plan for this area. Additional coordination might be useful.
- b) The potential layout needs coordination with the Road Plan for the Ripley District.
- c) The dimensions of the block south of the green space needs to be adjusted, it seems too large.
- d) A green space on Georgia Avenue will liven up the street and draw people in.
- e) Progress Place needs to be addressed urgently.
- f) Parking garage on the north side of the green space is problematic because it acts as a barrier between the Core area and South Silver Spring. Besides, it is underused and all new developments will provide parking anyways. Ideally, it should be demolished in order to create a visual connection between the green space and the Core area, and to provide activating uses fronting onto Georgia Avenue.

➔ MNCPPC Staff responded to these comments:

- Staff will follow-up with the Road Plan for the Ripley District

- Staff will follow-up with the old master plan for this area and compare the recommendations
- Staff will revise the drawings to show accurate block dimensions
- Staff will outreach to the other property owners

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach

## Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee

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**May 15, 2008, 3:30 pm, Discovery Communications Headquarters Building conference room**  
**In attendance: 3 members, 20 people in audience including Gary Stith and Mell Tull**  
**John Marcolin (JM), Sandra Pereira (SP)**

## Meeting Minutes

Staff was invited to attend the monthly meeting of the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee and present the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD. Because of a mis-coordination, the agenda for the meeting failed to include the Staff's presentation. Nonetheless Staff still presented, but the time allocated for discussion and comments was very reduced. Gary Stith suggested that Staff present again to the Committee at a later time when more officers are present. Below is a summarized account of the questions and comments that followed the presentation.

1. At the Giant/ Blairs parking lot site, where is parking accommodated? Your images do not show any parking and yet this parking lot is currently heavily used.  
JM: In our recommendations, the parking is not visible because it is intended to be underground below the green area, or in structured parking facilities.
2. In whose land is the green space at the Ripley District site being proposed?  
The land belongs to different owners, which requires some coordination efforts.
3. The ranking for the Lee and Cohen Properties should have a score of 1 for the category of "ease of implementation."  
JM: Staff will consider your suggestion.
4. How long will it take to implement the Green Space Plan and its recommendations? How long will it be until these drawings are built?  
SP: These drawings are conceptual only. They help to visualize what could happen at each of the priority sites, but not what will necessarily happen. This plan sets long-term recommendations, which will get implemented as the sites come in for redevelopment. This approach has no specific timeframe, but rather it is market driven.



# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Commercial & Economic Development Committee Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board

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May 21, 2008, 7:30 pm, Silver Spring Regional Center Conference Room  
In attendance: see sign-up sheet, MNCPPC staff - John Marcolin (JM), Sandra Pereira (SP)

## Discussion questions

Staff was invited to present the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD at the Commercial & Economic Development Committee Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board meeting. Below is a summarized account of the questions and comments that came up during the presentation.

1. On the existing conditions map, the category for public parkland should not be all represented as green space since the site near the metro (No. 50 on Fig. 1) and the one at the intersection of Philadelphia Ave and Georgia Ave (No. 51 on Fig. 1) are mostly hardscaped. Also, the site at the intersection of Georgia Ave and Colesville Rd (No. 24a on Fig. 1) should be reconsidered as hardscape rather than green space.  
JM & SP: Staff will take your comments into consideration when finalizing the maps.
2. On the ranking chart, did you weigh the various categories differently? For instance, it appears that the ease of implementation category should be weighted more heavily than some of the others.  
SP: All the categories were given the same weight in our analysis.
3. The site in Fenton Village cannot accommodate all the potential development shown on the illustrations. It will generate too much traffic.  
JM: All the envisioned urban development creates places that are pedestrian oriented and well served by public transit. Pedestrian activity and access is encouraged, while vehicular access is discouraged.
4. Serious concerns associated with safety and implementation of underground parking exist. The community feels less safe in underground parking facilities than surface parking. The existing bedrock underneath the CBD makes it physically difficult and financially constraining to build underground parking.  
JM & SP: The redevelopment of existing surface parking facilities has been identified as an opportunity to better use urban land for the creation of amenity areas and public open space in an urban setting. Staff has suggested underground parking facilities as the most efficient way of locating parking in the urban environment. However, above ground structured parking facilities wrapped with activating uses are also acceptable and fulfill similar objectives of freeing up valuable urban land. Lighting, surveillance cameras, and the physical layout of underground parking structures are key for their safety.
5. The principle of green spaces enclosed by four walls appears to conflict with current notions of safety, visibility and openness of the public spaces. Please explain.

