AGENDA ITEM #15
March 9, 2010

Worksession

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 2010

TO: County Council

FROM: Minna K. Davidson, Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: Worksession: Recommended FY11-16 Capital Improvements Program
Long Branch Town Center Redevelopment
Wheaton Redevelopment Program

Those expected to attend this worksession include:

Gary Stith, Deputy Director, Department of General Services
Amy Wilson, Management and Budget Specialist, Office of Management and Budget

PHED COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee reviewed the subject projects on March 1, and unanimously recommends the following:

- Approve the Long Branch Town Center Redevelopment Program as recommended by the Executive.
- Approve the Wheaton Redevelopment Program as recommended by the Executive.

Long Branch Town Center Redevelopment, No. 150700, PDF 8-3 *(in $000s)*, © 1

	Total	Thru FY10	6 Years*	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16
FY10 Amd.	300	0	300	0	0	300	0	0	0
CE Rec.	300	0	300	0	0	300	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Recommended funding sources: $300 in current revenue: General
*Approved 6 years = FY09-14, CE Rec. 6 years = FY11-16

PHED COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approve as recommended by the Executive. (3-0) As a technical matter, Council staff recommended changing the PDF Coordination box to delete the Long Branch Advisory Committee and add the Silver Spring Regional Services Center. The Committee accepted this recommendation without objection.

This project provides for facility planning of public improvements necessary to support the redevelopment of the super block bounded by Arliss Street, Flower Avenue, and Piney Branch Road. Planning will include new streets, utilities, streetscaping, public amenities, and parking necessary for the redevelopment of this area as a higher density mixed-use Town Center with retail at street level and residential above. The infrastructure will be planned in partnership with the property owners and businesses in this super block with input from the surrounding Long Branch community. M-NCPPC will assist by developing land use regulations that will facilitate this redevelopment effort.

The approved FY09-14 PDF budgeted $300,000 in current revenue for planning and design for the Long Branch Town Center Redevelopment in FY09. Last year, the Executive recommended, and the Council approved shifting the $300,000 from FY09 to FY13 to reflect the current facility planning schedule. While private sector partners remain interested in the project, they have delayed making commitments because of the current economic downturn.

For FY11-16, the Executive recommends no change in the project schedule as the situation is much the same as last year.

Wheaton Redevelopment Program, No. 150401, PDF 8-5 *(in $000s)*, © 2

	Total	Thru FY10	6 Years*	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16
Approved	13,191	5,972	8,331	1,547	2,161	1,969	1,542	0	0
CE Rec.	13,191	5,972	7,219	797	2,161	2,719	1,542		
Difference	0	0	(1,112)	(750)	0	750	0		

Recommended funding sources: $418 in Federal Aid, $8,727 in G.O. Bonds, $500 in State Aid, $3,546 in PAYGO

*Approved 6 years = FY09-14, CE Rec. 6 years = FY11-16

PHED COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approve as recommended by the Executive. (3-0)

This project provides for studies, streetscaping, façade improvements, site improvements, land acquisition, relocation, lighting upgrades, and demolitions necessary for the renewal of the Wheaton urban revitalization/redevelopment area. The recommended funding will continue the streetscaping and façade improvement program in the downtown area. The PDF notes that related activities may be added to this project as work progresses, potentially resulting in cost increases.

As proposed, this project will continue to fund ongoing efforts. However, the County and Metro recently jointly issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select development partners to develop and execute mixed-use, public-private projects for downtown Wheaton. As

developers are selected and new projects are planned and implemented, more funding may be required in the Wheaton Redevelopment Project.

An RFQ briefing outline is on © 3-12. A press release on the kick off of the RFQ is attached on © 13-14, and a summary of a pre-solicitation meeting is on © 15-20.

PHED COMMITTEE DISCUSSION: The Committee received a briefing on the RFQ process from Mr. Stith. Among other things, he noted that there are now plans for a privately developed Safeway project adjacent to the Wheaton Metro that would include a high rise with about 500 units on top of a new, larger Safeway store. The Wheaton project would be similar to a project completed by Safeway and a private development partner on K Street in the District of Columbia. Mr. Stith said that this high rise project could change the development community's perception of market potential in Wheaton.

In response to Committee questions about previous plans to move the Safeway to another location in Wheaton, Mr. Stith said that the Avalon Bay project had been approved for the relocation of the Safeway, but Safeway changed its plans. Avalon Bay is currently reconsidering its options. The Committee was concerned that the community had requested a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) to enable Avalon Bay to include the relocated Safeway in its project, and that after the ZTA was approved the development did not go forward. The Committee wanted to consider how the Avalon Bay project unfolded, and the implications of that experience for similar kinds of efforts.

