

Master Plan Review

ASPEN HILL

Approved and Adopted
April 2004



BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Montgomery County Council directed the Planning Department to undertake a comprehensive zoning ordinance rewrite. Last rewritten in 1977, the current 1,200 + page code is viewed as antiquated and hard to use with standards that have failed to keep pace with modern development practices.

With only about four percent of land in the County available for greenfield development, the new zoning code can play a crucial role in guiding redevelopment to areas like surface parking lots and strip shopping centers. An updated zoning code is important for achieving the kind of growth Montgomery County policymakers and residents want.

Initial sections of the new code were drafted by Code Studio, a zoning consultant. These drafts were subsequently analyzed and edited by planners based on feedback from the Zoning Advisory Panel (a citizen panel appointed by the Planning Board to weigh in on the project's direction), county agency representatives, residents and other stakeholders. In September 2012, planning staff began the release of a draft code in sections accompanied by a report highlighting changes from the current code. The staff drafts were reviewed at length by the Planning Board.



The Planning Board held worksessions and public hearings between September of 2012 and May of 2013. On May 2, they transmitted their draft to the County Council. The Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee held worksessions during the summer and sent the draft to the full Council in December 2013. The full Council held worksessions in January 2014 and adopted the text of the new code in March. Work on the proposed map amendment continues.

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

An important aspect of the Zoning Rewrite process is the potential simplification of 123 existing zones into about 30 proposed zones. While some of the proposed zones are a direct one-to-one translation of existing zones, others are the result of combining existing zones with similar standards. Additionally, existing zones that are not currently mapped or are no longer used in the County have been eliminated from the proposed code. Through the implementation process, Montgomery County aims to simplify the number of zones, eliminate redundancy, and clarify development standards. A full translation table for all zones can be found in the documents section of our website: www.zoningmontgomery.org.

Agricultural, Residential, and Industrial Zone Implementation:

For agricultural and rural zones, the existing zones will be translated to proposed zones on a one-to-one basis, with the exception of the Low Density Rural Cluster zone which is not currently used in the County and will be eliminated.

Many of the existing residential zones will remain the same. Other residential zones will be combined with existing zones that have similar development standards. The R-4Plex zone, which is not currently mapped anywhere in the county, will be removed from the proposed code.

Implementation of Industrial zones will combine similar zones (Rural Service, I-1, and R+D) into the proposed Industrial Moderate (IM) zone. The existing heavy industrial zone (I-2) will be renamed as the Industrial Heavy (IH) zone.

Examples:



Commercial and Mixed-Use Zone Implementation:

Parcels located in the existing Commercial, Mixed-use, Central Business District (CBD), and Transit Station zones will be translated into one of the proposed Commercial/Residential (CR) or Employment (E) Zones using a two-tiered process.

First, decisions about specific parcels in these zones were based on recommendations within the Master Plan. Planning staff reviewed each Master Plan in the County. When the Master Plan provided specific recommendations about allowed density, height, or mix of uses for individual commercial or mixed-use parcels, those recommendations were used to build the formula of the proposed zone. This ensures consistency with currently allowed density and height, and helps codify Master Plan recommendations in a parcel-specific manner.

Second, if the Master Plan did not make specific recommendations, the current zone changed to a proposed zone on a one-to-one basis or the proposed zone was determined using a specific standardized decision tree (*see example below*). The standardized decision tree translates existing zones by considering each specific parcel's proximity to single-family neighborhoods or other factors. The goal of the implementation decision tree is to retain currently allowed heights and densities and maintain context sensitivity.

Example: C-1 Convenience Commercial



PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Aspen Hill Master Plan was approved and adopted in April 2004. The Master Plan reinforces the primarily suburban and residential character of Aspen Hill, seeks to increase opportunities for community interaction, and promotes diverse recreation and transportation options for community residents and workers.

