

**MEMORANDUM**

February 28, 2019

TO: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee

FROM: Glenn Orlin, <sup>GO</sup>Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan—fiscal impact statement, evaluation of transportation adequacy at buildout; transportation elements

PURPOSE: Worksession—develop Committee recommendations

**Councilmembers: Please bring your copy of the Final Draft Plan to this worksession.**

This staff report addresses transportation adequacy at the time of the buildout, the transportation elements, and the fiscal impact statement. Attached are comments received from the State Highway Administration (©1-3) and the County Department of Transportation (©4-6).<sup>1</sup> Some technical corrections will be made to the final document, but they are not identified in this report.

The purpose of this worksession is two-fold: for the Committee to make recommendations about the transportation elements of this plan; and to discuss potential short-term safety measures that can be implemented in the Veirs Mill Road Corridor.

Those anticipated to attend include:

Casey Anderson, Chair, Planning Board  
Gwen Wright, Director, Planning Department  
Carrie Sanders, Area 2 Chief, Planning Department  
Jessica McVary, Planner Coordinator, Planning Department  
David Anspacher, Functional Planning & Policy Division, Planning Department  
Eric Graye, Functional Planning & Policy Division, Planning Department  
Christopher Conklin, Deputy Director, Department of Transportation (DOT)  
Andrew Bossi, Director's Office, DOT  
Wade Holland, Interim Vision Zero Coordinator, CountyStat  
Captain Tom Didone, Traffic Division Director, Police Department  
Kristy Daphnis, Chair, Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee

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<sup>1</sup> Key words: #VeirsMillCorridor, plus search terms master plan, road, transit, bikeway, sidewalk.

***Fiscal Impact Statement (FIS).*** On February 1, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) transmitted the Executive’s FIS for this plan (©7-9). Executive staff estimates the County cost of new capital improvements associated with the Draft Plan to be \$175.3 million, all of which would be transportation improvements. The largest items are for their assumed County’s costs to construct Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative 2.5<sup>2</sup> (\$39.6 million) and, ultimately, to include continuous BRT lanes (Alternative 3, another \$34.4 million); and grade separating Veirs Mill Road over the Matthew Henson Trail (\$44.4 million). The \$56.9 million balance is almost entirely for a host of other bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The FIS notes that if the Matthew Henson Trail were bridged over Veirs Mill Road instead of vice versa, the grade separation cost would be \$11.2 million, bringing the overall County cost down to \$142.1 million.

The FIS makes certain assumptions about the share of costs between the County, State, and developers. A more detailed version of the capital budget portion of the FIS, showing the assumed breakdown, is on ©10-13. It presumes that the BRT cost would be split evenly between the State and County, even though the State has made clear to date that it is not participating financially in BRT. It also presumes that the State would pick up half the cost of bikeway and sidewalk improvements along Veirs Mill Road and Connecticut Avenue. Given the State’s history of not providing significant funding for sidewalk and bikeway improvements along their highways, this is an optimistic presumption.

The total cost of the elements in the FIS is \$253.2 million, assuming the Matthew Henson Trail is bridged over Veirs Mill Road.<sup>3</sup> The Council should anticipate that most of these costs will be the County’s to bear. In his comments on the Plan, the County Executive expressed that one of his two major concerns is “the very significant costs of the public safety projects recommended in the plan.”<sup>4</sup>

The FIS estimates the added operating cost, once implemented, that the BRT service would have an annual operating cost of \$4.8 million/year, and the cost of more bikesharing stations in the corridor increase the County’s subsidy by \$700,000 annually (©9).

***What is Veirs Mill Road, and what should it be?*** Veirs Mill Road is a 5.8-mile long State highway (MD 586) between Rockville Pike and Georgia Avenue (about 4 miles of which is encompassed in this master plan) and County master plans classify it as a “major highway.” The County Code defines a major highway as:

a road meant nearly exclusively for through movement of vehicles at a moderate speed. Access must be primarily from grade-separated interchanges and at-grade intersections with public roads, although driveway access is acceptable in urban and denser suburban settings. (County Code, Section 49-31(c))

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<sup>2</sup> Alternative 2.5 includes: queue jump lanes and signal priority for BRT and other buses at the 12 busiest intersections, BRT stations with level boarding and off-board fare collection, 15 60’-long articulated BRT buses, and associated bicycle and pedestrian access improvements to the new stations.

<sup>3</sup> This estimate does not include the already master-planned Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road interchange. There is no cost estimate for it. The Randolph Road/Georgia Avenue interchange is somewhat similar and cost about \$80 million, but the midpoint of its construction was a few years ago. So, a reasonable cost estimate for this interchange is \$90-95 million.

<sup>4</sup> The other major concern was the “likely displacement of current residents and a net loss of affordable housing for a population already burdened by rental housing costs.”

