



**MV Matters Community Workshop #3 & 4: Commercial Centers, Open Space and Former Golf Course**

**Date:** Feb 9, 2015, 7:00 pm

**Where:** Watkins Mill High School

Meeting started approximately 7:10 pm, with welcoming remarks and introductions. Staff proceeded to explain the evening’s activities and breakout sessions. To view the presentation, please click [here](#). About 120 residents, property owners and business owners were in attendance. Due to a weather event on January 26, meetings #3 & #4 were combined into a single evening.

The room was broken into multiple groups— one table each for the commercial centers (Goshen Road, Village & Professional Center and Lost Knife Corridor) and former golf course (open spaces and connectivity). Attendees were able to float between each group to offer ideas or discuss the options presented with staff. Below are notes taken at each of the tables with staff responses as necessary. Additionally, development review staff was on-hand to answer any questions relating to pending development plan application, DPA 15-01 relating to “Area 4” of Monument Realty’s concept plan. Monument Realty was also available to answer questions relating to the overall redevelopment of the former golf course.

Attendees were given information [sheets](#) regarding non-residential zones, and maps were on display for each of the options proposed, as well as existing [open space](#).

**Village Center**

- Understanding that there are many property owners, and that it will require a combined effort to make something happen, what can the planning process do to help move this along?

*Unfortunately, the master plan process cannot force property owners to consolidate. Master plans try to incentivize through the use of zoning, and development credits, but sometimes even that does not work.*

- How high would development be? Zoning information sheet says CRT can go up to 150 feet; would that be the height limit here?

*Although the generic CRT Zone permits maximum building heights up to 150 feet, the master plan can prescribe less. Staff believes that the heights of new buildings would be in between 4 to 6 stories (maximum of 70 feet). Although we have not thoroughly vetted the issue of height, staff’s recommendations would be consistent with the overall*



# Montgomery Village Master Plan

*vision of Montgomery Village and what is envisioned for development within the town's center.*

- Will traffic conditions be looked at along the Montgomery Avenue frontage? The intersection between Whetstone Drive and Montgomery Village Avenue was highlighted by a few as being particularly problematic.

*Staff will be considering the overall traffic impacts of proposed development through the use of regional and local traffic models. Please be aware that the master plan cannot address operational issues, such as timing of a stop light.*

- Relocating MVF offices to the Village Center seems like a good idea.

*Staff can evaluate and recommend certain land uses and location of such uses through the master plan process.*

- Connections ultimately recommended through the block should be pedestrian friendly, and should consider linkages to the school on Watkins Mill Road.

*Staff will consider the design recommendations for the street through the master plan and can include some design and massing techniques that may facilitate a pedestrian-friendly environment. Although outside of the master plan boundary, staff would consider pedestrian linkages or enhancements towards the high school.*

- Could street illumination be improved along Clubhouse Road? Low illumination levels were seen as dangerous to pedestrians, given there is a bus stop there.

*Staff cannot make such recommendations in a master plan; however, what ideas could be addressed through introducing/recommending specific road cross sections that may enhance the safety of a street.*

- One resident thought that the alternative emphasizing views to Lake Whetstone was a good idea (however, this option includes a big-box type anchor, several residents mentioned this would be a no-no).

- Can residential density include senior living? Many seniors like the atmosphere in the Village, and could sponsor Asbury type communities if built. The person making the comment mentioned that the emphasis seems to be in attracting families, but many will not come because they don't like the schools. She then said seniors don't (necessarily) care about the schools, but care about the atmosphere in the Village, so they *would* come.



*Yes, residential densities can include senior living in apartment-like settings; however that can only occur if the property owner/developer were to have a restrictive covenant running with the apartment building or go through the conditional use process. The current zoning ordinance differentiates between independent living, and residential care (e.g., assisted living, hospice, etc.) and these classifications depend on whether the use provides group cooking facilities for residents, as well as certain personal services.*

**Professional Center**

- If redeveloped, could any density be focused along Montgomery Village Avenue, away from residential communities? The relationship between potential new development on this block and adjacent residential was raised by a few residents.

