

White Flint Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee

July 14, 2014
Summary Notes

Members in attendance: David Freishtat, Todd Lewers, Natalie Goldberg, Peggy Schwartz, Francine Waters, Andrew Bossi, Dee Metz, Paul Meyer, Mary Ward, Chad Salganik, Allison Dollar, Ruwan Salgado, Della Stolsworth, Jeff Derogatis, Greg Trimmer and Edward Rich.

Members absent: Evan Goldman, John King, Brian Downie, Gabriela Cadena, Randy Kenna, Michael Springer, Barnaby Zall, and Bill Hard.

Guests: Jeff Bourne (Department of Recreation), Cindy Gibson (Councilmember Roger Berliner Chief of Staff), Devon Lauren (JBG), Jorgen Punda (Gables Residential), Steve Kaufman (Linowes and Blocher), Bryan Foulger (Foulger Pratt), Michael Kent (Fallstone Residential), Pete McLaughlin (Promark Real Estate), Edward DeAvila (Lerner Enterprises), Fred Marcial (Garrett Park Estates), Merry Elrod (Georgetown Village Condominium Association), Rebecca Hertz (Friends of White Flint), Daniel Ashtary (Torti Gallas & Partners), Tom Danico (Torti Gallas & Partners), Jason Evans (VIKA), Julian Goldman (Torti Gallas & Partners), Eddie Meder (Gables Residential), Jonathan Johnson (Torti Gallas & Partners), Andrew Metcalf (Bethesda Magazine), Jay Corbalis (Federal Realty Investment Trust) and Yum Yu Cheng (Linowes and Blocher).

M-NCPPC Staff: N’kosi Yearwood

The meeting began with personal introductions.

Updates

- A new Staging Allocation Request (SAR) for Pike & Rose-Phase II with 368 residential dwelling units will go to the Planning Board on July 24. This means that 861 residential units have been allocated from the Sector Plan Phase 1 limit of 3,000 residential units.
- The Implementation Committee will meet in August to discuss Woodglen bikeway proposal.
- Francine Waters reported that Cliff Cohen is the new chair for the White Flint Downtown Committee and Brian Downie is the new vice-chair. For the upcoming year, the Downtown Committee will focus on: beautification of MD 355; streetscape guidelines development; a zip code for the area; website development; hiring an intern; and exploring funding options for the urban district.
 - Ed Rich and Natalie Goldberg inquired about the branding status for the district. Jay Corbalis (Federal Realty) and Greg Trimmer (JBG) both indicated that the White Flint Partnership will host a future public meeting to solicit marketing and branding ideas.
- The Downtown Committee will not meet in August. The next meeting is in September.

Implementation Coordinator Report

Dee Metz (White Flint Coordinator, Office of the County Executive) reported on the following items:

- Residents have begun to move into Pike and Rose (Phase 1).
- Utility relocation for the western workaroud is moving forward.
- MCDOT designs for Woodglen Drive and Nebel Street bikeways are progressing.

Natalie Goldberg asked about the County hiring an attorney (Jody Kline) for the proposed Conference Center garage. Dee noted that Mr. Kline has worked on prior Site Plan approvals for the Conference Center and County attorneys typically do not work on Site Plans since public projects are approved via Mandatory Referrals. Mary Ward asked about the proposed bikeway improvements along Old Georgetown Road. Dee indicated that the improvements are not currently in the western workaroud plan, but it will be addressed in the future.

NoBe II

Greg Trimmer (JBG Companies) presented the proposed NoBe II amendments (Sketch Plan, Site Plan and Preliminary Plan). Greg indicated that office market challenges have driven the decision to modify the development. The approved office building along Rockville Pike will be replaced with a two-level retail building and a new residential building. Further, the unique high-rise residential building at Woodglen Drive and Nicholson Lane has been retained as well as the prior street network and the central public use space. There are three phases associated with this amendment:

- Phase I will include the new residential building, which is approximately 150 feet in height and approximately 65,000 square feet of retail.
- Phase 2 is the high-rise residential building at Woodglen Drive and Nicholson Lane.
- The final phase may include additional office development above the existing office/Paladar building on Woodglen Drive.

Comments

Paul Myer raised concerns that physically challenged individuals may have difficulty navigating the amount of steps and pavers in the development and potential lawsuits may occur. David Freishtat asked if the existing office/Paladar building would be demolished or added on to in the future. Greg said that the decision to demolish or add to the Paladar building has not been determined. He indicated that the Paladar restaurant has a long-term lease agreement, which will influence any redevelopment plans.

Mary Ward asked if the NoBe I landscaping features along Rockville Pike (MD 355) will continue to NoBe II. Greg stated that the landscaping for NoBe II is different because of the Sector Plan recommendations. The existing NoBe I rain garden and street trees are within the MD 355 right-of-way.

Natalie wondered how the central plaza would be implemented since there are three distinct phases. Greg responded that the plaza would be delivered in Phase I along with the street connections to Rockville Pike and Executive Boulevard.

Ed Rich asked about residential unit sizes and Paul Myer remarked that developers may be overlooking the potential market for larger residential units since larger units often sell quickly in the Wisconsin. Greg stated that Bethesda is the only area in the County that would make financial sense for large condominium residential units.

Gables White Flint

Eddie Meder (Gables Residential) and Daniel Ashtary (Torti Gallas & Partners) presented the Gables White Flint Site Plan. Located north of Wall Park and adjacent to the future Main/Market and realigned Executive Boulevard, this development will have approximately 476 residential units and 30,000 square feet of retail in three buildings that are linked together. Retail is located in the eastern building along realigned Executive Boulevard. A large parking structure is located immediately north of the Montgomery County Aquatic Center/Wall Park. Two private streets will provide connections to Main/Market Street and realigned Executive Boulevard. This development will reserve approximately 15,000 square feet of land for an expansion of the parking garage to support Wall Park's redevelopment, if the garage is not constructed in one phase.

Comments

Natalie Goldberg asked when the connection from Wall Park to the Gables property would occur. Jurgen Punda (Gables Residential) said that implementation for Wall Park redevelopment would not occur until the parking garage is built on the Gables property and when the County is ready to expand the Aquatic Center and build the recreation center.

Steve Kaufman, attorney for Gables Residential, said that if the garage is built in one phase, the County would have access to the first two levels with private development on other levels. Approximately, 985 parking spaces are associated with the development with 400 spaces dedicated for Wall Park redevelopment. Paul Myer and Greg Trimmer said that the parking solution between Gables and the County is elegant, if the financing issues can be worked out.

Natalie inquired how the Committee could start to lobby for the garage construction. Dee Metz and Jeff Bourne (Department of Recreation) said that the Parks Department and Department of Recreation CIPs are the best venues.

Mary Ward asked what features are envisioned for the expanded Aquatic Center. Jeff Bourne indicated that outdoor water play space and other features could be included in the future. Mary also asked what elements are proposed for the future Grand Park Avenue (existing Executive Boulevard). Daniel Ashtary described the proposed streetscape for the road, including a portion that will accommodate outdoor dining. Nkosi added that a shared use path will be provided on both sides of the street. Mary encouraged the provision of additional inverted U bike racks throughout White Flint as properties redevelop.