Like most major highways, Veirs Mill Road has a heavy volume of traffic because—unlike in city environments where there is a fine-grained street grid—in the suburbs there are far fewer route choices by which to convey people and goods, and much longer distances that need to be traversed.

The Draft Plan has the goal of recreating Veirs Mill Road as a “complete street.” This concept—which would treat the safety and mobility needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles more or less equally—is normally reserved for urban environments where all are moving closer to the same pace. However, Veirs Mill Road, from where it leaves the Wheaton CBD to where it enters the Rockville CBD, traverses what is clearly a suburban environment, and the Draft Plan’s land use recommendations would not change that. Except for the Veirs Mill commercial area, there is no concentration of pedestrian-oriented uses that would warrant urban-type street treatments.

The Draft Plan calls for an expensive package of improvements, and each improvement would enhance transit, bicycle, or pedestrian mobility. On the other hand, all the road changes newly proposed by the plan would render more difficult the mobility of people in motor vehicles: taking away through lanes, eliminating channelized turn lanes, and eliminating double left-turn lanes, among others. As for the only road improvement that would improve motor vehicle mobility for thousands of daily commuters—the already master-planned grade separated interchange at Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road—the Draft Plan entertains its elimination. The Draft Plan even goes so far as to address future traffic congestion by redefining the congestion standards to allow for more vehicle delay.

To quantify the effects of these impacts on mobility for people driving or riding in motor vehicles, Council staff asked Planning staff to estimate the peak period travel time between Rockville and Wheaton in 2040 both with and without the proposals. Planning staff estimates that the addition of more “protected” (i.e., signalized) pedestrian crossings and lowering the speed limit would make only a marginal difference in vehicle travel time. However, reducing the existing double left-turn lanes to a single lane would substantially increase in vehicle travel time. The findings are shown below:

	AM Eastbound	AM Westbound	PM Eastbound	PM Westbound
Existing	18 minutes	18 minutes	19 minutes	19 minutes
Draft Plan*	35 minutes	47 minutes	36 minutes	30 minutes
Draft Plan w/double-lefts*	32 minutes	22 minutes	29 minutes	19 minutes

\*Neither scenario assumes the planned Veirs Mill/Randolph intersection, which would reduce these times by a few minutes. The travel time savings on Randolph Road would be substantially more.

A major goal of the County and of this plan is Vision Zero: eliminating deaths on the road, whether they be bicyclists, pedestrians, or people who drive or ride in motor vehicles. It is generally agreed that the main contributor to deaths and severe injuries on the road is speed. As SHA notes, it sets speed limits based on a host of contextual factors: adjacent land use, roadway design and geometrics, prevailing speeds, transition between urban and suburban areas, school zones, accident history, etc. (©2). However, it is human nature that drivers typically exceed the speed limit. Therefore, it is appropriate to take measures that inhibit speeding on Veirs Mill Road, applying all three “E’s”: engineering, enforcement, and education.

Another significant contributor to deaths and injuries is the lack of safe passage for bicyclists and pedestrians along or across this major highway. This will become even more important when the Veirs

Mill Road BRT is implemented. Providing for continuous bikeways and sidewalks along the road and more frequent “protected” (i.e., signalized) crossings is also appropriate.

Veirs Mill Road is not unique. There are many other suburban major highways in Montgomery County that run through or form the edges of residential neighborhoods and that experience road-related deaths and injuries. For example, compare Veirs Mill Road with Georgia Avenue. Most of the homes with a Veirs Mill Road address are either in apartments set off the road or are in single-family detached houses that sit on a frontage street. The frontage streets are County-maintained secondary residential streets. Access in and out of the houses is on a street with very little auto traffic, which travels at a low speed. There is ample on-street parking, and the sidewalks are well separated from the highway by the frontage street and the grass strip.

On the other hand, the single-family homes on Georgia Avenue front directly onto the highway. There is no on-street parking. In fact, for these homes to be viable, many have paved over much of their front yards to park their vehicles and turn them around so as not to back out into traffic. The sidewalks directly abut the curb—no grass strips between the sidewalks and the highway.

The safety experience on the two highways also differs. A map in a Draft Plan appendix (©14) shows that between 2015 and 2017 there were 3 fatal and 7 severe-injury crashes on Veirs Mill Road from just north of the Wheaton CBD to the Rockville boundary. Two of the fatal crashes were due to the unique circumstance of the at-grade crossing for the regional Matthew Henson Trail. The same map shows that on Georgia Avenue from just north of the Wheaton CBD to the Matthew Henson Trail crossing of Georgia Avenue—nearly the same distance—there were 2 fatal and 16 severe-injury crashes, nearly twice as many serious accidents than on Veirs Mill Road during the same period.

