

White Flint Sector Plan

worksession #6 april 13, 2009



community
presentations



White Flint Sector Plan

worksession schedule

- march 19: property owners presentations
- march 30: complete property owner presentations
community presentations
- april 13: complete community presentations
- april 23: summary of density, building heights and
other redevelopment issues
public facilities: schools
MARC station site
- april 30: transportation
public facilities: parks
environment and sustainability
- may 7: design guidelines
status of fiscal analysis and implementation
- may 21: zoning, staging and implementation

White Flint Sector Plan

residential communities

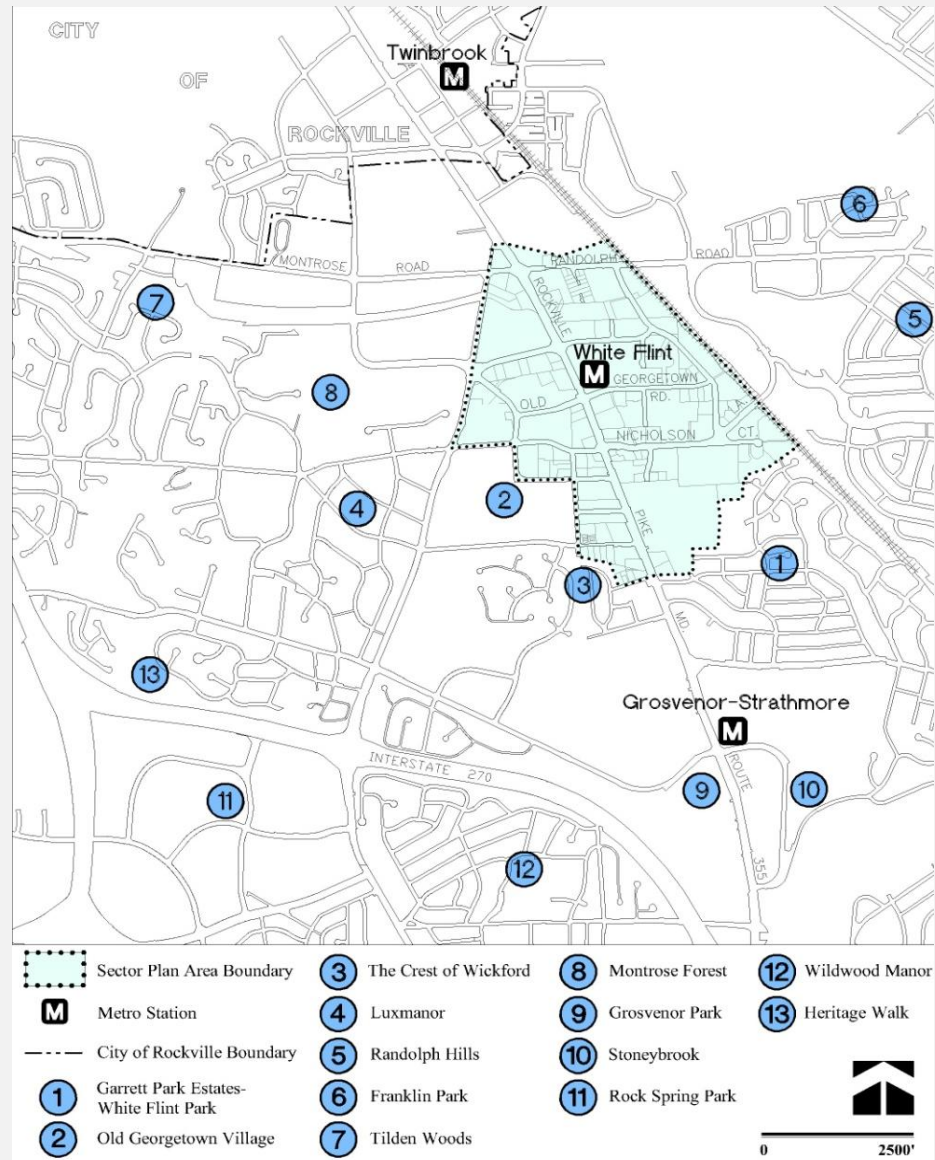
white flint park-garrett park estates

randolph hills

crest of wickford

fallstone

luxmanor



community presentations are next



GARRETT PARK ESTATES - WHITE FLINT PARK CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION

Smart Core, Not Strip High-Rise:

**Response to Developer Proposals and Plan Materials
for the White Flint Sector**

**Presentation to the Montgomery County Planning Board
March 30, 2009**

What Makes a “Smart” Core?

- **Destination**
- Walkability
- Mobility: Balancing Density and Infrastructure
- Compatibility with Existing Communities
- Sustainability

“Smart” Core: Destination

- Sense of place
 - Mixed Use Activity Center
 - Easily available for work and non-work activities
 - Accessibility to activities
-
- Are we creating a Destination?
 - Are we building a “Smart “Core?

