

Introduced by: Councilmember Seamens

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 2009 - 44

**RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE TAKOMA/LANGLEY SECTOR PLAN
(MONTGOMERY COUNTY)**

WHEREAS, the Takoma/Langley Sector Plan is a bi-county plan developed by Montgomery and Prince George's Counties' Planning Departments to enhance the community character and provide for transit-oriented development around planned transit facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma/Langley Sector Plan contains policies, objectives and recommendations that will guide future growth and development around proposed transit facilities in both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and the Takoma Park community have reviewed and discussed the plan and its impact on the future growth and development of Takoma Park; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council supports the development of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor and the Takoma/Langley Crossroads as an urbanized regional center which is environmentally and financially sustainable and enhances the quality of life of area residents; and

WHEREAS, for many years, the City has worked to plan for, coordinate, implement, and support improvements to this area, regardless of jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, owners of multiple properties along New Hampshire Avenue have requested an increase in zoning intensity, recognizing that the development of transitional residential buildings such as townhomes would better buffer the single family neighborhood to the rear of these properties from the noise and pollution generated by traffic along the corridor, as well as improve opportunities for the development of needed housing; and

WHEREAS, the City has advocated for and continues to support the reconstruction and development of University Boulevard and New Hampshire Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the City has advocated for and continues to support the reconstruction of New Hampshire Avenue as a multi-way boulevard; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board is holding a public hearing on July 23, 2009 to hear testimony on the draft Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Takoma Park supports the adoption of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan by the Montgomery County Planning Board, conditioned upon the following changes to the recommendations included in the draft Sector Plan:

1. Rezone properties located along the western edge of New Hampshire Avenue, currently zoned R-60 and generally limited to single family residences, to allow for the development of townhomes of a maximum height of 35 feet.
2. Rezone properties within Block 4 of the New Hampshire Gardens subdivision, adjacent to Holton Lane and Hammond Avenue, currently zoned R-60 and generally limited to single family residences to be rezoned to be consistent with proposed zoning for 7676 New Hampshire Avenue.
3. Expand recommendations to allow for, but not limit to, the development of live/work residences and townhomes along University Boulevard East, between Anne Street and Merrimac Drive.
4. Restrict the height of any future development of 7676 New Hampshire Avenue which abuts an adjacent single family residential property in use as a residence to 35 feet and the height of any future development fronting on Hammond Avenue to 40 feet.
5. Eliminate all references to:
 - i. the designation or classification of Hammond Avenue and that portion of Holton Lane which lies west of New Hampshire Avenue as a business street; and
 - ii. the development of a private street providing access to New Hampshire Avenue from Hammond Avenue.
6. Delete all references to the development of a sanctioned north/south trail along the Long Branch Stream Valley.
7. Delete the recommendation to restrict the establishment of new liquor stores and other retail businesses that sell beer and wine for off-site consumption to allow for further review by the community.

8. Consider relocating the civic green proposed for 1101 University Boulevard East, recommended as to be conveyed to Parks, closer to, or adjacent to the transit station and incorporating more hardscape than greenscape if adjacent to transit.
9. Recommend that existing structures, site improvements and land uses be deemed “conforming”.
10. Recommend maintenance of commensurate affordable housing.
11. Incorporate recommendations, identified in Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part of this Resolution, which would encourage the expansion and retention of existing businesses.
12. Incorporate general recommendations, identified in Exhibit B, attached hereto and made a part of this Resolution, which are intended to clarify the intent of the Sector Plan, provide more consistent use of certain terminology, and to correct grammatical and typographical errors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Takoma Park expresses its appreciation to the Montgomery County Planning Board for its support of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan, its recognition of the importance of promoting environmentally and financial sustainable development in our community, and for its genuine interest in maintaining the international character of the area.

Adopted this 20th day of July, 2009.

ATTEST:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk

**Revisions to draft Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan
Quality of Life – Economic Development
City of Takoma Park**

Recommendations to retain and grow the international and local character of businesses

- Establish a substantial and easily-accessible revolving loan fund for local and international businesses and to assist in targeted identity building over the first few years.
- Condition public funds for redevelopment subsidies on viable leases to international and local businesses, and limit redevelopment subsidies to costs with a public purpose normally born by the developer, such as shared structured parking, streetscapes, and other infrastructure.
- Use design standards to require second-story, alley-facing and equally less desirable commercial units that would naturally command less rent and be more affordable to businesses with less resources such as local or international businesses.
- Support a public/private partnership to create a “catalyst project” demonstrating the successful integration of international retail businesses with the redevelopment vision, recouping public investment over time.
- Use impact tax revenues, tax rebates, direct rent subsidies, payments in lieu of taxes, or other assistance that is phased out over time to retain, attract, and expand local businesses and businesses that contribute to or create the international identity of the area.
- Promote and market wealth of area international businesses to the international and immigrant communities in the region and along the Eastern seaboard corridor to create strong demand for these businesses and to promote the area as a destination for international goods and services.
- Provide incentives for property owners who use non-traditional leases - profit sharing, graduated, and financing build-out costs – for businesses that are independent and locally owned or contribute to the international character of the corridor.
- Build or invest in public facilities, cultural centers, events, and other institutions that support international cultural practices and events to create synergy between businesses and cultural institutions.
- Support Prince George’s County’s efforts to build and manage a public market building with stalls for vendors of international goods within the Sector Plan area.
- Investigate the feasibility of the elimination of State of Maryland sales taxes on exchange of international goods within the Maryland International Corridor for a period of ten years, similar to the incentives provided for designated arts and entertainment districts.