All this is background to the two-part approach for the specific recommendations in this staff report. The first is to support those plan elements that enhance the mobility and safety of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users in the corridor, but in a way that does not negatively affect the capacity of Veirs Mill Road needed to provide people in motor vehicles with at least a tolerable commute, as the current SSP standards define as tolerable. The second is to reduce the overall projected cost of the long-term improvements, so there is a closer match between the Plan’s aspirations and what the County can realistically afford to build in the next 20-25 years, a concern also evoked by the County Executive.

**Council staff concurs with the recommendations in the Draft Plan except where noted in this staff report.**

***Transportation adequacy at buildout.*** Every master plan should have a balance between its proposed land use and its proposed transportation network and services. For a quarter-century this “balance” has been defined as what would be needed to meet the current adequate public facilities requirements as described in the Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP), last updated by the Council in 2016. Achieving this balance in a plan is not an academic exercise: if a plan is not balanced, then at some point in the future a proposed master-planned development will be unable to proceed because it will have no means to meet the adequate public facility requirements.

The Draft Plan’s study area covers parts of four policy areas: Rockville City, North Bethesda, Kensington/Wheaton and Aspen Hill. The SSP measures transportation level of service according to

average vehicle delay (in seconds) during peak periods. The standards vary by policy area, and where an intersection straddles two areas, the tighter standard applies. Thus, at the key intersections between the Rockville and Wheaton CBDs the adopted standards for tolerable congestion are:

Veirs Mill Road/Twinbrook Parkway	71 seconds/vehicle
Veirs Mill Road/Aspen Hill Road	59 seconds/vehicle
Veirs Mill Road/Parkland Drive/Montrose Parkway	59 seconds/vehicle
Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road	80 seconds/vehicle
Connecticut Avenue/Randolph Road	80 seconds/vehicle
Veirs Mill Road/Connecticut Avenue	80 seconds/vehicle

The standard in the Rockville and Wheaton CBDs is 120 seconds/vehicle.

The Draft Plan recommends amending the standard for the intersections between Rockville and Wheaton CBDs to 100 seconds/vehicle. Procedurally, transportation adequacy standards are set in the SSP, not in a local master plan. If the desire is to amend them, they should be examined holistically with other standards throughout the County, to understand what the effect new standards would have on the entire transportation system. (The next comprehensive update of the SSP will be in 2020.) If Veirs Mill Road were to have a single standard, does that mean Georgia Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue/Rockville Pike/Frederick Road, Connecticut Avenue, River Road, Colesville Road/Columbia Pike, New Hampshire Avenue, and other major highways should have the same standard throughout their lengths? SHA notes that using a single congestion standard may not be appropriate throughout the corridor as the land use and traffic contexts change (©3). Furthermore, the Draft Plan does not propose a single standard that is the average of the current ones, but one that would tolerate more congestion than any of them. Depending on the intersection, a 100-second/vehicle standard would allow for 25%, 41%, or 69% more delay than the most recently approved standards. **Council staff recommends deleting references to changing the current standards.**

Planning staff evaluated conditions at ten intersections, some of which are beyond the boundary of Draft Plan study area, to better understand the nearby effects of the recommendations. Three of these intersections are failing now: Veirs Mill Road/Twinbrook Parkway, during both peak periods; Veirs Mill Road/Connecticut Avenue in the evening peak only; and Randolph Road/Connecticut Avenue during both peaks (©15). By the design year of 2040, four intersections will fail: the three noted above, plus Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road if no grade-separated interchange were to be built there (©16).

To bring these intersections to a tolerable level of congestion, as per the SSP standards, would require optimizing traffic signal splits and offsets at all of them, and:

At Veirs Mill Road/Twinbrook Parkway:

- Adding an eastbound right-turn overlap signal phase
- Adding a southbound left-turn lane
- Retaining the westbound-to-southbound double left-turn lanes

At Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road

- Adding a second westbound left-turn lane
- Adding an exclusive southbound right-turn lane

At Connecticut Avenue/Randolph Road

- Adding a second westbound left-turn lane
- Adding an exclusive southbound right-turn lane

DOT notes that analyses had not been performed at Veirs Mill Road/Aspen Hill Road and Veirs Mill Road/Parkland Drive/Montrose Parkway (©5). SHA's Veirs Mill Road BRT Study had forecasted conditions at these intersections for Year 2040. The SHA study showed that Veirs Mill Road/Aspen Hill Road would operate within Aspen Hill's 59 seconds/vehicle standard if the double left-turn lanes remain. Veirs Mill Road/Parkland Drive/Montrose Parkway would fail in the morning peak hour, but the problem may be resolved based on the final design of the BRT lanes there.

In several plans—Great Seneca Science Corridor, Chevy Chase Lake, and Bethesda CBD are examples—specific interchange and intersection improvements needed to provide a tolerable level of congestion were explicitly included in the Plan. The right-of-way would be preserved to protect the option to build them. However, among County officials the preference will likely continue to be to mitigate traffic by adding transit service, the bike/ped improvements, and transportation demand management measures. **Council staff recommends including these intersection improvements in the Plan.** They would be a backstop should these other actions not result in a tolerable level of congestion for vehicles.

***Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road interchange.*** This already master-planned interchange is conceived to be of a “tight diamond” design, with four through lanes of Randolph Road passing beneath Veirs Mill Road. The existing grades work well for an underpass; Planning staff has determined that the underpass could begin north of Selfridge Road and emerge south of Colie Drive. A tight diamond design would have the ramps to and from Veirs Mill Road hug the edge of the underpass. Two examples of this design are the North Capitol Street interchanges at New York Avenue and at Rhode Island Avenue in the District of Columbia. An exhibit presented as part of the public hearing testimony graphically displays how this design conceptually would fit in the Veirs Mill/Randolph context (©17).

This interchange will have many benefits. It would bring the intersection in compliance with the SSP standard of 80 seconds/vehicle and would remove a major bottleneck for commuters from the central and eastern county going to and from workplaces in White Flint and the I-270 Corridor, whether travelling by car, local bus, or by the master-planned Randolph Road BRT. It would enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility by reducing the number of lanes needed to cross Randolph Road: currently there are 7 lanes to traverse, compared to 4 lanes (in two separate 2-lane stages) with the interchange. Finally, it would obviate the need for two blocks of Selfridge Road between Randolph and Gridley Roads—a secondary residential street with 4 single-family homes fronting it—to be used as the designated left-turn route for eastbound vehicles on Randolph Road making a left turn onto northwest-bound Veirs Mill Road.

There would need to be a bypass roadway to handle Randolph Road traffic during construction. It would likely require taking the fast-food restaurant on the east corner and up to 4 single-family dwellings abutting Randolph Road at or near the south corner between Veirs Mill and Selfridge Roads. The outside curb-to-outside curb distance of Randolph Road and its ramps would probably be 20-25 feet wider than the current cross-section distance. After construction, there should be enough space on the

east corner to restore a small commercial use, and the remaining property near the south corner could be developed into a local park serving the Veirs Mill commercial area and the neighborhood.

The Draft Plan states that “A grade-separated interchange at this intersection is inconsistent with the overall transportation goals of this plan, which seek to improve conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users on Veirs Mill Road and the surrounding communities [p. 54].” In fact, just the opposite is true if the interchange is designed as described, for the reasons already noted.

The Draft Plan recommends considering eliminating this interchange from the current master plan, but if it is constructed, it must be built so that it does not inhibit pedestrian, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, and to minimize disruption to local businesses and homes. For the reasons noted above, the interchange should remain in the Plan, but with the caveats noted by the Planning Board. **Council staff recommends deleting references to considering eliminating the Veirs Mill Road/Randolph Road interchange, but retaining the language calling for its design to not inhibit pedestrian, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, and to minimize disruption to local businesses and homes.**

*Eliminating double left-turn lanes.* The Draft Plan recommends reducing double left-turn lanes to a single lane wherever they occur on Veirs Mill Road. As noted above, doing this would increase congestion levels at these intersections considerably. Furthermore, as DOT points out in its comments:

Currently all double-lefts have exclusive signal phasing such that there are no conflicting WALK phases across either crosswalk traversed by a left-turn. Converting double-lefts to single-lefts would necessitate longer cycles given to left-turn phases, reducing the amount of WALK time available and potentially increasing instances where pedestrians cross during a DON'T WALK phase. (©5)

The Draft Plan also includes the statement that “double left-turn lanes ... enable high-speed turns” (p. 54). But the speed of these turns is less than for single-lane left-turns: where two lanes of traffic are turning together, each driver is wary of the driver to the left or right and proceeds more cautiously.

**Council staff recommends deleting the Draft Plan’s proposal to eliminate double left-turn lanes at intersections, and deleting the statement noted above.**

*Eliminating channelizations at intersections.* The Draft Plan recommends eliminating channelized right turns at the intersections along Veirs Mill Road, and those at Connecticut Avenue in particular (©18). The concern is that channelizations can allow vehicles to make uninterrupted high-speed turns across crosswalks. However, removing a channelized right-turn lane can increase the overall congestion at an intersection by having the right-turning traffic passing through it. The Veirs Mill Road/Connecticut Avenue intersection already fails the congestion standard, and it is forecast to fail in the future as well.

In some circumstances this problem can be mitigated significantly by rebuilding the channelization to reduce its turning radius, thus reducing the speed by which a vehicle can negotiate it. This is precisely what is occurring at the Rockville Pike/Woodmont Avenue intersection on the north side of the Bethesda CBD (©19). For many years, vehicles heading southbound on Rockville Pike have been able to make a fast transition onto southbound Woodmont Avenue. However, the turn goes across a heavily used crosswalk that connects Downtown Bethesda with the NIH campus, posing a dangerous condition for pedestrians. A project now nearly completed has changed the channelization so that the

turning radius is smaller, resulting in much slower turns; nevertheless, the turning traffic is still separated from the center of the intersection, so its capacity is unaffected.