JM & SP: From an urban design sense, the green spaces shown are enclosed by four walls. They have defined edges and boundaries, which give structure and a sense of enclosure. However, from a practical standpoint, these walls are filled with retail uses at street level and office/residential on the stories above, not necessarily blank walls. This translates into key synergies between the street level retail and the green space; as well as the residential/ office above and the green space. Retail provides the activity needed to activate the green spaces, and the green spaces provide amenity areas for retail patrons. Residential/office above provides “eyes on the space” which is a key principle of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

6. Could green roofs count as green space in this study?

JM: This study focuses on public green space. Even though green roofs achieve numerous environmental benefits similar to the green spaces in this study, they are usually for private use and they are not accessible for the general public.

7. How can the artificial turf site in the core area of the CBD be used as a prototype for this study if it is not truly green?

JM: The artificial turf site has been used as a prototype in terms of size, surrounding uses, and activities accommodated. It is hoped that the recommended green spaces will achieve greater environmental benefits.

8. The 2 priority sites in South Silver Spring are in the same area of the CBD and somewhat close. Would they compete?

JM: Although they are both located in the South Silver Spring area of the CBD, they will not compete in terms of users because they will serve different groups. The site between Kennett Street and East West Highway (No. 8 on Fig.2) will serve a predominantly residential population. Whereas the Parking Lot at the Giant Food Store and the Blairs will serve a business and retail clientele, in addition to a residential population, due to its location next to the metro and core area of the CBD.

9. The selection of potential sites for green spaces seems a bit arbitrary. It looks good on the plan. However, there should be more significance drawn into the selection process perhaps in terms of historical resources. This area has a lot of history that perhaps could be integrated in some of your recommendations.

SP: Staff would like to hear more about this suggestion. Are there specific sites that should be selected because of historical significance instead of the ones prioritized by Staff?

10. This study needs more work on the implementation strategies. The Amenity Fund that will allow much of these recommendations to be implemented is not mandatory and Applicants currently don't have much incentive to participate. Incentives like additional building height and/or density are needed.

JM: Staff is confident that the Amenity Fund will appeal to small-sized lots that want to use the optional method of development, but don't have the land area to accommodate the 20 percent requirement of onsite public use space.

11. This study should give more recognition to parks outside and close to the CBD since these provide recreational and amenity space for CBD residents too (e.g. Sligo Creek and Rock Creek). There are a number of parks/ green spaces outside or immediately adjacent to the CBD (Fairview Park and Woodside Park) that might fulfill the need for green space in the CBD area.

SP: The study takes some of these parks into consideration in the ranking category of “proximity to existing parks”. Potential sites are less desirable if there are existing parks within close proximity. Also, the regional parks close to the CBD fulfill different uses and activities than the urban parks envisioned for the CBD.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach

## Bill Gries, M-NCPPC Park Development

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June 2, 2008, 11 am, Environmental Planning Conference Room

In attendance: Bill Gries (BG), John Marcolin (JM), Sandra Pereira (SP), Glenn Kreger (GK)

## Meeting Minutes

Staff met with Bill Gries to discuss implementation challenges and opportunities of the draft study from a park development and land acquisition perspective. Below is a summarized account of the discussion.

1. Sites that the county is currently pursuing for acquisition in the Silver Spring CBD:
  - a) Parcels surrounding Fenton Street Urban Park. The goal is to form a larger park by assembling surrounding parcels and their respective ROW. For 8 years, the County has been trying to buy the subject parcels, which have been on the market for sale at various times. The County made the first offer at \$1.2 million based on the value of a land assessment. This offer was rejected on the grounds that it was not sufficient, but yet no alternative land assessment was presented to justify a counter-offer. The County made a second offer this year for \$1.5 million, which was also rejected in favor of a private sector offer. No numbers have been disclosed yet on that offer.
  - b) Silver Spring Library site. Construction of the new library within the CBD is programmed in the CIP. The proposed location is at the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Bonifant Street and Fenton Street. The proposed layout to include potential alignment/ easement for the purple line.
2. Missed opportunities for parkland in the Silver Spring CBD:
  - a) Silver Place. The redevelopment of the MRO poses an incredible opportunity to have a large park in the CBD. The Agency should not have engaged in a public-private partnership to provide retail and housing in addition to the office space on-site. It makes it very complicated and disadvantageous. It should rather have devoted the additional land not used for office to parkland. Staff argued that putting a big park at Silver Place is unnecessary due to the proximity of Woodside and Fairview Parks
3. Implementation strategies for priority sites that might involve public land acquisition:

Site: Land between Kennett Street and East-West Highway.