“Smart” Core: Destination

- Urban core, not Strip High-Rise
- Community support for original concept of central core, urban village focused on Main Street and Civic Green
- Balance between jobs and housing
- Quality library (like Rockville)
- Density/activities emanate 360° from epicenter
- Areas of highest density around the core, stepping down as distance from core increases

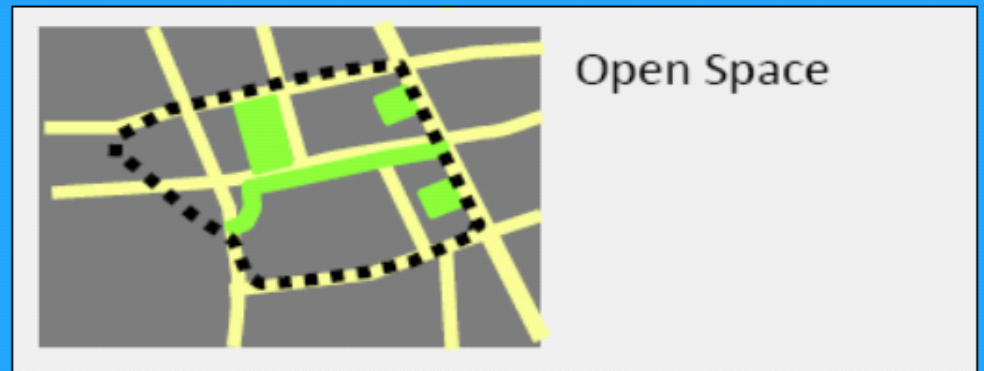
“Smart” Core: Destination

- “Main Street” is east/west axis
- Centered between existing Metro Station entrance and planned new northern entrance
- Pike is N-S axis for walkable distance
- Sector epicenter at intersection of “Main Street” and Pike



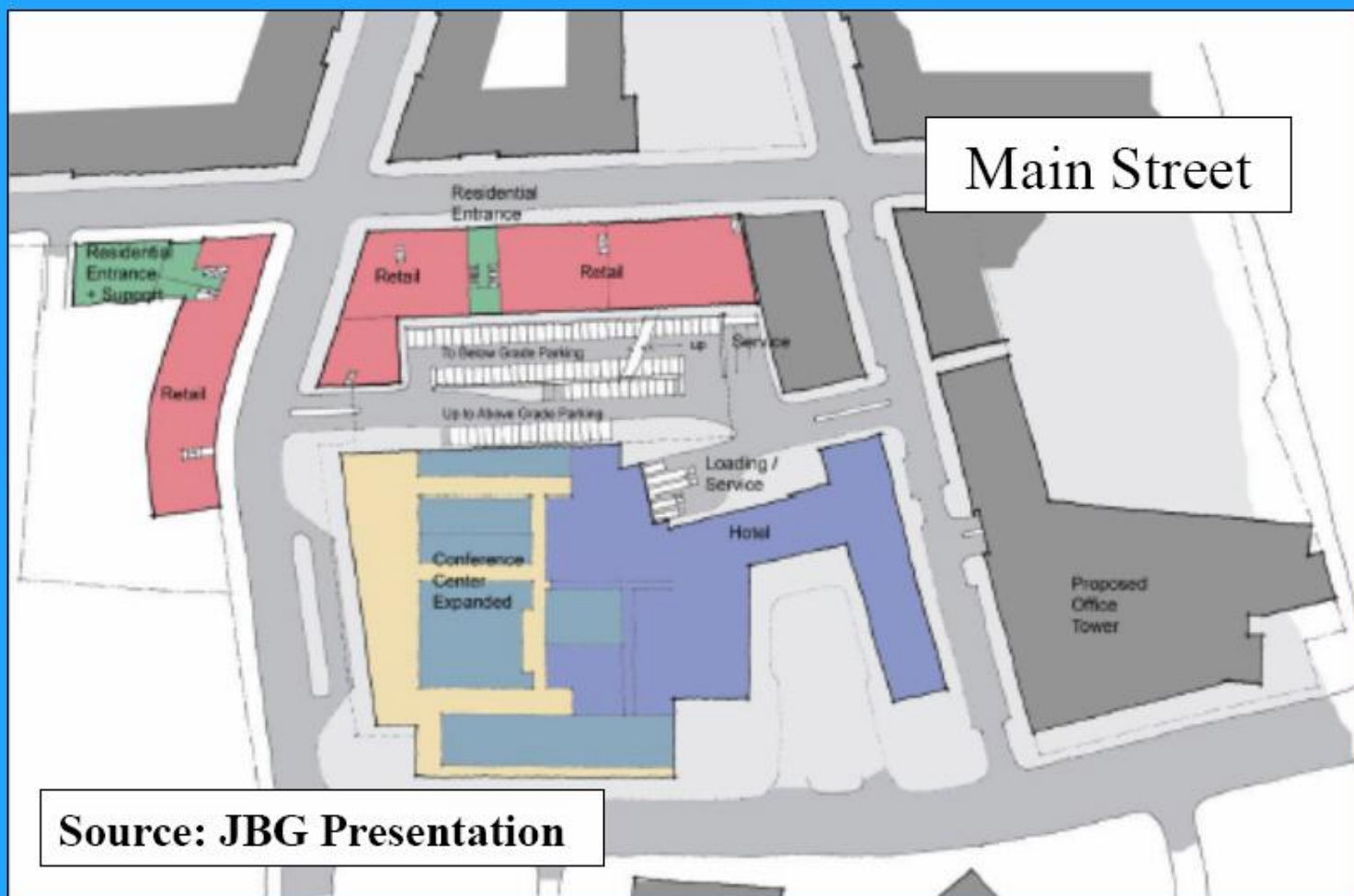
“Smart” Core: Destination

- Metro West District at Sector's heart
- Sense of place
- Main Street, Civic Green are focus of District's design
- Active recreation: Wall Park, Aquatic Center



“Smart” Core: Destination

Where’s the core?



