

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**

Monday, April 10, 2023

MINUTES

Minutes adopted Sept. 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Searcy, Councilmember Fulcher, Councilmember Dyballa, Councilmember Gibson, Councilmember Honzak

Absent: Councilmember Seamens, Councilmember Small

Also Present: Acting City Manager Eubanks, Planning & Development Manager Grigsby, City Clerk Carpenter

The City Council convened at 6:30 PM in the Community Center Auditorium, 7500 Maple Avenue.

PRESENTATION

Montgomery College Facilities Master Plan Briefing

Ms. Grigsby introduced Dr. Brad Stewart, Provost of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Montgomery College Campus.

Dr. Stewart briefed the Council on the current status of projects, the facilities master plan and on their community engagement strategy.

Michael Akin, of LINK Strategic Partners, stated that he worked with Montgomery College to make sure that the community and stakeholders' feedback was heard during the process. He said that their job was to facilitate community engagement. Mr. Akins said that there would be a virtual kick-off meeting to include all College facilities on May 2, 2023 followed by a series of meetings focused on the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus, followed by a wrap-up meeting. He said that there would be a dedicated webpage on the College website to include FAQs, updates, and meeting materials. (Presentation attached.)

Minor Master Plan Preliminary Recommendations

Ms. Gigsby stated that in 2021 the City entered into a partnership with Montgomery Planning to begin a minor master plan process. She introduced Melissa Williams, Planner with the Montgomery Planning Department.

Ms. Williams stated that she was the project lead on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. She presented preliminary recommendations. The recommendations presented were related to:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Historic Resources
- Environment
- Transportation
- Parks
- Community and Public Facilities

(Presentation attached.)

Ms. Honzak asked about the Washington Adventist Hospital site zoning.

Ms. Williams replied that the site was currently operating under the R-60 Zone. She explained that the site was under a special exemption agreement that limited the site for hospital and university uses. The removal of the special exemption would allow an opportunity for a mix of uses of the site.

Ms. Honzak asked what was the possible housing density on the site.

Ms. Williams replied that she did not currently have those numbers but that she would send that information to the Council.

Ms. Honzak asked if the Green Promenade and the Maple Avenue biking plans were discussed with staff and included in the plan.

Ms. Williams replied that the planning team was still working on the language for the plan. She said that the team envisioned the green promenade complimenting the City's Maple Avenue recommendations.

Ms. Honzak and Ms. Searcy asked about the possibility of a school. Ms. Searcy said that there was increased density proposed along Maple Avenue and asked if the team takes that into consideration when thinking about future forecasts for school needs.

Hye-Soo Baek, Schools Planner at Montgomery County Planning Department, explained that student enrollment projections came from Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). She said that the planning department shared data each time the department worked on a master plan which included information on expected student enrollment from a certain area. She said that

if there were capacity concerns, the Planning Department worked with MCPS to develop additional options to accommodate possible future growth.

Mr. Hisel McCoy, Down County Planning Chief, explained that every four years the County looked to see if schools in certain clusters were over capacity. He said the County practice in school updates included the generational master plan, the six-year CIP and the four-year growth policy. He stated that the minor master plan amendment was going to do its best to make recommendations to provide flexibility. He clarified that the questions asked by Council regarding school capacity were more related to the CIP cycle rather than the master plan.

Mr. Gibson asked how Bashear's Run would be restored.

Ms. Williams explained that the restoration involved the outfall near the Essex House and the recommendations made for the park land area.

Ms. Dyballa asked about vehicle, pedestrian and bike access recommendations on the hospital site.

Ms. Williams stated that the Planning Department was working to improve the connectivity across the campus by providing a variety of mobility option for the site including pedestrian paths and bicycle lanes.

Ms. Dyballa requested an explanation of mixed-use zones so that the public may understand what it is.

Ms. Williams replied that CR was a family of zones and there were two zones that were selected for the minor master plan, the CRN and CRT zones. She said that the CRN was a commercial residential neighborhood zone and CRT was a commercial residential town zone. She explained the difference between the two zones.

Ms. Honzak stated that there were a lot of underrepresented voices in Takoma Park in Ward 5 that she spoke to who expressed a need for recreation space. She asked about hospital hill open space.

Ms. Williams said that the hospital designated the area as a privately-owned public space. She said that they can have a conversation with the Adventist group regarding that space if the Council wished to.

Ms. Searcy commented on the various heights of structures on streets off of Maple Avenue. She said that she noted a difference in the single-family homes outside of the plan. She asked what the thought process was to ensure some sort of conformity or approach around the maximum height next to single family properties.

Ms. Williams stated that the plan recommendations were based on existing development. She said that in some cases some properties were being brought into conformance. She said that there was a benefit to the CR zones because it had a built-in residential compatibility requirement.

Ms. Searcy asked that if the minor master plan amendment recommendations included a limitation to the number of developments that can occur on the hospital site beyond the height and density.

Ms. Williams replied that the planning department did not control the number of buildings or the unit count. She said that the recommendations for the hospital site would take up space on the site which would limit the amount of available space for other development.

Ms. Searcy asked about the historic designation process.

Ms. Casey Roan, Historic Preservation Planner, stated that the historic preservation recommendation made in the minor master plan amendment were folded into the overall plan and the City has the opportunity to weigh in even though County regulates the preservation process.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.