To support its vision for Aspen Hill, the Master Plan makes key recommendations for each of the five areas: Land Use, Transportation, Environment, and Historic Resources and Facilities. In the area of Land Use, the Master Plan recommends returning the former Vitro site to office use in the long term, continuing the existing office use of the Lee Development Group site, transforming the right-of-way for the former Rockville Facility to green space, and permitting appropriate infill development.

The Plan's transportation element recommends creating a multi-use trail system to function as a recreational and commuting resource, promoting a hiker-biker connection from Rock Creek Park to Northwest Branch Park, and providing incentives to reduce vehicular trips. The Master Plan also provides environmental recommendations that advocate for protecting stream valleys, wetlands, and forested areas through development regulations; implementing stormwater management retrofits of developed sites; and expanding recycling programs for multi-family and non-residential developments.

In the areas of Historic Resources and Facilities, the Master Plan promotes preserving the community's historic and architectural resources. The Plan also recommends providing adequate funding for the upkeep of recreational facilities, allowing child day care facilities in the non-age restricted portion of the PRC zone, and supporting a separate zip code for Aspen Hill to increase community identity.



***Aspen Hill's National Capital Trolley
Museum***

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The Aspen Hill Planning Area currently has 25 zones: 15 Residential, 1 Mixed-Use, 5 Commercial, and 4 Planned Development.

Existing Residential:

RE-1: Detached Unit, Single-Family
RE-1/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family
RE-2: Detached Unit, Single-Family
RE-2/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-150/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-150: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-200: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-60: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-60/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-90: Detached Unit, Single-Family
RT-8: Townhouse, Single-Family
RT-12.5: Townhouse, Single-Family
R-20: Multi-Family, Medium Density
R-30: Multi-Family, Low Density
R-H: Multi-Family, High-Rise Planned

Existing Commercial

C-1: Convenience Commercial
C-2: General Commercial
C-O: Commercial, Office Building
C-T: Commercial, Transitional
O-M: Office Building, Moderate Intensity

Existing Mixed-Use:

RMX-2C: Residential Mixed Use

Existing Planned Development

PD-2: Planned Development
PD-3: Planned Development
PD-7: Planned Development
PRC: Planned Retirement Community

Standard Implementation:

The existing RE-1 and RE-1/TDR will translate to the proposed RE-1 zone. The existing RE-2 and RE-2/TDR will translate to the proposed RE-2 zone. The existing R-150, R-150/TDR, and R-200 zones will be combined to form the proposed R-200 zone. The existing R-60 and R-60/TDR will translate to the proposed R-60 zone. The existing R-90 will remain R-90. All existing TDR zones will have a new TDR Overlay zone.

The existing RT-8 will remain RT-8 (Townhouse) zone and the existing RT-12.5 will remain RT-12.5 (Townhouse) zone. The R-20, R-30, and R-H will remain.

The existing Planned Development PD-2, PD-3, and PD-7 zones will remain. The PRC zone will remain PRC.

The existing Commercial and Mixed-Use zones will translate to the specific proposed EOF (Employment Office), NR (Neighborhood Retail), CRN (Commercial Residential), and CRT (Commercial Residential Town) zones using both the standard translation criteria and specific Master Plan recommendations. Commercial and Mixed-Use parcels that do not have specific Master Plan recommendations will translate to the proposed zone based on the standard zoning translation table.