“Smart” Core: Destination

- Three developers presented on Metro West (JBG, Gables, Nissan-VOB)
- None embraced Main Street/Civic Green focus
- JBG Presentation
 - Five of ten slides focus on Rockville Pike Tower
 - No separate slide on Main Street and Civic Green
 - Brief reference: Community Street Retail...Along Main”
- Location at heart of sector places important responsibility on these developers
- Civic Green and Main Street must be “Iconic Landmarks” incorporated into their designs

“Smart” Core: Destination

- Main Street: Major axis and focus for design or after-thought?
- Civic Green: How assembled? Design focus?
- Planning Board should step up to ensure design and implementation of Sector's core

What Makes a “Smart” Core?

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- **Walkability**
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“Smart” Core: Walkability

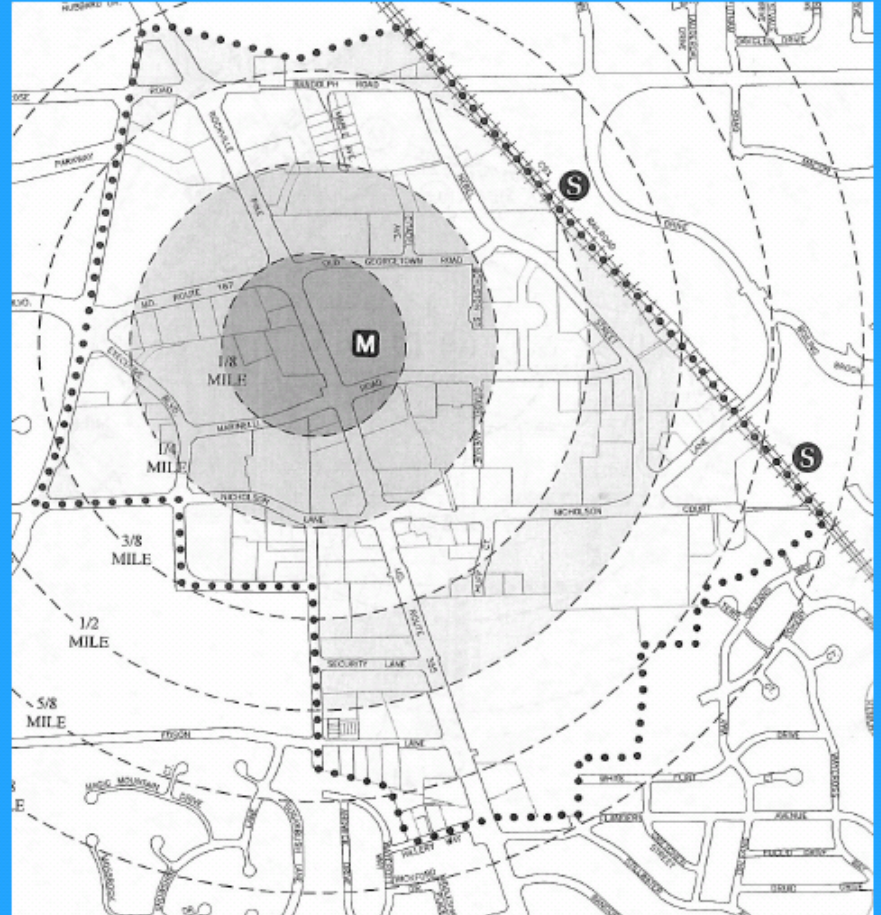
- Supports the Smart Core
- Primary factor in achieving mixed-use activity
- Primary factor in maintaining mobility
- Reduces need for additional transportation infrastructure
- Contributes to environmental sustainability, carbon emission reduction
- 360° walkability helps break legacy of Pike’s linear development
- Main Street axis capitalizes on walkability

“Smart” Core: Walkability

- Sector Plan: walkable = $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from Metro
- But, Dan Burden (Executive Director, Walkable Communities, Inc.) says...
- Walkable communities have:
 - Intact town centers, pleasant Main Street, hearty healthy set of stores, places to conduct civic business’ ...
 - All within **$\frac{1}{4}$ mile (5 minutes)** of absolute center...
 - From most homes possible to get to most services in $\frac{1}{4}$ mile (*actual walked distance*)...

