

PHED COMMITTEE #1
February 1, 2010

MEMORANDUM

January 29, 2010

TO: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee
FROM: *GO* Glenn Orlin, Deputy Council Staff Director
SUBJECT: Gaithersburg West Master Plan—transportation issues

Note: Please bring your copies of the Final Draft Master Plan, the Appendix, and the October 19, 2009 packet to this meeting.

This memorandum addresses most of the elements in the “Transportation Network” section of the Planning Board Final Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan (pp. 69-79), other transportation-related elements in the Plan, and other suggestions raised in public testimony or by Council staff, with the exception of the decisions already made by the Committee at its October 12, 2009 worksession: (1) to approve the bikeway elements in the Plan with certain revisions; (2) to approve the recommendation of the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee to classify Game Preserve Road as a Rustic Road; and (3) to reduce the planned number of through lanes on Longdraft Road from 4 lanes to 2.

The Executive’s comments (©1-6) include his fiscal impact assessment that estimates the cost of the County’s public improvements in the Draft Plan at \$4.1 billion over the next 30 years (assuming 20 million square feet of non-residential development), or at about \$3.7 billion (assuming 18 million square feet). The net positive fiscal impact of the Plan’s buildout would be \$1.5 billion (\$43 million annually) or \$1.1 billion (\$31 million per year) if the Executive’s proposed 18 million square-foot buildout were the goal. No engineering has been conducted for most of these projects, so the cost estimate may be significantly higher or lower.

Detailed comments from the Department of Transportation (DOT) are on ©7-12. Some purely technical corrections will be made to the final Master Plan document, but they are not identified in this memorandum.

Over the past two weeks the Council has received sets of questions from Councilmember Andrews, the City of Rockville, and The Gaithersburg-North Potomac-Rockville (“Scale It Back”) Coalition. Planning staff has provided its response to these questions in a January 27 memorandum to Council staff on ©13-29. (Councilmember Andrews’ memo is included in the response on ©24-25, and that memo includes Rockville’s questions verbatim. The Coalition’s questions are on ©26-27.) Within the last two days Council staff received correspondence from the City of Gaithersburg (©30-32) and Pamela Lindstrom (©33); these arrived too late for their questions to be answered by Planning staff, but we will strive to answer most of them in this packet or at the worksession itself. Finally, the questions about how the plan will be staged will be addressed at a future worksession, and questions about the details of implementation are beyond the scope of a master plan.

1. The meaning of transportation recommendations in a master plan. Master plans are blueprints for the long-term (20+ years) future of an area: both for how land should be developed (type and density) and what functional facilities, such as roads and transitways, will be needed to serve this development. But incorporating a new or expanded transportation project in a master plan does not mean it will be built in the short term. In fact, for a project to be built in the short term it would also have to be included in the State or County six-year capital improvements program, which is a separate public process altogether. Incorporating a new or expanded transportation project in a master plan does not even guarantee it will be built in the long term.

What it does mean is that it is County policy that eventually such a project will be needed, and that every step will be taken to protect the option to build it. For example, it means that sufficient right-of-way will be protected and required for dedication. It means that the right-of-way will not be used in ways that would make it more difficult to build or expand a transportation project in the future. Even if current residents of an area oppose a transportation project that they believe is neither wanted nor needed during their tenure, incorporating a transportation project in a master plan allows a future generation of residents to choose differently if conditions and public opinions change.

2. Land use/transportation balance. With the exception of the Potomac Subregion Master Plan, all master plans adopted by the Council for the past 25 years have been in balance: that is, the planned transportation system can meet the travel demand generated by the planned development. A plan in balance does not mean that traffic conditions at build-out will be deemed ‘good’ or even ‘fair’; more likely the traffic congestion will be at the borderline between ‘tolerable’ and ‘intolerable.’

The analysis of master-planned land use/transportation balance is conducted using the same techniques as are used under the policy area review test in the most recent Growth Policy. Therefore, a Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR)-type analysis was conducted for this plan, calculating Relative Transit Mobility (RTM) and Relative Arterial Mobility (RAM) and comparing the results to the standard. The difference between the Growth Policy analysis and this master plan analysis, however, is that RTM and RAM are not calculated at a point 6 years out, but at build-out for the planning area.

For area-wide master plans such as Gaithersburg West, the calculation of balance is normally conducted planning area-wide. The closest corollary to the planning area is the R&D Policy Area, which consists of nearly all of the area within the Gaithersburg West Master Plan where higher densities are recommended. The buildout of the land use and transportation facilities in the plan result in a R&D Village RAM of 42% and RTM of 65%, which is above the PAMR chart's "stair-step," which is the measure of transportation adequacy. This calculation even assumes dropping from the Draft Plan a grade-separated interchange at Great Seneca Highway/Key West Avenue, which Planning staff asserts is no longer needed. Similarly, the nearby policy areas of Rockville City, North Potomac, and Gaithersburg City are also above the adequacy stair-step. Only Potomac remains inadequate, but as noted above, past Councils have made Potomac the exception.

As part of this calculation is the assumption that Gaithersburg West will achieve a non-auto-driver mode share (NADMS) of 30%. This is reasonable given the amount of planned transit service and its location in the County. The planned service includes the Corridor Cities Transitway with 6-minute peak period headways and frequent service at other times, as well as the future ramping up of feeder bus routes as the buildout proceeds. The location is further away from the inside-the-Beltway commercial areas where the NADMS goals are 40-50%, but closer in than the Germantown Employment Area which has a NADMS goal of 25%.

The R&D Village currently has a 1,450 Critical Lane Volume (CLV) standard, but the Planning Board recommends 1,600 CLV as the standard for the portion of Gaithersburg West that includes the Life Sciences Center and Belward Farm. This is an appropriate standard once the CCT is programmed to be complete within the 6-year Growth Policy counting period. The Council has already assigned the 1,600 CLV standard to the Germantown Town Center Policy Area, since it has transitway-type express bus service directly to the Shady Grove Metro Station.

Council staff concurs that the plan's land use is in balance with its planned transportation, that the 30% NADMS goal is achievable, and that 1,600 CLV intersection standard is appropriate at build-out—that is, after the CCT is countable in the Growth Policy.

3. Grade-separated interchanges. The Draft Plan calls for adding three interchanges: Key West Avenue/Shady Grove Road; Great Seneca Highway/Muddy Branch Road; and Great Seneca Highway/Quince Orchard Road. It recommends eliminating two master-planned interchanges: Shady Grove Road/Darnestown Road and Shady Grove Road/Wootton Parkway. Subsequently, as noted above, Planning staff now also recommends eliminating the master-planned interchange at Great Seneca Highway/Key West Avenue. The master-planned interchanges at Sam Eig Highway/Diamondback Drive, Same Eig Highway/Great Seneca Highway, and I-120/Watkins Mill Road would remain. Therefore, there would still be a total of 6 interchanges in the planning area. Note also that the City of Rockville has a planned interchange at I-270/Gude Drive that lies outside the planning area, but which will divert some traffic from the existing I-270/MD 28 interchange.

Master plans include the location of grade-separated interchanges, but not their designs. Nevertheless, because of the potential impacts on the community, staffs have been working to

develop design concepts for two interchanges that have generated the most interest: the Great Seneca Highway interchanges at Sam Eig Highway and at Muddy Branch Road. The latest concept that has been reviewed by the DOT, SHA, and M-NCPPC is on ©34; it combines a fully directional interchange at Great Seneca/Sam Eig and a single-point urban intersection (SPUI) at Great Seneca/Muddy Branch. According to the latest design traffic flow on Great Seneca Highway would be unimpeded through both intersections, as would traffic flow on Sam Eig Highway to and from I-270 and I-370, and by extension to the Intercounty Connector. The SPUI design would depress Great Seneca Highway so that Muddy Branch Road would cross over it at close to its current grade, thus also significantly improving local access for motor vehicles, bikers, and pedestrians between the north and south sides of Great Seneca Highway. However, again, these are only the latest concepts and should not be taken as ‘givens’: only when the State ultimately completes a formal project planning study would the interchanges have been designed, analyzed, and vetted by the public and the panoply of Federal, State, and local reviewing agencies. **Council staff concurs with the Draft Plan’s recommendations for grade-separated interchanges.**

Since the transmittal of the Draft Plan the staffs of DOT and M-NCPPC have developed text that they wish to add to page 69 of the Plan (©28). This text acknowledges the special need for the Great Seneca/Sam Eig interchange, but that the other 5 interchanges should be subjected to a feasibility study prior to Stage 4 before a decision is made to build any of them. Their point is that it is plausible that a combination of transit services, transportation demand management, and other “alternative mobility enhancements” may be sufficient to obviate the need for one or more of these interchanges. **Council staff concurs with the general approach suggested by this text, but will address its specifics as part of the review of the proposed Staging Plan in a separate worksession later in February.**

4. Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT). On November 30 the Executive and Council wrote to the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation that they supported the alignment for the CCT that appears in the Draft Plan. This alignment passes through the Belward Farm from ESE to WNW, with a stop in the middle.

As part of its preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement, however, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is also investigating two alternative alignments that would avoid or minimize impacts to the Belward Farm. After crossing Key West Avenue, one alternative alignment would turn right onto Belward Campus Drive and return to the current master plan alignment near Decoverly Drive, while the other would continue due north along the property line toward Sam Eig Highway where it would return to the current master plan alignment. Both alternatives would be further away from the homes in Mission Hills and Washingtonian Woods that abut the Draft Plan’s alignment. However, the first of these alternatives would be more circuitous (increasing travel time on the CCT) and be sufficiently far from the Hopkins development to make it far less transit serviceable. The second alignment, while closer to the Hopkins development, would traverse a steep slope and a large stormwater management pond immediately east of Mission Hills. Rick Kiegel, MTA’s study manager, will give a short briefing to the Committee about the CCT alignment issues in the vicinity of the Belward Farm.



