

Master Plan Review

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

Approved and Adopted 1998



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 Council adopted the text of the new code in March and adopted the new zoning map in July 2014.

The new code and map will go into effect on October 30, 2014.

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



FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Friendship Heights Sector Plan was approved and adopted in 1998. The Plan establishes recommendations in four areas of Land Use, Neighborhood Preservation, Transportation, and Open Space and Environment.

Land Use:

- Concentrate new growth in the Metro-served area while preserving surrounding neighborhoods
- Enhance the Town Center by adding mixed land uses on major redevelopable parcels to integrate the different parts of Friendship Heights
- Provide new places for social gathering on the Hecht's and Chevy Chase Land Company sites to reinforce community
- Enhance Wisconsin Avenue as a shopping boulevard by expanding opportunities for retail on the Hecht's site and along Wisconsin Avenue on the Chevy Chase Land Company site
- Support neighborhood-serving retail at the Chevy Chase Center
- Provide opportunities for additional office development on the Hecht's, Chevy Chase Land Company, and GEICO sites, including replacing the existing GEICO office building
- Provide housing opportunities on the Hecht's and GEICO sites

Neighborhood Preservation

- Create a new residential neighborhood of townhouses and low-rise apartments on part of the GEICO site
- Preserve views from existing high-rise apartment buildings by incorporating guidelines for the height and location of new development, and by tree preservation and planting
- Protect single-family residential neighborhoods surrounding the Sector Plan



Wisconsin Place in Friendship Heights

Transportation

- Improve access to the Metro station by providing direct pedestrian connections, enhance access for people with disabilities, short-term parking and taxi facilities on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue, and a neighborhood shuttle service
- Create a Transportation Management District, an entity whose structure would encourage use of transit
- Create a bikeway network for commuters and recreational users with additional bicycle storage at the Metro station
- Improve the pedestrian environment with safer streets and pedestrian crossings

Open Space and Environmental Protection

- Provide a major public park on the Hecht's site
- Provide urban parks and plazas in the Town Center on the Chevy Chase Land Company and Barlow sites
- Provide other small green open spaces to complement the promenades and create quiet seating areas on the GEICO and Hecht's sites
- Create a new neighborhood park on Parcel 6 in the Village of Friendship Heights, expanding Brookdale Park, and adding other open spaces on the GEICO site
- Preserve and extend greenways on the edges of the Sector Plan area for visual screening, pedestrian and bicycle paths, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection
- Improve water quality and quantity control through on-site and/or regional stormwater management facilities
- Improve long-term regional air quality through Metro-centered development and shift from single-occupant vehicles
- Implement the County agricultural preservation policy through the use of transferable development rights (TDRs) on the GEICO site

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The Friendship Heights Planning Area currently has 6 zones: 3 Residential, 2 Central Business District (CBD) and 1 Transit Station zone.

Existing Residential:

R-60: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-60/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family
R-H: Multi-Family, High-Rise Planned

Existing CBD:

CBD-1: Central Business District
CBD-2: Central Business District

Existing Transit Station

TS-M: Transit Station, Mixed

Standard Translation:

The existing R-60 and R-60 TDR will combine into R-60. The existing R-H zone will remain R-H. The R-60/TDR properties will be incorporated into a new TDR Overlay zone.

The existing CBD and Transit Station zones will be translated to the specific proposed CR (Commercial Residential) using the standard translation criteria, specific Master Plan recommendations, or project approvals. CBD zones that do not have specific Master Plan recommendations will translate to the proposed zone based on the standard zoning translation table. The TS-M properties will be converted to the CR zone using non-standard conversions based on project approvals.