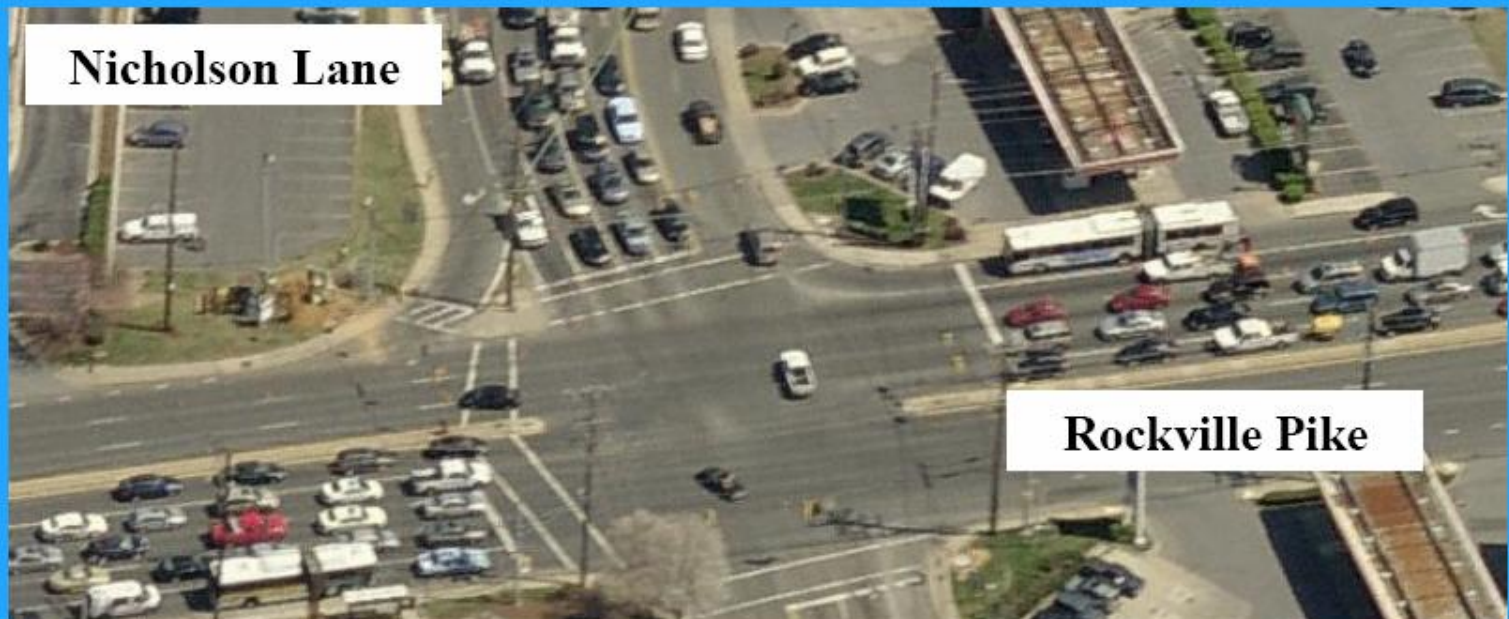
“Smart” Core: Walkability

- Support concentric circle approach to evaluating walkability
- Center at mid-point between existing and proposed Metro exits
- Focus highest density at core to maximize walkability
- Density drops substantially with transition from center
- Owners spanning density ranges may combine and divide to get average density for development



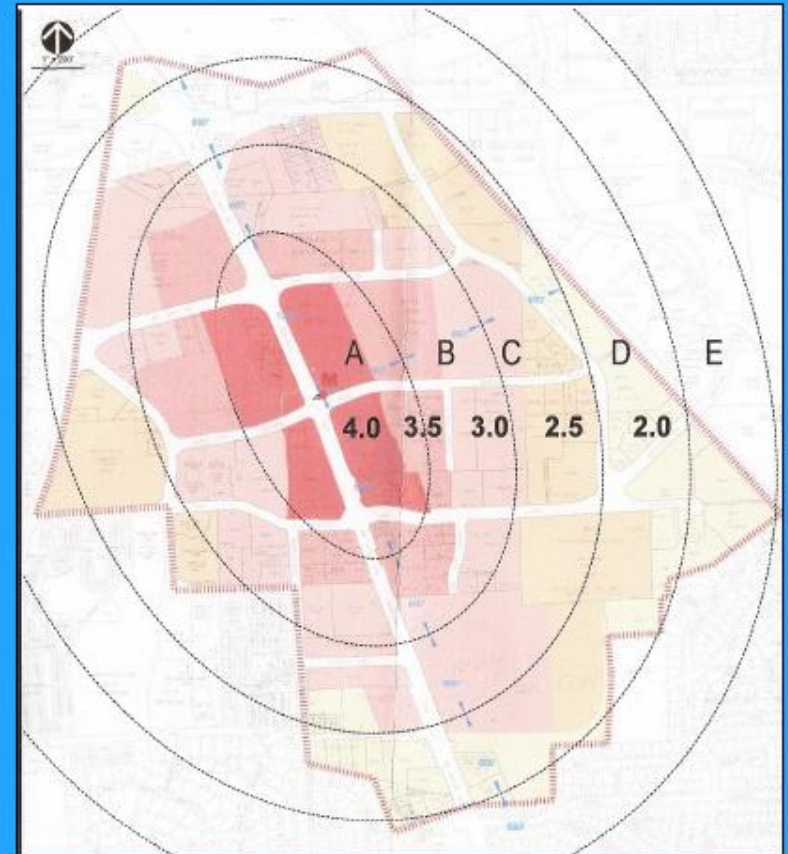
“Smart” Core: Walkability

- Consider pedestrian safety:
 - Crossing major intersections takes additional time
 - Making Pike into Boulevard enhances pedestrian safety
 - Enhance Metro underpass to make it user-friendly