051126

 mm
 have - CC
 S&F
 cover only - LL
 SF
 has - UZ

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

September 10, 2009

To: Phil Andrews, Council President

From: Isiah Leggett, County Executive

Subject: Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan

A handwritten signature of Isiah Leggett in black ink.

2009 SEP 11 AM 9:32

 MONTGOMERY COUNTY
RECEIVED
COUNCIL

I am pleased to provide comments on the Planning Board Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan. This Master Plan, with its focus on biosciences -- a cornerstone of the County's economic development strategy -- is one of the most important, defining master plans to be considered by the County Council. With only 4% greenfields development capacity remaining in the County, and without compromising other important policies, the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is a unique opportunity for Montgomery County to establish itself as a leader in the national and global life sciences marketplace. The plan is important to the Gaithersburg West area, the County as a whole, and the State of Maryland.

The core elements of the plan – higher density near transit, links among the academic, science, and government sectors, a broad array of housing for workers and their families, adequate transit and roads – if implemented properly will help carry this County through much of the first half of this century. While I will be recommending some modifications to the draft plan, particularly in the overall density outlined in this plan, I support the Planning Board's overall approach and vision represented in its transmittal to you. The plan recognizes the need to create opportunities for economic growth while strategically focusing and staging growth around mass transit, thus avoiding sprawl and protecting the County's long-established commitment to protection of the Agricultural Reserve.

The Planning Board Draft of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is part of an answer to a call to action that cannot go unheeded. Unfortunately, we are losing scientists and we are losing our competitive advantage in the biotechnology industry as a county, as a state and as a nation. This is a loss we cannot afford. Bio-technology is a fundamental element of Montgomery County's economy. Over the coming decades we can make an increasing contribution to traditional and new value-added activities for worldwide health, energy, and the environment. The draft plan creates the opportunity for the creation of up to 47,200 new high tech and related jobs for this industry. It is estimated that the plan can generate approximately \$1.5 Billion in net revenue to the County over the next thirty years.

We must elevate the profile of life sciences, catalyze tech transfer outcomes, improve and expand our work force, capitalize on our federal and academic assets, facilitate access to capital and strategic alliances, and develop critical infrastructure that supports this initiative. As a first step in this process, last Fall I established a task force of bioscience leaders from the public and private sectors and academia to identify recommendations and develop a strategic plan for a thriving and successful biosciences community in Montgomery County. This group, which is led by David Mott, former CEO of our own home grown MedImmune, will finalize its recommendations this coming October. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan will enable us to have the place for these activities.

We must establish the tools and commit ourselves to create an environment within Montgomery County in which a concentration of higher paying research, service and production jobs can be located to solve problems of modern society through science. We can be the place where solutions are found for the elimination of disease, world hunger, protection of the environment, and a reduction in energy consumption. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan is a critical component in helping the County to achieve this vision by creating a "Community Of Innovation" where the workers and researchers will live, work and play.

President Obama has recognized the imperative need to improve our national standing on scientific research and development. Promising to double funding for research and development and to spend at least 3% of the gross domestic product on scientific research and development, President Obama stated that science is "more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it ever has been before." Congressional leaders have likewise recognized the importance of science in our nation's continued prosperity and quality of life. At the same time, Governor O'Malley has reemphasized the critical role that bioscience plays in the State's economic development strategy and has established a Maryland Bioscience Center in Montgomery County. Montgomery County's selection for a center indicates our community's central role in sustaining and growing the bioscience industry in Maryland.

As a county we have the key assets that can make us leaders in the area of biosciences and related industry. Montgomery County was one of the very first to start down this path nearly thirty years ago with the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and we are now home to approximately 230 life sciences companies. It was the vision of the County Council at that time that enabled us to enjoy the successes that we have seen at the Life Sciences Center. But our past successes have not enabled us to hold the leading position that we have had historically. Research parks are changing. Suburban models are being replaced by research villages where researchers can live, work, learn and play. We have the elements for a successful research environment, but to remain a leader, our model must change as well. With competition growing globally, nationally and regionally, it is critical that we define ourselves as a leader in the field of biosciences and that we create exciting and inviting places for these quality jobs within the County. With the federal and state attention to this segment of the economy, we must act definitively and boldly now. Later is too late.

On October 2, 2008, the Association of University Research Parks issued a white paper on the “*Power of Place: A National Strategy for Building America’s Communities of Innovation*.” This policy statement has as one of its key recommendations the building of sustainable “Communities of Innovation” through smart growth reflecting best practices to encourage density and mixed-use development in American Innovation Zones. The Planning Board’s Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan seeks to create just such a community:

At Shady Grove we have key ingredients for a world class research village. With the University of Maryland Universities at Shady Grove, Johns Hopkins University, the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center, the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, and existing companies, we have a good beginning. With proximity to I-370 and I-270, the extension of the Corridor Cities Transitway into the heart of the life sciences area, and the relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy we have the essential elements called for to build a “Community of Innovation.” The Gaithersburg West Master Plan can stitch together these elements and provide the framework for a true research village where researchers can live, learn, work, and play in a community that provides access to mass transit and community amenities essential to attracting and retaining the world class workforce needed to sustain our bioscience community well into the twenty-first century.

Transportation and Density

The draft plan proposes a modified alignment for the Corridor Cities Transitway, which I strongly support. The proposed alignment brings the CCT into the heart of our Life Sciences Center, to the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Johns Hopkins and much closer to the Universities at Shady Grove. This alignment is logical and creates better mass transit opportunities with the increased ridership from these areas with only a small increase in travel time. The CCT studies have used a planning window through 2030 which assumes density of approximately 18 million square feet of commercial space. With this assumed density, the CCT becomes competitive for federal funding and more achievable. Adoption of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan will help us move forward with achieving the CCT. Implementation of the CCT is one of my priorities and will enable this plan, the recently adopted Germantown Master Plan and the Clarksburg Master Plan to be realized. With the implementation of the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District, access between CCT stops and nearby properties such as the Universities at Shady Grove and properties along Key West should be readily achievable.

The draft plan calls for commercial density of 20 million square feet. This is a density that many believe is essential to creating a sense of place for contemporary researchers. In determining the appropriate density for this plan, I believe such density must be achievable, reasonable and accomplish the objectives of a successful place to live, work, learn and play. *After carefully considering the question of density, I have concluded that the appropriate density for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan should be set at 18 million square feet for commercial development.* I also believe that we should review the plan in six years to determine if additional density would be needed and achievable into the future. I recognize the importance

Phil Andrews, Council President

September 10, 2009

Page 4 of 6

of the density to this plan and understand the need to create a "Community of Innovation." Therefore, my recommendation of density is based on an expectation that it will reduce the costs for needed transportation improvements by eliminating two or more highway interchanges and thereby facilitate the implementation of the plan.

While our master plans have horizons of thirty or more years, it is essential to determine if a plan can actually be implemented within the lifespan of the plan. It is the ability to actually implement the proposed density that leads me to conclude that 18 million square feet of commercial density is the proper number for the Life Sciences Center. A concern that I have about the plan as proposed is that it calls for five State interchanges to be built. These interchanges are costly and the funding of them is not within our control. The draft plan proposes that Stage 3 not proceed unless the two top priority interchanges are completed and three interchanges are fully funded. This raises a serious question as to whether the plan will ever successfully move past Stage 2. Traffic analyses conducted by Park and Planning Staff indicate that at approximately 18 million square feet of planned commercial space, at least two (if not more) interchanges may not be necessary. This would result in a cost savings of approximately \$250,000,000 and increase the likelihood of the plan being implemented.

The County's Department of Transportation has recommended that extension of Sam Eig into the Belward site be evaluated. With a cumulative commercial density of 18 million square feet and extension of Sam Eig into Belward, the Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch interchange may be totally eliminated. This would save an estimated \$120,000,000 to \$150,000,000 plus right-of-way. While this would impact approximately 12 single family units, it would result in saving approximately 60 condominium dwelling units that would otherwise need to be acquired in order to proceed with the CCT and the interchange.

Elimination of this interchange will also have a dramatic impact upon the competitiveness of the CCT because the CCT would otherwise have to reflect the cost of the right-of-way for the interchange including the costs of acquiring the 60 condominium units. Given these expected outcomes, I am asking that the Council have the Planning Board analyze extending Sam Eig into Belward and an overall commercial density of 18 Million square feet to determine how these changes impact the need for interchanges.

While I am recommending a density of 18 million square feet, I believe that any reduction of commercial development capacity should be done strategically. I urge the Council, with guidance from the Planning Board, to look at areas outside of a ¼ mile radius from CCT stations and areas that are not likely to redevelop due to existing uses and configurations. Densities should not be excised from county land which may be leveraged in public private partnerships in the future to help advance our bioscience objectives.

Strategic Location of Housing on the Public Safety Training Academy Site

I support the recommendations in the Plan that promotes mixed-use and residential development for a broad range of income-levels. A strong residential presence in the

Phil Andrews, Council President

September 10, 2009

Page 5 of 6

plan area will foster the establishment of this area as a livable community as well as a world class sciences center.

The relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy is of critical importance to the proposed plan and to the creation of a live, work research community. As I have noted before, if this site were to remain with its current use, it will require in excess of \$33 Million just for basic renovations. More importantly, I have come to the conclusion that our investment in this critical aspect of our public safety mission should be made elsewhere. It is not in the long term best interests of our community to continue to use this extremely valuable land in the heart of our bioscience community as a training facility for our public safety personnel. Both the Police and Fire Chiefs have outlined the extraordinary advantages to their public safety mission of relocating these facilities while I have outlined the extraordinary advantages to the taxpayer and the broader community of using this land for its most logical use.