NON-STANDARD CONVERSIONS

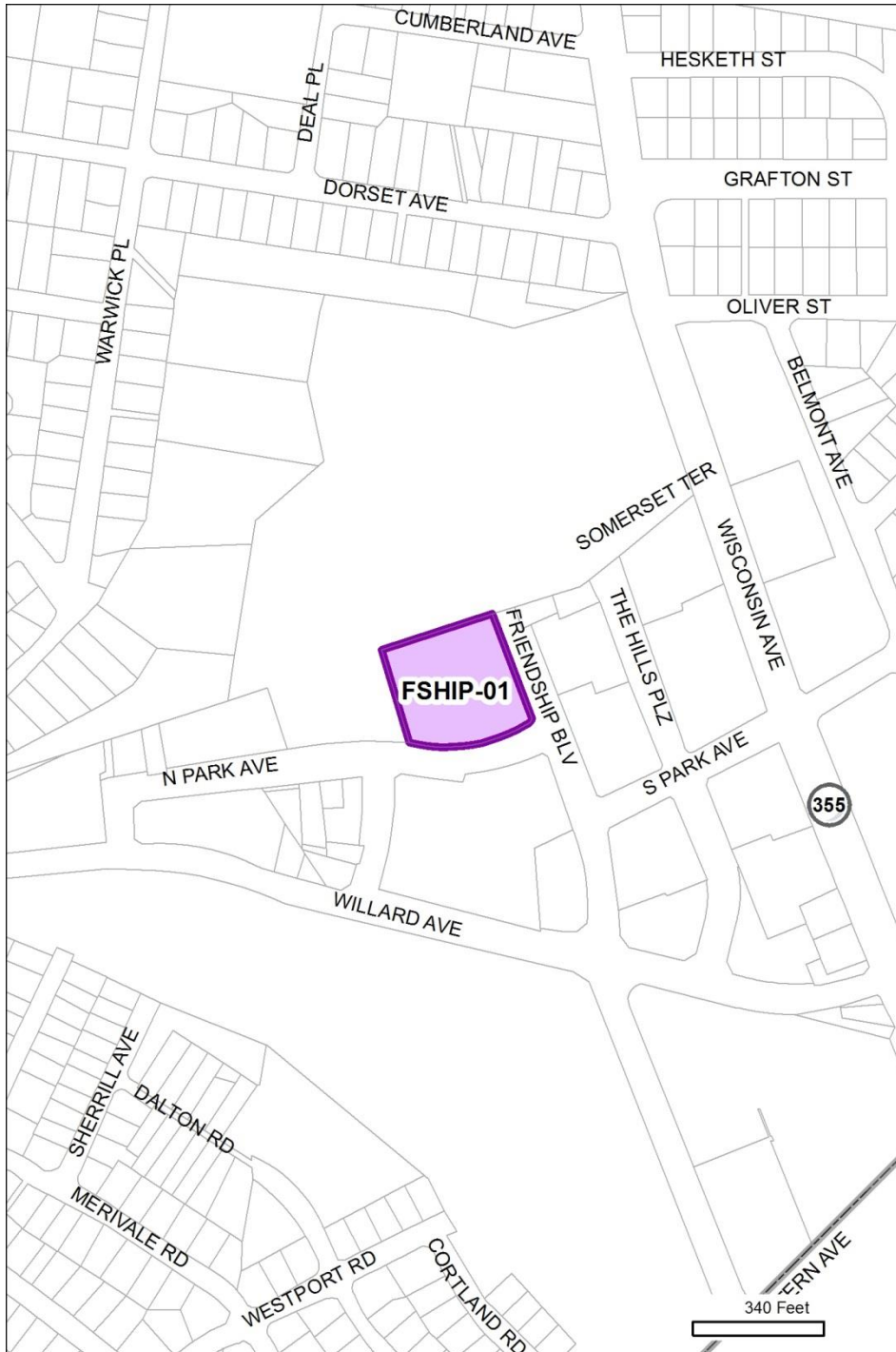
In some cases, properties were not converted using the standard conversions as outlined earlier in the packet.

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.