*Yes, staff would evaluate the different development options and the master plan can make certain design recommendations for siting a building. Considerations include the bulk, height and location on the property.*

- Would redevelopment on this block include retail?

*It could, but recommendations in the master plan could divert the retail redevelopment over to the Village Center and create a residential/office component if that is the overall vision of the master plan.*

- What will be the permitted height?

*Staff believes that the heights of new buildings would be in between 4 to 6 stories (maximum of 70 feet). Although we have not thoroughly vetted the issue of height, staff's recommendations would be consistent with the overall vision of Montgomery Village and what is envisioned for development within the town's center.*

- How dense would development be if it happen? Is CRT too much, given adjacent residential? Would CRN be a preferable option?

*Both the CRT and CRN are intended to be used for a pedestrian –scale, transitional edge zones. The CRT is used for smaller downtowns, such as the Village/Professional Center. Retail tenant ground floor footprints are limited to preserve the town center scale. The CRN Zone is used to preserve a community scale consistent with a neighborhood-serving mix of uses. The differences between the CRT and CRN are with regards to the total FAR and commercial/residential minimums. For a CRN Zone, the minimum FAR is 0.25, and one could limit either the commercial or residential FAR to 0.0.*



- Could Master Plan address other problems in the immediately surrounding area? Tree area south of Whetstone Dr. along the east side of Montgomery Village Avenue was discussed as a problem zone (prostitution and drugs were mentioned).

*Master plans cannot address crime or other social concerns. Master plans could introduce topics and recommendations for design that could prevent crime by designing a physical environment that positively influences human behavior, if redevelopment were to occur on a property. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) theories contend that law enforcement officers, architects, city planners, landscape and interior designers, and resident volunteers can create a climate of safety in a community. The theory is based on four principles: natural access control, natural surveillance, territoriality, and maintenance. Master plans can also recommend public facilities, such as police stations as well.*

#### **Goshen Road**

- What is the NR Zone

*The NR Zone is 'neighborhood retail.' The NR Zone is intended for commercial areas that have a neighborhood orientation and which supply necessities usually requiring frequent purchasing and convenient automobile access. The NR Zone addresses development opportunities within primarily residential areas with few mobility options and without a critical mass of density needed for pedestrian-oriented commercial uses.*

- Will this allow more development

*Not necessarily. Although the mapped density is 0.25 total FAR, existing developments have approved site plans with a lower FAR. To increase the building size, FAR or rearrange the properties on-site, the property owner would need to go through a regulatory review process prior to obtaining a building permit to expand the use.*

- Use golf carts for transport (e.g., like Peachtree City, GA)
- Need more areas for trees.
- Space between curb and sidewalks for bio-swales.
- Need grocery store at Village Center.

#### **Lost Knife Road**

- Better Lighting.

*Unfortunately, the master plan cannot make operation recommendations (e.g., illumination levels); however, it can recommend desirable roadway cross-sections and lighting features should redevelopment occur in a specific location.*



# Montgomery Village Master Plan

- More restaurants.

*Unfortunately, the master plan cannot ensure the provision of specific uses; however, it can recommend zones that allow such uses should the market support them.*

- Connectivity—how can we better connect with City of Gaithersburg to sites?

*The master plan could recommend desired connections points between Lake Forest Mall and properties along Lost Knife Road; however, delivery of these connections would need to be reviewed during a development application (like preliminary or site plan) in conjunction with MCDOT, SHA and the City of Gaithersburg to ensure overall safety, proper access design and suitability for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles.*

- Better parking lot and access to library.

*The master plan could make recommendations to allow for better access to the library.*

- Expand/leverage medical health uses within mixed-use (overlay zone?) to draw more attention to health presence (e.g., Holy Cross/Adventist).

*The master plan can recommend zones that allow such uses, but cannot require them.*

- Maintain existing retail and access experience (don't replicate other master plans to copy retail experience nearby. Keep MV character.)

*Each community is different and the draft plan will seek to reflect the character of Montgomery Village.*

- Are there others using the daycare so it can move? How?

*Yes, the daycare is fully operational. Master plans can suggest alternate (and temporary) locations of the daycare while the property undergoes redevelopment and recommendations could suggest space at the same location after which new building(s) is/are constructed.*