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Long Branch Town Center Redevelopment -- No. 150700

Category	**General Government**	Date Last Modified	**December 03, 2009**
Subcategory	**Economic Development**	Required Adequate Public Facility	**No**
Administering Agency	**County Executive**	Relocation Impact	**None.**
Planning Area	**Silver Spring**	Status	**Planning Stage**

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE ($000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY09	Est. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	300	0	0	300	0	0	300	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**300**	**0**	**0**	**300**	**0**	**0**	**300**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

FUNDING SCHEDULE ($000)

Current Revenue: General	300	0	0	300	0	0	300	0	0	0	0
Total	**300**	**0**	**0**	**300**	**0**	**0**	**300**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

DESCRIPTION

This project provides for the facility planning of public improvements necessary to support the redevelopment of the super block bounded by Arliss Street, Flower Avenue, and Piney Branch Road. This block is a poorly organized and under developed commercial area that was reviewed by an Urban Land Institute panel which recommended that this block be intersected by new streets and reoriented as a Town Center for the Long Branch community. Planning will include new streets, utilities, streetscaping, public amenities, and parking necessary for the redevelopment of this area as a higher density mixed-use Town Center with retail at street level and residential above. The infrastructure will be planned in partnership with the property owners and businesses in this super block with input from the surrounding Long Branch community. M-NCPPC will assist by developing land use regulations that will facilitate this redevelopment effort.

JUSTIFICATION

The Long Branch Community is a very diverse, high density community with a large immigrant population. This community is underserved by the commercial center that is the focus of the community at the intersection of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch. The Long Branch community has been designated as a revitalization area by the County and has been designated as an Enterprise Zone by the State of Maryland. The objective of the redevelopment effort is to provide better services to the community and expand the availability of affordable housing. The effort to create a Town Center for Long Branch must be a public/private partnership to effectively accomplish these goals. This project was recommended by the Long Branch Task Force and is supported by the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board.

Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington, "A Technical Assistance Panel Report, The Long Branch Community"; and the Long Branch Task Force 3rd Annual Report, May 2005.

OTHER

This project will comply with the standards of the Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of General Services (DGS), Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA), Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), American Association of State Highway Officials (AASTHO), and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

FISCAL NOTE

Expenditures and funding were adjusted to reflect the current facility planning schedule.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

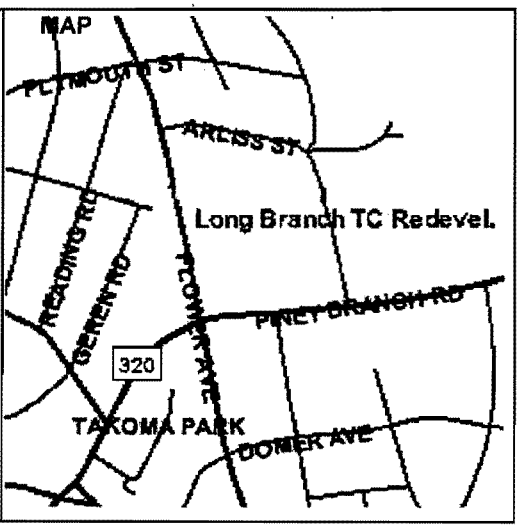
APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

Date First Appropriation	FY07	($000)
First Cost Estimate Current Scope	FY07	300
Last FY's Cost Estimate		300
Appropriation Request	FY11	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY12	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		0
Expenditures / Encumbrances		0
Unencumbered Balance		0
Partial Closeout Thru	FY08	0
New Partial Closeout	FY09	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION

Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Department of Transportation
Department of Permitting Services
M-NCPPC
Long Branch Advisory Committee
Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)
Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA)
Department of General Services

MAP



Recommended

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Wheaton Redevelopment Program -- No. 150401

Category	**General Government**	Date Last Modified	**January 08, 2010**
Subcategory	**Economic Development**	Required Adequate Public Facility	**No**
Administering Agency	**County Executive**	Relocation Impact	**None**
Planning Area	**Kensington-Wheaton**	Status	**On-going**

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE ($000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY09	Est. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	3,861	1,728	0	2,133	239	630	794	470	0	0	0
Land	1,010	1,010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	1,235	1,235	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	7,081	115	1,880	5,086	558	1,531	1,925	1,072	0	0	0
Other	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**13,191**	**4,092**	**1,880**	**7,219**	**797**	**2,161**	**2,719**	**1,542**	**0**	**0**	**0**

FUNDING SCHEDULE ($000)

Federal Aid	418	46	372	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	8,727	0	1,508	7,219	797	2,161	2,719	1,542	0	0	0
PAYGO	3,546	3,546	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Aid	500	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**13,191**	**4,092**	**1,880**	**7,219**	**797**	**2,161**	**2,719**	**1,542**	**0**	**0**	**0**

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT ($000)

Maintenance				199	14	14	24	49	49	49
Net Impact				**199**	**14**	**14**	**24**	**49**	**49**	**49**

DESCRIPTION

This project provides for studies, streetscaping, facade improvements, site improvements, land acquisition, relocation, lighting upgrades, and demolition necessary for the renewal of the Wheaton urban revitalization/redevelopment area. This project represents a multi-project effort by Montgomery County to support the redevelopment of the Wheaton Central Business District (CBD). Funding continues the streetscaping and facade improvement program in downtown Wheaton. Related activities may be added to this project as work progresses, potentially resulting in cost increases.