“Smart” Core: Walkability

- Oppose Elliptical concept:
- Moves centerpoint south to existing Metro exit, away from Main Street east-west axis
- Allocates density by developer, not by distance or walkability
- Extends urban sprawl south along Pike



What Makes a “Smart” Core?

- Destination
- Walkability
- **Mobility: Balancing Density and Infrastructure**
- Compatibility with Existing Communities
- Sustainability

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Balance between density and infrastructure necessary to maintain mobility
- Rockville Pike continues as major transportation corridor, vital link for local residents
 - Grid structure critical for local traffic, but inconsistencies:
 - Example: Woodglen crossing Marinelli
- Smart Core must work during non-rush hours and weekends
- Pedestrian activity supporting walkability reduces the need for additional infrastructure

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Maximum density should match what is supported by an improved Transportation Analysis
- Major concerns with traffic analysis and density:
 - Capacity of Metro based on questionable assumptions
 - Strathmore Avenue and Rockville Pike - projected gridlock
 - Raising the congestion level masks the problem, does not solve it
- Imbalance between analysis and density: we either need more infrastructure, less density or both

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Transportation Analysis - Capacity of Metro
 - Assumes 8-car trains, 2½ minute headways
 - Currently during rush hour:
 - 8-car trains, 5 min headway at White Flint
 - 6-car trains, 2½ min headways turn around at Grosvenor
 - To provide capacity in traffic analysis requires **96 additional Metro cars**
 - Who will fund expansion (fixed investment in cars, storage; ongoing operational costs (workers, maintenance)?
 - Expenditure not part of financial analysis
 - Metro expansion must be part of the staging plan

“Smart” Core: Mobility

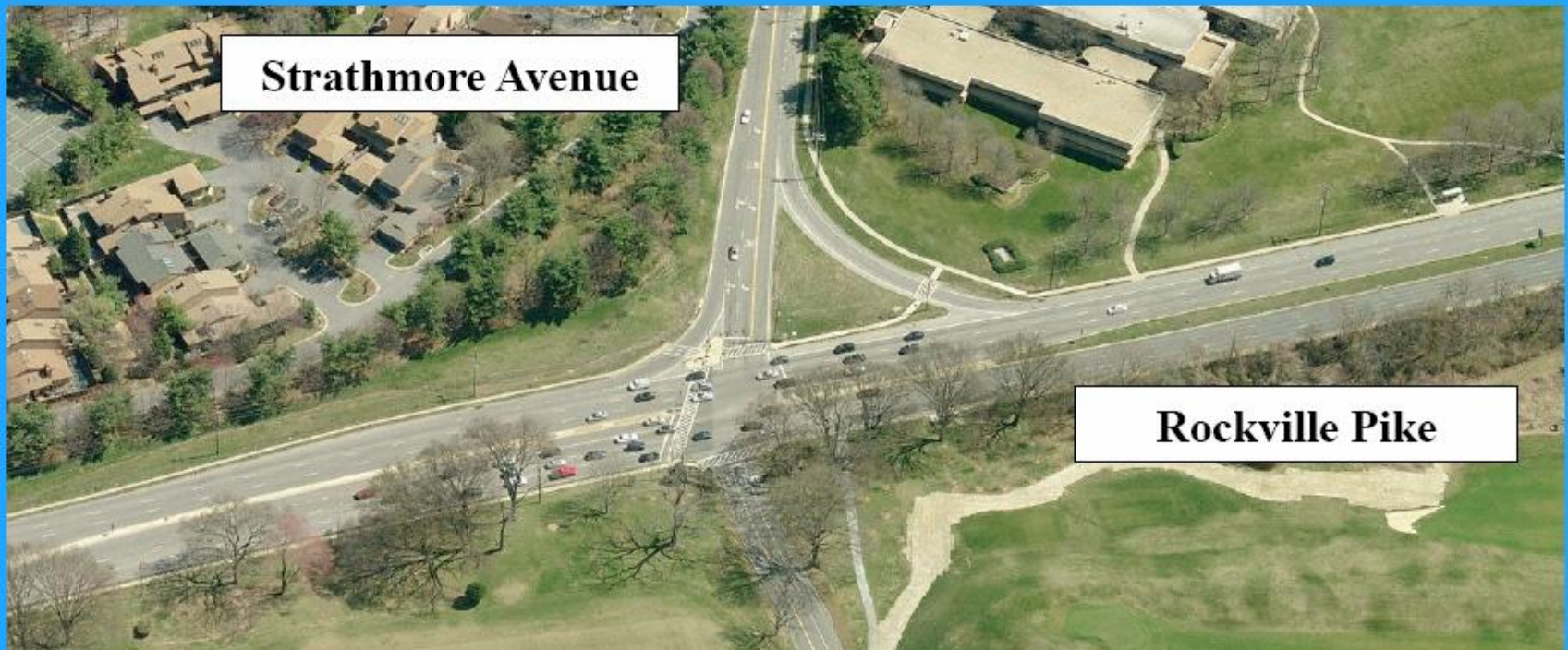
- Transportation Analysis - Strathmore Ave. and Rockville Pike
 - “At ...Strathmore Avenue (MD 547) the peak hour forecast CLV is **1852...**”