  - a) Approximate land value assessment: \$40 x 3 FAR (allowable density by Code) x 1.6 acres (lot size)
  - b) Current owners: car body shop & Spanish Church. Churches are usually difficult to move unless it is already on their agenda for reasons such as the need to expand, need for additional parking, etc. Important to contact the Church.
  - c) Funding sources:
    - ALARF, any public project that is on an approved Master Plan. Therefore, the priority sites on the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD would not qualify. This might be a reason to consider amending the Sector Plan.

- Legacy Open Space, any site can be nominated for Legacy Open Space. If accepted, it would then qualify for the funds available. Contact Brenda Sandberg for details.
- 'local park' vs. 'destination park', currently no significant funds available.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach The Giant/ Blairs Parking Lot Site

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June 2, 2008, 2 pm, Atrium Conference Room

In attendance: Arnold Kohn (The Tower Companies), Christian Lessard, AIA, Robby Brewer, Esq.,  
MNCPPC staff - John Marcolin (JM), Sandra Pereira (SP), Rose Krasnow (RK), Glenn Kreger (GK)

## Meeting Minutes

Staff met with a team of representatives (“Team”) of The Giant/ Blairs parking lot site to explore more of the thought process behind the recommendation for the Blairs, the type of parks that might be developed there, possible redevelopment design issues, and the timetable/next steps in the process. Below is a summarized account of the discussion.

1. Concerns expressed by the Team:
  - a) Operational (commercial, residential, parking)
    - a. How to keep Giant operational during any redevelopment/ construction, for instance while building additional height?
    - b. The lease with Giant was recently renewed for another 20 years, which prevents any modifications (redevelopment) during this period without the agreement of the tenant.
    - c. How will parking be accommodated during construction? Residents and retail tenants (Giant) will oppose to any construction/redevelopment if parking is compromised.
    - d. The anchor store (Giant ) has very specific requirements for parking location, accessibility, and layout. The recommendation to have underground or structured parking might not meet their requirements/needs.
    - e. Where will people live during construction?
  - b) Investment
    - a. Giant has done major renovations as part of the lease renewal.
    - b. The Blairs is scheduled to have major upgrades (kitchens, common areas, etc), an approximate total of 7 million dollars.
    - c. Bedrock makes it very difficult and perhaps financially infeasible to have underground parking.
  - c) Affordability of residential units, mixed-income community
    - a. The Blairs is unique in that it offers a range of unit types that include some very affordable. Redevelopment often jeopardizes the affordability of the development because the financial investment needs to be recovered.
  - d) Implementation, which route will MNCPPC pursue?
    - a. Master Plan Amendment (long-term)
    - b. Incentives (height, density, parking garage)
    - c. Acquisition by the County
2. Staff responded to some of these concerns:
  - a) Justification for choice of the Blairs

The selection process of the priority sites involved identifying opportunities for sites that could be potentially redeveloped to accommodate a large green space. Surface parking facilities, like the Giant parking lot was one of the opportunities identified. Then, a series of criteria was developed to help prioritize the recommended sites. The Giant/Blairs scored high on the criteria used which included number of residential units within 800 feet, no existing parks within 800 feet, existing and potential connections, ease of implementation. In addition, the location of this site - within close proximity of the metro - makes it very unique.

b) Types of parks

An urban park is envisioned that will accommodate a variety of informal uses and serve as a destination and gathering place while enhancing the pedestrian experience in the heart of the CBD. This green space is intended to serve office workers and commuters in addition to the surrounding residential population. This green space will have strong synergies with the Silver Spring metro station and function as a vibrant gateway to the CBD. The layouts presented in the Study are conceptual only and not necessarily what has to happen.

c) Redevelopment design elements

The design elements that are important to consider are the massing, density, and building enclosure of the green space, pedestrian and vehicular circulation within the site and allowing for as much flexibility within the space as possible. The next steps in the study will further develop the design elements for each space.

d) Implementation

Staff would like to avoid a Master Plan Amendment since this should be done in a systematic way and would encompass a series of elements. The process tends to be very lengthy. Staff cannot provide any additional incentives, such as, height or density. The County does not intend to acquire the Giant/ Blairs site. Staff understands that this recommendation will only happen if there are sufficient economic incentives for the Tower Companies to undertake an Optional Method project. There is a lot of unused FAR in this site under the current zoning; however, the cost of underground parking and the extension of the Giant's lease are significant obstacles. The site still has significant merit; however, its feasibility is uncertain at this time.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach

## Bill Mooney, former Director of Park Development

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June 24, 2008, 4:30 pm, Atrium Conference Room

In attendance: Bill Mooney, John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira, Rose Krasnow, Glenn Kreger

## Meeting Minutes

Staff met with Bill Mooney to follow-up on his comments presented at the roundtable discussion with the Planning Board on April 24, 2008. His comments focused on the economic benefits of parks and open spaces in urban areas and the process for implementing Staff's recommendations. Below is a summarized account of the discussion.