**Council staff recommends that the Plan's text be amended to say that, depending on the circumstances, channelizations may either be eliminated or rebuilt with a turning radius resulting in a design speed no greater than 25 mph.**

**Target speed and lane widths.** The posted speed limit on Veirs Mill Road north of the Wheaton CBD is generally 40 mph all the way to the Rockville CBD, including through the Twinbrook residential area, where there are frontage streets on both sides. The exception is the section between Turkey Branch Parkway and Twinbrook Parkway, where the limit is 45 mph. In this latter section west of Robindale Drive there is parkland along the south side and no homes that front on the north side. The Draft Plan calls for a target speed of 35 mph throughout. SHA "encourages the plan to allow for varying contexts and consider target speeds appropriate to those contexts" (©2).

**Council staff concurs generally with setting the target speed at 35 mph. However, because of its context, the section between Robindale Drive and Twinbrook Parkway should be reduced only to 40 mph. Conversely, the target speed in the Veirs Mill commercial area between Havard Street and Bushey Drive should be reduced to 30 mph, recognizing the more prevalent pedestrian activity there.**

The travel lanes on Veirs Mill Road are consistently 12' wide. This is the width of an Interstate Highway lane. However, there is a well-recognized correlation between lane width and speed, so reducing the width can contribute to slowing traffic down without affecting the road's capacity to carry traffic. The Draft Plan's proposed standard cross-sections (pp. 32-33) show 10'-wide lanes except for 11'-wide lanes for reserved BRT (and right turns), once the continuous lanes are built in the long term. SHA notes that it has implemented 10'-wide lanes in urban settings on a case-by-case basis; it would conduct studies specific to each segment of traffic density and speed and truck traffic volume before concurring with a 10' width (©2).

These proposed cross-sections all have curb and gutter. Where there is curb and gutter the distance from the curb needs to be 1' wider, to provide room for the gutter and sufficient shy area from the curb. The same is true for the inside lane. If the outside curb lane is to be reserved for BRT, then large trucks would be prohibited from using it; the outside lane is usually wider to accommodate the extra width of heavy trucks. The middle lane will be the de facto lane for trucks to use, so it, too, will need to be at least a foot wider. **Council staff recommends that, for a safe design, the lane widths in these planned cross-sections should be revised, from outside to inside, to 12'-11'-11' rather than 11'-10'-10'.** Thus, the planned cross-section will need to accommodate 6' more pavement (3' in each direction) and the right-of-way widths either broadened by 6' or reductions made in other elements. In the three of the four cross-sections on pp. 32-33 the median could be reduced by 6' to make up the difference.

These cross-sections on pp. 32-33 also include either a sidepath or separated bike lanes (i.e., a cycle track) on both sides of Veirs Mill Road for its entire length. However, wherever there is a frontage street, it could double as the bikeway: as noted, these are secondary residential streets with very little traffic that travel at a low speed. They operate as one-way for autos, but they could be signed as

two-way for bicycles by replacing the “Do Not Enter” signs at the end of each block with “Do Not Enter except Bicycles” signs. This would reduce the size of the planned cross-section, thus considerably reducing the ultimate cost and impact of adding a shared use path or separated bike lanes. DOT confirms it is possible to have contra-flow bike lanes on a one-way street with the appropriate signing and markings or other techniques, as appropriate, to ensure pedestrian safety; it has implemented the concept on Cedar Street, south of Wayne Avenue and along Ellsworth Drive, north of Cedar Street. **Council staff recommends that where there is a frontage street that it serve as the bikeway on that side of Veirs Mill Road, at least in the short term.**

***Gannon Road extension.*** The Draft Plan calls for Gannon Road, a secondary residential street north of Veirs Mill Road and east of Randolph Road, to be extended northwest to Randolph Road if the site of the Department of Recreation’s administrative office redevelops. The text on page 37 says such an extension should “provide a connection between Gannon Road and Colie Drive.” However, Map 6 on page 36 does not show Gannon Road and Colie Drive connecting with Randolph Road across from each other at a single intersection. DOT has commented that they should connect (©6). **Council staff recommends showing Gannon Road and Colie Drive connecting at Randolph Road at the same point, and adding text noting that this could be done by relocating Colie Drive.**

***Community outreach.*** The Draft Plan describes the various ways by which the Planning Board and staff have reached out to the community to gain input on this plan (pp. 2-6). While this is useful information in a Draft Plan, it should not be part of the final Adopted Plan, which should be confined to goals and objectives, and recommendations on projects and policies. **Council staff recommends that the Community Outreach section not be included in the Adopted Plan.**

***Matthew Henson Trail crossing.*** Tables 1 and 2 on pp. 8-9 (©20-21) summarize the Plan’s short- and long-term recommendations. The table is purposefully and appropriately silent as to the number of years associated with the short-term, given that the master plan is not a capital improvements program. Regarding the Matthew Henson Trail crossing, the short-term improvement is to enhance the design of the at-grade crossing so that it is more direct and better lit. The long-term improvement is to build a grade-separated crossing for the trail.

