



City of Takoma Park, Maryland
TAKOMA JUNCTION CONCEPT PLAN
Responses to Neighborhood Questions
January 17, 2019

As part of the Takoma Junction redevelopment, Neighborhood Development Company, the selected partner for the City's project, has submitted a site plan application to Montgomery County. The following are questions members of the community have raised about how the project will impact the immediate neighborhood, specifically residents on Poplar Avenue. For more information, please check the City webpage for the Takoma Junction Redevelopment: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/takoma-junction-redevelopment/>

What will be the impacts of runoff and storm water management on the neighborhood and specifically on Poplar Avenue?

Stormwater control is part of what is reviewed through the site plan review process. Here are comments provided by the Director of Public Works:

Stormwater from the site will go through the facility that will be on the property. The stormwater will then be piped underground to existing underground stormwater pipes. Regarding water problems from drainage on Poplar, I am aware of several issues: When the Fire Station was being built there were numerous problems with erosion and flooding from the top of the site down the slope at the back and onto Columbia and Poplar. This was pre and during construction. The Fire Station installed a large sand filter that filters most of the stormwater from the site. I am not aware any continuing problems from flooding from the Fire Station. I believe all were addressed by the construction of the system.

Additionally, new stormdrain pipe was added to the Columbia Avenue/Poplar Ave intersection to enable the fire station stormdrain lines to tie into existing systems at that location. We do know that we get a lot of water run-off at Poplar and Columbia, it is due to topography mostly and the amount of impervious area around those streets.

There is also a great deal of underground water (hence Spring Park nearby). We see that on the west side of Poplar Avenue. Subsurface water from the higher elevation property on Hickory flows down to the lower homes on Poplar. Most homes on the west side have sump pumps that are very active. This is related to topography and underground springs. There are so many sump discharges that the City installed a grate and underdrain to capture the discharged water from sump drains at the property side of the sidewalk (often coming out of retaining walls) to allow it to drain under the sidewalk and out to the gutter or directly into the stormdrain structures below. This enables the sidewalks to not be covered by privately discharged water from sump

pumps.

There are similar issues on the east side, but the topography is different so the drainage does not go to the front of the properties, like it does on the west side. There is also a storm drain structure that runs down the back yards of property between Poplar and Sycamore and down to a large structure on Elm Avenue. That structure on Elm is a quite large 4 feet wide and tall trench.

The source of water from the properties on the lower end of Poplar both on the west side and the east side comes from the higher elevations to the west and east of them, not from the north of them.

We can provide some maps with the topography and the storm structures marked.

What impact will the parking garage have on Columbia and Poplar Avenues regarding air quality issues associated with that plan?

The number of spaces in the parking lot is similar to the number on the lot currently plus the cars at Johnny's Auto shop. The underground parking will have open windows – most of them at quite a distance from Columbia Avenue. The garage will be designed to meet all regulations related to appropriate treatment of exhaust.

What will the mechanical towers on the roof look like from either the front or rear of the building? Are the roof mechanicals within the allowable height elevations and what is the noise level associated with the mechanicals?

It is unlikely that the mechanicals on the roof will be visible, due to the topography and façade around the roof. Roof mechanicals are subject to the City's noise ordinance and cannot exceed allowable noise levels. Often, special structures are built around mechanicals to ensure that noise standards are met. This will be something that we will be examining as the site plan goes through the review process.

The traffic studies indicate that there would be increased traffic in the neighborhood streets and mention an option of closing Sycamore Avenue. How would residents in the Sycamore/Poplar/Columbia area get to 410 if Sycamore is closed?

There have been a number of proposals related to City streets in the Takoma Junction area. Some of the options include making changes to Sycamore and/or Grant, but most significant changes were not recommended. The SHA Vision study will be looking more closely at the roadways in the Takoma Junction area as part of a public process. Between the development's site plan review process and the SHA study, there will be a good amount of public discussion of traffic and circulation. Access to the Co-op's parking lot will need to be maintained in any event.

Will there be a path through the green area up to the Co-op? Will the trees be preserved?

www.takomaparkmd.gov/junction

Where will the construction staging area would be?

There will likely not be a path through the green area up to the Co-op. Such a path would need to be ADA accessible and, if so, would probably require the removal of many trees and have other negative environmental impacts.

While a number of trees may come down as part of the construction, there will likely also be new trees planted. It should be noted that a number of trees have grown on the fill on the site and may not have good root systems. Replanting on better soil will help reach the goal of having a healthy natural forest area.

Once the site plan is finalized, discussions of construction staging can take place. Most staging is likely to be on site. This would be an issue on which to have ongoing discussions with the neighborhood, as staging locations change over the course of construction.

How can I track the status of the project?

Information about the project is available online at takomaparkmd.gov/junction. Interested parties are encouraged to check the page for regular updates as the project progresses.