1. Economic benefits of open spaces can be linked to:
  - a) Property values, proximity to open spaces increases property values, which increases tax base.
    - a. Central Park, NYC
    - b. Real estate economists
  - b) Rent prices, proximity and views to open spaces increases rent prices.
    - a. Greyhound bus station, NYC, and Verizon Center
  - c) Vacancy rates
    - a. Perhaps there are less house vacancies near open spaces.
  - d) Foot traffic
    - a. Open spaces encourage foot traffic, people attract more people, which is critical for businesses success.
    - b. Open spaces have the potential to be an attraction, economic generators – design is key to make them successful.
    - c. Blank walls (defined as approximately 300 feet of linear blank facades) are detrimental for retail. In downtown Silver Spring, movie theaters and loading docks were removed from street level in order to avoid the “blank wall effect”.
    - d. Bryant Park, NYC
2. Process:
  - a) **Staff** needs to define the location of green spaces within the sites, and then let people know. Otherwise, developers will leave the left over space as the green space. It makes a big difference where the green space is located. For instance, in the Ripley District site, if the green space opens up onto Georgia Ave it becomes an amenity for Silver Spring, if it is in the middle of the block enclosed by buildings it becomes an amenity for the surrounding buildings, if it is in the back of the site by the railroad tracks it is not too accessible and it becomes an amenity only for trail users.
  - b) The **market** sometimes needs to catch up with the strategic ideas of planners. Downtown Silver Spring had long been envisioned by planners, but the market wasn't ready. It needed to catch up. These are transition times, from a suburban to urban mentality. It takes time. The Giant site with its extensive surface parking lot is a suburban model located in an urban environment. It's time to bridge this disconnect. Other Giant stores have developed more innovative models with



underground parking that respond better to urban conditions. The Giant/Blairs site in Silver Spring should explore underground parking that opens up to the west by taking advantage of the elevation drop, and a green space at street grade that can be accessed from the east side.

- c) The **community** needs to have the right expectations. It is important to have an understanding that in order to get something you need to give in something. In the Silver Spring downtown, the community got bigger development than they hoped for.
- d) Developers need to have **incentives** to provide these large green spaces. The public sector can use as leverage the zoning, density, and height. Staff answered that the Optional Method of Development provides enough incentives and in exchange it already requires 20 percent onsite PUS. The study provides recommendations on the layout and location of this PUS, and especially that it should be green and all consolidated into one large area rather than scattered into small areas.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach

## Pam Messenger, General Manager, Friends of Post Office Square, Inc.

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July 1, 2008, 3:00 pm, Conference Call  
In attendance: John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira

## Meeting Minutes

Telephone Conference with Pam Messenger to glean important information on how the green space at Post Office Park in downtown Boston has revitalized financial district.

1. Pam has been through Silver Spring on many of her trips through Washington, DC and understands that Downtown Silver Spring was once neglected, but is now becoming a revitalized urban core. Staff explained the goals of the Draft Green Space Plan for Silver Spring and understood staff's concern that the number of sites available for a large green space is dwindling. Pam stated:

"You can't go back after the downtown is revitalized"... and take the land for a green space. She couldn't understand why anyone would be against a green space in the CBD.

2. How the park is used:
  - a. The Park is like a beach at noon; people getting their dose of sun and vitamin K.
  - b. It provides cool shade from the sun in the hot summer months.
  - c. People surge into the park at Lunch time. People will buy lunch elsewhere and eat it at the park.
  - d. Moms with strollers and children frequent the park. This is interesting because there are no residences within 4 to 5 blocks.
3. Economic Benefits:
  - a. A view onto a green is prime office space: "Its' like a view onto Central Park".
  - b. If people are drawn to astro-turf (like the civic center plaza in Silver Spring), why not to a fountain, concert, trees, cafés?
  - c. Make sure users can "Get something" such as a coffee, ice cream, pubs, food vendors and other outdoor eating venues.
  - d. Post Office Park is not near residential – no apartment buildings fronting the park; the closest residential is 4 to 5 city blocks away.
  - e. Today there is a lot of retail. There was very little in 1992 before the park opened.
  - f. Though the economy of Boston has improved generally since the park opened, much of the overall improvement in surrounding and adjacent property values can be attributed to the park.
4. Description:
  - a. Site area : 1.7 acres
  - b. There is constant grounds maintenance
  - c. The park is everyone's living room
  - d. Underground parking garage with 1,400-car spaces, classical music, painted ceilings – the "Taj Mahal of parking garages"