NON-STANDARD CONVERSIONS

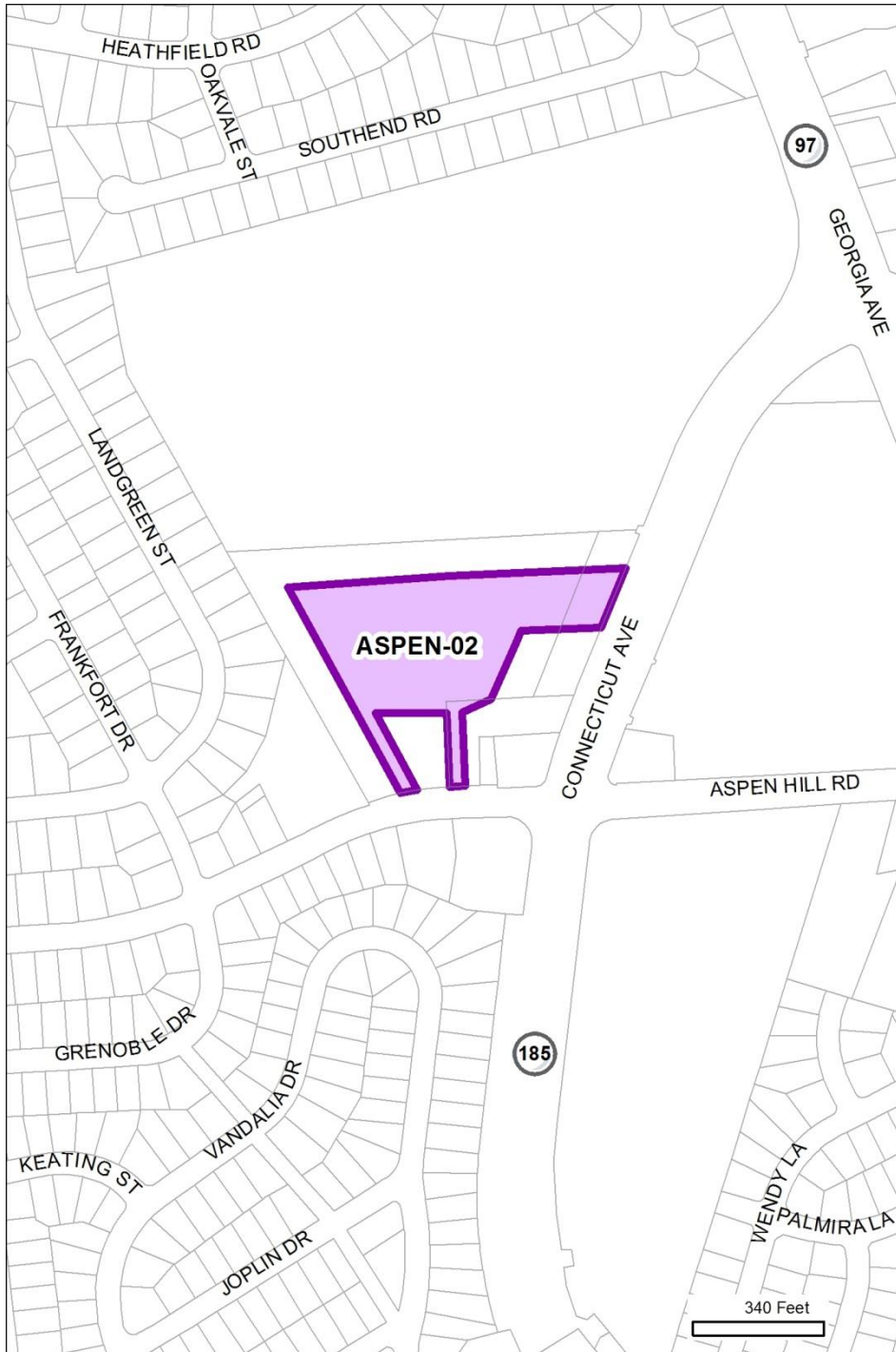
In some cases, properties were not converted using the standard conversions as outlined earlier in the packet.

Generally, this is because the relevant Master or Sector Plan made recommendations regarding the appropriate density, height, or mix of uses on a given site.

In other cases, the text of the zoning ordinance or an overlay zone can affect the development potential of a site, and therefore affect the conversion given as part of the draft proposed DMA.

Additionally, the PHED Committee instructed that, when requested by a property owner, existing site approvals be reflected in the draft proposed DMA. Non-standard conversions sometimes reflect these project approvals.

The following pages will give detail on all of the non-standard conversions in this plan area.



