

## HALPINE MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

### **1. Identify the nature of the amendment being requested and why an amendment is considered necessary in the context of the current master plan and zoning.**

On behalf of Halpine Park, LLC and the Housing Opportunities Commission (“HOC”), we respectfully submit this application (“Application”) for an amendment to the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan, adopted and approved in December 1992 (the “North Bethesda Master Plan”) to be included as one of the three potential minor master plan amendments in the current Planning Board Work Program. Specifically, we request that the properties owned by Halpine Park LLC, HOC, MHP Twinbrook, LLC (“MHP”), and Bullis Tract LLC (known as “Rock Creek Woods”) that are located on Twinbrook Parkway to Viers Mill Road, known collectively as the “Halpine Properties,” be included in the requested minor master plan amendment (the “Halpine Minor Amendment”). As described throughout the Application, the Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the unique opportunity for collaboration with HOC and MHP on integrated housing solutions in future redevelopment, as well as to comprehensively plan for cohesive long term improvements in an area that is both convenient to transit and that borders the valuable resource of Rock Creek Park.

As shown in the exhibits attached with this Application, the Halpine Properties consist of approximately 58 acres and are located within ½ to ¾ mile (10 to 15 minute walk) of the Twinbrook Metro Station. In addition to the location near transit, the Halpine Properties are also adjacent to Rock Creek Park and proximate to the Twinbrook Recreation Center, which provide unique opportunities for improving public benefits and access to these resources. The Halpine Properties are classified primarily in the R-30 (multiple-family, low density) zone, although the Rock Creek Woods apartment that are closer to Viers Mill Road are in the R-20 (multiple-family, medium density) zone. The Halpine Properties generally consist of garden apartment developments and surface parking lots built in the late 1960s, except for the HOC property, which consists of townhomes built in the early 1980s.

The Halpine Minor Amendment was actually first recommended by the Planning Board Staff (“Planning Staff”) during the review of the Twinbrook Sector Plan Amendment in December 2007. At that time, the owners of the Halpine Properties requested to be included in the Twinbrook Sector Plan boundary. However, the Planning Staff, Planning Board and County Council, sitting as the District Council (the “Council”), recommended a limited master plan amendment for the Halpine Properties instead as a more practicable way to amend this small portion of the North Bethesda Master Plan. The Halpine Minor Amendment was also recently discussed in the context of a Pre-Application Plan submitted by Halpine Park LLC as a more appropriate means to provide a truly comprehensive review of how the area should evolve over the next 20 years and to provide more meaningful opportunities for affordable housing, cohesive planned development, transportation improvements and public amenities. For reference, the detailed Staff Report for the Pre-Application Plan is at [http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20111027\\_HalpineViewStaffReportFinal.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20111027_HalpineViewStaffReportFinal.pdf). Although none of the owners of the Halpine Properties have immediate plans to redevelop the properties, the Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the long term vision and



comprehensive approach these long term property owners need to plan for the future, and will provide it within the reasonable timeframe for planning instead of unnecessarily delayed for an amendment to the North Bethesda Master Plan.

As explained in detail in this Application, the Halpine Minor Amendment is necessary in the context of the 20-year old North Bethesda Master Plan to provide the opportunity to advance numerous land use objectives of the County and provide public benefits for the community over the next 20 years. The Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the opportunity to review and update the land use recommendations for the Halpine Properties and thus create the potential to achieve the land use objectives of the North Bethesda Master Plan, including: to preserve and increase the variety of housing stock and affordable housing, to focus future development on land near Metro stops and areas served by existing transportation infrastructure, and to encourage a land use pattern that provides opportunities for housing and employment (See, North Bethesda Master Plan, Page 35). The Halpine Minor Amendment will also provide the opportunity for the Halpine Properties to address the specific North Bethesda Master Plan goals to improve “the pedestrian friendliness of streets, particularly near transit nodes,” to provide “better local circulation” and an improved road network, to protect existing woodlands and create “green corridors”, and to address stream erosion and provide environmental site design features (See, North Bethesda Master Plan, Pages 3, 149, 249, 250 and 253).