5. Financial Structure:
  - a. A land redevelopment corporation, a not for profit corporation, called *The Friends of Post Office Square Redevelopment Corporation*, operates Post Office Square.
    - Based on legislation enacted by the State of Massachusetts, called the Urban Renewal Statute.
    - Composed of surrounding business owners, such as banks, as well as outside shareholders.
    - Gives control of the park to the Land Redevelopment Corporation for 40 years (18 years left) after which the land reverts to the city of Boston.
  - b. The corporation generates \$8.6 million per year in profits, of which:
    - Some is used to pay for the \$76 million loan of the development of the park-and-parking-lot
    - \$2.9 million are annual operational costs
    - \$1 million is for the local tax bill
    - Some extra funds are contributed to a maintenance fund for neighborhood parks in Boston
6. Pam suggests we study Bryant Park in New York City as well as Centennial Park in Atlanta, Georgia.
7. For more details (and history) see Post Office Square websites: [www.normanbleventhalpark.org](http://www.normanbleventhalpark.org) & [www.posquare.com](http://www.posquare.com)

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce

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**July 3, 2008, 9:30 am, Chamber of Commerce, 8601 Georgia Avenue  
M-NCPPC in attendance: John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira, Glenn Kreger**

## Meeting Minutes

Staff was invited to present the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD at the Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting. Below is a summarized account of the questions and concerns that came up during the presentation.

### 1. Economic feasibility

- a) Underground parking is a financial challenge mainly due to the existing shallow bedrock in the CBD. Staff responded that the redevelopment of existing surface parking facilities has been identified as an opportunity to better use urban land for the creation of amenity areas and public open space. Staff has suggested underground parking facilities as the most efficient way of locating parking in the urban environment. However, above ground structured parking facilities wrapped with activating uses are also acceptable and fulfill similar objectives of freeing up valuable urban land.
- b) How many of the examples shown with underground structures (e.g. Post Office Square, Bryant Park) have dealt with existing bedrock? How much is it to park in the Post Office Square parking garage? Their rates, which provide revenue for the park and more, are unthinkable in Silver Spring.
- c) Are green spaces economically feasible? The Rockville Town Center does not work from an economics perspective.

### 2. Economic impacts

- a) Do green spaces truly support and benefit retail? Staff answered that green spaces are an integral part of the urban environment together with residential, office, and retail. They will draw people and function as an economic engine for the CBD if properly designed and maintained. Green spaces and retail are known to have great synergies. People drawn to green spaces will patronize surrounding retail, and people drawn to that retail will enjoy the green space as an amenity.
- b) None of the examples showing property value vs. proximity to parkland in Montgomery County (e.g. King Farm and Kentlands) represent a true urban environment like the SS CBD. It is necessary to analyze the economic impacts of green spaces in an urban context, such as, Jesup Blair Park. What are the economic benefits of Jesup Blair Park? If Jesup Blair Park is not a good example, then what are the reasons? It should be made a first priority to have it as a good example. Otherwise, how can the recommendations for additional green space in the CBD have any merit? Staff answered that the location of Jesup Blair Park at the southern tip of the CBD does not make it easily accessible to everyone in the CBD. In addition, access is also limited due to the railroad tracks to the east and Georgia Ave to the west, which function as barriers. Lastly, the surrounding uses, especially industrial, do not contribute to the activation of the park.