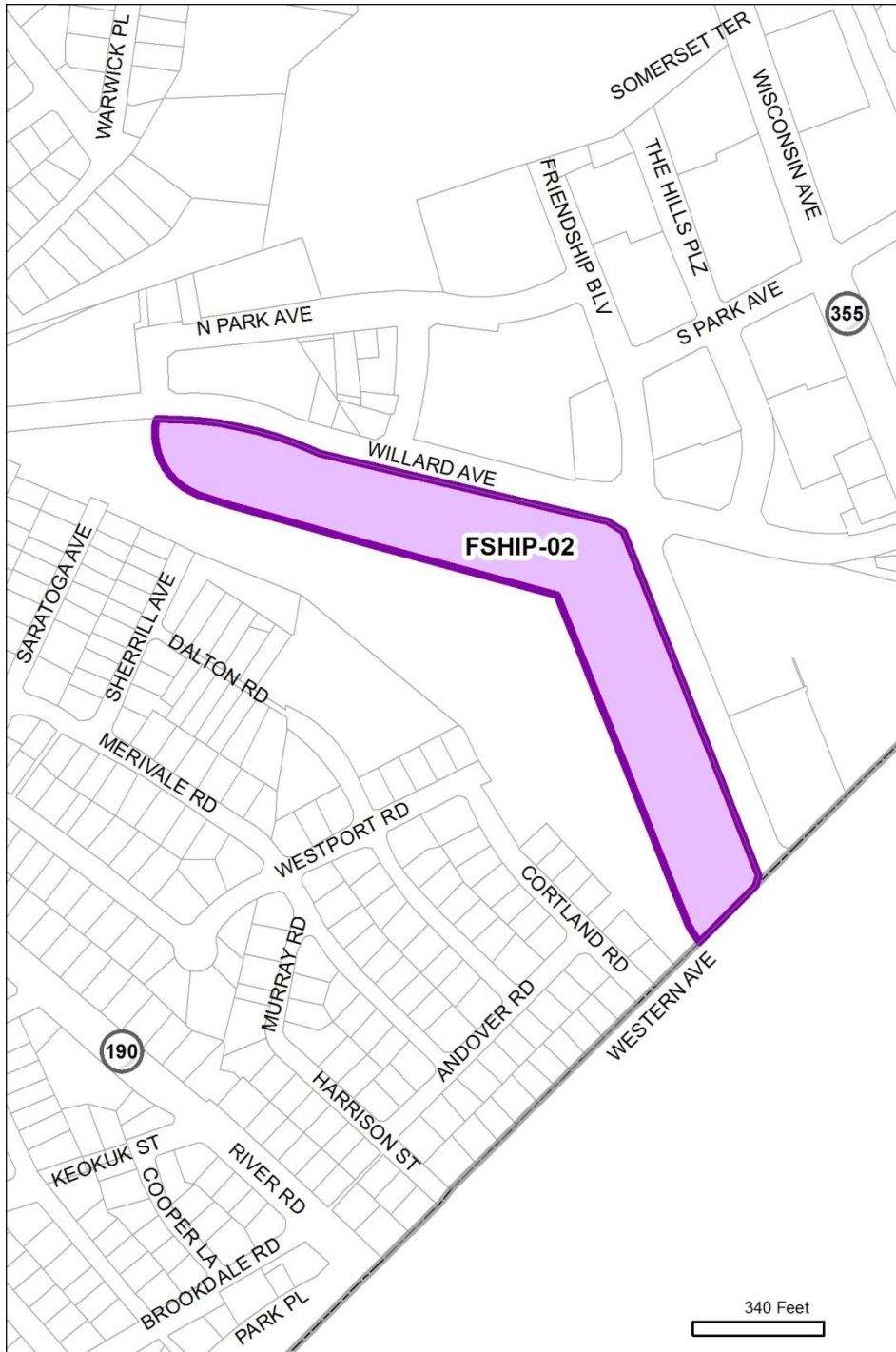
In other cases, the text of the zoning ordinance or an overlay zone can affect the development potential of a site, and therefore affect the conversion given as part of the draft proposed DMA.

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.

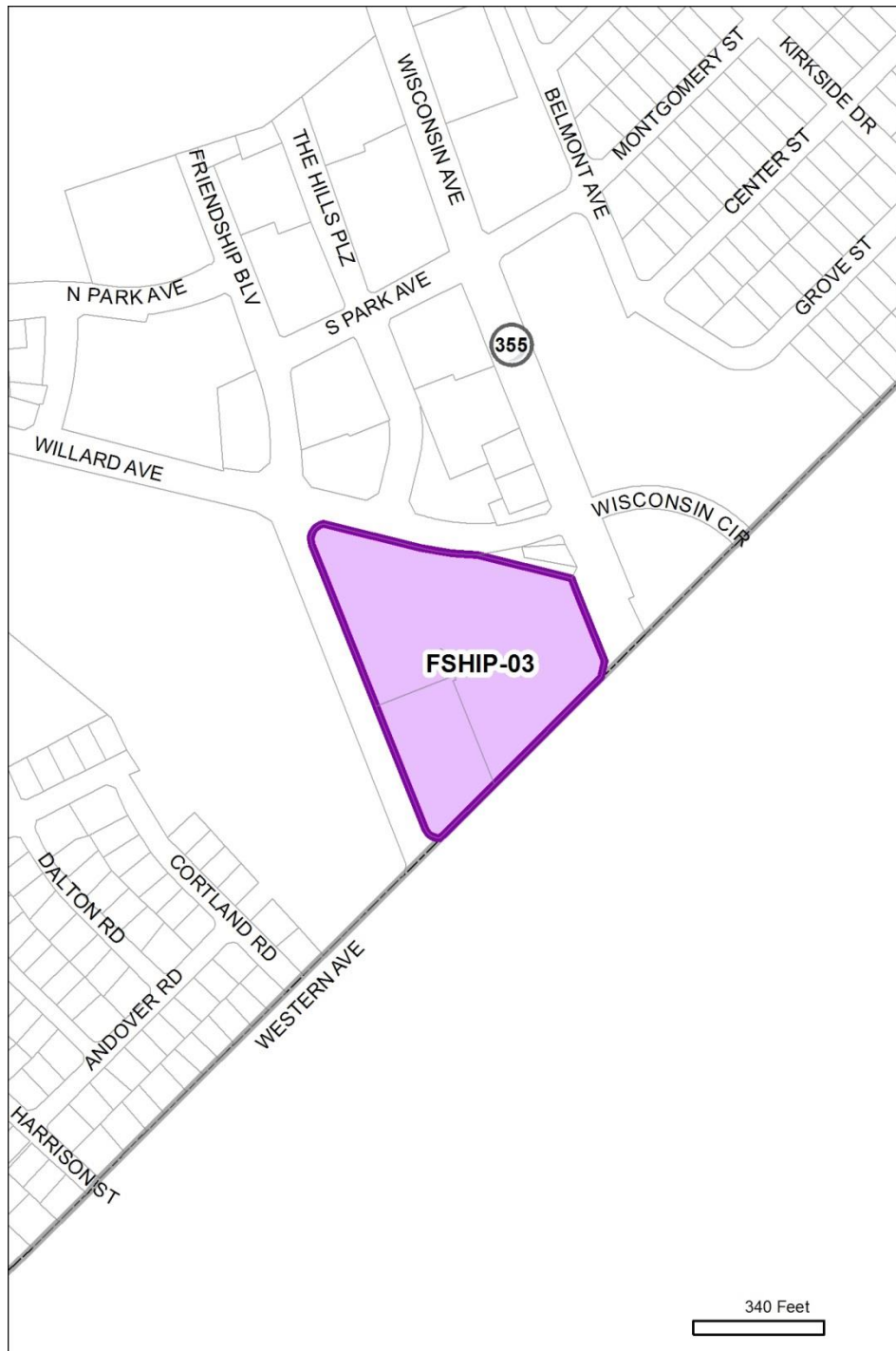
The following pages will give detail on all of the non-standard conversions in this plan area.



