



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

MCPB

Item # 5
02/12/09

February 6, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Acting Chief *GK*
Vision / Community Based Planning Division

Dan Hardy, Chief *DKH*
Move / Transportation Planning Division

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South Central Transit Corridor
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SUBJECT: Worksession 1: Transportation Analysis for the White Flint Sector Plan

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Review Transportation Appendix

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

The Planning Board held a Public Hearing on the White Flint Sector Plan on January 12, 2009. One issue raised in the worksessions before the public hearing and reiterated in the public hearing testimony was the need for a public presentation and discussion of the transportation and economic analyses underpinning the plan recommendations. The first two worksessions address these topics.

February 12: Worksession 1 - Transportation

This Worksession, led by Dan Hardy, Transportation Division, will focus on the contents of the Technical Appendix for the transportation analysis, especially the rationale for the recommendations regarding mobility, and the amount of development that can be accommodated in the Sector Plan area through the regulatory process.

February 19: Worksession 2 - Economics

This Worksession, led by Jacob Sesker, Research and Technology Division, will focus on Staff's technical analysis of the financing mechanism proposed in the White Flint Sector Plan, including the assumptions used to establish a build-out of the development program, an analysis of the various revenues generated by that build-out, and the results generated by Staff's model of the proposed financing mechanism.

March 5: Worksession 3 - Density Allocation Principles, Land Use and Zoning by District

This Worksession, led by Piera Weiss and N'kosi Yearwood, will focus on the land use and zoning issues in the public hearing including density allocation principles, the proposed density on individual properties, and building heights. We anticipate that another Worksession may be necessary on this topic.

TRANSPORTATION REVIEW

The primary purpose of the February 12 worksession is to review the overall transportation / land use balance for the White Flint Sector Plan. The January 2009 Transportation Appendix, included as an attachment to this staff memo, forms the primary technical material for the February 12 discussion.

Staff will present the following information on February 12; generally covering the material in the Appendix in a slightly different order:

- proposed land use and transportation changes proposed in White Flint and how those changes promote more efficient travel behavior
- transportation land use / balance for the Sector Plan
- transportation network
- policy changes, and
- staging and implementation

We have some new information since the Sector Plan draft was prepared in early December, due largely to the public hearing and other outreach processes. The Appendix notes certain areas where staff is considering a change to the Public Hearing draft plan based on that outreach process and these considerations are highlighted below. On February 12, we will not ask the Board to make recommendations on any of these topics, but will rather return to them as part of subsequent worksessions.

Parking Lot District / Management Authority

The Sector Plan recommends the establishment of a Parking Lot District (PLD) to manage travel demand in part by managing parking supply. We recognize that the literal PLD definition in Chapter 60 of the Montgomery County Code is not an appropriate mechanism to manage parking supply. We will discuss some options for leveraging the desired reduction in private parking space requirements as part of the zoning ordinance into creating a resource for parking facilities, either publicly or privately managed, that are open to the general public.

Staging Plan

The staging plan recommends specific transportation facilities and policies as prerequisites to each stage. The staging plan recommends a biennial monitoring program with a staging emphasis on the Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) for the Plan area. As part of our Growth Policy work program during spring 2009, we will be considering alternative growth management methods such as parking and cordon line volume caps, that may be applicable in White Flint to supplement the mode share analysis. Significant stakeholder interest exists in expanding monitoring programs to include a broader geography, midday/weekend, and operational analyses. The White Flint Sector Plan could serve as a model for introducing new analysis tools and metrics into the Growth Policy; a topic that will be addressed during both the Plan and Growth Policy discussions during the next several months.

We believe it is important to add an analysis of traffic safety and circulation within adjacent residential neighborhoods to the staging plan as a pre-requisite for Stage 2.

Rockville Pike Location and Design

We believe that to construct the Rockville Pike concept described in the Sector Plan (including a wide median, maintenance of three through travel lanes, and a curb lane with bus priority treatments) it may be necessary to shift the centerline of the Pike westward about ten feet, reflecting limitations on the east side relating to WMATA tunnel locations and NRC security restrictions. This would increase impacts to properties on the west side of the Pike, likely increasing project costs. We understand alternative Pike concepts are also being developed by area stakeholders. The cost effectiveness of alternative concepts will require some further discussion.

White Flint Mall District

The property owners in the White Flint Mall District presented a street network proposal in November 2008 that reflect property owner consensus on alignments that serve the different property owners in an equitable fashion. This concept, shown in Figure 9 of the Appendix, generally meets the intent of the draft Plan, but introduces some street details, including street widths and curvature, that require further discussion.