In addition to the Halpine Minor Amendment being necessary in the context of the North Bethesda Master Plan, it is also necessary in the context of the adjoining Twinbrook Sector Plan, adopted and approved in January 2009, and the proximate White Flint Sector Plan, adopted and approved in March 2010, both of which are part of the same North Bethesda Master Plan. As the Planning Board and Council are aware, the recommendations for higher density, mixed-use zoning to encourage transit-oriented development in Twinbrook and White Flint were implemented and these areas are emerging as transit-oriented areas from the previous low-density commercial and industrial character. In the context of the immediately adjoining properties in Twinbrook at higher densities and the properties in White Flint (and pending White Flint 2) that are similarly situated as the Halpine Properties insofar as Metro proximity, the Halpine Minor Amendment is necessary to similarly review the opportunities for improved transit-oriented land use recommendations and zoning classifications that incorporate a comprehensive review of community facilities and amenities. The Exhibits included with this Application show the relationship and context of the Halpine Properties with the Twinbrook Sector Plan and Twinbrook Metro station, and demonstrate the similar transit-oriented context of the Halpine Minor Amendment with the White Flint Sector Plan (and pending White Flint 2 Plan) – as well as highlight the significantly limited nature of the Halpine Minor Amendment on single-family neighborhoods in comparison.

In addition to the North Bethesda Master Plan context, the Halpine Minor Amendment is necessary in the context of the current R-30 zoning classification for most of the Halpine Properties to provide a review of a more appropriate and dynamic zoning classification that will provide the opportunity to advance numerous land use objectives of the County and provide public benefits for the community. The limited density of 15 units an acre permitted in the R-30

zone that may have been appropriate in the 1960s and 1970s before the Twinbrook Metro Station was constructed and before the Twinbrook Sector Plan was created and amended most recently in 2009, does not provide a feasible opportunity for redevelopment.

**2. Identify the area for which an amendment is being requested. You must specify the land area for which an amendment is requested, including any of the following:**

- **property addresses**
- **a master / sector plan boundary**
- **a zoning boundary**
- **a detailed map identifying property boundaries**

The property addresses and corresponding tax identification numbers for the Halpine Properties are provided below. As shown on the Exhibits attached and below, the area of the Halpine Minor Amendment consists of approximately 58 acres and has natural boundaries of Viers Mill Road to the North, the City of Rockville, Twinbrook Parkway and the Twinbrook Sector Plan boundary to the west and south, and Rock Creek Park and Parklawn Cemetery to the east. The area of the Halpine Minor Amendment is truly neighborhood in character and scale- at approximately 58 acres, the Halpine Properties are less than 10% of the total area of the North Bethesda Master Plan (approximately 5,900 acres), and significantly less than the 153 acres of the Twinbrook Sector Plan, the 430 acres of the White Flint Sector Plan, and the 452 acres of the White Flint 2 Sector Plan.

Halpine Park LLC – Parcels N640, N600, N870; 5508 Dowgate Ct., 13001 Twinbrook Parkway, and 12813 Twinbrook Parkway; Tax ID Nos. 04-54480, 0400054478, 04-00054467.

HOC – Parcel N753; 12901 Twinbrook Parkway; Tax ID No. 04-00052457.