The current use of this site is an extreme underutilization of land and actually is a barrier to connectivity among Belward, the Life Sciences Center, the Universities at Shady Grove and the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. Further investment in this site will diminish the likelihood of achieving a live/work innovation community and will reduce planned ridership that makes the CCT competitive. The relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy will allow the CCT to be realigned closer to the Universities at Shady Grove and through the Life Sciences Center. It will also provide housing needed to support the life sciences industry and growth. With the proper mix of housing types and price points, the PSTA site will provide housing for students, researchers and families. The housing will be oriented to transit with a CCT stop centrally located to the housing. This housing is important to the jobs/housing ratio balance envisioned by the plan as well.

Technical Comments and Fiscal Impact

I am attaching to these comments a statement of infrastructure and other costs called for by the plan. I am also attaching a summary fiscal impact analysis that reflects the expected net fiscal impact of the plan as proposed with 20 million square feet of commercial development. The average annual net fiscal impact is projected to be approximately \$43 Million and the cumulative net fiscal impact over a period of thirty years is approximately \$1.5 Billion. I am also attaching a summary of the anticipated fiscal impact if the plan is approved at 18 million square feet of commercial space. At 18 million square feet, the anticipated average annual net fiscal impact is projected to be \$31 Million with a cumulative net fiscal impact of \$1.1 Billion. The numbers in the fiscal impact analysis reflect assumptions based on information from the draft plan and related studies.

In addition to the comments that I am providing in this memorandum, my staff will provide detailed technical comments to Council staff on aspects of the draft plan. As you know I have also convened a Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group which reflects a broad cross section of interests. This group focused on the Gaithersburg West Master Plan over two sessions and has provided me with a list of comments on the Plan. One comment

that came up multiple times is the importance of creating exceptions for projects of strategic economic significance so that the County does not lose economically significant opportunities because of staging restrictions. I agree with the comment and urge the Council to include such a provision: I am attaching both the comments from the group and the list of members of the group.

Vision and Conclusion

With President Obama's and Congress' commitment to increased spending for science, and our proximity and assets, it is essential that we create the tools so that Montgomery County is the place for the growth in this important segment of our economy. With the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and our East County site, we can create opportunities for an estimated 47,000 quality jobs in the future. We must remove barriers to realization of this important objective.

Both Johns Hopkins University and the Universities at Shady Grove have exciting plans and visions for research and education opportunities in the future. The energy and symbiosis of these institutions with private and public sector researchers cannot be underestimated. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan is the opportunity to create a platform and center for science, education and health care in Montgomery County.

I commend the Planning Board and its staff for an excellent job creating a vision for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan area. It is a vision that creates meaningful economic development opportunities, approaches the Corridor Cities Transitway in a manner that facilitates its realization, orients development to transit, and creates a live, work community with attention to the balance of jobs to housing.

With a horizon of thirty or more years, the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is today's vision of tomorrow. Most of us will not be around to see the vision being implemented. It is important to adopt this visionary plan because of the opportunities it will present for jobs, education and housing for our children and our children's children.

IL:dsj

Attachments (5):

Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group Membership List
Comments from 8/19/09 Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group Meeting
Executive Branch Staff Technical Comments
Costs Associated with the Gaithersburg West Master Plan
Summary of Projected Net Fiscal Impacts

Department of Transportation

General Comments

1. To ensure that the plan is in land use-transportation balance it is critical for the recommended transportation improvements to be implemented. It would be helpful for the plan to include illustrative figures showing its vision of how each of the transportation improvements can be implemented to provide a level of assurance regarding land use-transportation balance.

There are points of conflict between transportation improvements and environmentally sensitive areas which would need to be addressed in order to achieve the envisioned transportation network. Some of the transportation improvements need to be reconciled with "Environmental Features" highlighted in the LSC Open Space Network such as:

- the CCT Belward station
- the CCT Alt. A alignment
- the grade separated interchange between Key West Avenue (MD 28) and Great Seneca Highway (MD 119)
- the widening of Key West Avenue to 8 lanes
- the extension of Blackwell Road (B-1)
- new road B-2
- new road B-5
- new road B-8

Some of the transportation improvements assumed in the Draft Plan are located totally or partially within the boundaries of an incorporated municipality and will need to be coordinated with the municipality's master plans to minimize a potential source of conflict:

- the grade separated interchange between Great Seneca Highway (MD 119) and Muddy Branch Road (totally in Gaithersburg)
- the grade separated interchange between Sam Eig Highway and Diamondback Drive (totally in Gaithersburg)
- the grade separated interchange between Key West Avenue (MD 28) and Shady Grove Road-(partially in Rockville)
- the grade separation between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road
- the extension of Rio Boulevard (A-23)
- the extension of Diamondback Drive (A-261b)
- the extension of Decoverly Drive (A-284)

Finally, some transportation improvements may potentially impact possible historic resources including:

- the CCT Belward Station
- Darnestown Road (MD 28)
- Oakmont Avenue Relocated (A-255)

2. One of the transit system recommendations is to develop express bus service using value-priced lanes from I-270 and the ICC. The value priced lanes are not included in the Constrained Long Range Plan for the Metropolitan Washington Region, and therefore, inclusion in the Draft is not appropriate. This raises some concern about the I-270 network that was tested since the Transportation Appendix states that the new concept of Express Toll Lanes on I-270 was assumed.
3. The Draft contains references to target speeds and specific design standards for roads in the planning area. All such language should be amended to be consistent with the standard wording which was recently worked out as part of the Germantown Sector Plan.
4. The Plan should contain additional figures that more specifically and clearly show the proposed configuration of, and right-of-way (land area) needed for, certain transportation facilities, particularly highway interchanges.
5. The Draft Plan references Design Guidelines that will be prepared to guide the development proposed in this Plan. MCDOT requests the creation of a process that would give MCDOT the lead, or approval authority, when it comes to application of the Design Guidelines as they relate to the configuration and standards for streets.
6. Specific technical and editorial comments are shown on the “Specific Comments” attachment.

Specific Comments

- p. 10 add the InterCounty Connector to the figure
- p. 23 recommend that the intent of the second bullet under “Buildings” be made more explicit by adding wrapped by residential, office or retail space
- p. 30 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the two interchanges at MD 28 and Shady Grove Road, and MD 28 and MD 119
- p. 32 & 33 move the “MD 28” labels in the figures from Darnestown Road to Key West Avenue
- p. 33 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the interchange at MD 28 and MD 119
- add an interchange concept plan to show the impact on the forest area
- p. 37 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the three interchanges at MD 28 and MD 119, MD 119 and Sam Eig Highway, and MD 119 and Muddy Branch Road

- p. 39 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the three interchanges at MD 28 and Shady Grove Road, MD 28 and MD 119, and MD 119 and Sam Eig Highway
- add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the right hand Figure
- p. 42 the discussion about short, walkable block; street grid; roadway cross-sections; curb radii; multi-modal travel; traffic calming; etc. should be amended to reflect the Executive Regulation for Context Sensitive Roadway Design and operational considerations
- the Plan should not promote installation of special crosswalk pavements. The decision to implement such amenities should be on a case-by-case basis dependent on a variety of factors (such as site location, pedestrian volumes, proximity to significant pedestrian generators, traffic volumes and characteristics, etc.).
- p. 43 add labels to the Figure designating each of the master-planned roads.
- The Draft proposes to reconstruct Sam Eig Highway to include shoulders suitable for peak-period, peak-direction BRT. This may be a good idea, but how does it connect to the highway network/CCT? What is the proposed BRT network and service that would use Sam Eig?
- delete “Great Seneca Highway” and replace with Darnestown Road in the bottom bullet, for consistency with the master plan roads Table
- add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the Figure for consistency with Plan text
- delete any proposed road or interchange totally or partially within a municipality unless said facility is also shown on that municipality’s master plan; MNCPPC does not have planning jurisdiction within these municipalities and this Draft should not over-represent the potential transportation network.
- p. 44 revise the first complete bullet to state – Construct grade-separated interchanges at three LSC locations: Great Seneca Highway at Muddy Branch Road, Great Seneca Highway at Key West Avenue, and Key West Avenue at Shady Grove Road
- revise the second complete bullet to state – Delete the proposed grade separated . .
- revise the third complete bullet by completely deleting the phrase “signed shared roadways/on road bike paths (Class III bikeways along local streets)” because it is duplicative of, and less accurate than, the following phrase
- delete the second bullet under Recommendations regarding express bus service using value-priced lanes from I-270 and the ICC. The value priced lanes are not

- included in the Constrained Long Range Plan for the Metropolitan Washington Region, and therefore, their inclusion in the Plan is not appropriate.
- *...particularly relieving the requirement for smaller properties to self-park.* If the smaller properties are not developed at the same time as larger properties it would seem very difficult to successfully relieve them of any parking requirements.
 - delete *Define public garage sites at Preliminary Plan for publicly owned properties...* If publicly owned properties in the PSTA are redeveloped as a residential area as recommended in the Draft Plan a public parking model is unlikely to be sustainable and would not meet the needs of the residential community.
- p. 52 & 53 the maps should identify the possible CCT maintenance shops and yard alternatives and the Master Plan should identify the candidate locations
- p. 55 delete “and provide for a transit station co-located with the MARC station in the City of Gaithersburg” in the third bullet at the top of the page; this location is outside of the McGown Property, and the planning area
- p. 57 add a figure showing the detailed location of the Deer Park (Humpback) Bridge in relation to the master planned alignment of Oakmont Avenue relocated (A-255) there is a discrepancy between the limits of Oakmont Avenue shown in the second bullet at the top, and the limits of Oakmont Avenue shown in the Table on page 72; in any case the limits on this page are incorrect and need to include a bridge over the CSX railroad
- p. 60 add text pertaining to the County’s position on future annexation of the Washingtonian Light Industrial Park enclave area
- add text and Figures for two other enclaves; Washingtonian Residential and Hi Wood
- p. 63 the Plan recommends establishing CR zoning, but except as part of the CR Zone plan, parking is not addressed
- p. 65 the complete exemption of health care services development from Stage 1 requirements is too open ended
- p. 66 the complete exemption of health care services development from Stage 1 requirements is too open ended

