



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – April 4, 2018 Agenda Item #4

Work Session

Public Presentation of the Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) Takoma Junction Site Plan

Recommended Council Action

None – presentation only

Context with Key Issues

After several years of planning for improvements to the City's lot at Takoma Junction, a draft site plan is now before the City Council, prepared by the City's partner on the project, Neighborhood Development Company.

This Work Session is the first in a series of public discussions that have been scheduled to provide the Council and the community with opportunities to review and comment on the draft site plan for the Takoma Junction redevelopment project. During this process, the Council will be acting as both the property owner, ensuring that the planned development satisfies the requirements of the August 2016 [Development Agreement](#) and is consistent with the provisions of City Council [Resolution 2015-19](#) and [Resolution 2017-53](#), as well as functioning in its official role as a part of the Montgomery County [development review process](#), providing comment on various elements of the site plan.

The site plan presented by the Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) during this work session will illustrate where the building will be placed on the site, the location and nature of public realm improvements, vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns including sidewalks, a lay-by for deliveries, the driveway access point, the location and number of on-site parking spaces to be provided, the extent of the reserved green space and other green features, building elevations and the proposed arrangement and use of spaces within the building. The presentation will be posted on the Takoma Junction Redevelopment project page on Thursday, April 5.

As the owner of the property, the Council will want to see the extent to which the proposed site plan advances the City's goals for the project to:

- act as a stimulus to the commercial district and locally-owned, independent businesses;
- improve the aesthetic appeal of the district; and
- be contextually sensitive and environmentally sustainable

Prior to taking any formal action on the plan, the Council will determine to what extent the draft site plan addresses the criteria of the Development Agreement as it relates to the site plan, specifically: Has NDC incorporated environmental sustainability and green elements in the project? Have they created accessible and attractive outdoor space for public use? Does the proposal advance the Council's interest in addressing mobility issues and enhancing the streetscape? Are parking options for area businesses not located within the Project provided? Does the plan provide the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op reasonable access for the loading of deliveries and customer parking?

The Council will also be asked to provide specific comment on the plan, allowing it to proceed to the development review process overseen by Montgomery County Department of Planning. During this process, the Council will consider how the draft plan addresses their earlier comments on the concept plan, detailed in Resolution 2017-53, adopted October 25, 2017.

Upcoming work sessions will focus on the design of the building and its placement on the property (April 11), public space and sustainability features (April 18), and traffic and circulation patterns (April 25), and the site plan as a whole (May 2). Formal action on the site plan is scheduled for May 9 at which time the Council will vote on a resolution which would allow NDC to proceed with the Montgomery County development review process.

Council Priority

Advance Economic Development Efforts: Takoma Junction Development

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. The removal of the impermeable surface of the parking lot, improved stormwater features, installation of the proposed vegetative or green roof, and other green features will contribute to the positive environmental impact of the development.

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 the center of the City; 57% of the residents of Takoma Park are people of color. Of 464 businesses in Takoma Park, 139 are identified as minority-owned businesses (US Census Bureau, 2015). We do not believe this Council action will disproportionately impact any particular group.

Attachments and Links

- [Takoma Junction Redevelopment – Project Page](#)
- [Development Agreement](#) (August 2106)
- [Resolution 2017-53 Expressing the Sense of the Council Regarding the Takoma Junction Redevelopment Project](#) (October 25, 2017)
- [Resolution 2015-19](#) Authorizing the Initiation of Negotiations with Neighborhood Development company, LLC for the Redevelopment of the City Lot at the Takoma Junction (April 13, 2015)
- [Montgomery County Development Review Process Presentation](#) (February 14, 2018)
- [FAQ – Development and Ground Lease](#) (July 18, 2016)

1 Introduced by: Councilmember Qureshi

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

4
5 **RESOLUTION 2017-53**

6
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 sized for use
50 by 18-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 and open 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 may allow for more public gathering space in front of the building and
81 accessible outdoor space devoted to year-round public use.

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

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

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

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

106 **WHEREAS,** the inclusion of a 34,000 square foot development option among the options to be
107 considered as part of the traffic study does not constitute approval of a 34,000
108 square foot option by the Council; AND

109 **WHEREAS,** the traffic study should include analysis of the potential impacts of the various
110 development options on pedestrian and bicycle traffic and public transportation.

112 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF**
113 **TAKOMA PARK THAT** the Concept Plan presented to the City Council on September 27,
114 2017 shows the following information on which a traffic study can be based: approximately
115 34,000 square feet of retail and office space (two floors); a level of underground parking; the
116 location of the entrance to the parking garage and service area; and a lay-by on Carroll Avenue,
117 the Council directs NDC to also evaluate traffic associated with updated square footage of retail
118 and office space associated with the Takoma Auto Clinic parcel and of a development concept
119 that includes greater public gathering space at the front of the building at street level and outdoor
120 space for year-round public use, including the potential of a third floor public space.

121 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, as the project moves forward, the Council expects to
122 see a Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan that meets the criteria of Resolution 2015-19 and the
123 Development Agreement, including the Agreement's provisions relating to reasonable
124 accommodation of the TPSS Co-op, and, in particular, regardless of whether the traffic studies
125 show minimal impact on traffic, provides:

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

151 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** if a lay-by is deemed appropriate, then it shall be
152 shown on the Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan.