- c) From a regional standpoint, would these spaces (or even the CBD) compete with other similar spaces like the Rockville Town Center to the point that it is detrimental for the region? Staff responded that in order to create vibrant, successful and sustainable urban areas it is necessary to have a mix of uses (office, residential, retail) and an open space network that complements those uses. All of these elements are part of the package. The goal is to create pedestrian friendly places that encourage people to get out of their cars, which directly relate to broader issues of rising gas prices and climate change. Even though these urban areas are still limited in number, this is the new trend in urban planning.
3. Maintenance
- a) Who is going to maintain these green spaces? Why should the private sector be burdened with maintenance? Staff responded that it depends on who develops the green space. If it is privately developed, then it should be privately maintained. However, if it is developed by the public sector only, then it should be maintained by the public sector. Especially in mixed-use developments, the private sector will have a vested interest in maintaining these spaces to ensure that they contribute to rather than detract from the success of the surrounding development. In addition, with ever decreasing funds, the public sector will have less ability to maintain public spaces.
  - b) If the Amenity Fund will be used to purchase portion of these sites, then who will maintain them?
4. Density
- a) Surrounding density is critical for the success of urban green spaces. However, in the CBD we don't have the densities needed to generate the critical mass needed for these spaces. The examples shown (e.g. Post Office Square, Bryant Park, etc.) have much higher surrounding densities, which account for their success. Staff answered that this study makes strategic recommendations for the future, long-term success of the CBD. At present, the CBD is not developed to the full allowable densities, thus it presents an opportunity to identify strategic locations for future large green spaces.
  - b) How much public green space do we need to support Silver Spring's anticipated population of residents and workers? What is the ideal population/green space ratio? What are the ratios for the examples shown? Staff will follow-up, however it is difficult to quantify population numbers for urban green spaces since these spaces draw people from a wider region than the immediate vicinity of the CBD.
  - c) Are the illustrations for each space accurate in terms of density/ FAR per sector plan's recommendations? Has the green space prevented the site from achieving the maximum allowable density within the set height limitations? If so, can density in the green space areas be transferred to other CBD areas? Staff said that the illustrations are conceptual and they roughly max out allowable density for each site. The overall recommendations allow for flexibility in the size of the green space as long as it meets the 0.5 acre minimum size.
5. Design elements
- a) Visibility is key to the success of these urban green spaces. The artificial turf has been successful in part because people see through, no blocked views. Parents drop off kids and can see them.
  - b) Jesup Blair Park is an existing large green space in the CBD. Huge asset. What can be done to make it a success and achieve all the goals that this study describes for spaces that don't even exist?
  - c) The illustration for the site of Parking Lot 3 in Fenton Village seems to conflict with the concept that the retail needs to be at the street edge. In contrast, the illustration shows retail that is pulled away from the street. Staff answered that these are two different

concepts. Retail at the street edge along with consistent street walls is important in main streets and roads to maintain a clear sense of enclosure and boundary. When this “street wall” is interrupted by an open space it should be done intentionally and at strategic locations, not arbitrarily to fulfill the 20 percent onsite PUS requirement. The retail on the illustration for Parking Lot 3 has been designed surrounding the green space and the two are meant to be inter-dependent. The design responds to site-specific conditions as well as strategic goals for green space in the CBD.

- d) The guidelines for tree-lined streets are problematic because people can’t see retail signs from the street. Retailers have complained for the lack of visibility. Staff has heard this concern before and it is being addressed in the update of the SS Streetscape Standards.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association

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September 10, 2008, 7:30 pm, 8045 Newell Street – Social Room  
In attendance: see sign-up sheet, MNCPPC staff - John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira

## Discussion questions

Staff was invited to present the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD at the South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association meeting. Below is a summarized account of the questions and comments that came up during the presentation.

1. How will this Study be implemented? What is the process after the Planning Board approves the recommendations?  
Response: Staff is still working out the specific details, but the intention is to have this study serve as guidelines for development. Any time a new development application is submitted in the Silver Spring CBD, it would be reviewed for conformance with the recommendations. It is not our intention to have a Sector Plan Amendment.
2. How will you be able to implement a green space in the Falklands?  
Response: The Falklands is an opportunity that we identified for urban stream restoration, not necessarily a recommendation for new green space. These are coming up in the next slides. We'll then focus on the implementation of the recommendations. However, if by chance the Falklands were to re-develop, the stream valley would be required to be converted into a green space open to the public.
3. Why is the Giant site so high on the priority list if it has such strong constraints for implementation?  
Response: Staff believes that there are strong incentives to redevelop this site because a) it is underused and it could potentially achieve a much higher density, b) despite the constraint of existing 20 year leases, if the economic climate was right, the owners would have more incentive to re-negotiate the lease, c) it occupies a prime location in the CBD and it is a block from the Silver Spring metro stop.
4. Why did you pick in South Silver Spring, the site on Kennett Street? Did you consider other sites such as the self-storage?  
Response: We have considered the self-storage site as an alternative site. Despite some strengths, this site is located in the periphery of the CBD, next to the border with the District, which made it less desirable than the site on Kennett Street which is in the core of the South Silver Spring area. Thus, the site on Kennett Street seemed to better serve the residents of South Silver Spring. In addition, the site on Kennett Street includes a portion that has already been purchased by the County (DHCA), which would be key for a potential public/private venture.
5. Explain more about the other alternative that includes private development on the Kennett site?

Response: Based on the feedback that we have received so far, it might not be financially feasible to develop the Kennett Street site as a public enterprise only. The costs for land acquisition and future maintenance might be prohibitive. Therefore, we might have to revise our recommendations to call for a public-private partnership to develop this site with a mix-use development and a large green space with a minimum of 0.5 acres.