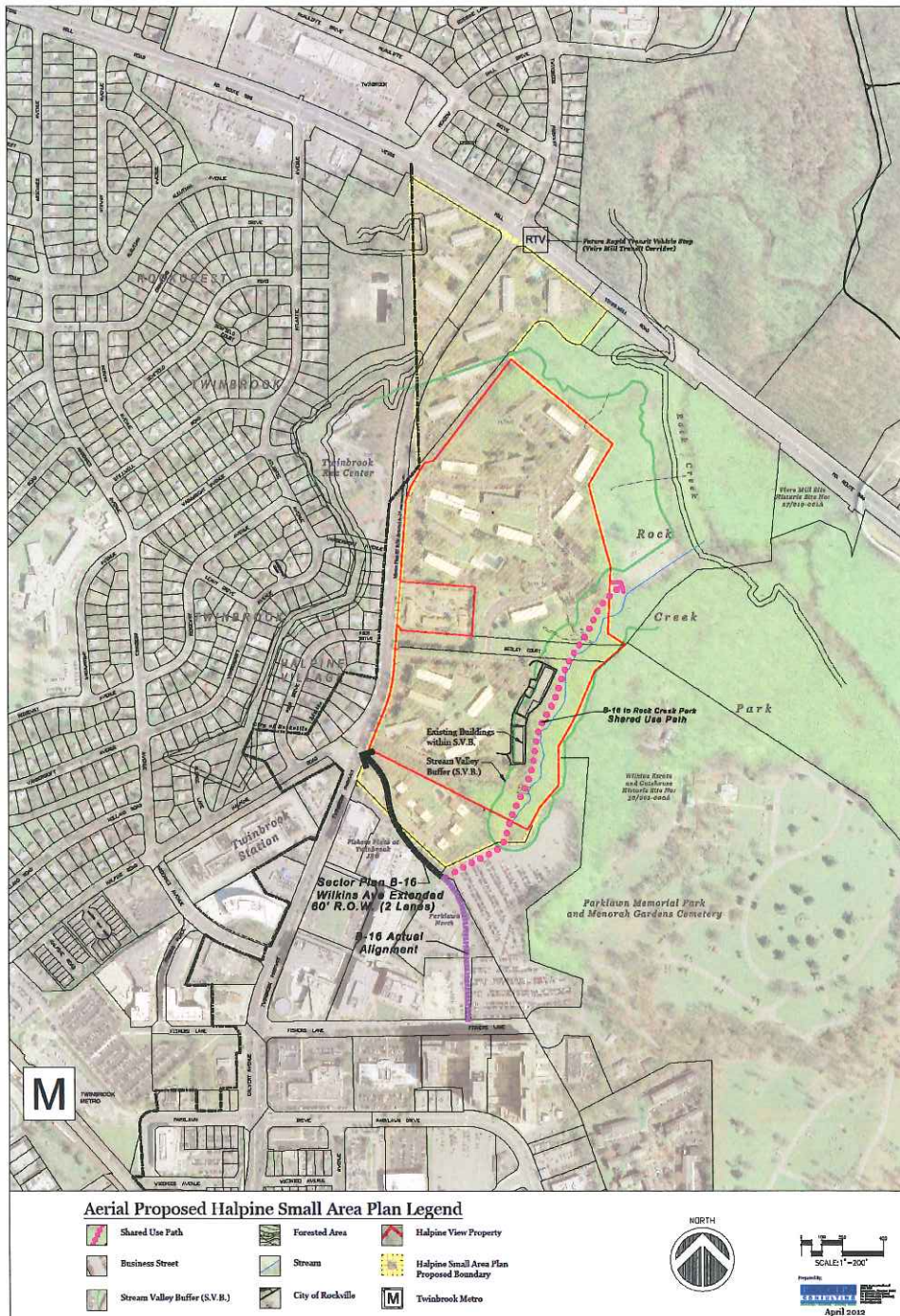
MHP Twinbrook LLC- Parcel N970; 5501 Halpine Place; Tax ID No. 04-00049142.

Bullis Tract LLC – Parcels N 320 and N370; 13200 and 13201 Twinbrook Parkway; Tax ID Nos. 04-00055176, 04-00055187.