- p. 67 revise color of Stage 1 highlight from yellow to brown for consistency with the Bar Chart
- p. 69 add a bullet to state – Increase the number of lanes on Key West Avenue within the Plan Area to 8
- p. 70 delete any proposed road or interchange totally or partially within a municipality unless it is also shown on that municipality's master plan;
- add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the Figure for consistency with Plan text
- it would be helpful if the transportation figure could be enlarged for legibility
- p. 71 add a listing for “F-9” I-370 to the Freeways
- revise the Limits of the first M-15 listing to state – “Darnestown Road (MD 28) to Decoverly Drive (extended)” for consistency with and to avoid overlapping the third M-15 listing
- delete the third M-22 listing; it duplicates the CM-22 listing
- revise the Limits of the first M-26 listing to state – Great Seneca Creek to Longdraft Road; for consistency with and to avoid overlapping the second M-26 listing
- revise the second M-26 listing to show West Diamond Avenue for the Name and 6 [only] for the number of Lanes
- delete the M-28 listing; it duplicates the CM-28 listing
- change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
- recommend Design Standard #2008.10 for Shady Grove Road due to dual bikeway proposed
- p. 72 revise the Limits for A-255 to provide more clarity and specificity about the bridge over the CSX Railroad
- revise the Limits for the first listing of A-261b to state – Plan Boundary to Key West Avenue
- add a second listing for A-261d for Johns Hopkins Drive from Decoverly Drive to MD 28
- revise the Limits for the listing of A-284 to state – Muddy Branch Road to Plan Boundary;
- Add the column header for “Lanes”
- change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan

- recommend Design Standard #2004.10 with reduced width buffer for Shady Grove Road due to dual bikeway proposed
 - add Design Standard #'s for Riffle Ford Road and Oakmont Avenue
 - clarify what "(needs SUP)" means
 - recommend Design Standard #2004.01 for Decoverly Drive east of MD 119, Medical Center Drive, and Diamondback Drive due to bicycle facilities on these roads
- p. 73 revise the Limits for the third listing of B-1 to state – Darnestown Road to Great Seneca Highway
- specify the Limits of all roads listed from B-2 through B-15; "proposed new road" is inadequate
 - add a listing for I-1 Gaither Road
 - change the column heading to state "Design Speed" and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
- p. 74 change the column heading to state "Design Speed" and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
- delete the third bullet under "Recommendations"; this is an operational issue
- p. 77 & 78 the LSC needs to have more on-road designated master planned bikeways, for example along SP-59, LB-1 and LB-4 plus a dual bikeway along Oakmont Avenue



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 27, 2010

Memorandum

TO: Glenn Orlin, Deputy Staff Director
Montgomery County Council

VIA: Dan Hardy, Transportation Planning Chief *DKH*
Move/Transportation Planning Division

FROM: Eric Graye, Transportation Planning Supervisor *EG*
Move/Transportation Planning Division

Tom Autrey, Transportation Planning Supervisor *TA*
Move/Transportation Planning Division

Nancy Sturgeon *NS*
Gaithersburg West Master Plan

SUBJECT: Gaithersburg West Master Plan
February 1 PHED Committee Meeting
Responses to Questions

Per our coordination last week, this memo provides responses to the questions in Councilmember Phil Andrews's January 21 memorandum to you (included as Attachment A) and the twelve questions in the materials you provided from the Gaithersburg – North Potomac – Rockville Coalition (included as Attachment B).

The questions and our responses generally follow two common themes:

- The definition of master plan balance for a long range plan includes a comprehensive forecasting of regional travel demands to gauge areawide mobility and define infrastructure needs from a planning perspective. This analysis facilitates the review of conditions both within the Plan boundary and in other policy areas countywide. **The Planning Board's Draft Plan meets the County Council's definition of balance that has guided the approval of master plans for the past two decades.**
- The assessment of localized roadway performance is used to determine the basic number of travel lanes and locations where grade-separated interchanges are expected in order to address current mobility expectations. Specific intersection or interchange designs are undesirable (and typically not included) in long-range master plans as detailed needs and

design criteria evolve over time. General plan guidance for future project planning can be beneficial and the interagency transportation working group has developed the language in Attachment C. **Staff recommends this additional guiding language be added to the Plan.**

The responses below frequently cite the two primary documents prepared in 2009:

- The plan's July 2009 Transportation Appendix (bound as Appendix 7 on pages 59 through 100 of the Planning Board Draft Plan Appendix) and referred to herein as the **Plan Appendix**

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/gaithersburg/documents/GBWbook071009.pdf>

- The Planning Board Chairman's October 19, 2009 response to questions discussed at the PHED Committee's October 26 meeting and referred to herein as the **October 2009 Supplemental Report**:

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/091026/20091026_PHED1.pdf

We look forward to reviewing this information with the PHED Committee on February 1.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS IN ATTACHMENT A

1. *"The City remains concerned about the impact on traffic of the proposed high level of development in the Gaithersburg West planning area. Rockville appreciated the addition to the Plan of a recommended improvement to the intersection at Key West Avenue and Shady Grove Road, but does not believe it to be sufficient. First, the Plan recommends that funding the improvement, but not actual construction be a requirement for Stage 4, after 5 million square feet will already have been constructed. That requirement is much too late in the process, and should be advanced forward to Stage 2. More importantly, however, improving the intersection would almost certainly have the consequence of increasing the impact on the already highly overburdened entrance to I-270 at Route 28. This Plan must recognize the reality of the impacts that will occur outside of the Planning Area as a result of the new development, including how drivers will access the LSC (Life Sciences Center). There is no location more pressing in this regarding than the network that connects I-270 and the LSC. The Plan must analyze and potentially address this area as an overall system and incorporate appropriate investments so as to not diminish the quality of life of those around the LSC, including within Rockville; and those investments must be part of the staging requirements."*

The Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) results derived from the transportation analysis of the Draft Plan employed the use of a regional transportation model that considered both planned development and transportation infrastructure in the City of Rockville as well as the remainder of the Washington Metropolitan Region. A key rationale for using a regional modeling tool was to capture the upstream/downstream transportation effects of adjacent areas on the LSC. Similarly, this approach provided a means by which to capture the impacts of LSC traffic on adjacent areas. Attachment D provides the PAMR results derived using this process. These results show that the

City of Rockville achieved a Relative Arterial Mobility (RAM) score of 40% which is the considered the minimum threshold (at LOS D) for policy area transportation/land use balance. The Local Area Model (LAM) transportation analysis applies a focused model within the general boundary of the LSC area, but reflects information on the impacts of forecast traffic from surrounding areas. The LAM study area incorporates only those portions of the City of Rockville adjacent to the Gaithersburg West plan area. Further details are described in the response to Question 2 below.

2. *"Even the most aggressive of the Draft Plan's targets for alternative transportation modes still anticipates at least 70% of new employees and residents using automobiles. Considering the large number of new employment and homes, we anticipate both major arterials and secondary roads to be heavily impacted. Arterials of greatest concern to Rockville include Darnestown Road, MD 28 (Key West Avenue/West Montgomery Avenue) and the I-270 ramps, in addition to the potential impact on I-270 itself. Those arterials within the City of Rockville have not been included in the current study. Secondary roads that must also be studied and then managed include Wootton Parkway, Fallsgrove Boulevard, Blackwell Road, Watts Branch Parkway and other Rockville streets. Rockville staff has raised these concerns in meetings that have been held with staff from Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Planning Department and the State of Maryland. Rockville strongly requests that a thorough analysis be done in order to understand fully these impacts. We suspect that the analysis may show that the plan includes insufficient infrastructure to manage the newly generated traffic. Rockville encourages the County Council not to fear understanding the reality, even if it leads to a conclusion that densities in the plan must be reduced."*

The travel demand forecasting for the Plan includes both Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) forecasting and Local Area Modeling (LAM). The PAMR analysis utilizes a model of the Washington region, including Rockville, as indicated in Figure 27 of the Plan's Transportation Appendix.

The PAMR analysis provides an assessment of transit and arterial mobility for each of the County's Policy Areas. The PAMR analysis describes conditions for the Rockville City Policy Area, although since the City has independent planning and zoning authority, the PAMR results have no bearing on the development approval process.

As described above, Attachment D demonstrates that the City of Rockville Policy Area is forecast to have a Relative Arterial Mobility of 40% under the Planning Board Draft Plan. The October 2009 supplemental report describes the effect of alternative land use scenarios on the conditions in the City of Rockville Policy Area. The Relative Arterial Mobility for the PHED Committee scenario is 41% (Appendix C-6 on page 34). Like the R&D Village Policy Area containing the Life Sciences Center communities, both results achieve the PAMR standard of 40% for an area with LOS C or better relative transit mobility.

Similarly, the Gaithersburg City Policy Area meets the current definition of master plan balance in both the Planning Board Draft Plan (43%) and the PHED Committee scenario (46%).

The Local Area Modeling focuses on twenty-eight junctions in the Plan area vicinity as listed in Appendix C-5 (page 49). Six intersections (#84 through #88 and #904) are along Shady Grove, essentially on the Rockville city boundary. Two others (#700 – Key West at Gude; #999 – West Gude @ Research) are within the City of Rockville at the junction of key arterial highways.