MP Number:		FSHIP-01
Master Plan:		Friendship Heights
Location:		Friendship Bl & N Park Av
Existing Zone:		CBD-1
Standard Conv:		CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-2.75 H-90 T
Proposed Conv:		CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.75 H-90 T
Modifications	Zone Group:	Standard
	Overall FAR:	Standard
	Comm'l FAR:	Reduced to 1.5
	Resid'l FAR:	Standard
	Height:	Standard
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
Friendship Heights Sector Plan: Page 77 <i>"If the existing office building is demolished, reconfirm the recommendation of the 1974 Sector Plan for an optional method residential development with a maximum of 200 dwelling units and 30,000 square feet of ground-floor retail."</i>		
Notes:		
On this site, the existing office building has not been demolished, therefore, it should be zoned to the existing building, which is 1.5 FAR.		



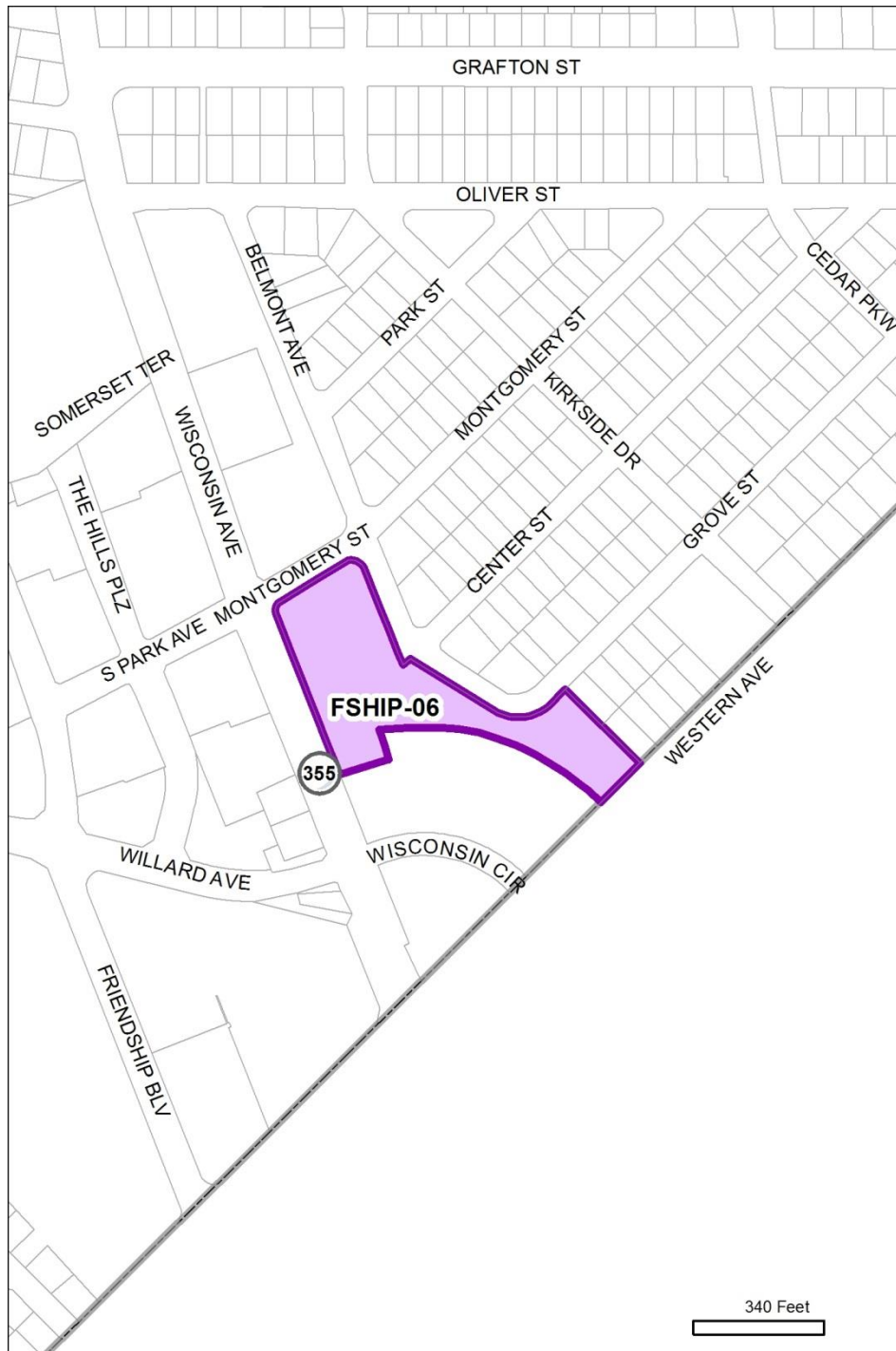
MP Number:		FSHIP-02
Master Plan:		Friendship Heights
Location:		GEICO site
Existing Zone:		TS-M
Standard Conv:		None
Proposed Conv:		CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-1.0 H-100 T
Modifications	Zone Group:	-
	Overall FAR:	-
	Comm'l FAR:	-
	Resid'l FAR:	-
	Height:	-
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
LMA/ Development Plan G-760 approved:		
-Overall FAR of 2.85		
-810,000 sf of commercial (approx. 1.88 FAR)		
-420,536 sf of residential (approx. 0.97 FAR)		
-9 stories		