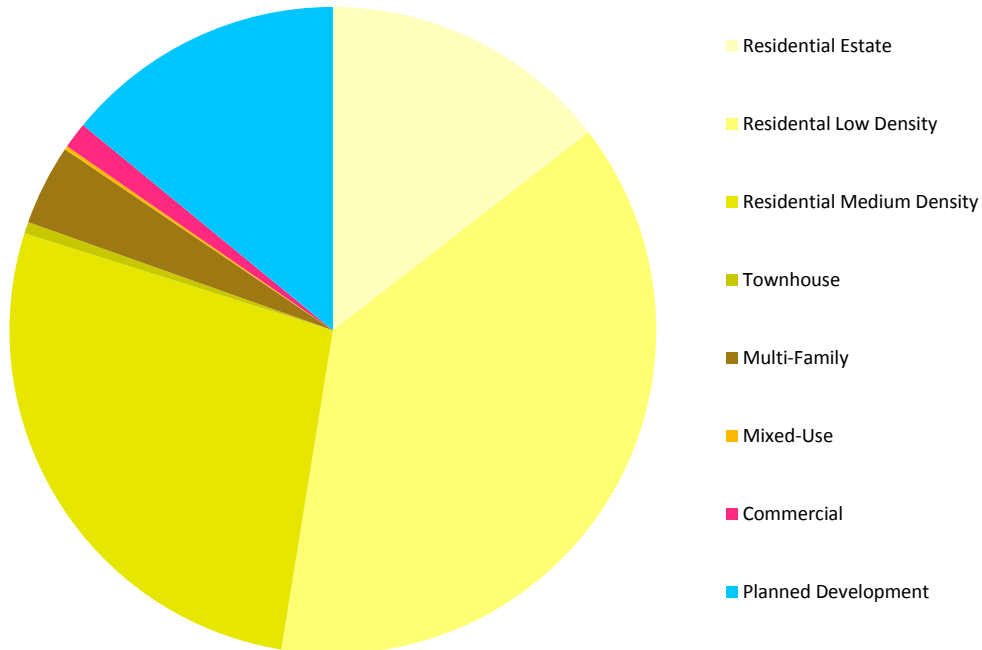
MP Number:		ASPEN-02
Master Plan:		Aspen Hill
Location:		Connecticut Ave & Aspen Hill Rd
Existing Zone:		C-O
Standard Conv:		EOF-3.0 H-100
Proposed Conv:		EOF-3.0 H-60
Modifications	Zone Group:	No change
	Overall FAR:	No change
	Comm'l FAR:	-
	Resid'l FAR:	-
	Height:	Reduced to 60'
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
Aspen Hill Master Plan: Page 46-47 <i>"No structure, excluding building mechanics, should be higher than two stories above the existing structure [which is 3 stories in height]"</i> .		

