

**Twinbrook Sector Plan**  
July 12-14 Workshop Series Summary

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
[www.mc-mncppc.org/twinbrook](http://www.mc-mncppc.org/twinbrook)

## Introduction

The July 14 meeting held at Twinbrook Elementary School concluded a series of workshops held on July 12 and 13 at the Twinbrook Recreation Center. Their topics included Workshop 1: Establishing Adequate Services, Workshop 2: Building an Advanced Technology/Biotechnology Center, and Workshop 3: Opportunities in the Light Industrial Areas.

These meetings were part of an outreach strategy developed to integrate public insight, opinions and concerns into the Sector Plan process. Several business and community members attended the workshops and the final session. Representatives from various agencies included the Department of Public Works and Transportation, the City of Rockville, and Montgomery County Public Schools. The Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County and Search for Common Ground helped facilitate the discussions with the community, which were led by members of the Community-Based Planning Division staff.

The workshops included presentations on relevant information about existing policy frameworks, new data and other important guidelines or considerations. Following the presentations, attendees were invited to identify issues that should be addressed in the Sector Plan, ask questions and voice concerns. These comments were recorded and are included in this document.

After the three workshops, staff held a larger evening meeting on July 14 to summarize the topics discussed and thoughts contributed, and gather any additional input in these categories from businesses and community members unable to attend the daytime workshops. It began with an overview of information covered in the workshops and attendees were invited to record any additional comments, suggestions and questions about the topic. The meeting closed with a discussion of the process ahead, and the next opportunity for involvement in the scenario building exercise planned for September. A summary of each meeting follows.

## **Workshop 1: Establishing Adequate Services**

July 12, 1:00 p.m.

Twinbrook Community Recreation Center

### **Purpose**

This meeting was intended to inform and engage the Twinbrook community in dialogue with County agencies on the topics of housing, schools and transportation. The presentation included some indicating statistics along with policies and plans that will guide the Twinbrook Sector Plan.

### **Summary**

Planning staff from the Research and Technology Center presented information about the changing housing market in Montgomery County. A projected increase in the jobs-housing ratio by 2030 will increase the number of jobs in the County, and demonstrates the need for additional housing.

County housing policies include:

- providing a variety of housing choices
- ensuring assistance for those with diverse housing needs
- creating neighborhoods that are high quality and safe.

Montgomery County's housing priorities include increasing opportunities for people who grew up in the County and want to remain, those who currently live in the County but would like to find different housing in the County, and those who want to live and work in the County.

To decrease traffic congestion, it is important to have adequate housing opportunities where jobs are located. Clustering jobs and housing around transit links such as Metro, and planning for an interconnected local street system that includes ample sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting and trees can encourage walking, biking, and transit use, and help decrease auto dependency. Housing opportunities in the planning area include the proposed Twinbrook Commons project located east of Twinbrook Parkway and the two Health and Human Services parking lots located west of Twinbrook Parkway.

New housing units in the planning area will bring children who will need to be accommodated in the Richard Montgomery and Walter Johnson school clusters.

Transportation staff presented transportation objectives, guiding policies, and analytic techniques that will be used or considered during the Twinbrook Sector Plan process. Key transportation elements outlined by the *1992 North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan* include the Metro station, MARC train access, Montrose Parkway, the local street grid, parking, neighborhood traffic as well as bike and pedestrian routes. Staff summarized the basic transportation objectives that include following the recommendations of the *Transportation Policy Report*, maintaining consistency with other plans, and creating adequate capacity. Guiding County policies include the Montgomery County Road Code, Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), Annual

Growth Policy (AGP), and Transportation Demand Management efforts. Staff outlined several tools that the transportation planners will use to develop a strategy, including the EMME/2 Travel Demand Model and the Local Area Model (LAM). Several key issues already identified as problematic include Rockville Pike, Veirs Mill Road, and the intersections at Twinbrook Parkway and MD 355, Twinbrook Parkway and Veirs Mill Road, and Parklawn Drive and Montrose Parkway.

After the presentation, the floor was opened for questions and comments. Community members and agency representatives mentioned several things about these topics and their input follows.

#### Housing

- Increased demand for larger units (two and three bedroom)
- Need for affordable housing
- More moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs)
- Need for three-bedroom units in MPDUs

#### Schools

- Concern that there will be overcrowding in schools from new housing in the study area (especially the elementary schools)
- Developers should provide funding for schools

#### Road Congestion

- Twinbrook Parkway (Veirs Mill Road to Rockville Pike), 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Along Rockville Pike (from White Flint to Route 28)
- Edmonston Road/Route 28/Twinbrook Parkway/First Street
- Need another east/west connection

#### Parking

- Parking at Metro is impossible after 8:30 a.m.
- No parking at Rockville Metro
- Parking problems in Twinbrook started when the Grosvenor parking lot was closed for construction

#### Metro

- Lack of capacity, no seats on Metro cars at Twinbrook
- Need for lighting in community around the Metro station
- Lack of Ride-On service, need to extend service
- Ride-On can be considered disruptive by neighbors (noise, speed, frequency)

#### Cut-Through Traffic

- Neighborhood street traffic
- Coordination with the State Highway Administration

### Bicycle Routes

- Two lanes of parked cars (Crawford, Lewes, Ardennes) leaves no room for bikeways

### Bus Stops

- Need to assess placement of bus stops

## **Workshop 2: Building an Advanced Technology/Biotechnology Center at Twinbrook**

July 13, 1:30 p.m.