MP Number:		FSHIP-03
Master Plan:		Friendship Heights
Location:		Willard Av & Friendship Bl
Existing Zone:		CBD-2
Standard Conv:		CR-5.0 C-4.0 R-4.75 H-145 T
Proposed Conv:		CR-3.0 C-2.75 R-3.0 H-145 T
Modifications	Zone Group:	Standard
	Overall FAR:	Reduced to 3.0
	Comm'l FAR:	Reduced to 2.75
	Resid'l FAR:	Reduced to 3.0
	Height:	Standard
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
<p>Friendship Heights Sector Plan: Page 53</p> <p><i>"Rezone the site from the CBD-1 Zone to the CBD-2 Zone with a maximum of 1,050,000 square feet of total development</i></p> <p>....</p> <p><i>With optional method development, the Plan recommends a total of 750,000 square feet of combined retail and office space. ... In addition, the Plan recommends a hotel of approximately 150,000 square feet and a minimum of 150,000 square feet of residential space.</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>A grocery store could also be included within the development on the site... A facility of up to 40,000 square feet could be constructed. If the Planning Board determines... that additional grocery space is desirable for Friendship Heights, it may allow the grocery store to be included in the development without being counted toward the overall square footage limits.</i></p>		
Notes:		
<p>On this site, 1,050,000 square feet would be approximately 3.0 FAR.</p> <p>Commercial development (office, retail, hotel) totaling 900,000 square feet would be approximately 2.6 FAR.</p>		



MP Number:		FSHIP-05
Master Plan:		Friendship Heights
Location:		Wisconsin Cir & Wisconsin Av/Western Av
Existing Zone:		CBD-1
Standard Conv:		CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-2.75 H-90 T
Proposed Conv:		CR-2.0 C-2.0 R-1.5 H-90 T
Modifications	Zone Group:	Standard
	Overall FAR:	Reduced to 2.0
	Comm'l FAR:	Reduced to 2.0
	Resid'l FAR:	Reduced to 1.5
	Height:	Standard
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
Friendship Heights Sector Plan: Page 42 <i>"Allow a maximum of 300,000 square feet of total development (approximately 65,000 square feet of neighborhood retail space, generally on the ground floor, and 235,000 square feet of office space). This limit includes any existing structure that is not redeveloped."</i>		
Notes:		
On this site, 300,000 square feet of development would be approximately 1.9 FAR. Residential reduced to 1.5 to accommodate mandatory ground-floor retail required in Sector Plan.		



