



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – October 25, 2017 Agenda Item 1

Voting Session

Resolution Expressing the Sense of the Council Regarding the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Concept Plan

Recommended Council Action

Vote on resolution expressing the sense of the current Council to the incoming Council regarding the Concept Plan and provide information to the Neighborhood Development Company so that a Preliminary Plan/Site Plan may be prepared that would be consistent with the Council's goals and vision for the project.

Context with Key Issues

Neighborhood Development Company, the selected partner for the City-owned lot at the Takoma Junction, presented their concept plan for the redevelopment of the Junction to Council on September 27, 2017. The plan was discussed by the Council on October 11.

A concept plan showing use, parking and vehicular circulation is needed in order to pursue traffic studies, design work, and reviews by outside agencies leading to the preparation of a Draft Preliminary Plan/Site Plan. The City Council must approve the Preliminary Plan/Site Plan for the development project to proceed.

This concept plan reflects NDC's interest in purchasing the parcel currently owned by the Takoma Auto Clinic. The addition of this parcel to the City's lot has a number of benefits, including placement of the driveway entrance to the underground parking at a location that would have less negative impact on Carroll Avenue traffic flow.

NDC's concept plan builds on the community input received during the community meetings undertaken in February and March of this year as well as meetings with agencies who oversee aspects of the development process. However, the concept plan as presented raised a number of building design questions that the Council wishes to see addressed.

A Council resolution will express the sense of the current Council for consideration by the incoming Council and will provide information for NDC as it works to develop a design that meets the goals and vision of the Council.

In early 2018, NDC expects to present the site plan/preliminary plan, which requires Council's approval as specified in the Development Agreement.

Council Priority

Advance Economic Development Efforts: Takoma Junction Development

Prepared by: Rosalind Grigsby, Community Development Manager

Approved by: Suzanne R. Ludlow, City Manager

Environmental Impact of Action

The project will be designed and constructed in a manner that satisfies the requirements for LEED Gold or higher certification from the U.S. Green Building Council or an equivalent certification.

Fiscal Impact of Action

The transformation of the parking lot to an active commercial property will add to the City tax base. The cost of the development will be borne by the developer.

Racial Equity Impact of Action

The property is located in Ward 3, where 61.9 percent of the population is White, 20.6 percent of the population is Black, and 11.1 percent of the population is Hispanic. We do not believe this Council action will adversely affect or disproportionately impact any particular group.

Attachments and Links

Draft Resolution

Council Resolution 2015-19

[Takoma Junction Redevelopment](#)

Concept Plan – New Boundary

Concept Plan – Below Grade Level

Concept Plan – Ground Level

Concept Plan – Upper Level

Concept Plan – Roof Level

1 Introduced by: Councilmember

2
3 **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

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5 **RESOLUTION 2017 –**

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7 **EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE COUNCIL REGARDING THE**
8 **TAKOMA JUNCTION REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN**

9
10 **WHEREAS,** Council adopted Resolution 2015-19 in April, 2015, authorizing the initiation of
11 negotiations with Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) for the
12 redevelopment of the City lot at the Takoma Junction; AND

13 **WHEREAS,** Resolution 2015-19 also gives direction on the goals and desired vision for the
14 Takoma Junction Redevelopment Project; AND

15 **WHEREAS,** the August 2016 Development Agreement with NDC, approved by the Council on
16 July 27, 2016, includes other provisions and guidance concerning the
17 redevelopment project and referenced in quotes and elsewhere below; AND

18 **WHEREAS,** a Concept Plan related to use, parking and vehicular circulation is needed in order
19 to pursue traffic studies, design work, and reviews by outside agencies leading to
20 the preparation of a Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan; AND

21 **WHEREAS,** a Concept Plan was presented to the Council on September 27, 2017; AND

22 **WHEREAS,** a Concept Plan is an initial sketch of the development site and with continued
23 negotiations with NDC will be further revised to result in a more specific Draft
24 Site Plan/Preliminary Plan which will fully show how the Council's goals and
25 desired vision for the project will be met; AND