The purpose of assessing transportation system mobility in a master plan is to gauge the general level of system adequacy, not to design specific improvements. Of the eight intersections located either partially or entirely within Rockville, only Shady Grove at Key West (#86) is forecast to significantly and consistently exceed the capacity of an at-grade intersection, yielding the recommendation that this junction ultimately be grade-separated. The only other intersection either partially or wholly within Rockville with a CLV above 1600 is West Gude @ Research, where the V/C ratio of 1.03 in the PHED Committee alternative is higher than in the Planning Board Draft plan due primarily to the introduction of a new I-270/West Gude interchange per the City's master plan in that scenario. The current forecasts indicate that the interchange recommended in the 1990 Shady Grove Study Area Plan at the junction of Darnestown, Shady Grove, and Glen Mill Roads, is not needed and this plan recommends removal of that planned interchange.

3. *"In addition, current Staging Requirements do not include requirements for the development of the residential units. The City believes strongly that this link should be made in the plan, so that there is adequate planning for the impacts of thousands of new housing units."*

The exemption of new residential development from staging requirements is intended as a strategy to encourage the development of housing in the early phases of the Plan, helping achieve a jobs/housing balance that facilitates a live-work community to serve both trip reduction and placemaking purposes. Irrespective of staging requirements, it should be noted that all new development (both commercial and residential) would be subject to the provisions of the County's Growth Policy and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). These provisions will provide assurance that new development will be timed with the provision of the necessary public facilities to support it.

4. *"In general, the City also believes that the Plan should describe more specifically the advantages of the proposed level of additional development. The Plan should consider alternative methods of achieving the goals and visions of the LSC, which may include revisiting the overall scale of development. The quality of life of a large number of Montgomery County residents would be severely degraded if the private development moved forward without the infrastructure and community amenities required to support that development."*

We believe that the Master Plan provides sufficient safeguards to ensure both the long-term viability of the Life Sciences Center and a high quality of life for existing and future residents in the area. We agree that growth and change in the LSC must occur in a way that does not overburden the surrounding communities. The Planning Board Draft Master Plan recommends zoning and density that promotes needed economic development (including allowing for a major expansion of the hospital) that can be accommodated by the planned transportation system. The

Planning Board Draft includes a staging element that will, in conjunction with the APFO, ensure that development will not occur without the infrastructure needed to support it. In addition, the Plan should be reviewed 6-10 years after adoption to ensure that it is properly balanced and make any necessary adjustments. These issues are discussed at greater length in the October 2009 Supplemental Report (see Attachment A, Question #1, Question #2 – Planning Board Recommendation section, and Question #5).

5. *"The Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) is at the core of the Draft Plan, and once built, will pass through Rockville in the King Farm neighborhood. The city strongly supports the development of the CCT, but the Plan should also consider alternative phasing and/or densities should the State not fund the project or approve the Draft Plan's recommended alignment."*

The Plan is predicated on the approval of the recommended realignment of the CCT through the LSC area. Staff concurs that should the state decide not to fund the CCT, the staging plan would limit the total amount of development that can occur in the LSC area. Should the state select an alternative alignment for the CCT, the Plan may need to be revised to reflect that alignment. Therefore, at this time, Planning staff sees no reason to consider alternative phasing and/or densities for the LSC area and notes that information provided in MTA's November 2009 study of alternative alignments of the CCT in this study area favorably supports the Plan-recommended alignment.

I ask that you provide a point-by-point response to each of the issued raised by the City. In addition, I request the following: 1) a detailed list of the areas outside the boundaries of Gaithersburg West (not limited to Rockville City) included in the Plan's traffic analysis; and 2) an analysis of whether the Plan's traffic mitigation requirements would adequately and timely address projected increased traffic attributable to the Plan in areas outside of the Plan's boundaries. Please identify any such areas where (more) mitigation would be required if that area were within the Plan's boundaries. In your analysis, please use current traffic standards, not the weaker ones proposed for the LSC. Thank you for your analysis, which will provide important information to the council members prior to voting on recommendations regarding development levels and staging requirement for Gaithersburg West.

Pages 95 through 99 of the Plan Appendix describe the travel forecasting process and assumptions used in plan development and evaluation. As described above, the Policy Area Mobility Review provides information on all policy areas in the County. As shown on page 34 of the October 2009 supplemental report, only two Policy Areas in the PHED Committee Scenario fail to meet the definition of balance:

- The Potomac Policy Area has a Relative Arterial Mobility value of 39%, and is generally coterminous with the Potomac Subregion Master Plan, a plan adopted in 2000 with an explicit recognition that the land use and transportation were not intended to be in balance
- The Fairland/White Oak Policy Area has a Relative Arterial Mobility value of 36%. This Policy Area was identified as out of balance in the development and adoption of the PAMR system in 2007 and that finding is part of the purpose for the proposed Route 29

Corridor Land Use and Mobility plan in the Planning Board's proposed work program for FY 12.

The intersection congestion analysis presented in Appendix C-5 on page 49 of the October 2009 supplemental analysis assumes a CLV standard of 1600 as the basis for reporting volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios. The 1600 CLV standard was also the congestion standard proposed by the Planning Board for the new Life Sciences Center Policy Area, although in November 2009 Growth Policy discussions the County Council determined the new CLV standard to be premature pending further progress on Corridor Cities Transitway implementation.

Appendix C-5 facilitates comparison of alternative congestion standards through inclusion of the AM and PM CLV values used to calculate the V/C ratio. A CLV of 1450 (the current standard for the R&D Village Policy Area) equates to a V/C ratio of 0.91 (or 1450/1600) in Appendix C-5. Two intersections in Appendix C-5 would be affected by the selection of a 1450 versus 1600 CLV standard (i.e., they have a V/C ratio in the Planning Board Draft plan scenario between 0.91 and 1.00):

- Key West at Omega/Medical Center (#466) has a CLV of 1574 in the PM peak period, and
- West Gude at Research (#999) has a CLV of 1563 in the PM peak period.

The determination of a master plan's land use/transportation balance rests on average areawide levels of mobility, not individual intersection forecasts. As described on page 91 of the Plan appendix, a V/C ratio slightly above 1.0 suggests that APFO mitigation should consist of either non-auto facilities or at-grade improvements and that congestion will not be so significant as to warrant grade-separation.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS IN ATTACHMENT B

1. *68,000 jobs and 16,000 residences have been approved in Germantown without any staging requirements. Considering the traffic generated by the Germantown Master Plan and the 50,000 additional people proposed by the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, how many cars will be added to the roads before the first staged infrastructure improvement along Great Seneca Highway will be in place?*

The transportation analysis performed by Planning Department staff assumed a build-out time horizon and did not specifically consider the "interim" time horizons associated with staging. It should be noted that the provisions set forth in the County's Annual Growth Policy (AGP) and the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) work in concert with the Plan's staging requirements to provide assurance that new development will be timed with the provision of the necessary public facilities to support it.

The first highway improvement, a grade separation at Great Seneca Highway and Sam Eig Highway, is already in the County's priority letter to the state delegation for new project planning starts. The County's request to begin project planning for this improvement predates, and is independent of, the current Gaithersburg West master plan effort. Completing project

planning, design, and implementation for a project of this size typically takes a minimum of five years due to the degree of regulatory agency and community coordination involved.

2. *How many homes and neighborhood amenities, broken out by subdivision, will be destroyed in the widening of Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch Road, the construction of the grade-separated interchanges and the right-of-way for the CCT?*
3. *Which intersections will require railroad-style gates?*
4. *Where will noise walls be required?*

The feasibility of highway and transit infrastructure in the draft Plan has been examined by an interagency work group of implementing agencies including the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), State Highway Administration (SHA), and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). The interagency work group has made the following conclusions:

- There are no fatal flaws with the planned transportation system improvements.
- All transportation system improvements should be viewed through the lens of sustainability to ensure that environmental, social, and fiscal aspects of each programmed improvement are sound.
- No changes to the master planned rights-of-way are needed to proactively preserve or acquire additional property for interchange or intersection design.
- However, certain design requirements or community interests may ultimately require the acquisition of right-of-way beyond that currently proposed for protection as master planned right-of-way. An example of this consideration is in the provision for stormwater management, which cannot be precisely known until the design details of project are further developed and for which both design standards and state-of-the-practice technologies will likely change during the implementation period of the master plan.
- More detailed alternatives analyses, including participation of community representatives, should be conducted prior to selecting a preferred alternative for any of the master planned transportation facilities.

Collaborative project planning beyond the level available with master plan resources is required to identify a preferred project-level alternative. The Executive's September 2009 testimony on the Gaithersburg West plan suggested that 60 condominium units on Hillside Lake Terrace would be required to construct an interchange at Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch Road similar in footprint to one recently designed on the Montrose Parkway. One design alternative that could avoid those impacts, an echelon interchange, has been critiqued by local stakeholders as being insensitive to community aesthetics, demonstrating the importance of considering multiple objectives and alternative designs. The interagency working group has explored other design options at this location, including depressing Great Seneca Highway below Muddy Branch Road. The third and fourth bullets in the list above reflect the confidence of the agencies that no additional property displacements should be counted on as a certainty, but the equivalent recognition that some small number of property displacements may ultimately be found to be warranted.

The development of conceptual alternatives at a level of detail appropriate to select an alternative requires a level of resources more closely associated with an environmental impact document than a master plan. The County Council discussed this challenge as it considered the recommendation for grade separated interchanges along MD 355 in adopting the Germantown Plan in 2009. More detailed project planning is typically of greatest value when construction is expected in the near term (say, five years as opposed to twenty), so that the planning reflects contemporary values for both regulatory requirements and community concerns.

Subsequent feasibility analyses are also the best manner in which to address specific approaches to safety and mitigation techniques such as the questions regarding transitway signal controls and noise walls. Specific approaches to ensuring the safest possible interface between the CCT and other vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists will be determined as the CCT project proceeds through preliminary engineering (and the Final Environmental Impact Statement) and final design. Noise attenuation measures such as beams or walls would similarly need to be considered based on specific alternative designs for roadway or transit improvements. For the CCT, these elements will be addressed as the project continues through preliminary engineering and the development of a Final Environmental Impact Statement during the next two years.