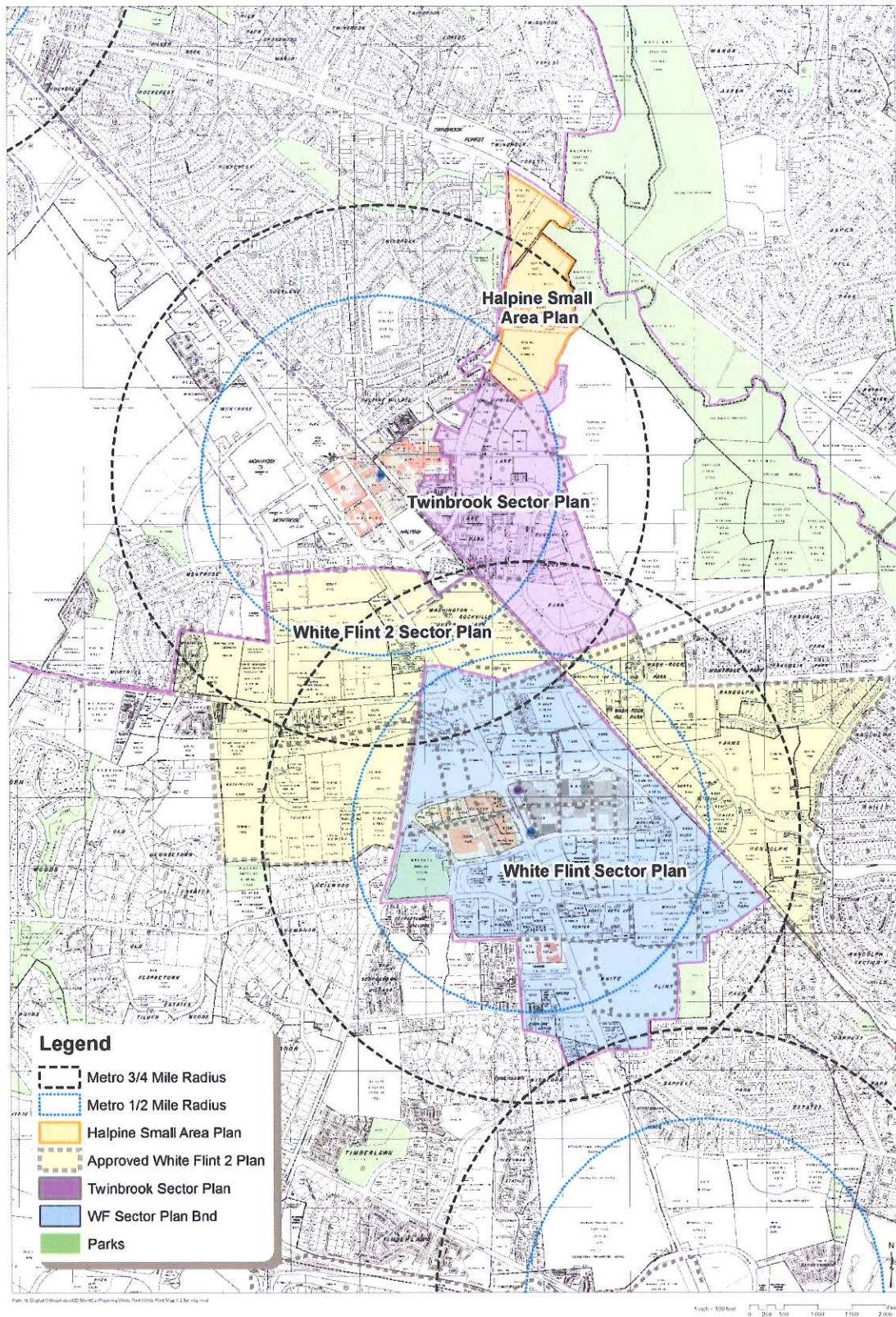














**3. Describe how the requested amendment benefits the public and what impacts might be anticipated as a result of the application.**

The proposed Halpine Minor Amendment to the North Bethesda Master Plan will benefit the public with a comprehensive planning approach to the potential future redevelopment of the properties over the next 20 years. While piecemeal zoning applications can certainly provide these public benefits, the comprehensive approach with the Halpine Properties will improve the ability to address affordable housing, neighborhood transitions, transportation improvements and community benefits, and is consistent with the long-term vision of the owners of the Halpine Properties.

As part of the comprehensive planning approach, it is anticipated that there will be the opportunity to:

- 1) Create and preserve more transit-oriented affordable housing, particularly in consideration of: the potential for collaboration with the unique neighboring property owners of HOC and MHP, the ability to create restricted affordable units on properties where no restricted units exist today, and the location of the Halpine Properties to provide a mix of housing types (including more affordable housing types and construction than right at Metro);
- 2) Improve, reduce and align the intersections along Twinbrook Parkway and create greener and safer pedestrian connections;
- 3) Improve vehicular and pedestrian connections to the employment center of Twinbrook with more connectivity and grid street alignment;
- 4) Provide forest conservation and stormwater management facilities that currently do not exist;
- 5) Remove structures that are currently located in stream valley buffers, consolidate numerous surface parking lots into structured parking, utilize environmental site design features, and participate in stream restoration efforts;
- 6) Connect to planned hiker-biker trail connections to Rock Creek Regional Park;
- 7) Implement comprehensive planning and design to provide compatible and desired transitions from neighboring properties; and
- 8) Implement comprehensive transportation improvements and connect residents with the Twinbrook Metro Station and future Rapid Transit.

**4. Identify the master or sector plan for which the amendment is requested and how the requested amendment advances current land use objectives, including but not limited to:**

- **providing needed housing and affordable housing**

The Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the opportunity to address the recommendations of the North Bethesda Master Plan to preserve and increase the variety of housing stock, including affordable housing. The location of the Halpine Properties is unique in that it can both provide a variety of housing types and affordable housing in a location where it is desired and feasible. More housing is desired in this location because it is a 10-15 minute walk from Metro, immediately adjacent to a significant employment hub and emerging transit oriented area with convenient retail and restaurants, and adjacent to the natural resource (and recreation opportunities) of Rock Creek Park. The affordable housing is more feasible to develop in this location because of the likelihood of a variety of housing types and buildings at a lower scale than those in higher density areas immediately adjacent to Metro.