26 **WHEREAS,** after considering the presented Concept Plan and hearing public comment, the
27 Council held a Work Session on October 11, 2017 to discuss the Concept Plan
28 and to identify changes and direct NDC in the necessary elements to include in
29 the future Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan to meet the requirements of the
30 Development Agreement; AND

31 **WHEREAS,** this Resolution is to provide the incoming Council with a sense of the current
32 Council regarding its comments on the Concept Plan, and to direct NDC on
33 changes regarding the Concept Plan so that following further consultation with
34 NDC, and completion of the traffic studies, a Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan
35 may be prepared that would be consistent with the Council's goals and desired
36 vision for the project, and the requirements of the Development Agreement, and
37 thus be approvable by the Council; AND

38 **WHEREAS,** specific comments on the Concept Plan are:

- 39 1) The Concept Plan does not show at street level adequate “public or
40 community spaces that result in enhanced interactions among residents and
41 visitors.”
- 42 2) The Concept Plan does not show or adequately detail the “accessible outdoor
43 space devoted to year-round public use or enjoyment” and how those
44 components comport with the design requirements of Section 6.3.6 of the
45 Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance.
- 46 3) The Concept Plan does not show a “building structure that aspires to elegance,
47 beauty, and place-setting that will be admired by professionals and residents.”
- 48 4) Pending review by the Maryland State Highway Administration and the
49 Montgomery County Planning Board, the inclusion of a lay-by for use by 18-
50 wheel delivery trucks may be an acceptable way to meet the need for
51 deliveries for the TPSS Co-op.
- 52 5) The inclusion of a lower level of structured parking is an acceptable way to
53 provide “continued inclusion of public parking on site.”
- 54 6) The Concept Plan shows a design for deliveries by non-18-wheel trucks and
55 trash and recycling collection that raises questions and concerns about its
56 workability, and questions remain about the opportunity for deliveries or trash
57 and recycling collection to occur through the lower level of structure parking.
- 58 7) The Concept Plan gives the appearance of an uninteresting building in a large
59 mass of two, and potentially three, stories which raises concerns regarding
60 appropriateness and fit with surrounding buildings.
- 61 8) The Concept Plan does not address the appearance of the rear of the property
62 which should be of a design “that minimizes detrimental impacts on
63 neighboring properties on Columbia and Sycamore Avenues.”
- 64 9) The Concept Plan does not provide information on green elements that would
65 ensure “that the Building satisfies the requirements for LEED Gold or higher
66 or equivalent” requirements.
- 67 10) The Concept Plan does not clearly identify the “amount of retail, community,
68 open space and residential space included in the project;” AND

69 **WHEREAS,** the parcel size for this Concept Plan is larger than originally proposed due to the
70 potential inclusion of the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel to the west of the City lot;
71 AND

72 **WHEREAS,** purchasing the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel, which Council supports, has a number
73 of likely benefits for the proposed development:

- 74 1) It allows the driveway entrance to the underground parking lot to be in a
75 location that has less negative impact on Carroll Avenue traffic flows.

- 76 2) It allows for more underground parking spaces.
77 3) It provides more distance between the driveway entrance and the lay-by so
78 that more street trees along the curb could be accommodated, providing
79 greater comfort and safety for pedestrians.
80 4) It allows for more public gathering space in front of the building and
81 accessible outdoor space devoted to year-round public use.
82 5) It allows for more retail square footage which may help offset the purchase
83 price of the parcel and moderate commercial rental rates; AND

84 **WHEREAS,** the key information from a Concept Plan that is needed for a traffic study includes
85 the identification of the proposed square footage of retail space and of other
86 proposed uses in order to be able to calculate the numbers of vehicles drawn to
87 the site because of the development; the proposed number of parking spaces
88 provided on site; and the proposed locations of driveways for customers and
89 service vehicles; and truck unloading areas; AND