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

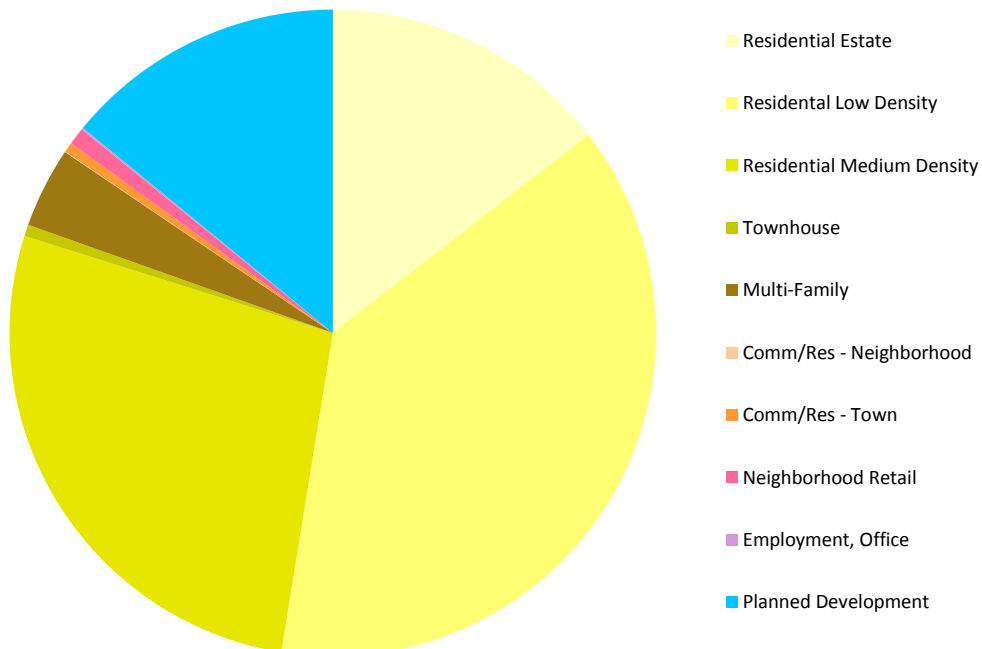
Aspen Hill					
Existing			Proposed		
Zone	Acres	Percent	Zone	Acres	Percent
RE-1	30.63	0.42	RE-1	45.95	0.61
RE-1/TDR	15.32	0.21			
RE-2	952.54	13.18	RE-2	1,002.81	13.88
RE-2/TDR	50.27	0.70			
R-150	193.52	2.68	R-200	2,750.62	38.05
R-150/TDR	12.04	0.17			
R-200	2,545.06	35.20			
R-60	634.32	8.77	R-60	635.49	8.79
R-60/TDR	1.17	0.02			
R-90	1,338.02	18.51	R-90	1338.02	18.51
RT-8	5.27	0.07	RT-8	5.27	0.07
RT-12.5	36.51	0.51	RT-12.5	36.51	0.51
R-20	238.21	3.29	R-20	238.21	3.29
R-30	33.14	0.46	R-30	33.14	0.46
R-H	19.84	0.27	R-H	19.84	0.27
RMX-2C	13.21	0.18	CRT-2.0 C-0.5 R-1.5 H-65 T	13.21	0.18
C-1	66.11	0.91	CRT-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	1.08	0.01
			CRT-1.0 C-0.75 R-0.5 H-45	2.89	0.04
			NR-1.0 H-45	62.14	0.86
C-2	19.17	0.27	CRT-2.25 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-45	2.89	0.04
			CRT-2.25 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-75	16.28	0.23
C-O	5.13	0.07	EOF-3.0 H-60	5.13	0.07
C-T	1.79	0.02	CRN-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	1.79	0.02
O-M	2.06	0.03	EOF-1.5 H-60	0.88	0.01
			EOF-1.5 H-75	1.18	0.02
PD-2	14.28	0.20	PD-2	14.28	0.20
PD-3	26.70	0.37	PD-3	26.70	0.37
PD-7	28.09	0.39	PD-7	28.09	0.39
PRC	947.17	13.10	PRC	947.17	13.10
Grand Total	7,229.57		Grand Total	7,229.57	