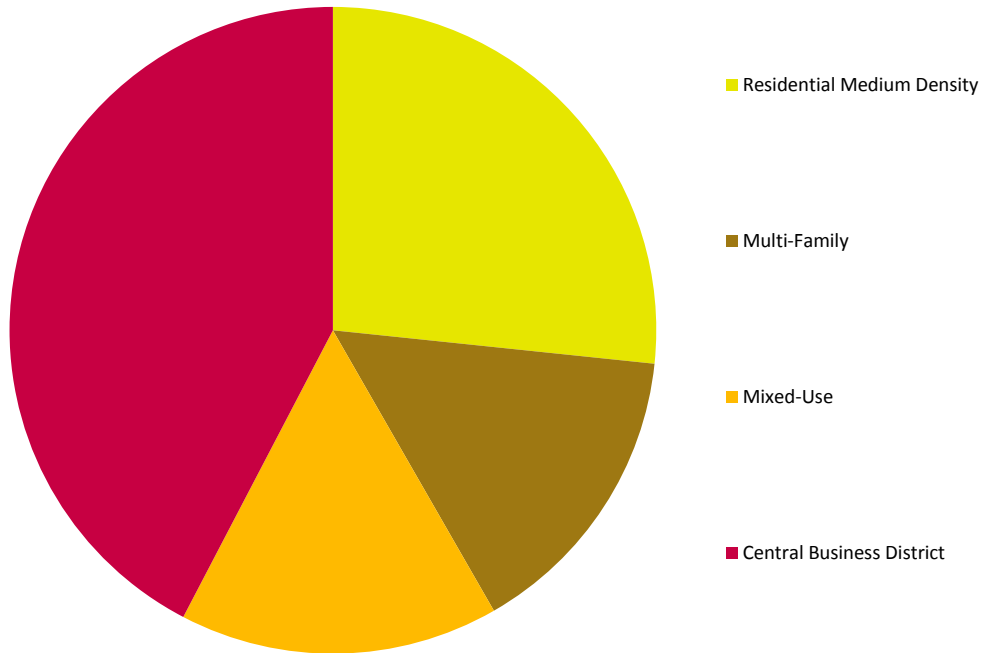
MP Number:		FSHIP-06
Master Plan:		Friendship Heights
Location:		Chevy Chase Center
Existing Zone:		TS-M
Standard Conv:		CR, density/height based on approvals
Proposed Conv:		CR-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-55 T
Modifications	Zone Group:	Standard
	Overall FAR:	Set at 0.75
	Comm'l FAR:	Set at 0.75
	Resid'l FAR:	Set at 0.25
	Height:	Set at 55'
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
<p>This site was reclassified to the TS-M by Local Map Amendment/ Development Plan G-775, and amended by DPA 10-01. The development plan authorized 112,000 sf of commercial development (0.54 FAR) and a maximum height of 3 stories. However, the property owner requested a height of 55' to match the building's current and approved height (at 3 stories, it still complies with the zone) it received under the TS-M zone (site plan #8-2001-021-A). Since no residential development was approved for this site, staff recommends decreasing the residential density to 0.25 FAR, the lowest amount allowed in the CR zone.</p>		

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

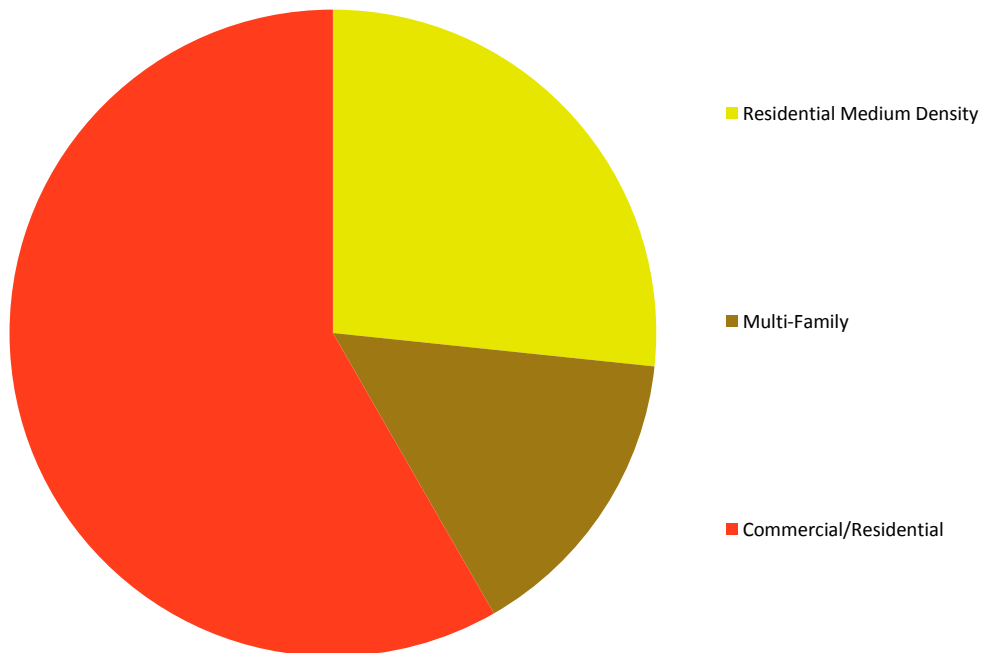
Friendship Heights					
Existing			Proposed		
Zone	Acres	Percent	Zone	Acres	Percent
R-60	8.41	9.11	R-60	24.59	26.65
R-60/TDR	16.18	17.53			
R-H	13.89	15.06	R-H	13.89	15.06
CBD-1	29.40	31.86	CR-2.0 C-2.0 R-1.5 H-90 T	3.57	3.87
			CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.75 H-90 T	2.12	2.30
			CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-2.75 H-90 T	23.71	25.69
CBD-2	9.67	10.48	CR-3.0 C-2.75 R-3.0 H-145 T	7.97	8.64
			CR-5.0 C-4.0 R-4.75 H-145 T	1.70	1.85
TS-M	14.72	15.95	CR-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-55 T	4.48	4.85
			CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-1.0 H-100 T	10.24	11.10
Grand Total	92.27		Grand Total	92.27	