The concern is that while the short-term measure will provide modest improvement, a truly safe crossing for this regional trail will not occur until the trail is bridged over Veirs Mill Road, just as the Rock Creek Trail was many years ago. Frankly, the County should have budgeted the cost of a trail bridge when the trail was initially built. It is at the bottom of steep hills extending in both directions; even with a posted speed lowered to 35 mph, drivers will find it extremely difficult not to exceed that limit. Planning staff (and yours truly) have observed that most pedestrians and bicyclists do not activate the signal, some because they don’t want to wait and some perhaps because they feel uncomfortable forcing platoons of vehicles in each direction to stop just for themselves.

**Council staff recommends that a ped/bike overpass for this trail be included as a short-term improvement.** Perhaps the current short-term improvement could be described as “Step 1” and the overpass as “Step 2.” Furthermore, the Plan should be explicit that this is to be a trail overpass rather than raising Veirs Mill Road to create a trail underpass. According to the FIS the latter would cost four times that of an overpass (\$44 million versus \$11 million), and it would require shutting off vehicular access to and from Turkey Branch Parkway. It would also effectively create a wall in front of

some houses fronting on Veirs Mill Road, and the traffic noise from the raised road would carry over a wider distance.

***Short-term safety measures in the corridor.*** When the Council heard the Planning Board's overview of the plan, several Councilmembers asked that this worksession also be an opportunity to talk through some of the short-term safety measures that could be expedited. Representatives from the Department of Transportation, the Police Department, CountyStat, and the Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee will be present to engage in this discussion. The Draft Plan's short-term recommendations are on ©20.

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February 27, 2019

Ms. Jessica McVary, AICP  
Planner Coordinator  
Planning Area 2  
Montgomery County Planning Department  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. McVary:

In response to your January 3, 2019 request for the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration's (MDOT SHA) comments on the December 2018 Planning Board draft of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan ("the plan"), MDOT SHA offers the following for your consideration.

*Ongoing Efforts*

In line with the County's Vision Zero Action Plan, MDOT SHA is approaching pedestrian accommodations and safety in urban areas differently than in suburban and rural areas. The MDOT SHA continues to evaluate solutions and implementation strategies to further this approach to pedestrian safety throughout Maryland. Noting that the plan places an emphasis on these types of pedestrian safety improvements, the MDOT SHA already is undertaking the following actions to address the plan's vision and recommendations along MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road):

- MDOT SHA District 3 currently is conducting necessary traffic studies to evaluate the appropriateness of locating protected crossings at Norris Drive and at Andrew Street. The MDOT SHA anticipates completing these studies in the Spring of 2019.
- MDOT SHA District 3 currently is conducting necessary traffic studies to evaluate the appropriateness of designating a school zone from Galt Avenue to MD 185 (Connecticut Avenue), pursuant to Maryland Transportation Code § 21-803.1 (2017) and lowering speed limits as necessary. The MDOT SHA anticipates completing these studies in the Spring of 2019.
- MDOT SHA District 3 currently is evaluating infrastructure improvement options, such as refreshing existing faded pavement markings, to better ensure motorists observe existing bus/right-turn only lanes. The MDOT SHA anticipates completing this evaluation in the Spring of 2019.

- MDOT SHA Highway Development currently is evaluating the feasibility of potential future sidewalk improvements to improve pedestrian facility connectivity and anticipates completing its full report in the Spring of 2019. To accommodate potential future programming and implementation of pedestrian improvements, MDOT SHA encourages the Planning Department, in the plan, to prioritize pedestrian infrastructure and intersection improvement recommendations.

On January 28, 2019, MDOT SHA staff met with representatives of the Planning Department and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to discuss these ongoing activities and the schedules indicated above for reporting study and evaluation results.

#### *General Comments*

- The MDOT SHA encourages the Planning Department to include accommodations and width necessary for stormwater management and utility infrastructure, especially in proposed typical sections, throughout the plan. Doing so will more accurately describe the right-of-way necessary and the cost to implement desired typical sections.
- The MDOT SHA encourages the Planning Department to consider varying land use and traffic context. In three cases, the plan recommends setting a consistent standard for roadway design and/or operations throughout the plan area and through the MD 586 corridor:
  - This plan proposes to reduce vehicular speed throughout the corridor, specifically designing future improvements to accommodate a target speed of 35 mph. The MDOT SHA considers various contextual factors such as adjacent land use, roadway design and geometrics, prevailing speeds, transition between urban and rural areas, school zones, accident history, unusual or unanticipated conditions, etc., when setting speed limits. The MDOT SHA encourages the plan to allow for varying contexts and consider target speeds appropriate to those contexts.
  - This plan recommends reducing vehicular lane width in an effort to calm traffic and improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Although MDOT SHA has implemented 10-foot-wide lanes in select Montgomery County urban corridors, it has done so on a case-by-case basis. While such a treatment may be appropriate in the MD 586 corridor, MDOT SHA would request additional segment-specific studies of traffic density, traffic speed, and truck traffic volume before concurring with this plan's recommendations.