The units in the Halpine Properties in the R-30 zone (except those owned by HOC and MHP) are all currently market rate units that do not have any restrictions on the income of the tenants and collect rent generally above the maximum rates for restricted affordable units in new developments. While these existing units may be currently more “affordable” than new high-rise construction, they are not as affordable as restricted units and not necessarily leased to the tenants that would qualify for affordable housing.

The R-30 zoned Halpine Properties currently contain approximately 655 units, which is less than a density of 15 units an acre. Put in perspective, this density is *less than half* the standard method density of a CBD 0.5 zone located on the borders of CBD zones next to single-family homes, *over a third less* than the densities the Council just approved for the border CRN properties in the Kensington Sector Plan next to single-family homes, and *over a third less* than the densities the Council approved for properties the same distance from Metro in the White Flint Sector Plan (that are adjacent to single-family homes). The Halpine Minor Amendment provides the opportunity to eliminate this inconsistency in land use recommendations for transit area properties.

The Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the opportunity to create more housing in this area that is currently underserved given its location proximate to transit and employment, and more housing that will be generally more affordable than the high rise construction immediately adjacent to the Metro Station at much higher densities. Further, the Halpine Minor Amendment will create the possibility for more restricted affordable housing, not just through MPDU requirements, but also through comprehensive recommendations that consider the unique opportunities for potential collaboration with the private owners and the properties owned by HOC and/or MHP in the future.

- **improving the jobs-housing ratio**



Improving the jobs-housing ratio was an issue raised during the review of the Twinbrook Plan, particularly by HOC, because of the lack of certainty on whether sites in that employment area (outside the City of Rockville boundary) would redevelop with residential uses. Indeed, the renewal of the lease for the Parklawn Building (also known as the HHS Building) and the new GSA lease for a new research office building in Twinbrook are maintaining and adding jobs on sites that were envisioned as potential housing sites. Subsequent to the Twinbrook Plan, this area of the County was identified in the “Montgomery County Snapshot” as the area (District 3, adjacent to District 1) with highest number of jobs and second highest in the number of employers, but had the lowest number of residential units in the pipeline. (See, “Montgomery County Snapshot, Council Districts by the Numbers” at [http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/research/documents/Databookfinal\\_web.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/research/documents/Databookfinal_web.pdf).) The Halpine Minor Amendment will provide the opportunity to improve the jobs-housing balance in the greater Twinbrook area, which will address other benefits such as improved commuting patterns.

- **public benefits**

In addition to the public benefits more specifically listed above and below, the Halpine Minor Amendment will advance the land use objectives to:

- 1) Provide a review of community serving facilities in the area and potential improvements, such as improved connections to the Twinbrook Recreation Center and Rock Creek Park and/or the provision of additional community spaces;
- 2) Address existing environmental concerns, such as removal of buildings in stream valley buffers (See, Aerial Exhibit), the provision of stormwater management facilities and forest conservation measures where they currently do not exist, consolidate numerous existing surface parking lots, utilize environmental site design and sustainable building principles, and assist with the desired stream restoration in adjacent park; and
- 3) Improve the vehicular and pedestrian connections and facilitate comprehensive transportation improvements in the area, such as reducing and aligning the intersections along Twinbrook Parkway with create greener and safer pedestrian connections, improving the connectivity to the employment center of Twinbrook, the Metro Station and to future rapid Transit with a more grid street alignment and feasible road and sidewalk connections, and creating more community recreation and transit access to the planned hiker-biker trail connections to Rock Creek Regional Park (See, Aerial Exhibit); and
- 4) Review the potential for new zoning classifications that would incorporate public benefits with any future residential redevelopment, such as the new family of CR zones.



- **improved transit commuting**

The Halpine Minor Amendment would address the land use objective of improved transit commuting by improving the jobs and housing balance referenced above, and also by improving actual connections to transit within the Halpine and Twinbrook area with intersection alignments and improvements along Twinbrook Parkway, providing new and improved pedestrian corridors and connections (including hiker-biker trail connections), and potentially participating in future mitigation improvements such as rapid transit vehicle stops.

- **enhancement of existing and small businesses**

Although the vision for the Halpine Properties is primarily residential, the Halpine Minor Amendment would provide the opportunity incorporate recommendations for neighborhood serving convenience retail and businesses where appropriate.

- **using existing infrastructure for sustainable growth**

The Halpine Properties have the existing infrastructure of the road and transit network and the community resource and environmental infrastructure of Rock Creek Park and new trail connections, which infrastructure could be enhanced over the next 20 years and improved for sustainable growth. Further, long term redevelopment based on a comprehensive plan of the neighborhood, not piecemeal zoning applications, would provide the opportunity for comprehensive planning for sustainable growth in this area.