JUSTIFICATION

The Wheaton Redevelopment Program was established in 2000 with the goal of encouraging private reinvestment through targeted, complementary public investment. It is estimated that the private sector will create nearly two million square feet of new development and generate over $280 million in capital investment. All developers are required to adhere to a strict streetscaping plan. In order to protect these investments, provide a safe, attractive and uniform environment, the County will replace and enhance inefficient lighting, provide streetscaping where no private development has occurred, and improve building facades for small business owners.

International Downtown Association (IDA) Advisory Panel Report March 2008; IDA Advisory Panel Recommendations for the Wheaton CBD; Wheaton's Public Safety Audit, Wheaton Public Safety Audit Task Force, October, 2004; Pedestrian Safety Study Report, Maryland Department of Transportation, November, 2004; National Mainstreet Center Planning Study, Sector Plan, Approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision of 2002, Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee.

FISCAL NOTE

A $418,000 Federal grant, funded through the SAFETEA-LU Transportation Act, was received in FY09.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis has been completed for this project.
- The Executive asserts that this project conforms to the requirements of relevant local plans, as required by the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

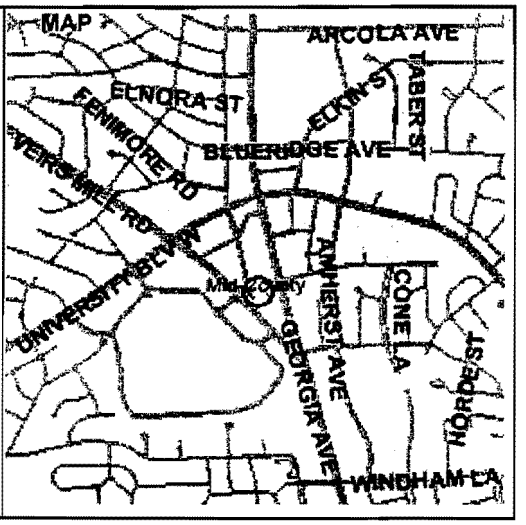
Date First Appropriation	FY04	($000)
First Cost Estimate Current Scope	FY09	6,160
Last FY's Cost Estimate		13,191
Appropriation Request	FY11	797
Appropriation Request Est.	FY12	2,161
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		5,972
Expenditures / Encumbrances		5,085
Unencumbered Balance		887
Partial Closeout Thru	FY08	0
New Partial Closeout	FY09	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

Recommended

COORDINATION

WMATA
Office of the County Attorney
Department of Public Libraries
M-NCPPC
Westfield
Community associations and residents
Contractors
Office of Procurement
Department of General Services
Department of Transportation
Private developers
Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Mid-County Regional Services Center
State of Maryland
Affected property and business owners

MAP



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Wheaton Redevelopment

- *Dramatic recessionary impacts*
- *Continue implementation of CIP*
- *Support for small businesses*
- *Support for new residential projects*
- *Developer partnerships through RFQ*
- *Coordination on Sector Plan*

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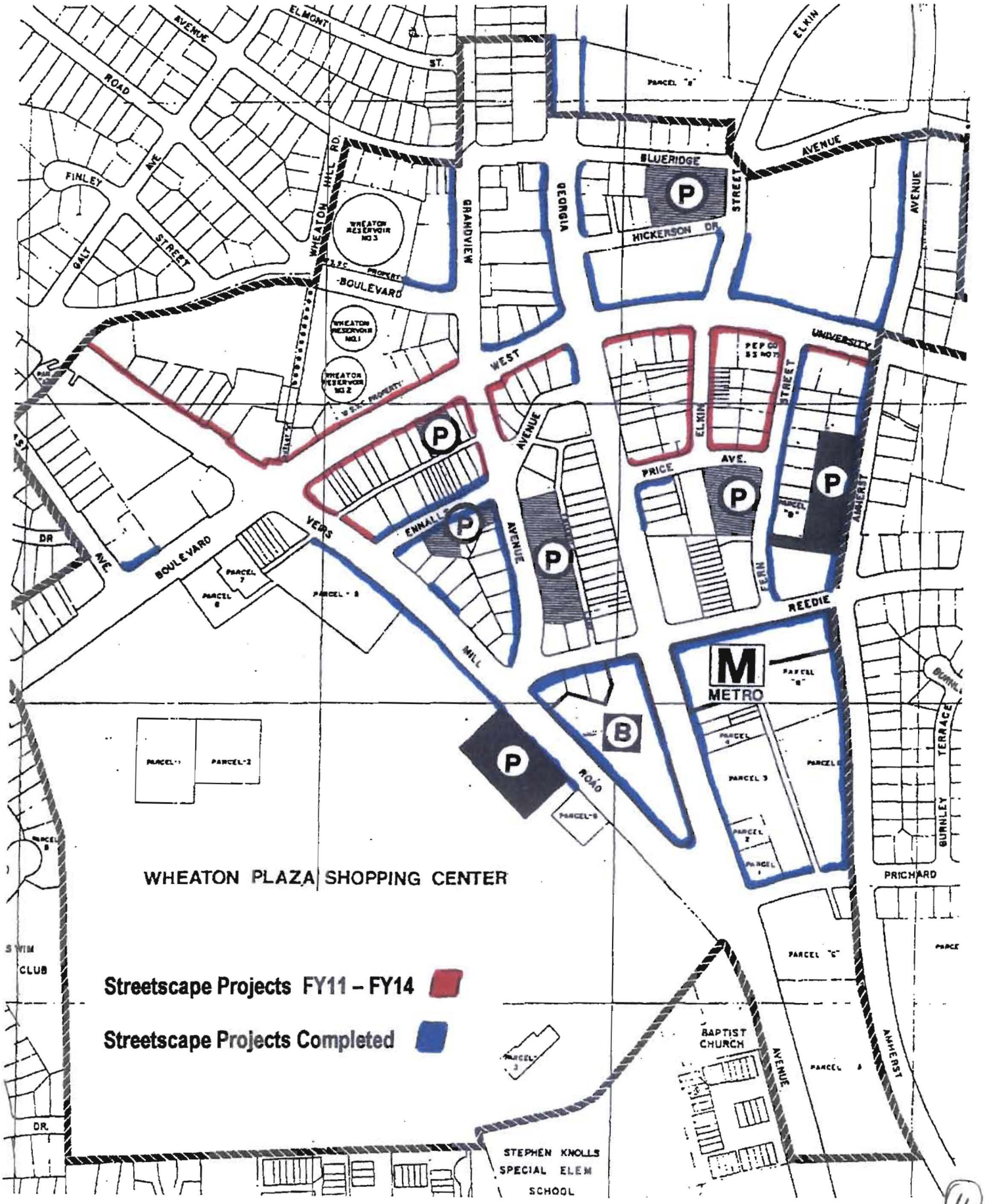
WHEATON STREETSCAPE PROJECTS