Ms. Jessica McVary  
Page Three

- The MDOT SHA notes that applying a consistent maximum congestion/delay standard may not be appropriate throughout the corridor as the land-use context varies throughout. Congestion standards should be applied based on each intersection's land use and traffic context. The MDOT SHA encourages the plan to allow for varying contexts and consider congestion standards appropriate to those contexts.
- This plan recommends the use of both green and red paint as traffic control devices. The MDOT SHA encourages partner agencies to propose innovative treatments, such as the use of colored paint as a traffic control device. The MDOT SHA notes, though, that neither color currently is approved fully for use by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- FHWA has granted only *interim approval* of the use of green paint for traffic control purposes such as delineating bicycle facilities at intersections. The MDOT SHA and MCDOT previously executed a MOU outlining procedures for implementation and maintenance of green paint for traffic control purposes in the County; therefore, this MOU need only be amended to specify additional locations.
- FHWA has granted only *experimental approval* of the use of red paint for traffic control purposes such as delineating "Bus Only" lanes. Therefore, FHWA's approval is necessary for any application of red paint for traffic control purposes.

Thank you for providing MDOT SHA the opportunity to review and comment on the December 2018 M-NCPPC Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan Planning Board Draft. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Kandese Holford, MDOT SHA Regional Planner, at 410-545-5678, toll-free 1-888-204-4828, or via email at [kholford@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:kholford@mdot.state.md.us).

Sincerely,



Eric Beckett  
Deputy Director  
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering

cc: Andrew Bossi, P.E., Senior Engineer, MCDOT  
Dr. Glenn Orlin, Deputy Director, Montgomery County Council  
Ms. Carrie Sanders, AICP, Chief, Area 2, Montgomery County Planning Department  
Ms. Nancy Sturgeon, Master Plan Supervisor, Montgomery County Planning Department  
Ms. Kandese Holford, Regional Planner, MDOT SHA



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

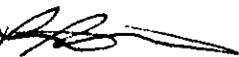
Marc Ehrlich  
County Executive

Al R. Roshdteh  
Director

MEMORANDUM

January 18, 2019

**TO:** Greg Ossont, Deputy Director  
Department of General Services

**FROM:** Christopher Conklin, P.E., Deputy Director for Policy   
Department of Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan – MCDOT Revised Planning Board Draft Comments

Thank you for the opportunity to review the December 2018 Planning Board Draft of the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan. We have appreciated the Planning Department's significant engagement with MCDOT on this effort. Our detailed comments on this draft are attached to the memorandum. Our most significant comments are highlighted below:

- 1) **TPAR Analysis:** We request that the plan include 2012 TPAR or other systemwide evaluation of the corridor with regard to vehicular operations. Individual intersection evaluations provide a tool for comparison with Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP) maximum delay thresholds, but they do not provide an overall assessment of the corridor performance. Furthermore, the plan would be improved by identifying performance targets for the corridor as the SSP identifies the lowest performance that is tolerable rather than a performance objective.

Future master plans should also seek to develop and update TPAR Transit metrics for each plan area, instead of adapting 2012 data. Such information can provide a helpful snapshot of the condition and quality of transit services in a master plan area, and how / where they may need to improve.

- 2) **Congestion Threshold:** We recognize that there is too much variation in the SSP congestion standards for this corridor. However, the rationale behind the increased maximum congestion standard recommended in the plan is unclear. Furthermore, we reiterate our desire to have a performance objective stated as plans should not to seek to achieve the maximum allowable delay.

(4)

Office of the Director

101 Monroe Street, 10th Floor • Rockville, Maryland 20850 • 240-777-7170 • 240-777-7178 Fax  
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot

- 3) **Unevaluated Intersections:** There are three major intersections which were not evaluated as part of the transportation analysis and should be analyzed:
- Veirs Mill Road and First Street in the City of Rockville; a junction formed entirely by State-maintained routes.
  - Veirs Mill Road and Aspen Hill Road; one of the intersections designated for reducing a double-left turn to a single-left turn.
  - Veirs Mill Road and Parklawn Drive / Gaynor Road; where Montrose Parkway East is designed to intersect.
- 4) **Failing Intersections:** Four intersections appear to fail the LATR evaluations under current congestion standards, and three appear to fail with the increased congestion thresholds. The three include each junction formed by the trio of Veirs Mill Road, Connecticut Avenue, and Randolph Road. The fourth (which passes with the increased congestion standard) is at Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Parkway.
- 5) **Single-Lane Left-Turns:** It is not made clear how limiting left-turn lanes to a single lane would improve safety for all users. Currently, all double-lefts have exclusive signal phasing such that there are no conflicting WALK phases across either crosswalk traversed by a left-turn.

