

White Flint Sector Plan Advisory Committee

December 13, 2010

Montgomery County Planning Department

Meeting Notes

Members in attendance: Greg Trimmer, Arnold Kohn, David Freishtat, Todd Lewers, Ruwan Salgado, Dan Hoffman, Meredith Josef, Barnaby Zall, Natalie Goldberg, Peggy Schwartz, Francine Waters, Mike Coveyou, Anne Root, Diane Schwartz-Jones, John King, Della Stolsworth, and Chad Salgnaik

Guests: Fred Lees (Montgomery County Department of Transportation), Tommy Mann (FRIT), David Anspacher (Montgomery Planning Department) and Sally Cameron (Luxberry Condo Association)

M-NCPPC Staff: Nkosi Yearwood and Dan Hardy

Meeting notes taken by Todd Lewers with additions by Nkosi Yearwood

Introductions

- Members and guests introduced themselves.

Meeting Location and Time

- The White Flint advisory committee meets the second Monday of each month. Nkosi Yearwood reported that locations other than the Silver Spring offices of MNCPPC were being explored, with Diane Schwartz-Jones looking into holding meetings in North Bethesda. Nkosi said that the Bethesda Regional Service Center is available to the group at no cost. Barnaby Zall asked to hold meetings in the White Flint area. Diane said the County's meeting room at the Conference Center is too small. Francine Waters indicated that the Mall's conference room was also too small. Barnaby said that he sent an e-mail with several locations in or near White Flint, including the Montgomery Aquatic Center and Tilden Park Recreation Center. Several other members offered space at local facilities such as Federal Realty's offices and the Forum's Board Room. Diane will follow-up on the use of the multi-purpose at the Montgomery County Aquatic Center (MAC).

Chairs

- A discussion ensued regarding the selection of two co-chairs of the Committee to facilitate the group's work. Evan Goldman, via an email to Nkosi, recommended Dan Hoffman of Randolph Civic Association, and Dave Freishtat of the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce as co-chairs. A motion was made by Barnaby Zall, seconded by Arnold Kohn, to elect Dan Hoffman and Dave Freishtat as Co-Chairs.

During the discussion, Barnaby Zall asked Dan and Dave whether they were willing to take on these roles. Dan asked what the responsibilities and roles of the co-Chairs would be. Nkosi indicated that these roles were intended to interface, coordinate, and collaborate activities with the Planning Board, other Departments and related staff. Dan and Dave indicated that they had received Evan's email promoting their candidacies. They were both honored and indicated that they would accept the co-chair positions, if that is what the full committee decided. After a brief discussion, there was consensus to have Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Freishtat assume the responsibilities of these roles for the next two (2) years. Greg Trimmer stated that these selections were definitely appropriate since there were several organizations active in the White Flint area, including the White Flint Partnership, Friends of White Flint, and the White Flint Community Coalition, and neither Dan nor Dave were viewed as too involved with any single group. Meredith noted it may be better if the co-chairs could serve only for a year. The committee, however, agreed that two years was appropriate since the life of the group is expected to last for several more years.

Meeting Notes

- John King noted that he was not listed as attending although he was present. The November 22, 2010 Meeting Notes were not approved by the committee.
- Nkosi requested that summary notes be taken by a volunteer member of the group and Nkosi would have the notes posted on the White Flint Planning website. Todd Lewers volunteered to take notes for this meeting.

Sketch Plans

The current development Sketch Plans, North Bethesda Market II, Mid-Pike Plaza, and North Bethesda Gateway, are proceeding. The Planning Board will take up all three at meetings on January 20, 2011. The Board will further discuss staging allocation at the January 13th meeting.

Dan Hardy – Department of Transportation Presentation

Nkosi turned the meeting over to Dan Hardy, Transportation Planning Chief of the Planning Department. Dan distributed a PowerPoint presentation entitled White Flint Sector Plan Implementation Transportation Approvals/Monitoring; a copy is attached to these minutes.

Overview

Mr. Hardy first went over acronyms like:

- CLATR (Comprehensive Local Area Transportation Review) – the new form of transportation measurement and evaluation created by the White Flint Sector Plan
- PAMR (Policy Area Mobility Review)
- TPAR (Transportation Policy Area Review)

- TDM (Travel Demand Management)
- BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)
- HMR (Highway Mobility Report)
- AGP (Annual Growth Policy)
- SSP (Subdivision Staging Policy)
- CIP (Capital Improvement Program)

Dan began discussing the Planning Board’s strategy for monitoring the implementation of the WF Sector Plan. He explained some new procedures, including a new Biennial Monitoring Program to assess development approvals, public facilities and the funding and growth regulation policies which would affect the Staging Plan for White Flint.