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

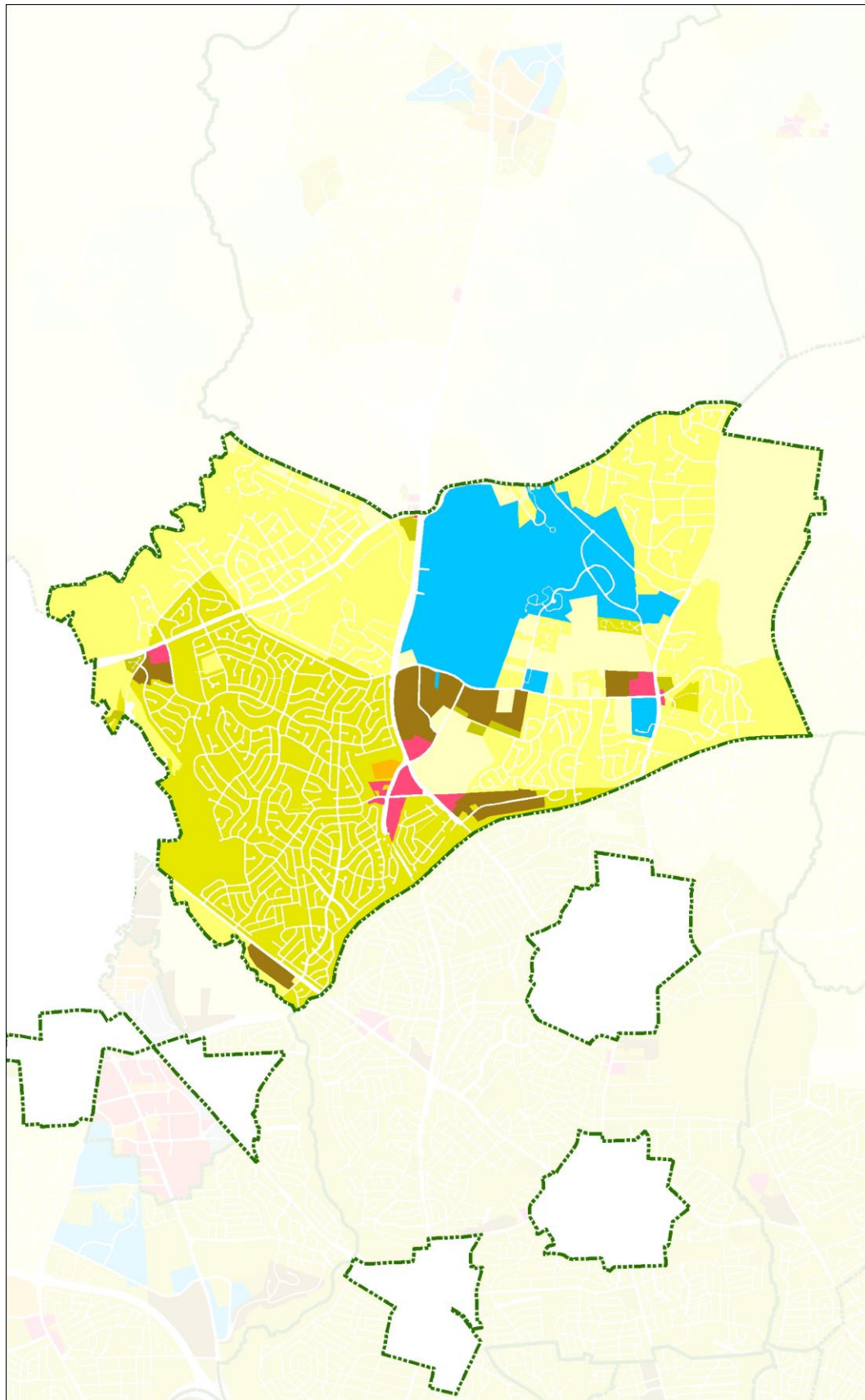
Aspen Hill: Existing Zoning



Aspen Hill: Proposed Zoning



EXISTING ZONING MAP



Existing Zones

- Residential Estate**
 - RE-1
 - RE-1/TDR
 - RE-2
 - RE-2/TDR

- Residential Low Density**
 - R-150
 - R-200
 - R-200/TDR

- Residential Medium Density**
 - R-60
 - R-60/TDR
 - R-90

- Townhouse**
 - RT-8
 - RT-12.5

- Multi-Family**
 - R-H
 - R-20
 - R-30

- Commercial**
 - C-1
 - C-2
 - C-T
 - C-O
 - O-M