153 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Draft Site Plan/Preliminary Plan shall be
154 announced and made public with adequate time for review.

155 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the traffic studies upon completion shall be announced
156 and made public with adequate time for review and will be the basis for one or more City
157 Council work sessions.

158 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Council directs NDC to continue to periodically
159 provide updates to the project schedule so that this public document reflects an accurate picture
160 of the status of the project and tasks within it.

161 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Council directs NDC and the City to identify and
162 provide to Council the full list of “main tasks” that are referenced in the Development
163 Agreement and to ensure the process for amending main task deadlines in the Development
164 Agreement is followed.

165 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Council directs NDC to:

- 166 1) continue to the traffic study, taking into account in the study to the extent possible the
167 items in the second Resolved clause that have a bearing on traffic, and
168 2) continue toward the development of the detail necessary to produce a Draft Site
169 Plan/Preliminary Plan of the project.
170

171 **Adopted this 25th day of October, 2017.**

172

173 Attest:

174

175

176

177 _____
177 Jessie Carpenter, CMC

178 City Clerk

Introduced by: Councilmember Stewart

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2015-19

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE INITIATION OF NEGOTIATIONS
WITH NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT
OF THE CITY LOT AT THE TAKOMA JUNCTION**

WHEREAS, the City purchased the parking lot at the Takoma Junction in 1995 for the purposes of stabilizing this small but important historic neighborhood commercial district and facilitating the revitalization of the area; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Junction Task Force, a Council-appointed committee, presented a final report in February 2012 with the following mission statement:

Takoma Junction, predominantly located in the Takoma Park Historic District, is a small commercial district in the heart of a residential community, with historically significant resources and a vital fire station that should:

- *encourage motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists to slow down, park, relax, and shop while functioning adequately as a link within the local road and transit networks,*
- *encourage sustainable commercial opportunities and provide convenience to local consumers,*
- *serve as a cultural meeting-point for old and young in a diverse community,*
- *blend harmoniously with adjacent residential neighborhoods, and*
- *all in a forward-thinking, attractive and environmentally sensitive way.*

WHEREAS, the City Council, in furtherance of the redevelopment of the lot, authorized the release of a Request for Proposals in January 2014 and received seven full proposals in response in May 2014; and

WHEREAS, four development teams were selected as finalists by the Council in September 2014 for further consideration, each having been found to be in compliance with the evaluation criteria set forth in the Request for Proposals; and

WHEREAS, the Council, over the course of six months, has considered the four redevelopment proposals, scheduled public presentations of the developers' proposals, sponsored a community open house, held listening sessions for the community, solicited additional public comment expressed through oral, written and web formats, and conducted eight work sessions allowing for the further review of the proposals; and

WHEREAS, the Council, having carefully evaluated the expertise, financial capacity, and overall vision and concept of each of the development teams and having weighed the public input gathered during this evaluation process, has determined that Neighborhood Development Company, LLC is a capable developer for the Takoma Junction lot and will be a suitable partner with the City; and

WHEREAS, Neighborhood Development Company, LLC has expressed a willingness to work cooperatively with the Council and the community to further refine its conceptual plan for the redevelopment of the site and the finalization of various elements of its proposal including:

- a) amount of retail, community, open space and residential space included in the project;
- b) size and massing of proposed structures;
- c) engineering and urban design features that aspire to high environmental and sustainability standards;
- d) incorporation of high-end interior and exterior building finishes;
- e) size and configuration of commercial parking facilities and vehicle access;
- f) landscaping that will enhance the pedestrian experience;
- g) preservation and maintenance of the wooded area;
- h) construction of a building structure that aspires to elegance, beauty, and place-setting that will be admired by professionals and residents;
- i) establishment of a mutually acceptable working relationship with the TPSS Co-op that assures its current and future operational and expansion needs;
- j) enhancement of the economic vitality of the Takoma Junction area;
- k) an increase in the City's commercial tax revenue base;
- l) a fiscally prudent solution for the City of Takoma Park;
- m) traffic study; and
- n) community meetings and design charrettes; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the important role that the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op will play as the anchor tenant in the location and NDC has indicated it will work to assure the Co-op's continuity of operations during construction; and

WHEREAS, the Council seeks the following:

- a) early resolution between NDC and the Co-op regarding the Co-op's long-term role as an anchor tenant in an expanded structure at the Junction;
- b) continued inclusion of public parking on the site;
- c) project design that minimizes detrimental impacts on neighboring properties on Columbia and Sycamore Avenues;
- d) continued guidance of NDC's design by the priorities identified in the Takoma Junction Task Force report;
- e) design that optimizes the provision of retail services on the first floor of the building; and
- f) provision of public or community spaces that result in enhanced interactions among residents and visitors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND authorizes the City Manager to initiate negotiations with the Neighborhood Development Company, LLC on an agreement for the redevelopment of the City-owned lot and disposition of the property.

Adopted this 13th day of April, 2015

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk