

Silver Spring Library Project Status Summary as of December, 2008

After a presentation by County staff, the HHS committee of the Montgomery County Council gave their consent to moving forward with the design of the Silver Spring Library based on the County Executive's recommended "1C" Master Concept Plan. The selected plan calls for a 63,000 square foot Silver Spring library at the corner of Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street, with an open space at the corner of Fenton and Bonifant Streets. The County's design team, headed by Lukmire Partnership, will orient the main street level access to the Library on Fenton Street bordering the open space.

The Master Concept Plan also allows for approximately 146 future residential units, which will be proposed as 30% MPDU, 30% moderate priced, and 40% market rate, to be located on the project site along Bonifant Street. This future housing development will be overseen by Department of Housing and Community Affairs, and will be independent of the library project.

The County design will make provisions for the future Purple Line, as MTA has designated the site as one of the east Silver Spring station options being considered. In addition, the County design will provide space for an arts center and County offices to be constructed with the Library. Street level retail is proposed to be included with the future residential construction, so as to complement the future redevelopment of the Fenton Village.

The selected plan calls for the utilization of the Wayne Avenue Garage, located across the street, for Library parking. By utilizing the garage, the County will provide the required library parking while achieving credit toward a LEED Silver designation by avoiding the creation of additional parking.

The County Executive's recommended "1C" Plan included the construction of an 80-foot long pedestrian bridge directly from the garage to the library. This bridge would avoid a mid-block crossing of Wayne Avenue in an area where there is no retail to benefit from foot traffic and would significantly enhance the safety of those accessing the library from the Wayne Avenue Garage. This is particularly the case for the elderly, the disability community and users with young children. The Council has asked County staff to review the merits of providing a new signalized mid-block crossing instead of the bridge.

M-NCPPC has weighed in against the use of a bridge for access and pedestrian safety for the library, stating that the bridge would be contrary to the Urban Renewal Plan created in 1999. The Urban Renewal Plan was developed to implement the Urban Renewal Project which does not include the new library and which has been completed.

Library and General Services staff will work with County transportation staff to review the issues, and report back to the HHS committee in February 2009.