While most of the interchanges in the Gaithersburg West plan are primarily intended to support end-state development, the Great Seneca Highway/Sam Eig interchange is already on the County's priority list to the state delegation. During the next two years, the MTA will also need to design a CCT alignment through the Plan area. Staff therefore recommends that as MTA proceeds with the next step of CCT alternatives analyses, MCDOT begin facility planning for the Great Seneca/Muddy Branch junction to ensure that the CCT design, roadway mobility needs, and community interests are all considered in tandem. Additional language developed by the interagency work group on transportation proposed as an addition to the master plan is included as Attachment C.

5. *What accommodations are planned for the roads outside the planning area that will be overwhelmed by the "Science City" traffic...Dufief Mill Road, Travilah Road, Shady Grove extended/Piney Meetinghouse, Wootton Parkway, Glen Mill Road, Falls Road, Quince Orchard Rd, and Route 28 through Rockville?*

As described previously, the PAMR review of traffic outside the Plan area indicates that while traffic volumes will increase, the planned roadway system will accommodate the forecast growth as defined by current mobility standards. Outside the Plan area, system improvements are primarily limited to the transit and major highway system in the I-270 corridor, including:

- Implementation of the Corridor Cities Transitway between Shady Grove and Clarksburg
- Elimination of the WMATA "turnback" at Grosvenor
- Construction of the Intercounty Connector to provide access to the east (and around, rather than through, the city centers of Rockville and Gaithersburg)
- Widening of I-270 north through Germantown to provide additional capacity for peak direction travel demand and using HOV priority, express bus transit services, and value pricing to manage travel demand
- Addition of the I-270/Gude Drive interchange

- Widening of Great Seneca Highway to six lanes into Germantown

To the south and west, the Plan and its analytic assumptions respect the policies of both the City of Rockville and the Potomac Subregion Plan to retain two lanes on roadways such as Wootton Parkway, Piney Meetinghouse Road, and Travilah Road.

6. Where will the traffic from Great Seneca Highway be re-routed during the road-widening and the construction of the grade-separated interchanges and CCT right-of-way?

Keeping roadways open during construction or reconstruction is important for both the local residents and the local economy. This “maintenance of traffic” is a standard element in the capital improvement program and roadway closures, if required at all, are typically limited to short periods overnight. Details are site-specific, but typically involve building temporary roadways and using existing shoulders and median space to carry traffic while roadbeds are being reconstructed.

7. At the recent PHED committee worksession, Glenn Orlin said that the people in Germantown and Clarksburg who are headed to the Shady Grove Metro will not take the CCT. Obviously there is no benefit for them to take the CCT when they can drive their cars straight to the Metro or jump on an express bus that will go straight down the new lanes on 270. Is this being considered in the ridership numbers?

Yes. The traffic forecasting model takes into account a bus network that includes existing Ride-On Route 100 that provides an express trip via I-270 HOV lanes every 5 minutes from Germantown to Shady Grove Metrorail. It also incorporates Ride-On Route 82 from Clarksburg to Germantown that provides 20 minute service in the peak direction. See the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Detailed Definition of Alternatives (October 2007), Tables 4.2 and 5.2. The latest (November 2009) MTA ridership estimates for the CCT reflect the increased density immediately adjacent to selected stations (e.g. Germantown Town Center, the three LSC stations, Crown Farm, etc.) where plans call for mixed use Transit Oriented Development.

8. Most of the people in our area and many areas along the proposed alignment cannot take the CCT because we cannot get out of the subdivisions without our cars and there is little or no parking at the CCT stations. Is this being considered in the ridership numbers?

Yes. Some of the CCT ridership will be from existing subdivisions and other locations that require access to the CCT via car or bus but we concur that most ridership is attributable to the mixed uses in the immediate vicinity of the stations throughout the length of the transitway. See Figures 6 and 7 of the MTA November 2009 Technical Paper at:

http://www.i270multimodalstudy.com/images/stories/documents/Final_CCT_Alternative_Alignments11-05-09-last.pdf.

Our own sketch planning analysis suggests that this ridership level could be attained with reasonable assumptions related to the percentage of workers and residents within ½ mile of the

station using the CCT. The percentages range from 10% to 20%, depending upon the station under consideration.

9. *There are only 1900 total parking spaces at the CCT stations and the only substantial number of “walkers” will come from King Farm, Crown Farm, the PSTA and Kentlands. The CCT is supposed to carry 30,000 riders per day. That would mean that 28,000 people would have to be walkers, bikers or transfer from other transportation. Is that an accurate estimate and is it possible?*

This question is focused primarily on the “home end” of the trip. The 30,000 riders per day includes separate trips (i.e., out and back) by a single person. In other words, if all trips were made by round-trip travelers on journeys to and from work, then the 30,000 boardings per day would be composed of 15,000 people going to work in the morning and returning home in the evening.

The mixed uses around CCT stations will attract trips (to jobs and other activities in the area) as well. Overall, mixed use development facilitates shorter trip lengths (as indicated in Exhibit C-3 of the October 2009 Supplemental Report) and a higher percentage of the total trips will be made by means other than a single occupant auto (as indicated in Exhibit C-2 of the October 2009 Supplemental Report). With respect to transfers to and from Metrorail, the MTA estimates that about 20% of the total CCT ridership will transfer to Metrorail at Shady Grove.

10. *If the original alignment for the CCT is not used, has the Planning Department analyzed the possibility of routing the CCT into Belward on Johns Hopkins Drive and out onto the extension of Decoverly Road?*

The MTA has indicated they will be examining the feasibility of this alignment as a means of minimizing impacts to the historic resource of the Belward Farm – a federal and state requirement as part of their on-going analysis. The Planning Department does not support this alignment proposal as it would shift the LSC Belward CCT station away from the proposed center of development. Such a shift might be expected to reduce CCT ridership. The effect of this shift on CCT ridership will be assessed as the alignment is investigated further.

11. *There will be little or no parking at the CCT stations. How will spill-over parking be handled in nearby neighborhoods?*

Spillover parking is typically a problem in locations where transit stations are located adjacent to residential communities and is addressed largely through residential permit parking programs. In the LSC and other station areas, there are recognized challenges to good pedestrian connectivity to the established residential communities beyond the typical $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile transit station “walk shed”. Staff concurs that this characteristic does reduce the value of the CCT stations as a walk-access transit trip for most current community residents. However, the same factor will discourage spill-over parking in those neighborhoods.

12. *According to the Master Plan, “In addition to the APFO (Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance) standards, this Plan recommends staging to ensure that infrastructure is in*

place before development is allowed to proceed". And "The Plan provides stages and amounts of development that are tied to the CCT's funding, construction and operation to ensure that transit is available as development proceeds."

Johns Hopkins Real Estate was previously approved for 1.2 million square feet on Belward and the proposed master plan would bring that up to 4.6 million square feet...which incidentally is 20% more square feet of office space than the Pentagon! They have been planning their commercial office complex since 1989 so presumably they will be waiting at the ready for the triggers that would allow them to grab any and all square footage as it becomes available. It appears that they would be able to build their entire operation before the CCT is even started.

Stage 1 allows for 8.2 million sq ft of commercial space, which is "existing and pipeline", plus an additional 400,000 square feet.

Johns Hopkins is presumably well along in the planning process, so they will likely scoop up the incremental 400,000 square feet which would give them 1.6 million square feet. They plan to start building within three years.

As soon as the prerequisites for Stage 2 have been met, essentially the funding of the CCT from the Shady Grove Metro to Metropolitan Grove and a five percent increase in non-driver mode share, another 2.8 million square feet will become available which would magically provide them with 4.4 million square feet. They would likely top it off to 4.6 million square feet by using unused square footage from companies whose preliminary plans have expired. This would allow them to complete their commercial complex on the farm to accommodate 15,000 people...regardless of whether the CCT is ever built.

At that point, Johns Hopkins Real Estate would have exactly what they want, enough "capacity" on Belward Farm for 15,000 people. To quote one of the Smart Growth blogs, they would have a "cash cow" to finance their operations in Baltimore. We will be left with the mess and the County would be playing "catch up" with the massive amount of infrastructure that would be required to handle the crushing traffic.

Is this possible?

The Plan proposes a robust staging plan to ensure that the major transportation investments keep pace with development. The staging plan is focused on the Life Sciences Center communities, where the majority of new development is oriented toward the CCT stations. Development approvals typically have a lifespan of up to five years at which point the rights to develop can expire. This practice exists in part to prevent any property owner from cornering the market on public facility capacity.

The staging plan is complementary to, and independent of, the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). Any development rights granted by the Planning Board need to pass APFO requirements, so that even if a development meets the master plan staging requirements, it may be subject to its own subdivision phasing plan requirements.