“These forecasts are higher than the current CLV congestion standard....They are typical, however of CLV forecasts for intersections on heavily traveled arterial routes in Sector Plans where smart growth development is being encouraged by County Policy, including the **Silver Spring CBD** Sector Plan in 2000, the **Bethesda CBD** Sector Plan staging analysis in 2004...”

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- **Transportation Analysis - Strathmore Ave. and Rockville Pike**

Silver Spring CBD or Bethesda CBD?



“Smart” Core: Mobility

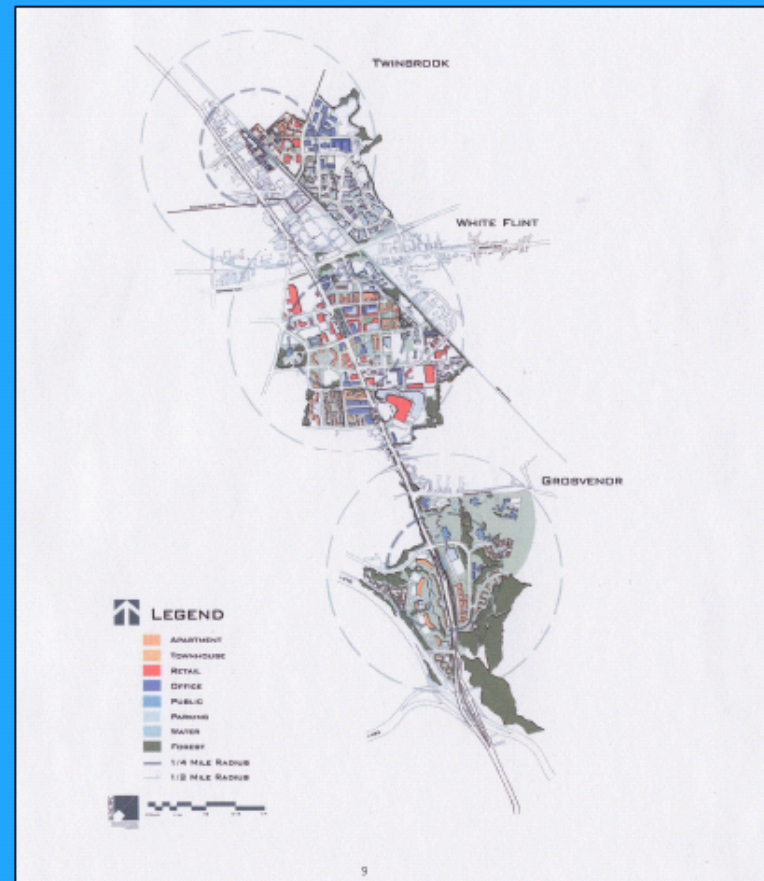
- Transportation Analysis - Strathmore Ave. and Rockville Pike
- Essential entrance and exit for communities
- Strathmore Ave. not in Sector Plan, but impact of increased traffic is vital concern



Strathmore and Kenilworth Aves, Garrett Park

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Transportation Analysis – Raising congestion level masks, does not solve problem
 - Strathmore Ave last signalized intersection in Grosvenor MSPA. LOS is set at 1800
 - Raising congestion standards at Edson and Security converts entire area from Beltway to Rockville into one Metro area
 - Follow I-270 Corridor study: Confine centers and maintain space between them



“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Location of MARC station
 - Most effective where it serves jobs and residences
 - Close to central core, not $\frac{3}{4}$ mile away at Nicholson Court
 - Support staff recommendation for Montouri property
 - If not possible, keep station at 1992 Master Plan location

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Increase infrastructure, support Bus Rapid Transit
 - BRT on Rockville Pike provides reliable express transit service, improvement over negative perception of standard buses
 - BRT includes east-west North Bethesda Transitway
 - Not just a promise, but dedicated funding for BRT within Sector

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Balance density and infrastructure
- With current provisions, 30 million sf too much
- Leave determination of appropriate number until revision of transportation analysis:
 - Reevaluates Metro capacity
 - Minimizes impact to Pike and Strathmore Ave
 - Manages congestion rather than raises standards
 - Considers additional infrastructure or less density
- Maintain highest density at core

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Staging Plan:
 - Overall zoning envelope greater than maximum density
 - Allows density and infrastructure to develop in a non-cohesive manner
 - First-come, first-served density allocation defeats orderly Sector development
 - Important to develop core first, so that place identification can begin
 - Developers’ proposals to add additional density to the zoning envelope exacerbate problem
 - Support staging allowances based on infrastructure

“Smart” Core: Mobility

- Staging Plan:
 - Phase 3 is too late for Rockville Pike.
 - What if County decides to use money for something else?
 - All development can still complete without the Pike.
 - Support MPDUs and Workforce housing
 - However they are provided (exactions, bonus) in end they count as part of the density allocation set in the Staging Plan

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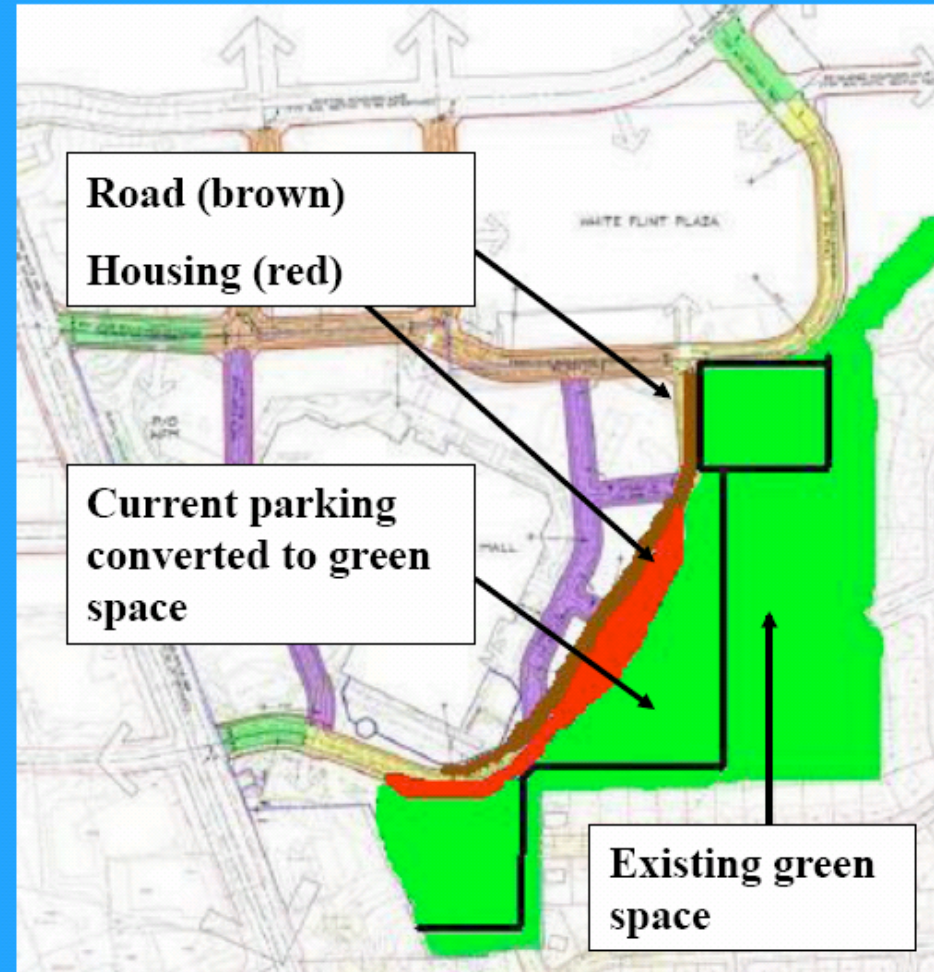
“Smart” Core: Compatibility

- All agree: “Compatibility with existing neighbors”
- Depends on what definition of “compatibility” is
 - Mall owners want to push road and development to the edge of our community