- Mixed-Use**
 - RMX-2C

- Planned Development**
 - PD-2
 - PD-3
 - PD-7
 - PRC

PROPOSED ZONING MAP

Proposed Zones

- Residential Estate**
RE-1
RE-2

- Residential Low Density**
R-200

- Residential Medium Density**
R-60
R-90

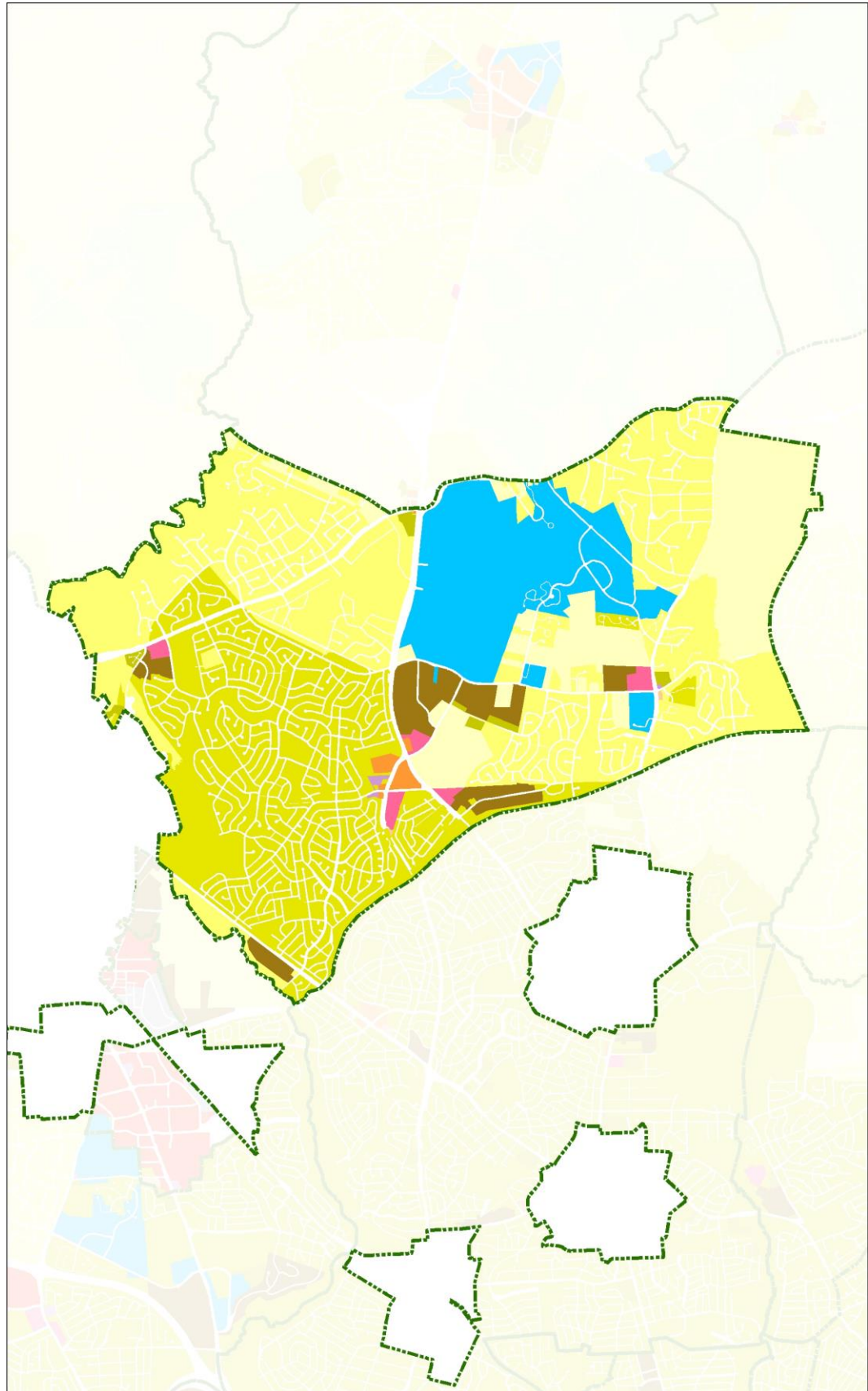
- Townhouse**
RT-8
RT-12.5

- Multi-Family**
R-H
R-20
R-30

- Comm/Res-Neighborhood**
CRN
- Comm/Res-Town**
CRT

- Neighborhood Retail**
NR
- Employment, Office**
EOF

- Planned Development**
PD-2
PD-3
PD-7
PRC



PLANNING AREA CONTEXT