90 **WHEREAS,** Council has discussed the square footage of the development and wishes to be
91 better informed about the impacts and tradeoffs of development at different sizes
92 in terms of traffic impacts, appearance and financial feasibility, additional public
93 space, as well as potential rents for tenants; Councilmembers are interested in
94 seeing the impacts of an approximately 34,000 square foot structure of two stories
95 (first level retail, second level office and community space) and of any updated
96 square footage estimate that includes the expanded area of the Takoma Auto
97 Clinic parcel and of the impacts of development that includes an expanded public
98 gathering space and space for year-round outdoor use, including the potential of a
99 third floor public space; AND

100 **WHEREAS,** having traffic study models at several ranges of development size will provide
101 important information to the incoming City Council when considering the project;
102 AND

103 **WHEREAS,** Resolution 2015-19 and the Development Agreement, the comments from the
104 residents participating in the Community Consultation sessions, and the
105 comments from the Council and residents throughout this process provide
106 direction and guidance for the design work leading to the preparation of a Draft
107 Site Plan/Preliminary Plan.

108 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF**
109 **TAKOMA PARK THAT** the Concept Plan presented to the City Council on September 27,
110 2017 shows the following information on which a traffic study can be based: approximately
111 34,000 square feet of retail and office space (two floors); a level of underground parking; the
112 location of the entrance to the parking garage and service area; and a lay-by on Carroll Avenue,

113 the Council directs NDC to also evaluate traffic associated with updated square footage of retail
114 and office space associated with the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel and of a concept that includes
115 greater public gathering space at the front of the building and outdoor space for year-round
116 public use, including the potential of a third floor public space.

117 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, as the project moves forward, the Council expects to
118 see a Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan that meets the criteria of Resolution 2015-19 and the
119 Development Agreement and, in particular, regardless of whether the traffic studies show
120 minimal impact on traffic, provides:

- 121 1) A large amount of vibrant, comfortable, and easily accessible street-level public space
122 that functions as a community gathering spot, does not require the purchase of food or
123 beverage to use, and is accessible for year-round use.
- 124 2) Accommodation of delivery, trash and recycling vehicles in a manner that does not cause
125 traffic problems, optimizes public enjoyment of the site, addresses the needs of on-site
126 tenants, and provides reasonable accommodation to the TPSS Co-op.
- 127 3) Placement of the elevator or elevators in a location that serves patrons and tenants
128 conveniently, including patrons of the TPSS Co-op.
- 129 4) A street-facing façade design that consists of large storefront windows on the retail level
130 and includes exciting or iconic features that evoke the spirit of Takoma Park.
- 131 5) Massing that fits with the area and is comfortable for those using and passing by the site
132 on Carroll, Sycamore, and Columbia Avenues.
- 133 6) Appropriate landscaping and building façade design of the Columbia Avenue side of the
134 property that improves the appearance of the green space and would help address
135 environmental sustainability and other goals for the project.
- 136 7) Design features that will preserve and improve alternatives to automotive transportation.
- 137 8) Details regarding parking options for off-site businesses located in the Takoma Junction.
- 138 9) Design and construction features which satisfy the requirements for LEED Gold or higher
139 certification from the U.S. Green Building Council or an equivalent certification.
- 140 10) Details necessary to provide reasonable accommodation to the TPSS Co-op for access for
141 loading of deliveries, customer parking, and continued operations during construction.
- 142 11) Identifies any resolution or agreement reached between NDC and the TPSS Co-op
143 regarding shared façade design or other improvements that would enhance the aesthetic
144 appeal of the whole commercial strip between Sycamore Avenue and the fire station.

145 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Council directs NDC to continue to the
146 traffic study and toward the development of the detail necessary to produce a Draft Site
147 Plan/Preliminary Plan of the project.

148

149 Adopted this ___ day of October, 2017

150 Attest: _____

151 Jessie Carpenter, CMC City Clerk