Natalie asked who will do the traffic studies. Dan stated it will be a combination of public and private sources, such as highway mobility report and existing data.

There was a side discussion at the beginning of the presentation (described below), then Dan indicated that the development of White Flint would certainly have an effect upon the development of the Capital Improvement Program for transportation. He also said that the Planning Board wanted to create a database and post as much information online as possible.

CLATR etc.

Dan explained the new Comprehensive Local Area Transportation Review (CLATR) process set up in the White Flint Sector Plan. Instead of looking only at individual intersections, CLATR looks at issues throughout the Sector, coordinating with other studies and the Subdivision Staging Policy, which used to be known as the Growth Policy. Dan said that in using CLATR, the intent was to look at how this tool has been used for staging in places like the Bethesda CBD and try to obtain ‘lessons learned’ from that and other experiences. A similar CLATR analysis is required in staging plans for the Great Seneca Science Corridor (Gaithersburg West) and the Shady Grove Sector Plan.

He also spoke about ‘mode share’ or the percentage of workers and residents using transit, non-motorized transportation, or ridesharing instead of driving. The White Flint “non-auto driver mode share” goal (using transit and non-automotive modes) begins at 34% in Phase I then 42% in Phase II and ultimate at Phase III is 51% for residents and 50% for employees.

There was also commentary regarding some of the improvements to date such as motorist confusion and safety concerns at the new Rockville Pike/Montrose Parkway overpass/underpass improvements. Fred Lees (MCDOT) said he will look into the matter.

Greg Trimmer asked about TPAR’s background. Dan indicated that TPAR is longer-term in nature since it includes not just CIP projects but speculative projects that take longer than 6 years to develop and implement. TPAR also examines items like directional congestion and span and coverage of transit service.

Dan said that staging and monitoring processes could be reconciled with the fact that some properties are already further along in the development process than others. He said that the Planning Board was considering options for managing the number of plans which would be approved in each stage of the Sector Plan, so that the construction limits in the staging plan would match the available infrastructure. He asked for suggestions for choosing between CLATR land assumption options such as: all those who have filed a sketch plan are assumed fully built; proportional development across all developments; and requesting developers to identify a ten-year plan (*See slide 7-2 on the attached hand-out*). The staff's recommendation is for the first-to-file option using existing pipeline and submitted sketch plans. Barnaby Zall noted that although there are three major sketch plans under review, other projects have been identified for future development.

Meredith inquired if there are other national or regional examples of places that transition from suburban and what has worked. Dan pointed to 'lessons learned' from Bethesda and Silver Spring where development activity has promoted a transition to an urban place. He summarized the discussion as suggesting that the Planning staff ask developers about their plans before making up the options available for the Board. The group concurred that a 10-year horizon for the CLATR was appropriate and that major property owners should be polled as to their current thinking about the amount of development they would expect to have on-line by 2020 for CLATR assumption purposes.

Special tax exemption

At the beginning of Dan Hardy's presentation, Natalie Goldberg asked about the Council's exempting condominiums and multi-family residential buildings within White Flint from the new Special Taxing District. She asked, since all condominium and apartment owners are not a part of the Special Taxing District, will they be allowed to participate in the new CLATR and zoning process? Dan Hardy said that, unless they are in the Special Taxing District, they will be under prior impact tax system. Diane Schwartz-Jones interjected and said, "that is exactly right, since those owners are not paying the tax, then they will be operating under the old rules". Nkosi clarified that the Planning Board Draft did not rezone the Forum, but the Forum sought the CR zone during the PHED Committee review, and the full Council approved the zone.

Todd Lewers asked "when did this come about and was there anything in writing about that position?" Nkosi Yearwood indicated that the legislation on the exemption from the Special Taxing District was going to the County Council the next day for approval. Lewers then asked, "was the Forum being singled out because his condominium association had sought and achieve rezoning of its property?" Mike Coveyou said that the County Executive Staff had discussed the Forum. Lewers said that the discussion should be taken off-line by other appropriate persons who were or might be affected by these issues.

Next meeting

- The advisory committee will meet on Monday, January 10, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. Nkosi will distribute a memo regarding the place where the meeting will be held. After some discussion, the topic of the January meeting will be parks, libraries and other public amenities.
- The February meeting will be held on February 14, and the topic will be schools.

Happy Holidays to ALL