**General Recommendations for revisions to the draft
Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan
City of Takoma Park**

Page 8. Plan should not include specific branding tag or campaign. Recommend removal of quotes from the phrase “heart of the international corridor.”

Page 15. Typo in the last sentence of picture caption.

Page 17. Correct all references to the CDA to read “Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority, Inc.”

Page 19. Delete second recommendation restricting liquor stores. The City is currently exploring revising the liquor laws, and prefers to rely on City and neighborhood comment to restrict new liquor stores. The establishment of new liquor stores is currently not allowed under State law.

Delete first bullet under recommendation regarding community gardens and urban farms. City has completed an inventory and evaluation of potential gardening sites on public and private land in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads, and is in a third year of grants to promote community gardens along New Hampshire Avenue. Make the second bullet a first order recommendation, not a second order recommendation.

Delete fast track permitting program recommendation. Sector Plan area already has fast track permitting through the green tape program for enterprise zones for all commercial sites. Plan recommends the establishment of a redundant program. City supports the continuation of the current program.

Page 20. Clarify language and intent of second paragraph. It reads as creating more jobs to dwelling units, but reading further on, it appears to advocate more dwelling units to jobs, and overall it is unclear which is more desirable.

Page 22. Rezoning recommendation is for Commercial Residential zoning which currently allows for live work housing. Townhomes appear to be lower density than what is developed on site.

All commercial properties currently enjoy fast track permitting through the green tape program for enterprise zones. Recommend continuation of the program.

Add townhomes or other transitional multi-family along New Hampshire Avenue.

Page 22. Is the chart proposed land use or proposed zoning? Appears to be proposed zoning – also should show parks if it is proposed use.

New Hampshire Ave reference to “street treatment” is vague and should be clarified or further defined.

Page 23. Why is the height so low next to Prince George's residential neighborhood at the eastern boundary? There is an established 50 foot wide tree buffer that is quite tall and dense – development could be 60-80 feet in height –The Takoma Overlook development is much higher than that.

Page 26. On Anne Street, while the base properties show it as a street connecting through, it does not connect through to Carroll Avenue and dead ends in the sidewalk.

Correct the green street so that it extends through behind the Safeway property.

Page 27. Strike under CPTED principles “a clear delineation of public & private areas” as it is not as important as there is not much drug activity on our multifamily properties. However, this could be replaced with “demonstrate that public space is cared for and valued through cleanliness, facilities and infrastructure that are in good repair, and community touches such as gardens, flowers, design elements, and art.”

Under placemaking design guidelines, strong language emphasizing pedestrian orientation should be added.

Page 29. Note that the 150' r-o-w confirms the existing Master Plan r-o-w.

Page 30. Specify bicycle and transit access in addition to pedestrian access.

Page 31. Typo – change feet to foot (15 foot public improvement easement)

Is the buffer 2 or 3 feet in width between the bicycle travel land and the vehicular travel lane?

Reference to bicycle and transit access is missing.

Pages 30-32. Add recommendation to relocate electric/overhead wires to the alleys, rear of properties or below grade.

Add recommendations for bicycle parking and other street furniture beyond seating.

Page 34. Recommend a circulator bus for New Hampshire Avenue, not the Sector Plan area.

Page 35. Should, not but does not, address bike access, needs or issues in any comprehensive way.

Page 36. Recommendation to retrofit existing streets to include sidewalks needs to include a tree buffer to shade and buffer walkers and children from the street.

Page 40. Replace “Add stormwater management along New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard” with “Add stormwater management for streets and properties within the Sector Plan area” to clarify the meaning as the area and not the streets. There should be a specific recommendation for a median bio filtration system for stormwater management on New Hampshire Ave surface flow when the street is reconstructed as a multi-way boulevard.

Add a recommendation to ensure that streets and stormwater drains that drain directly into the Long Branch stream have quality and quantity stormwater management controls.

This section needs to acknowledge that the City controls the SWM, not the County.

Page 41. Add “site residences within walking distance of goods and services to reduce vehicle use”.

Add a general 25-35% tree canopy coverage recommendation. Currently it is only noted on specific parcels.

Page 43. Correct Becca Lilly and Hillwood Manor park indicators to point to the play areas – currently indicators have little relation to areas which the community identifies as the parks.

Replace the first recommendation with “provide an urban park that serves the New Hampshire Gardens neighborhood youth and elderly as well as other residents. This park should also serve any employees, residents, and visitors to the future redevelopment of the southwest corner of University and New Hampshire Avenue.”