Small Business

Recession Impacts

- Retail vacancy more than doubled (2.4% 2008 to 5.1% 2009).
- 18% drop in avg. rent (from $29.19 2008 to $23.87 2009).
- Retail dominated (76% of all commercial space, 33% countywide).
- 35% of Wheaton's commercial space: restaurants & food markets.

Small Business Outreach

- Pro-actively conducted 89 small business visits in 2009.
- Issues raised: access to capital, lease negotiation, marketing, permitting, and public nuisance.
- Collaboration with DED, LEDC and MDSBDC providing technical assistance.

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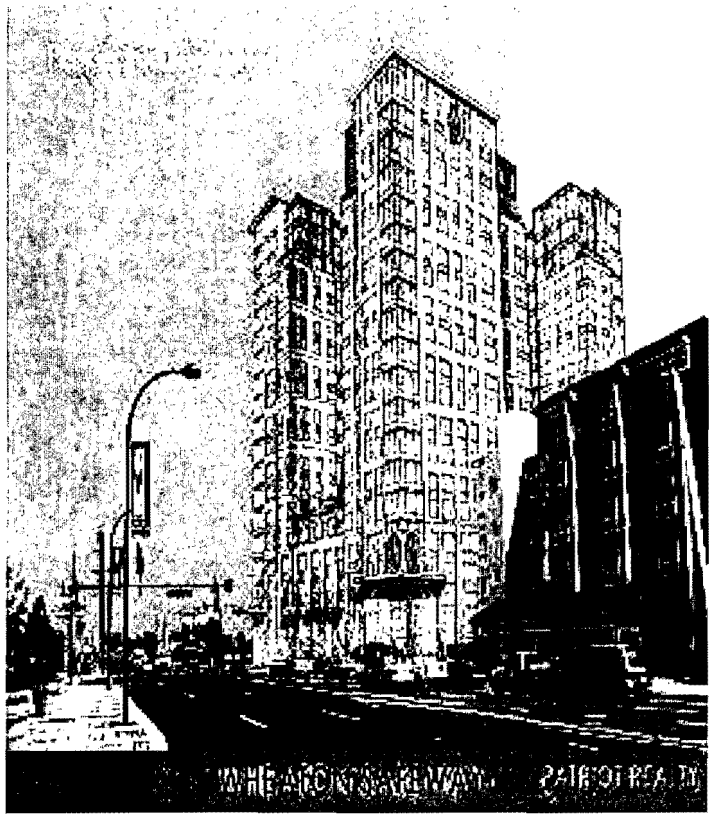
Safeway Mixed-Use Project

- Application filed with M-NCPPC
- Patriot Realty as residential partner
- Approx. 500 residential units
- More than doubling existing grocery store
- Adjacent to Metro



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MetroPoint
"Mixed Income Project of the Year"

- Multifamily Executive Magazine award winner
- Metro/HOC/Bozzuto project
- 173 unit project opened 2008
- 53 units (31% income restricted) Adjacent to Metro

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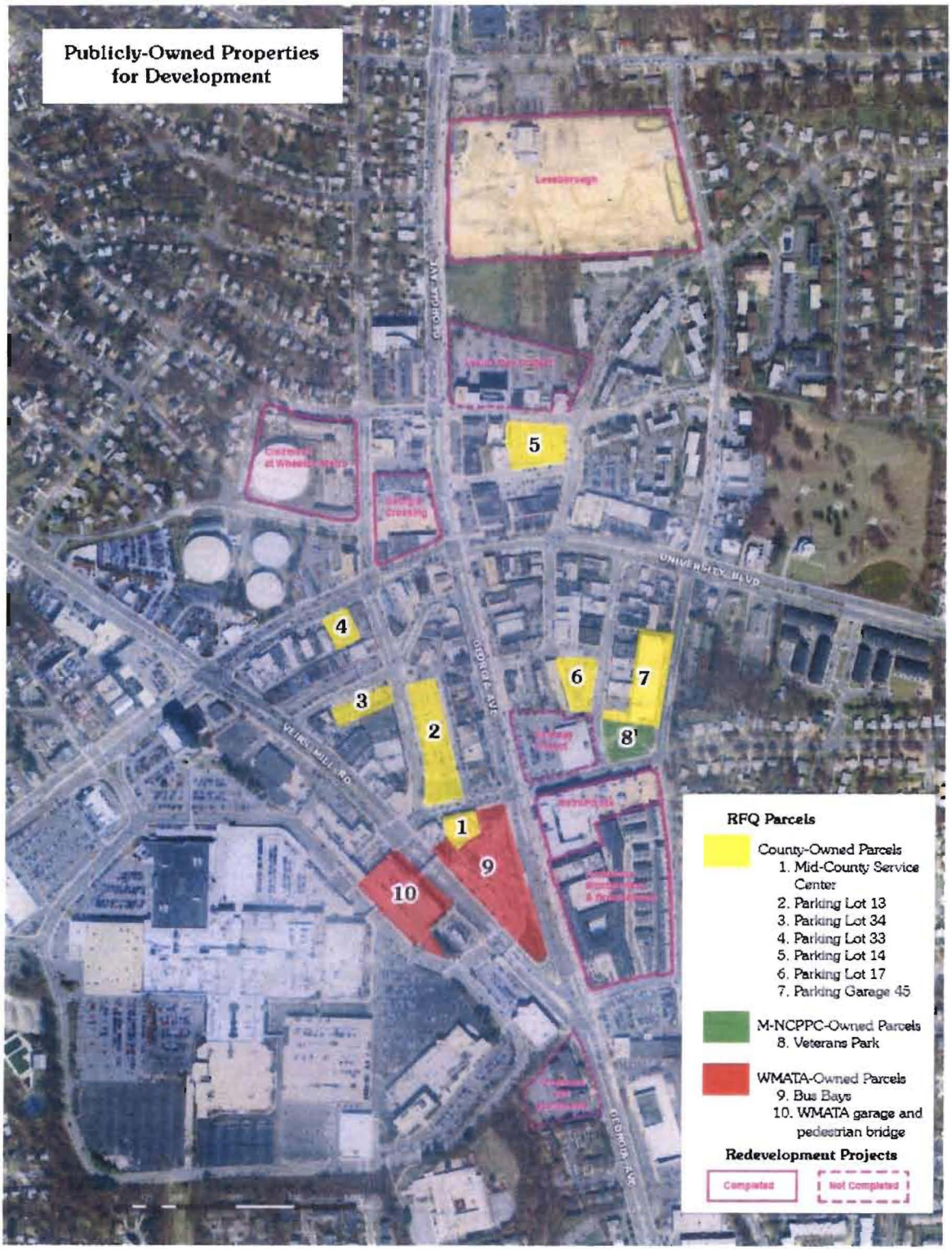
RFQ Goals

The objective of this public-private partnership will be the development of high quality, transit-oriented projects within the Wheaton Central Business District that are consistent with the Public Team's objectives of increased density, mixed-use, and appropriate levels of affordable and workforce housing.

Aerial View of Properties Proposed for Development



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RFQ Properties

Parking Lot District Properties

- Lot 13 1.74 acres CBD-2
- Lot 34 0.47 acres CBD-2
- Lot 33 0.38 acres CBD-2
- Lot 17 0.60 acres CBD-3
- Garage 45 1.34 acres CBD-2
- Lot 14 1.06 acres CBD-2

Mid-County RSC 0.35 acres CBD-2

M-NCPPC: Veteran's Park 0.68 acres CBD-2

Metro: Bus bays 3.14 acres CBD-2; Metro Garage

Replacement Facilities required

Development Process Overview

- Letter of Intent
- Manage Development Planning Process
- Concept Plan Approved
- General Development Agreement
- Property Sale and/or lease agreements
- Obtain Entitlements

RFQ Schedule

RFQ Release:	Friday, January 15, 2010
Pre-Submission Meeting: and Optional Site Tour:	Tuesday, February 2, 2010
Deadline for Questions Time: 4:00 P.M.	Friday, February 12, 2010
Responses to Questions Time: 2:00 P.M.	Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Phase I Submissions Due Friday, March 19, 2010, 4:00 PM

Selection of "Short-listed" Candidates for Phase II Submissions	April 2010

Specific Due Dates for Phase II Submissions, Candidate interviews, and RFQ Selection(s)* will be provided to "Short-listed" Candidates.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

News Release

For Immediate Release: 1/15/2010

Leggett and Metro Kick Off Search for Development Partners for Wheaton Revitalization

County Executive Ike Leggett today announced that the County is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select development partners to develop and execute mixed-use, public-private projects for downtown Wheaton.