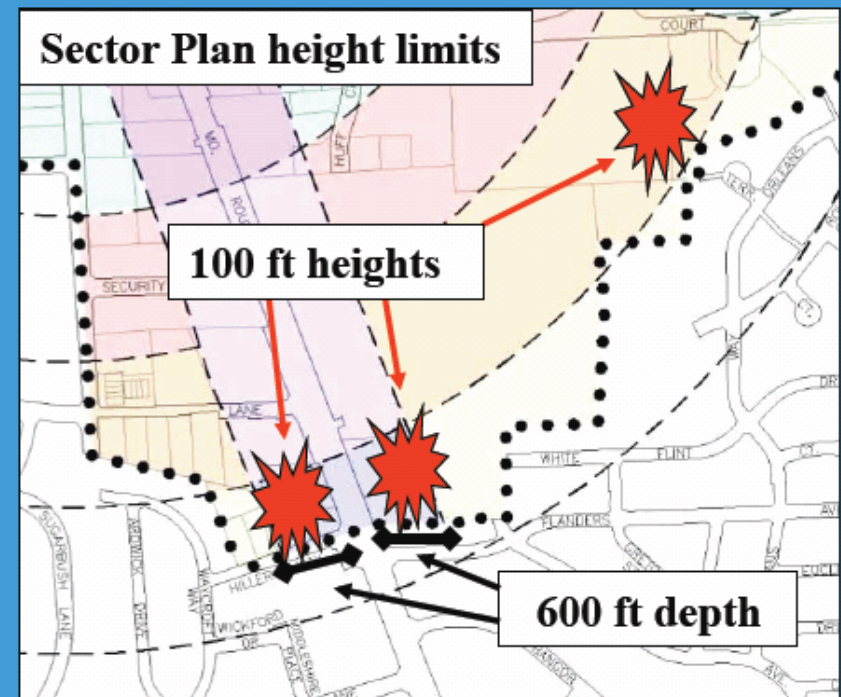
“Smart” Core: Compatibility

- Community Proposal
 - Want to retain existing distances between community and buildings, currently codified in C-T zone, redesigned as green buffer
 - Retain green buffer at Combined Properties and Nicholson Court
 - Town houses separate road and mall from proposed green buffer
 - Nebel Street extended exits at Executive Blvd



“Smart” Core: Compatibility

- Compatible building heights
 - Object to allowing 100 ft buildings adjacent to communities on both sides of Pike
 - Object to envelope extending 600 feet in from Pike
 - Existing medical bldg 75 ft high, extends ~67 ft deep
 - 36 ft – 50 ft maximum height at border



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“Smart” Core: Sustainability

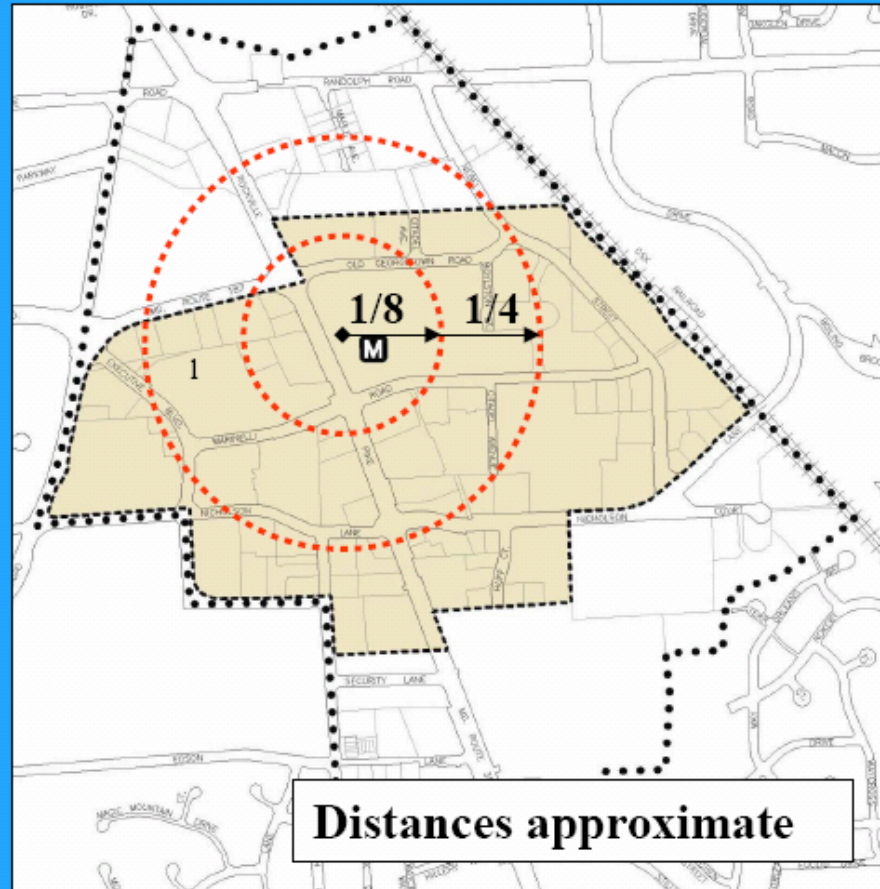
- New development must include substantial increases in pervious surfaces and tree canopy
- “No net loss” of pervious surface is not “smart” development; Sector Plan must do better
- Stormwater management must minimize dangers to existing streams, watershed, and Chesapeake Bay, enhance and restore our streams and soils.
- New development and traffic management must measurably and rapidly reduce carbon emissions from both buildings and automobiles.
- Developers fail to mention plans to achieve sustainability goals

Conclusion: For a “Smart Core”

- We love Sector Plan’s commitment to core; want to see it implemented!
- Want landmark destination, “public realm” to transform White Flint and create “destination”
- Want walkable core: valuable in itself, will also reduce vehicular traffic elsewhere in sector
- Density and height step down rapidly from core
- Balance density and infrastructure
- Improve existing community buffers

Conclusion: Compact Urban Core is Smart!

- Sector Plan's vision more faithfully realized with compact envelope akin to current MSPA, revised to reflect walkable distances



Conclusion: “Trust, But Verify”

- Communities entitled to some clarity on CR zone: What implications for Sector Plan? When?
- All features safeguarding communities must be in Sector Plan itself, using mandatory, not permissive language (“must” instead of “should”)

**next are randolph hills, crest of wickford,
fallstone and luxmanor presentations**