6. Can these sites accommodate a community garden? Playground?

Response: We welcome your ideas and suggestions for amenities in these spaces. We will then compile them in a master list which would allow Applicants to choose from according to their program of requirements too. As part of our recommendations, however, these green spaces should be as flexible as possible to accommodate a wide range of activities and users in similarity to the artificial turf site in the downtown area. They should not be highly programmed or designed.

7. How realistic is it to have these recommendations implemented?

Response: These recommendations represent the strategic vision for green spaces in the CBD. Because most recommendations rely on a public-private partnership, the private sector will have to take the lead to develop the green space in coordination with the guidelines and requirements established by the public sector. We can't give a timeframe for development/ implementation because it depends on the individuals who own the properties. So, it could happen tomorrow, next month or 20 years from now. At the current pace of development that the Silver Spring CBD is experiencing, it is imperative to establish these strategic locations for green spaces now rather than risking being too late.

8. How much should the private sector lead these efforts? We risk having them develop green spaces that are fenced off and hidden like the Discovery Garden all over.

JM: The private sector will lead the effort, but in coordination with the guidelines and objectives established by the public sector. Because the majority of the sites would be developed through a public-private partnership, there would be strong collaboration amongst all the parties. Ultimately, the public sector will have to approve the project. Staff agrees that the Discovery Garden is not the best example of a public green space, however when it was developed Silver Spring was a much different place and Staff did not have the same leverage to negotiate as it has today.

9. What do you need from us? How can we participate to help support your recommendations?

SP: You can send us letters or emails of support. In addition, we will take testimony when we go to the Planning Board next.



# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Iglesia de Dios Pentacostal la Nueva Jerusalem

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September 23, 2008, 2:30 pm, 1100 East-West Highway

In attendance: Pastor Mercedes, MNCPPC staff - John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira

## Discussion questions

Staff met with Pastor Mercedes to discuss the recommendations of the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD and specifically for the Church's site, and to learn about the Church's plans for the future. Below is a summarized account of the questions and discussion that came up during the meeting.

1. Pastor: Our Church has been on this site since 1995 and we will not go anywhere now. There was nothing around us when we first moved here - Silver Spring was nothing compared to today. Things have improved. There is lots of construction around. We have prayed for Silver Spring and the Lord has helped us and Silver Spring. We are not moving out. Our work is here not somewhere else. We help youth, drunk people – we bring them in, guide, counsel, and help them to be better. We need to be here. We are not selling our land. Even if you offered \$65 million. Ok, we would sell if you gave us 5 acres of land here in Silver Spring and \$100 million.
2. Staff: It would be helpful if you let us explain why we are here. We are not here to negotiate land, in fact that County government is going through a budget crisis, so chances to have any funds to buy land are very small if non-existent. We are at a much earlier stage in the process when we simply identify potential sites in the CBD for large green spaces. These will most likely be developed by the property owners (rather than the government) when and if the property owners choose so. We want to work together with you to have a win-win situation for everybody. So, first it is important for us to understand your plans for the future.
3. Pastor: We want to stay in this location but we need to expand perhaps in the next 5 years or so. Our plan is to build up on our existing building to have more usable space. Our congregation has been growing and we want to fit in everyone. We have service on Sundays and activities all other days of the week. We want to host conferences, events, which will draw even more people.
4. Staff: Have you considered to do a mix-use development, which includes the Church and some other additional uses like residential, office above? You have the ability to do this at this location because you are in a prime location in the CBD where building heights and density are higher than what you currently have. In addition, the benefit of a mix-use development is that in the long-term it could generate additional revenue for the Church, assuming that the Church continues as the owner and leases or rents the office/residential space above. Also, you should consider talking to your neighbor and if he also wants to redevelop/expand, you would both benefit from doing it together as a joint project.

5. Pastor: We have not talked to our neighbor and do not know about their future plans, but we'll ask. We were not thinking of doing any residential/office – just the Church. We need to find an architect and talk about these ideas.
6. Staff: Keep us posted on your plans. We are here to help you achieve your goals in a way that you also give back to the community. All our recommendations ask for is a large consolidated green space that the community can use. The green space would also benefit the image of your Church and provide extra area if you have large events (conferences). The Church would not be required to provide any parking onsite, but would need to pay a fee-in-lieu towards the parking lot district.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc. (ESSCA)

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October 20, 2008, 7:30 pm, Sligo Recreation Center  
In attendance: MNCPPC staff – Sandra Pereira, Melissa Williams

## Discussion questions

Staff was invited to present the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD at the ESSCA monthly meeting. Below is a summarized account of the questions and comments that came up during the presentation.