"Wheaton's time has come," says County Executive Isiah Leggett. "With Silver Spring the County selected a highly qualified development team to work with community stakeholders to develop and execute a redevelopment concept that changed the face of downtown Silver Spring. In Wheaton we will do the same.

"This is exactly the best time to lay the foundation so we can catch the next up-swing in the economy. Wheaton is a unique community with lots of strengths. We want to build on those strengths and some efforts already underway to create a vibrant, prospering central business district anchored by Metro."

The County is joining forces with Metro (the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority) to issue the RFQ. "This is an excellent opportunity for talented developers to help plan for the future of Wheaton without the need for heavy capital outlays in today's constrained market," says Steven E. Goldin, Metro's Director of Real Estate. "We have one completed project in Wheaton as part of our Joint Development program, and look forward to adding this one to the list of 30 projects completed or underway at Metrorail stations throughout the metropolitan area."

The County, partnering with Metro, will offer 11 acres of parking lots and Transit Station areas in 10 parcels for potential development sites. Selected development partners will work with all stakeholders in the community and will seek to aggregate additional lands to plan and develop high-quality, transit-oriented, mixed-use projects that will create places to live, work and shop in downtown Wheaton.

The deadline for responses to the RFQ by the private sector is March 19, 2010. The County and Metro will evaluate the responses and make a recommendation to the County Executive and the Metro Board by July. The aim would be to secure a partner by late summer.

"Without costing us anything in these tight fiscal times, we can begin to lay the groundwork for a strengthened revitalization of Wheaton that can be teed up and ready to go when the business cycle turns," said Leggett.

Councilmember Valerie Ervin also praised the County Executive's announcement on Wheaton revitalization:

"I am enthusiastic that the County and Metro are moving forward with a master developer agreement to revitalize the Wheaton Central Business District," said Council Vice President Valerie Ervin who represents District 5, which includes Wheaton. "We cannot take a piecemeal approach to revitalizing this area because it often leads to a mismatch

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between what the community wants and what is actually realized. I am hopeful that this process will produce a plan focused on walkable, transit oriented development that will revitalize the central business district and maintain the quality of life in the surrounding residential neighborhoods."

To view or download the RFQ solicitation document and background materials, go to http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/DGS/Dir/wheatonRFQ.asp .

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Pre-Solicitation Meeting Summary
February 2, 2010

Gary Stith, Deputy Director, Montgomery County Department of General Services (DGS) welcomed everyone and introduced representatives of other agencies involved in the RFQ that may be useful as resources:

County Representatives:

- **Rick Siebert**, Montgomery County Parking Lot District, (PLD); Rick.Siebert@MontgomerycountyMD.gov
- **Corinne Rothblum**, Montgomery County Economic Development Corinne.Rothblum@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **Natalie Cantor,** Director, Mid-County Regional Center Natalie.Cantor@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **Carol McKenzie**, Deputy Director, Mid-County Regional Center Carol.McKenzie@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **Sharon Lasswell**, Wheaton Redevelopment Staff (Capital Projects) Sharon.Lasswell@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **Pete McGinnity**, Wheaton Redevelopment Staff (Small Business Development and Retention); Peter.McGinnity@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **Roylene Roberts**, Department of Housing and Community Affairs Roylene.Roberts@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Representatives:

- **Steve Goldin**, Director of Real Estate sgoldin@wmata.com
- **Gary Malasky**, Director of Property Development gmalasky@wmata.com
- **Bob Burns**, Sr. Development Specialist rlburns@wmata.com

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)

- **Sandra Tallant**, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) – with Planning (Sector Plan) Sandra.Tallant@MNCPPC-mc.org
- **Mark Riley,** Deputy Director of Parks for M-NCPPC Mark.Riley@MNCPPC-MC.org

Maryland Dept. of Transportation Representatives

- **Brian Greenan**, Coordinator, Transit-oriented Development bgreenan@mdot.state.md.us

Owners of Privately-Owned Properties: There are some areas in the Wheaton CBD where significant pieces of property have been put together and assembled privately. The County will not use the Urban Renewal process to aggregate property as it did in Silver Spring. Mr. Stith introduced the following property owners who were present:

- Jim Agliata Vice President of Development, Westfield, LLC jagliata@westfield.com – largest property owner in Wheaton; Westfield is working to bring Costco to the mall; a Goal of redevelopment is improved connectivity

between Westfield and the "core" area of the downtown

- Harold Weinberg, Principal, Miles Realty Company, Inc. haroldw@milesrealty.com - owns property on Blugeridge Avenue, near Lot 14
- David Aaronson, Wheaton Center daarons@wcl.american.edu - owns property around Lot 5, to the west and south
- The Levin Family – owns a significant portion of the block to the west of Lot 13, across Grandview Avenue
- Greenhill Realty kcoakley@greenhillcompanies.com - owns property throughout downtown Wheaton
- Chris Lindsay with Lindsay Ford CLin65@aol.com - owns property located in the northwest quadrant of Veirs Mill Rd. and University Blvd.