- **transitions to existing neighborhoods**

The ability to provide logical and successful transitions to existing neighborhoods is a primary benefit of reviewing the Halpine Properties comprehensively, and not be piecemeal zoning applications. In addition to recommendations that would provide transitions (of structures and density) and aligned intersections and connections to the single-family community across Twinbrook Parkway, the Halpine Minor Amendment would provide the opportunity to review transitions within the Halpine Properties themselves, to provide appropriate transitions and connections to the employment center of Twinbrook, and to provide a transition to Rock Creek Park that opens up this resource for the community.

- **meeting changing demographics or economic trends**

As mentioned above regarding the changes in zoning and character that have been recommended and implemented in the adjacent Twinbrook Sector Plan and White Flint Plan areas, the Halpine Minor Amendment would provide the opportunity to similarly update the recommendations for the Halpine Properties to address the new focus on redevelopment opportunities in these transit-



oriented areas within 10-15 minute walk of Metro that can also provide more variety and affordability of housing alternatives.

**5. What zoning changes are necessary to implement the amendment being requested?**

The requested Halpine Minor Amendment would likely result in recommendations for a new Euclidean zoning classification for at least the MHP, Halpine Park LLC and HOC portions of the Halpine Properties that are currently in the R-30 zone. It is anticipated that the new zoning classification would provide more of a gradual transition in density from the adjacent Twinbrook properties, more clarity of the redevelopment parameters, more opportunities for affordable housing and flexibility for neighborhood serving retail, and more meaningful community amenities.

**6. Identify interested parties relevant to your application. For small geographic areas, include the content of property owners for the subject property. For larger areas, include any materials to indicate who has been contacted and any relevant correspondence.**

The owners of the Halpine Properties – Halpine Park LLC, HOC, MHP and Rock Creek Woods- are the primary interested parties relevant to this Application and all are either part of this Application or consent to the Halpine Minor Amendment process. As part of an earlier piecemeal pre-application submitted for just the Halpine Park LLC property in 2011, representatives met and/or spoke with representatives from the Twinbrook Citizen's Association, the City of Rockville, and Parklawn North Lot LLC (via the JBG Companies). As discussed with the neighbors in the context of that application, the owners of the Halpine Properties would expect and appreciate their participation and insights in any charrette or discussions that would occur as part of the Halpine Minor Amendment.

**7. Do you consider traffic volumes or transit patterns to be a major consideration in your application and if so, how do you propose to address those concerns?**

No, the collection of traffic information for the Halpine Minor Amendment should not be a significant issue or burden for Planning Staff because of the recent collection of intersection (traffic counts at 16 intersections) and transportation facility information for the Halpine Park LLC pre-application (Traffic Study attached with this Application), which included 1,642 new units and 9,350 square feet of retail (which is the density likely to be achieved with the consideration of the entire 58 acres of the Halpine Properties). In fact, one of the primary benefits of the proposed Halpine Minor Amendment is the opportunity to provide a comprehensive review and prioritization of the off-site transportation improvements listed in the Planning Staff report for the Halpine Park LLC pre-application submission (dated October 27, 2011 and located at:

[http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20111027\\_HalpineViewStaffReportFinal.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20111027_HalpineViewStaffReportFinal.pdf). Further, the Halpine Minor Amendment provides the opportunity to analyze



and prioritize other transportation improvements that would be desired over the course of 20-years with potential redevelopment that would stem from the larger property area of the Halpine Properties and connections to the Twinbrook area and potential rapid transit on Viers Mill Road.

**8. Has your request been the subject of a previous master plan amendment, rezoning, zoning text amendment or similar application?**

Yes, as mentioned above, the Halpine Minor Amendment was actually first recommended by the Planning Staff during the review of the Twinbrook Sector Plan Amendment in December 2007. At that time, the owners of the Halpine Properties requested to be included in the Twinbrook Sector Plan boundary. However, the Planning Staff, Planning Board and Council recommended a limited master plan amendment for the Halpine Properties instead as a more practicable way to amend this small portion of the North Bethesda Master Plan. The Halpine Minor Amendment was also recently discussed in October 2011 in the context of the public hearing for Pre-Application Plan No. 720110090 submitted by Halpine Park LLC as a more appropriate means to provide a truly comprehensive review of how the area should evolve over the next 20 years and to provide more meaningful opportunities for affordable housing, cohesive planned development, transportation improvements and public amenities.

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