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

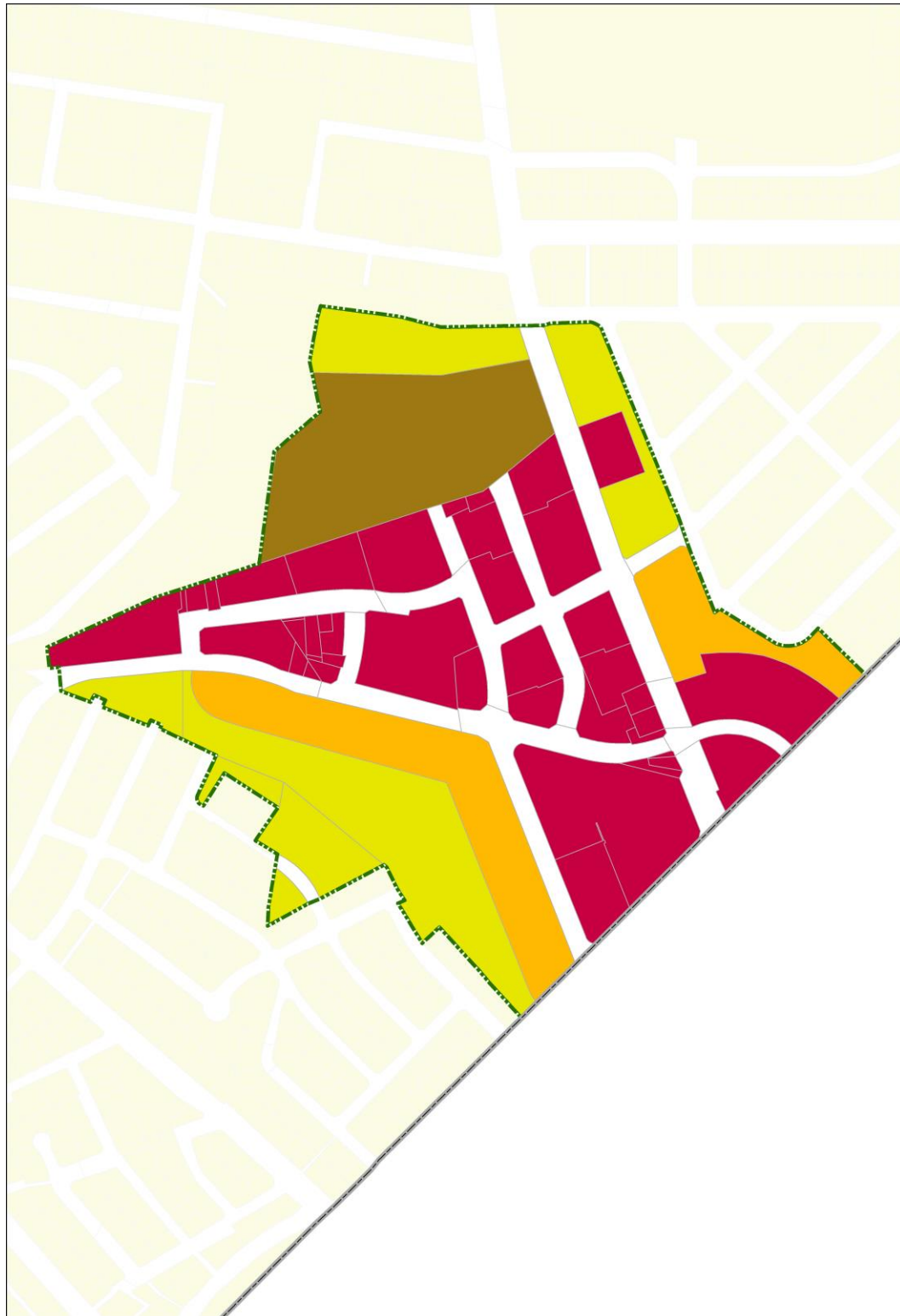
Friendship Heights: Existing Zoning



Friendship Heights: Proposed Zoning



EXISTING ZONING MAP



Existing Zones

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