Other:

- **Greg Baker**, Chair of the Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee (WRAC), which is comprised of business and property owners and community residents

Steve Goldin, Director of Real Estate for WMATA thanked the attendees for their interest in the Request for Qualifications and made the following points:

- Metro may have had a bad reputation in the development community in the past, but he and his staff are there to help and to make things happen; WMATA wants to be a development partner
- Two of WMATA's top people will be working on this project - Gary Malasky and Bob Burns; they are rolling out a new joint development process and initiative at Metro—well beyond Wheaton.
- In the new RFQ/RFP process the development community will have a seat at the table throughout the project.
- Emphasis is being placed on financial strength and ability to commit equity to site assemblage.
- The secret to making this project a success is the small unique shops.
- As to their garage, WMATA is working on shared parking at their commuter decks with adjacent private uses.

PowerPoint Presentation - by Mr. Stith - The RFQ is available on the DGS website - Click here for presentation

Highlights:

- Wheaton today;
- Goals;
- Tools for Redevelopment: Enterprise Zone Designation; Arts and Entertainment Designation; Governor's Smart Site Designation; Wheaton Urban District; Wheaton Parking Lot District and Transportation Management District.
- Wheaton Map showing the various districts – most of the public properties included in the RFQ are located in all of these districts.
- Public Parcels – in the RFQ we have included all the public properties in downtown Wheaton. You can pick and choose what properties you are interested in developing. The County would expect a comprehensive approach to developing the "core" area.

That would include Parking Lot 13, the Mid-County Regional Center and the WMATA properties to be developed as a singular project, portions of which could be appropriately phased. Redevelopment of the "core" of Wheaton is very critical to declaring Wheaton successful.
There may be an opportunity to develop Parcel #8 Veteran's Park which is owned by M-NCPPC. However, the County Executive and M-NCPPC will not allow that park to be eliminated. It could be replaced on another piece of public property. While this park has very little use throughout the year, the feedback from various Veterans Groups indicates the redevelopment of this parcel may be very controversial.

- List of the Montgomery County, M-NCPPC and Metro properties. The Regional Service Center houses certain functions that can not go away and would need to be accommodated somehow in the redevelopment of downtown Wheaton. The County will work with developers as to how that can be accomplished.
- Development Process Overview;
- RFQ Schedule with dates. The reason the County chose to do an RFQ is it is less expensive to the developer than an RFP. The process the County is looking for is for the developer to develop a concept in conjunction with the public partners and the community. In Phase II, financials, as well as more detail will be asked for and will also include an interview. Phase II submission deadlines will be provided to the short list selected in Phase I. The County hopes to have someone selected by June.
- Evaluation Criteria - make sure the information and material submitted addresses this criteria.
- The Development Team will have strong input in the development of the Sector Plan that is currently being updated.
- Most properties in the RFQ are in the PLD – parking will be a critical issue in the redevelopment of downtown Wheaton;
- WRAC members will work closely with the Development Team

Gary Malasky – WMATA

- In valuing the bus bay property, WMATA's process is to discount the value of the property to accommodate the cost of what needs to be done to relocate the bus bays.
- The Bus Bays do not have to stay at their current location, however they do have to be very proximate to the Metro Rail Station entrance.
- The Garage is needed for commuter parking, however a different kind of use that has been mentioned was retail facing the front of the garage. If that is done, replacement parking will be needed (at the cost of the development community).

PowerPoint Presentation on the Sector Plan Process and Status – by Sandra Tallant
click her for presentation
Highlights:

- Sector Plan staff draft will go to the Planning Board in April and will go to the county Council in early 2011;
- Map of the study area; Wheaton in 1952 and Wheaton today;
- Supportive community; great small businesses and events;
- Build on Wheaton's music culture, ethnic food and shopping;

- Wheaton's economy/land use; residential; office; retail;
- Development Envelope;
- Transportation;
- Wheaton Tomorrow – some considerations: a covered market; art, other mixed-use development;
- Improve the Public Realm;
- Open Space Network; neighborhoods;
- Wheaton today;
- Slides of the various Squares in Wheaton;
- In 2000 a Charrette was done to begin to look at what downtown Wheaton could be;
- Environmental improvement will be made incrementally through redevelopment;
- Wheaton Development Opportunities;
- Development Activity underway; and
- Wheaton Sector Plan 2010 Schedule

Questions and Answers: A tour of the downtown will follow the question and answer session for those interested in participating. Click here for tour map

Q. Is there a program statement for what functions would have to be replaced in the Regional Service Center?

A. The County is working on that and will provide that information to the Development Team. It's primarily Health and Human Services functions – many under contract through non-profit organizations, as well as the Regional Services Office/Urban District. It isn't necessary that all the functions in the Regional Service Center stay together, but a one-stop-shop may have an advantage that the County might want to pursue. A more detailed "Program of Requirements" will be put together.