Change title on map from “Existing Parks” to “Existing and Proposed Parks.”

Page 44. Map doesn’t show existing hardscape pathway near Becca Lilly. Map shows hardscape which doesn’t exist off of Carroll Avenue in SVA 1A Long Branch.

Redraw the line for Sligo Creek Trail – the Sligo Creek trail actually crosses New Hampshire Avenue and then goes south on the east side of the street.

Recommend preserving the tree buffer next to the recreation center on New Hampshire Avenue.

Page 46. Acknowledge the other half of this commercial district on the Prince George’s County side.

Recommendation for 1007-1021 is too specific - Office uses work very well in this location; commercial or residential may work well in the future. Town homes are too low density. Keep rezoning to CR Zone, but do not limit to townhomes. Don’t force live-work in this market.

The CDA is not an association – see earlier note.

Pages 47-50: Clarify recommendation to require developers to retain existing retail and identify resources – both technical and financial – to be provided in event existing retail is temporarily relocated or displaced during redevelopment. Designations of percentages referenced in the Plan may be found to be arbitrary and capricious.

Reconsider requiring a green roof treatment for a parking garage. Solar panels, vertical storm water treatments, trellises may be a better investment as there is no advantage for energy saving on cooling costs with a green roof on a parking lot. Requiring a LEED designation will better specify green treatments on the site and offer flexibility to the developer and site conditions then requiring wholesale green roofs.

Label Development Plan view as for illustrative purposes only to show build out potential. If there are portions that are not illustrative, then the parts that are not should be deleted. Development Plan makes it appear as if that is what will be built. It does not look like what the plan is – a framework.

Change LEED Gold requirement to a minimum requirement, to allow buildings to be built to Leed Platinum standards, or if the County in the future requires more than LEED Gold.

Page 47. Delete the recommendation of locating the civic green adjacent to the transit center – this is prime retail property and a park is not an appropriate use, given that it is an urban style transit stop.

Page 48. Delete the recommendation to relocate the post office. The post office provides an important anchor for Holton Lane and this would disrupt that.

Holton lane is not adjacent to 1101 University Boulevard E.

This diagram is inconsistent with the diagram on page 24.

Page 49. Re-mark parcel on the illustrations to include lots south of Holton Lane.

Change features like a settlement center to a floating symbol and a recommendation that the County acquire whichever parcel becomes available.

Design for any redevelopment of 7676 should be sensitive and compatible with single family houses located on Hammond.

Design should support parking below grade on New Hampshire Avenue and under the sidewalk easement.

Page 51. Do not limit the liner buildings to 40 feet in height. Statement is unclear as the rest of the plan refers to heights of 60 feet.

Change recommendation for the west side of New Hampshire Avenue to allow future redevelopment with multi-family residential.

Plan needs and merits a more viable method of business retention than the recommended method, even if just to say that one needs to be established. Charge DED with it.

Page 52-53. Connectivity – Add recommendation to “preserve connectivity for pedestrians, bikes, and vehicles between lots and encourage shared parking.”

Page 54. Change liner building height to 60 feet. Three stories may not be sufficient to offset costs of developing an adequate recreation center.

Page 55. Typo - should confirm, not reconfirm zoning for Kennewick Avenue.

Environment – Add stormwater management recommendations to support residential programs such as rain barrel programs, to improve quality of water prior to reaching stream, and to increase water infiltration within the residential neighborhood.

Typo – sign and mark local trails should be under subheading of connectivity.

Page 56. Add to Montgomery County Implementation responsibilities:

- Support small businesses acquisition of skills and market share.
- Acquire land and develop a food and food science incubator.
- Support acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of housing
- Support redevelopment opportunities, financing and grants for local businesses.
- Request renewal of the enterprise zone and expansion to all CR zoned commercial properties.

Page 57. Allow WSSC property to develop as commercial. A height is never established for the WSSC property or the nearby commercial. If the WSSC property is zoned R-60, none of the site would be usable for adjacent property parking, and thus would make it impossible to implement the New Hampshire Avenue Concept Plan vision of a Family Style Pub at this corner.

Page 59. Change third recommendation to “plan for and design new business streets and private roads and accompanying signalization and property access revision” from “introduce new business streets and private roads”.

Page 60. For Capital Improvement Program budgeting:

- o Add New Hampshire Avenue Reconstruction (SHA)
- o Add Purple Line (MTA/Counties)
- o Add Neighborhood Sidewalks (Takoma Park)

Page 61. Consider changing the target speed on University Boulevard to 25 MPH once redevelopment occurs.

What is the cross section for Anne Street at University Boulevard? The business cross section is for a 70 foot r-o-w.

Key the cross sections to the urban design guidelines.

Add a New Hampshire Avenue access lane target speed of 15 miles per hour.

Page 62. City laws prohibit biking on sidewalks for anyone older than 16. Add a recommendation to change this on shared bike paths.

DB-5 –Specify buffered bike lanes.