- Multi-Family**
R-H


- Central Bus. Dist.**
CBD-1
CBD-2

- Mixed-Use**
TS-M

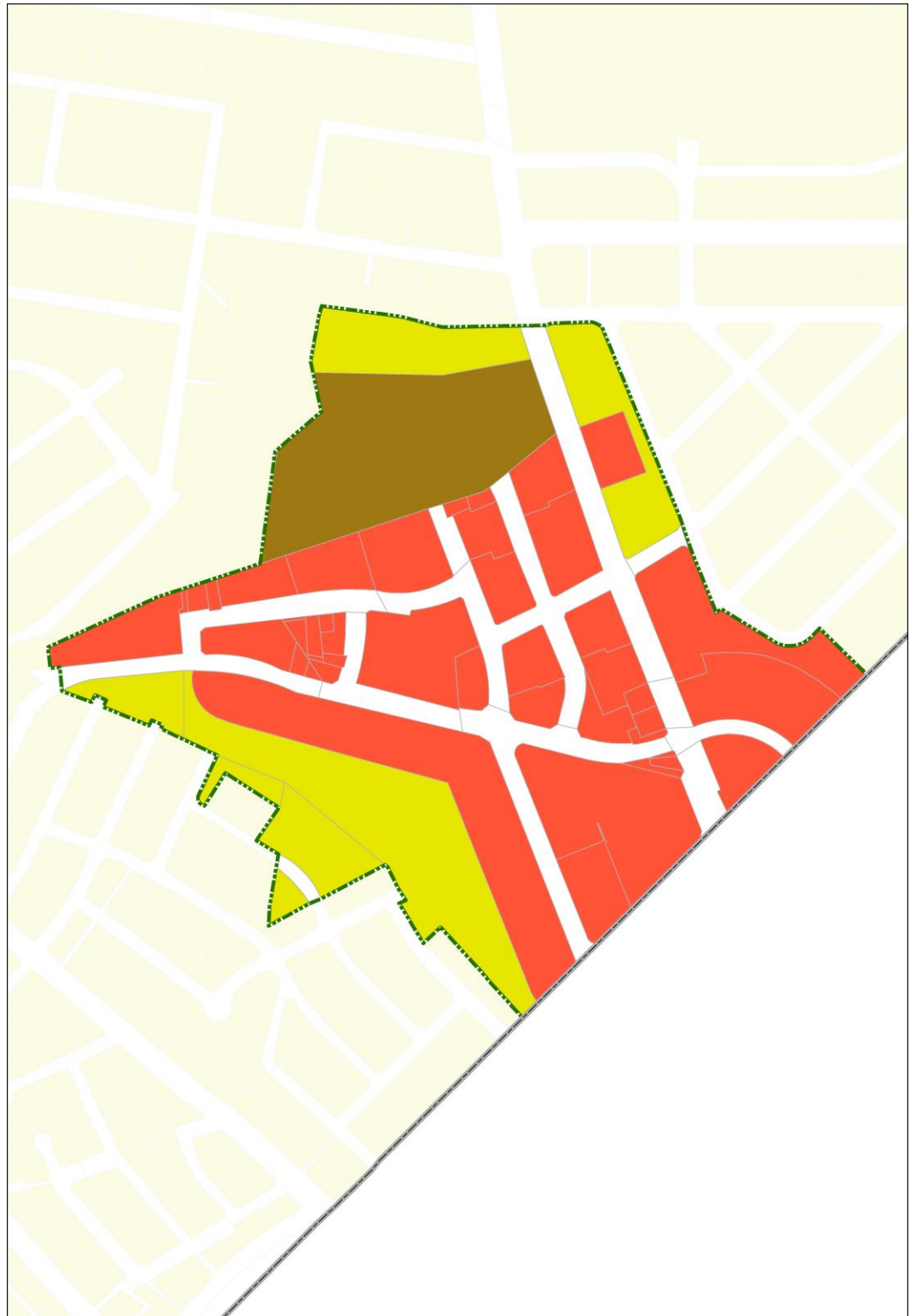
PROPOSED ZONING MAP

Proposed Zones

 **Residential
Medium Density**
R-60

 **Multi-Family**
R-H

 **Commercial/
Residential**
CR



PLANNING AREA CONTEXT