Q. Is the Mid-County Regional Center one of the properties listed?

A. Yes it is.

Q. If the developer is relocating the bus bays, are they responsible for finding the new location for the bus bays?

A. Yes.

Q. If the County goes through the development process, is WMATA going to consider selling their property?

A. WMATA's Board has expressed a preference for long-term ground leases, which is typical unless it is a condo development.

Q, Is the planning being done by the County?

A. No – The County will be in partnership with the Developer(s) selected by this RFQ process to do the planning for this redevelopment. The Development Partner will actually be in control of the planning process for the redevelopment. They will hire their team, and part of the County's review will be not only their (the Developer's) *experience and qualifications, but also their design team's experience and qualifications.*

Q. The RFQ mentions there is a new Comprehensive Plan – is that in place yet?
A. No, it's currently in process.

Q. The RFQ does anticipate there could be teams meeting the criteria?
A. Yes. We are not only looking at the consultants, but emphasis will be on who is leading that team and the developer.

Q. Will Work Force Housing still be a requirement, given the County is stepping back from that?
A. As of today, Work Force Housing is still a requirement in downtown Wheaton. The Council is considering making Work Force Housing an optional program. The County is very interested in Work Force Housing and will work with the developer(s) to see if it can be done, but if the Council bill goes through it will not be a legal requirement.

Q. How do you envision the coordination and continuity of multiple development teams?
A. The coordination function will be part of the County's responsibility and they will work with M-NCPPC on doing that. The County is not interested in finding someone to be the Master Planner for all of downtown Wheaton. The County would be interested in a different character or a different feel for different parts of downtown Wheaton, and we can accomplish that with different development teams. Smaller projects give smaller developers the ability to demonstrate success. It is not anticipated that all the projects will happen at once. The County would welcome that opportunity.

Q. The RFQ talks about the Parking Lot District (PLD) establishing fair market value for purchasing PLD properties. Does the PLD have the same position WMATA has where it would discount the cost of the replacement parking you put in from the fair market value of the land?
A. In public/private partnerships, the provision of structured parking to replace the surface parking can be determined to be equal to fair market value. The PLD would generally expect to receive an asset in return for selling the actual property. The PLD is most likely not interested in selling the property and having the value of the property go against parking to be owned by the private developer. Metro, in contrast, would be interested in looking at something like that.

Q. Is there a reason why the large WMATA parcel next to Centex is not part of this?
A. It is not part of the "core", but can be discussed separately with WMATA. Mr. Stith mentioned that Avalon Bay might be interested in discussing a different option for their large piece of property at Georgia and Blueridge Avenues, which is next to the WMATA parcel that borders Centex.

Q. Are there any parcels in the "core" that are considered required for your response or will have a higher value than others?

A. *Mr. Stith could not answer the "value" question, but the County is very interested in the redevelopment of the "core" because the community is not going to feel that dedevelopment is accomplished in Wheaton until we have dealt with the "core". The ULI Technical Assistance Panel felt it would be wiser for the County to defer offering the public properties associated with the "core" to increase their value, but the County doesn't necessarily want to do that. Given community expectations, the County felt it was important to include the "core" properties now. However, the County believes the "core" needs to be dealt with comprehensively, and it would be less receptive to a response that only addresses Lot 13and does not include the WMATA Bus Bay property.*

Q. Does the County have an anticipated number of developers they are looking to work with?

A. *The Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Report suggested that the County group parcels where it made sense to do so. The County structured the RFQ so there are three distinct areas, which allows for consideration of developing some, rather than all, the parcels offered.*

Q. Will more points be given to a developer interested in doing all three areas?

A. *No. It would be more attractive to have multiple developers. Single use developers are encouraged to partner with some of the smaller developers with experience in doing mixed-use development and be able to create a rich mix. The County is looking for mixed-use, higher density development.*

Q. In summary, most of the County properties are parking lots, will the developer have to provide replacement parking?

A. *It is most likely they will, because many of the small businesses can not provide their own parking and the County still has some obligation to meet their* (small businesses) *needs. The County anticipates that shared parking through a public facility would be necessary. Based on the scope of a proposed project, it could even be more, it could be less. The PLD will help make that determination.*

Q. Will M-NCPPC change the zoning in the Master Plan?

A. *M-NCPPC is currently evaluating the FAR in each block and looking at some of the new tools. They anticipate a proposal in some cases for changing zoning, especially those that are the C-O Zone. It's unclear if the Planning Board is interested in retaining the CBD Zone or transitioning that property to the CR Zone. In some cases, there is a preference for the CR Zone because of the reduced open space requirement which can be very difficult to obtain in some urban areas.*

Q. Will a list be available of who attended the Pre-Solicitation meeting?

A. *Yes, the County will place the list on the DGS website, as well as the PowerPoint presentations by Mr. Stith and by Ms. Tallant and the walking tour map.*