1. Could the site at Sligo Ave and Grove Street now occupied by the Police station be converted into a green space? The community of East Silver Spring desperately needs more green space.  
Response: Staff will follow-up on your suggestion. This site was not included on our analysis because it is located outside the CBD boundary.
2. Why is the Falklands considered an opportunity? The existing stream valley and natural environment is great as is. Any redevelopment especially with higher densities would be a detriment. There would be less trees, less green, and additional erosion caused by the additional impervious surfaces.  
Response: In this study, Staff is not making recommendations for the Falklands. But, at a minimum, efforts could be made to make it more public perhaps via signage.
3. Does the tool “Off-site transfer of open space” translates into open space supposedly in Silver Spring being transferred to Bethesda?  
Response: No, in fact, the off-site transfer of open space generally occurs within the immediate vicinity of the subject site.
4. The green space provided needs to relate better to the community of East Silver Spring. The north-south orientation of the green space excludes the community of East Silver Spring. Instead the green space should open up towards Fenton Street.  
Response: This layout reinforces the retail corridor along Fenton Street, which it is agreed that needs to be strengthened, by adding more retail face along Fenton Street. As a response to your previous comments Staff now proposes to add an arcade connection between Fenton Street and the green space. This arcade would add a break to the retail wall while providing an access point off Fenton Street to the community of East Silver Spring.
5. The road in the middle of the block should be eliminated because it divides the green space in half and makes it a less usable – “kids can’t kick ball because there’s a road with cars”.  
Response: This road follows master plan recommendations. Besides, it is intended to be a mixed-street, which is designed to emphasize pedestrian circulation while allowing for limited, slow auto traffic. Trees, bollards, and street furniture are used to mark the pedestrian domain. Ellsworth Street in downtown Silver Spring is an example of a mixed-use street. Cars will help to activate this area, they bring additional eyes on the street, and add to the perception of “public realm”.

6. How fair is the trade-off between Parking Lot 3 and the re-development with a green space? Is the **size** of the green space comparable to the existing parking lot? How many **parking spaces** will be public in the re-development? Will **parking cost** increase? What will be the **time lapse** between demolition and construction of the new parking facility? “Some projects get approved/ demolished and then nothing happens for 5 years, meanwhile we lost our parking lot and don’t have a green space or a parking facility.”

Response: The approximate area of the green space is 1 acre. Staff does not have information on the number of parking spaces proposed for the redevelopment of Parking Lot 3. However, in other projects such as the Galaxy in South Silver Spring, where the Applicant also re-developed a public surface parking lot, the number of public parking spaces provided inside the new parking garage doubled as compared to the number of existing parking spaces in the surface lot. Staff has no information on parking costs, but it would be reasonable to assume that these will be comparable to the standard parking rates at the time that the garage is completed. Staff does not know how much time it will take to built any proposal, however, this a valid concern and it has been noted.

# Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD – Outreach Silver Spring Community Meeting

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January 27, 2010, 7:30 pm, MRO – 8787 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring  
In attendance: MNCPPC staff - John Marcolin, Sandra Pereira, Robert Kronenberg

## Discussion questions

Staff hosted a community meeting at the Department of Planning to update the community on the status of the guidelines and the timeframe for completion. Staff welcomed comments and suggestions to be included in the final document. Below is a summarized account of the questions and discussion that came up during the meeting.

1. Question: Why do the open spaces have to include lawn –won't paving work just as well?  
Response: The Silver Spring Green Space Guidelines seek to provide un-programmed green space in the CBD to answer the demand for green open space that became apparent at the hearing to replace the artificial turf with new civic center and plaza.
2. Question: Won't maintaining lawn be more costly than the same area paved?  
Response: The cost of installing and maintaining sod is far less expensive than the cost to install pavers. Staff will provide some numbers showing cost differences.
3. Question: It appears from the presentation that MNCPPC recommends putting green spaces where no one lives or works. Won't these spaces be unused?  
Response: The open spaces that are recommended can only happen as part of a larger, mixed-use development that takes advantage of the density that the sector plan recommends and the existing zoning allows for. The green open spaces could not happen without such re-investment.
4. Question: Given the state of the economy, what are the chances that any of the recommended green open spaces will ever be built?  
Response: First, two of the 5 recommended sites are already in the planning stages. Studio Plaza in Fenton Village received project plan approval from the Planning Board. The planned green space is substantially similar to the recommendations in the guidelines for that site. The other site is the stream valley restoration located in the Falklands development, which will also include a large public use space on the north parcel. Secondly, the green space guidelines are meant to guide development in the CBD in the long term (over the next 10 years or more), over which time the economic environment may change, allowing for the kinds of re-investments that we are illustrating.