Twinbrook Community Recreation Center

### **Purpose**

This workshop was intended to engage the Twinbrook community in exploring how to create an appropriately scaled, world-class advanced technology/biotechnology center near a Metro station.

### **Summary**

Staff discussed the elements of transit-oriented design and outlined five principles for great place-making. Transit-oriented design elements include walkable blocks, quality streetscapes, community focal points, and a pattern of connected streets to make walking direct, convenient and safe.

The five principles for great place-making are as follows:

*Great Streets* that include pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and crossings, and consistent streetscapes and street furniture.

*Mixed Use Development* that integrates residential, commercial and office spaces; in Twinbrook, biotech offices and labs.

*Public Open Space* in opportunity areas creating plazas, fountains, seating and green space for people to enjoy.

*Interconnectivity* ensuring a variety of connections between Metro and important roads, and destination spots in the planning area.

*Focal Elements* create visually stimulating, unique environments that contribute to an area's identity. These can include fountains, public art, interesting architecture or a service center.

The workshop concluded with a facilitated discussion of these topics. Comments and questions from the audience follow.

### **Connections**

- Make connections between Twinbrook Commons and the Health and Human Services building along Fishers Lane; these buildings will be focal points for Twinbrook
- Metro station is a primary focal point

### **Proposed Uses**

- Street level retail/residential/office-serving uses
- Uses that serve the employees

### Green Space and Public Realm

- The planning area needs good streets, pleasant walks, and greenery
- Walkability around Metro, need better sidewalks to Metro and MD 355
- Parklawn Cemetery could provide open space
- Streets/open space need to be usable places to sit and stay
- Opportunities to develop the urban edge

### **Workshop 3: Opportunities in the Light Industrial Areas**

July 13, 3:30 p.m.

Twinbrook Community Recreation Center

#### **Purpose**

This workshop allowed the community and the small business and property owners in the light industrial areas to discuss ways to strengthen existing businesses and accommodate new uses in the area, what they view as valuable, and what needs to be rethought in the area. It was also intended as an opportunity to collect information about the type of businesses that have chosen to locate in Twinbrook, including rental versus ownership of the buildings, the percentage of employees who commute via transit, zoning concerns, etc.

#### **Summary**

This final workshop identified aspects of Twinbrook that are attractive to businesses as well as enhancements that could improve the area for businesses. Participants were asked to answer a questionnaire to help identify strengths and weaknesses of locating a business in the Twinbrook planning area. A facilitated discussion followed and participants' comments are summarized below.

#### Advantages of Operating a Business in Twinbrook

- Central location; proximity to I-270 and I-95
- Labor pool within walking distance
- Tight-knit business community
- Stable businesses (auto shops, rental company, construction company, electrician)

#### Disadvantages

- No organization in the business area
- Uncertainty about the area's future
- Lack of parking
- Poor condition of side streets



## **Final Meeting**

July 14, 7:30 p.m.

Twinbrook Elementary School

### **Purpose**

The July 14 meeting reviewed the information covered during the workshops held and presented workshop information for those who did not attend. It was also another opportunity for comments and questions.

### **Summary**

The audience included community members, interested individuals, representatives from the JBG Company, City of Rockville, Department of Public Works and Transportation, small business owners, and planning staff. Facilitators from the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County and Search for Common Ground were also present to gather community input.

Staff presented the 1992 North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan, the 2000 Charrette, and the outreach and planning process. Staff also presented and summarized workshop information. After the housing and transportation presentations, audience members added comments regarding information that was missing or any questions that had not been answered. These comments and questions were recorded as follows.

#### Housing

- What is affordable housing?
- What about the working poor
- MPDU vs. affordable, and How do you distinguish levels of affordability
- Experience verifies need for larger, affordable units
- Development planned 12.5 percent MPDUs; should include two-bedroom, one-bedroom, efficiency units (Twinbrook Commons)
- North Bethesda area has surplus of units – MPDUs are available
- Want two- and three-bedroom units in new developments for families and community building
- One bedroom units encourage singles, transients, and two-car households
- Increase of investor/owners; positive cash flow
- More county oversight of MPDUs
- Restricted/managed buyout of MPDU program

#### Transportation

- Morning congestion in general and specifically on Twinbrook Parkway
- WMATA maintenance needs to be increased at Metro station and bus stops
- Increased parking at Metro needed
- Veirs Mill Road has evening congestion
- Additional connections across rail tracks (pedestrian, bike, vehicular)
- Ride-On bus needs additional hours (#44)
- Traffic lights or pedestrian crossings needed at bus stops and Metro

- Pedestrian access to Metro is not used in part because the length of Twinbrook Parkway is unfriendly to pedestrians
- Better road and pedestrian connections to Metro in general
- Financial incentives to use public transportation
- More walkable amenities to connect workplace, home, shopping, restaurants, et
- More shuttles that hit the places where people work and live
- Impact on congestion of planned residential and retail developments