MEMORANDUM

January 21, 2010

TO: Glenn Orlin, Deputy Staff Director, County Council

FROM: Councilmember Phil Andrews *Phil A.*

SUBJECT: Request for review of the scope of traffic analysis and proposed traffic solutions regarding the Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan

On January 13, Council President Floreen received the attached letter from Rockville Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio, describing serious concerns the City has with the Planning Board's Gaithersburg West Master Plan. Many of these concerns center on the traffic impact of the amount of proposed development, and the (in)adequacy of proposed staging requirements. Following are the City's concerns about traffic issues in their own words:

- 1) "The City remains concerned about the impact on traffic of the proposed high level of development in the Gaithersburg West planning area. Rockville appreciates the addition to the Plan of a recommended improvement to the intersection at Key West Avenue and Shady Grove Road, but does not believe it to be sufficient. First, the Plan recommends that funding the improvement, but not actual construction, be a requirement for Stage 4, after 5 million square feet will already have been constructed. That requirement is much too late in the process, and should be advanced forward to Stage 2. More importantly, however, improving the intersection would almost certainly have the consequence of increasing the impact on the already highly overburdened entrance to I-270 at Route 28. This Plan must recognize the reality of the impacts that will occur outside of the Planning Area as a result of the new development, including how drivers will access the LSC (Life Sciences Center). There is no location more pressing in this regarding than the network that connects I-270 and the LSC. The Plan must analyze and potentially address this area as an overall system and incorporate appropriate investments so as not to diminish the quality of life of those around the LSC, including within Rockville; and those investments must be part of the staging requirements."
- 2) "Even the most aggressive of the Draft Plan's targets for alternative transportation modes still anticipates at least 70% of new employees and residents using automobiles. Considering the large number of new employment and homes, we anticipate both major arterials and secondary roads to be heavily impacted. Arterials of greatest concern to Rockville include Darnestown Road, MD 28 (Key West Avenue/West Montgomery Avenue) and the I-270 ramps, in addition to the potential impact on I-270 itself. Those arterials within the City of Rockville have not been included in the current study. Secondary roads that must also be studied and then managed include Wootton Parkway, Fallsgrove Boulevard, Blackwell Road, Watts Branch Parkway and other Rockville streets. Rockville staff has

raised these concerns in meetings that have been held with staff from Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Planning Department, and the State of Maryland. Rockville strongly requests that a thorough analysis be done in order to understand fully these impacts. We suspect that the analysis may show that the plan includes insufficient infrastructure to manage the newly generated traffic. Rockville encourages the County Council not to fear understanding the reality, even if it leads to a conclusion that densities in the plan must be reduced.”

- 3) “In addition, current Staging Requirements do not include requirements for the development of the residential units. The City believes strongly that this link should be made in the plan, so that there is adequate planning for the impacts of thousands of new housing units.”
- 4) “In general, the City also believes that the Plan should describe more specifically the advantages of the proposed level of additional development. The Plan should consider alternative methods of achieving the goals and visions of the LSC, which may include revisiting the overall scale of development. The quality of life of a large number of Montgomery County residents would be severely degraded if the private development moved forward without the infrastructure and community amenities required to support that development.”
- 5) “The Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) is at the core of the Draft Plan and, once built, will pass through Rockville in the King Farm neighborhood. The City strongly supports the development of the CCT, but the Plan should also consider alternative phasing and/or densities should the State not fund the project or approve the Draft Plan’s recommended alignment.”

I ask that you provide a point-by-point response to each of the issues raised by the City. In addition, I request the following: 1) a detailed list of the areas outside the boundaries of Gaithersburg West (not limited to Rockville City) included in the Plan’s traffic analysis; and 2) an analysis of whether the Plan’s traffic mitigation requirements would adequately and timely address projected increased traffic attributable to the Plan in areas outside of the Plan’s boundaries. Please identify any such areas where (more) mitigation would be required if the area were within the Plan’s boundaries. In your analysis, please use current traffic standards, not the weaker ones proposed for the LSC. Thank you for your analysis, which will provide important information to councilmembers prior to voting on recommendations regarding development levels and staging requirements for Gaithersburg West.

Cc: Mike Knapp, Chair, PHED Committee, Committee Members and Councilmembers
Honorable Phyllis Marcuccio, Mayor, City of Rockville

The Gaithersburg - North Potomac - Rockville Coalition
www.scale-it-back.com

Transportation issues

1. 68,000 jobs and 16,000 residences have been approved in Germantown without any staging requirements. Considering the traffic generated by the Germantown Master Plan and the 50,000 additional people proposed by the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, how many cars will be added to the roads before the first staged infrastructure improvement along Great Seneca Highway will be **in place**?
2. How many homes and neighborhood amenities, broken out by subdivision, will be destroyed in the widening of Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch Road, the construction of the grade-separated interchanges and the right-of-way for the CCT?
3. Which intersections will require railroad-style gates?
4. Where will noise walls be required?
5. What accommodations are planned for the roads outside the planning area that will be overwhelmed by the "Science City" traffic...Dufief Mill Road, Travilah Road, Shady Grove extended/Piney Meetinghouse, Wootton Parkway, Glen Mill Road, Falls Road, Quince Orchard Rd, and Route 28 through Rockville?
6. Where will the traffic from Great Seneca Highway be re-routed during the road-widening and the construction of the grade-separated interchanges and CCT right-of-way?
7. At the recent PHED committee worksession, Glenn Orlin said that the people in Germantown and Clarksburg who are headed to the Shady Grove Metro will not take the CCT. Obviously there is no benefit for them to take the CCT when they can drive their cars straight to the Metro or jump on an express bus that will go straight down the new lanes on 270. Is this being considered in the ridership numbers?
8. Most of the people in our area and many areas along the proposed alignment cannot take the CCT because we cannot get out of the subdivisions without our cars and there is little or no parking at the CCT stations. Is this being considered in the ridership numbers?
9. There are only 1900 total parking spaces at the CCT stations and the only substantial number of "walkers" will come from King Farm, Crown Farm, the PSTA and Kentlands. The CCT is supposed to carry 30,000 riders per day. That would mean that 28,000 people would have to be walkers, bikers or transfer from other transportation. Is that an accurate estimate and is it possible?
10. If the original alignment for the CCT is not used, has the Planning Department analyzed the possibility of routing the CCT into Belward on Johns Hopkins Drive and out onto the extension of Decoverly Road?
11. There will be little or no parking at the CCT stations. How will spill-over parking be handled in nearby neighborhoods?

12. According to the Master Plan, "In addition to the ADFO (Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance) standards, this Plan recommends staging to ensure that **infrastructure is in place before development is allowed to proceed**". And "The Plan provides stages and amounts of development that are tied to the CCT's funding, construction and operation to **ensure that transit is available as development proceeds.**"

Johns Hopkins Real Estate was previously approved for 1.2 million square feet on Belward and the proposed master plan would bring that up to 4.6 million square feet...which incidentally is 20% more square feet of office space than the Pentagon! They have been planning their commercial office complex since 1989 so presumably they will be waiting at the ready for the triggers that would allow them to grab any and all square footage as it becomes available. It appears that they would be able to build their entire operation before the CCT is even started.

Stage 1 allows for 8.2 million sq ft of commercial space, which is "existing and pipeline", plus an additional 400,000 square feet.

Johns Hopkins is presumably well along in the planning process, so they will likely scoop up the incremental 400,000 square feet which would give them 1.6 million square feet. They plan to start building within three years.

As soon as the prerequisites for Stage 2 have been met, essentially the **funding** of the CCT from the Shady Grove Metro to Metropolitan Grove and a five percent increase in non-driver mode share, another 2.8 million square feet will become available which would magically provide them with 4.4 million square feet. They would likely top it off to 4.6 million square feet by using unused square footage from companies whose preliminary plans have expired. This would allow them to complete their commercial complex on the farm to accommodate 15,000 people...regardless of whether the CCT is ever built.

At that point, Johns Hopkins Real Estate would have exactly what they want, enough "capacity" on Belward Farm for 15,000 people. To quote one of the Smart Growth blogs, they would have a "cash cow" to finance their operations in Baltimore. We will be left with the mess and the County would be playing "catch up" with the massive amount of infrastructure that would be required to handle the crushing traffic.

Is this possible?

Gaithersburg West Master Plan
Proposed Text Expressing Preference for Transportation
Improvements other than Grade-separated Interchanges

D-R-A-F-T 1-21-10

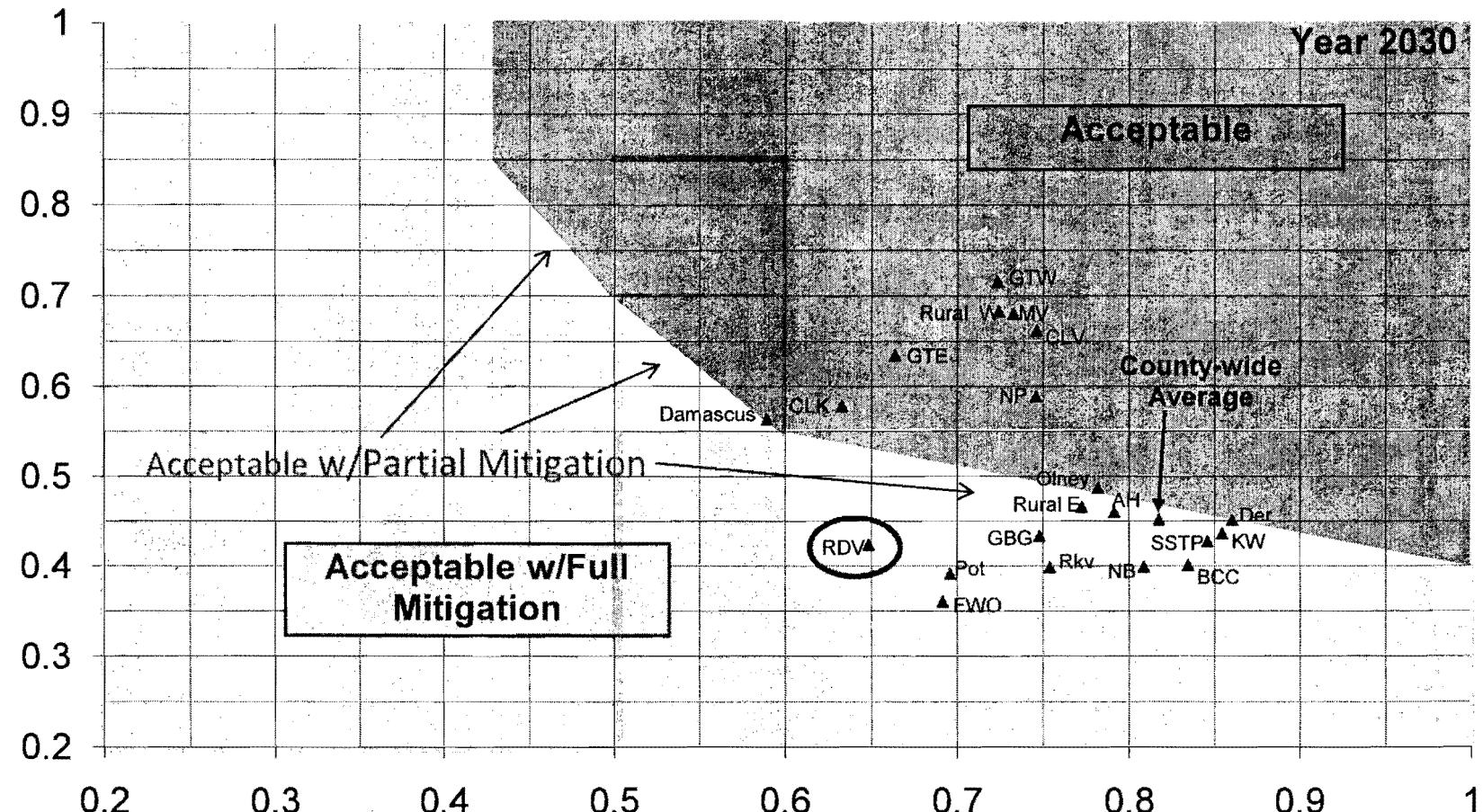
Add to bottom of page 69 of the July 2009 Planning Board Draft:

The proposed grade-separated interchange at Sam Eig Highway and Great Seneca Highway (MD 119) listed above should be given high priority for construction prior to commencement of Stage 3 of the Staging Plan. Although the master plan envisions construction of additional grade-separated interchanges prior to commencement of Stage 4, it is recognized that future social and technological changes may allow for equivalent mobility and capacity to be achieved without building additional grade-separated interchanges. Such mobility and capacity enhancements would need to be considered as alternative solutions to a grade-separated interchange during a transportation project planning study, or the review of a land development project. These enhancements include, without being limited to, increased transit services, implementation of a robust street system that promotes walking and bicycling, managed parking supply, provision of proactive travel demand management services, and operational improvements to at-grade intersections, streets, arterials, and highways. Emerging state and federal sustainable community initiatives incorporating climate change and energy concerns may significantly reduce future demand for single occupancy vehicle travel, potentially reducing the need for interchanges.

Prior to any interchange design, a feasibility study will examine the alternative mobility enhancements described above and develop context-sensitive solutions. This Plan supports context-sensitive improvements that are designed to facilitate community connections, minimize right-of-way needs, and address visual and noise concerns through design elements such as depressing roadways or ramps below grade. The feasibility study will include participation by adjacent community representatives to help define community needs and context. All transportation improvements should be planned, designed and constructed under the lens of sustainability, balancing their effects on the natural environment, social community and economic resources.

Year 2030 PAMR Chart - GWMP Draft Plan Scenario with TDM

Relative Arterial Mobility: (Congested Arterial Speed Relative to Arterial Free Flow Speed)





January 25, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President, Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville MD 20850

RE: Gaithersburg West Master Plan

Dear President Floreen: *Nancy*

The purpose of this letter is to relay the City of Gaithersburg's comments regarding the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, in advance of decisions the Montgomery County Council may make.

The City has been following this draft plan very closely and has provided a series of policy and technical suggestions. While the plan covers the unincorporated areas west of Gaithersburg, the primary focus of effort and public discussion has been the Life Sciences Center (LSC).

The plan for the LSC is seen as a long term concept that could take as many as 45 years to implement. While the City believes it is generally a good plan, we are extremely concerned about the impact of some of the traffic improvements necessary to support the proposed densities. Further, we are concerned that the proposed LSC plan could move forward with higher traffic congestion impacts (1600 CLV) than other projects in the City of Gaithersburg or the Gaithersburg West Planning Area (1450 CLV).

The Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan calls for very limited additional County densities outside of the LSC. In fact, the plan is generally supportive of annexation by the City of Gaithersburg of the McGowan Tract and several enclaves.

The City would therefore like to offer the following comments:

1. The City is extremely supportive of the concept of staging the approved density of the LSC based on transportation milestones; however, residential development should also be addressed in the various staging. Transportation impacts related to housing increases should be acknowledged.

City of Gaithersburg • 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-2098
301-258-6300 • FAX 301-948-6149 • TTY 301-258-6430 • cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov • www.gaithersburgmd.gov

MAYOR
Sidney A. Katz

COUNCIL MEMBERS
Jud Ashman
Cathy C. Drzyzgula
Henry F. Marraffa, Jr.
Michael A. Sesma
Ryan Spiegel

CITY MANAGER
Angel L. Jones

January 25, 2010

Page 2

2. The City is generally supportive of the concept of the LSC, but is concerned about the conceptual traffic improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed density. Of particular concern are the proposed grade separated interchanges at the following

locations: Sam Eig Highway at Great Seneca Highway, Great Seneca Highway at Muddy Branch Road, and Great Seneca Highway at Quince Orchard Road. Accordingly, we request that the Stage 3 provision requiring funding of two interchanges be modified with alternative transportation projects.

Based on the conceptual improvements provided to date, the City believes that these grade separated interchanges could require the taking of both residential and commercial properties, would harm pedestrian and bicycle conductivity, and would adversely affect the character of existing neighborhoods. Further, a number of these grade separated interchanges could adversely affect the current and proposed alternative alignment of the CCT.

3. Given that the Gaithersburg West Master Plan will be reviewed again in six years, the City would request that the proposed 4.5 million square feet of LSC Stage 4 density not be approved at this time. Prior to the next Master Plan review, the County and the various stakeholders could attempt to develop alternative traffic improvements and trip mitigation measures that would not have the adverse impacts outlined in item #2 above.
4. The City is concerned about the proposal to establish a higher traffic congestion standard for the LSC than the standard that is applied in the City of Gaithersburg and the remainder of the Gaithersburg West Planning Area.
5. In the event MTA approves an alternate alignment of the CCT to accommodate the LSC, the County should take immediate steps to acquire the necessary right-of-way and the land for the transit stations. Failure to do so could result in delays in construction of the CCT given that most of the other necessary land is already available. Further, should the CCT not receive Federal or State funding, the Plan should address alternative phasing and densities.
6. The City is pleased that the plan envisions the annexation of the McGowan Tract, and will coordinate our efforts closely with Park and Planning and the County. A key goal of this proposed annexation will be the acquisition of the land for the remaining quadrant of the Watkins Mill Road Interchange.
7. The City is very pleased about the County's recent restoration of the Deer Park/Humpback Bridge, and concurs with the Planning Board's recommendation concerning the need for ongoing assessment of the bridge's condition to address safety, mobility, and historic preservation issues.

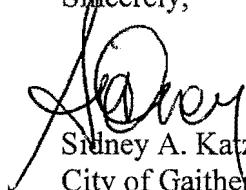
January 25, 2010

Page 3

8. As the proposed development moves forward in the planning process, it is extremely important to link this development to existing City neighborhoods with good pedestrian and bicycle connections.
9. The City is very supportive of the concept of reserving land for an elementary school at the LSC.

The City of Gaithersburg appreciates your consideration of our comments and concerns.

Sincerely,



Sidney A. Katz, Mayor
City of Gaithersburg

cc: The Honorable Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
Montgomery County Councilmembers
Glen Orlin, County Council Deputy Staff Director

Transportation Questions/Issues on the Life Sciences Center, GWMP

1. Level of Service Standard of 1600 is too high.

The draft plan gives the same Level of Service standard to Gaithersburg West and to White Flint (1600). The Transportation Appendix for the GWMP shows that the two planning areas have virtually the same Relative Arterial Mobility (RAM) at build out, but White Flint has much higher Transit Mobility (RTM). GW scores 63, hardly higher than its current score of 59, and hardly increasing with addition of the CCT. This score is lower than all but two other policy areas.

North Bethesda plan has a build out RTM score of 79, not counting any express bus service on Rockville Pike. How can you justify giving the same congested road LOS standard to both?

2. PAMR test should be redone.

The PAMR test for the White Flint plan was measured for the whole North Bethesda area, not just the sector plan area. The PAMR test was re-run using the current Round 7.2 growth forecasts. The same methods should be applied at Gaithersburg West.

The current PAMR test for the Life Sciences Center was run on a small area not much bigger than the R&D Village policy area. It includes almost none of the area of Rockville and Gaithersburg. The Round 7.2 growth forecasts show a substantial increase in employment growth for the R&D Village assuming the master plan is approved. It also shows growth of almost 5000 housing units.

The Round 7.2 forecast predicts employment will be equivalent to the end of the second stage of development as outlined in the staging plan. Thus it is likely that only the stage 2 transportation facilities will be in place: two new interchanges, one highway widened, CCT to Metropolitan Grove. The results of such a PAMR test are likely to show substantially more road congestion than the previous test results in the Transportation Appendix. This test may show the need identified by MDOT modeling, for more road improvements such as added lanes on I-270.

3. Do the fiscal impact analysis recommended by Maryland DOT

Maryland transportation officials put this recommendation in their Sept, 2009 letter analyzing the GWMP. The letter warned that Montgomery County is counting on several billion dollars for transportation facilities in the LSC area, including further expansion of I-270. There are also \$800 million in other requests in the County, plus regional needs like the Beltway and Purple Line.

MDOT urged the County to set priorities. The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance is designed to delay planned development for a reasonable period, not to stop development because our eyes were bigger than our stomachs regarding roads and transit.

4. What are the current mode shares, really, as shown by census and other actual data? How do you plan to achieve the 30% non-driver mode share when the models never show transit ridership above 15%