Converting double-lefts to single-lefts would necessitate longer cycles given to left-turn phases, reducing the amount of WALK time available and potentially increasing instances where pedestrians cross against during a DON'T WALK phase.

More detail is necessary to support this recommendation.

- 6) **Interchange Evaluation:** We concur with public sentiment that an interchange at the intersection of Randolph Road and Veirs Mill Road is unlikely to be effective use of public resources. We urge the Planning staff to evaluate the interchange more fully and develop a definitive recommendation as a part of this master plan. If this plan does not do so, it is unlikely to occur through another forum. Included in this evaluation should be consideration of the potential for varying traffic flows based on whether Montrose Parkway East is or is not implemented.

- 7) **Traffic Diversion:** Information should provided as to whether the traffic analyses found any degree of trip diversion arising from a slower-operating Veirs Mill Road, and whether any such diversions amounted to a significant enough volume as to justify evaluating the impacts to any such alternative routes.
- 8) **Right-of-Way:** The plan seeks to preserve existing right-of-way, recognizing that the limited development potential along much of the corridor makes it more realistic to assume any proposed infrastructure must fit within the right-of-way that is available today.

We largely concur with the plan's approach to right-of-way and our preliminary analysis shows that the Alternative 2.5 BRT can substantially be achieved within this right-of-way. Text has been included in the plan to note that at spot locations (particularly bus stations, queue jumps, etc.) additional right-of-way may be necessary.

It remains a preference of MCDOT, however, that the currently approved master planned right-of-way be preserved. We recognize that it may not be dedicated for a long time or even beyond the lifetime of the plan, but this additional right-of-way could be utilized toward upgrading the Alternative 2.5 BRT to Alternative 3 BRT, or it could provide additional room for the Breezeway given we expect that Breezeway design standards will rapidly change over the coming decades.

- 9) **Gannon Road Extension:** This proposed extension presents operational concerns as noted in the detailed comments. We suggest that this be realigned either to intersect with Randolph Road opposite Colie Drive, or that Colie Drive be realigned as to intersect opposite the Gannon extension.

Should you have any questions regarding our comments on the plan, please feel free to contact me or Mr. Andrew Bossi, Senior Engineer, at 240-777-7200.

CC:AB

cc: Al Roshdieh, MCDOT  
Gary Erenrich, MCDOT  
Andrew Bossi, MCDOT  
Amy Donin, DGS  
Jessica McVary, MNCPPC  
Matt Baker, SHA

**County Capital and Operating Cost Estimates Assumed to be Incurred as a Result of the  
Viers Mill Corridor Master Plan  
1/25/2019**

**Capital Improvement Projects**

Project		Description	Total County Costs
Inter- changes	<b>Veirs Mill Rd &amp; Randolph Rd</b>	Already master planned. As this plan proposes an intent to eliminate the proposed interchange this cost is not considered to be applicable to this FIS (and could arguably be considered a cost savings).	\$ -
Mass Transit	<b>Mixed Traffic BRT</b>	BRT Alternative 2.5. This accounts for the entire corridor between Rockville and Wheaton; not only the portion within the master plan area. Estimated O&M cost of \$4.8m/yr.	\$ 39,600,000
	<b>Dedicated Lanes BRT / Veirs Mill Reconstruction</b>	BRT Alternative 3. This is the incremental cost above the cost to implement Alternative 2.5. The total cost of Alternative 3, on its own, is estimated at \$147,900,000. This does not include the master planned bikeways, which are listed as a separate line item in this FIS. This does not include master planned grade separation of the Matthew Henson Trail. Estimated O&M cost remains the same as 2.5 at \$4.8m/yr.	\$ 34,400,000
	<b>Improve Bus Lane Compliance</b>	Improving compliance of motorists heeding the existing bus lane along eastbound Veirs Mill approaching Wheaton. The State would fund these costs.	\$ -
	<b>Improve Bus Stop Access &amp; Quality</b>	Miscellaneous small-scale projects.	\$ 100,000
	<b>Bikeshare</b>	Capital costs only, including station installation, bikes, and 1 set of bike replacements. Does not include Operations, which are estimated at \$700k/yr at full build-out. Likely to be built out by private contributions (\$1.4M), through grants or a public CIP may also be feasible.	\$ 400,000
New Roads	B-5 <b>Gannon Rd</b>	Extension to Randolph Rd. Would occur as part of redevelopment.	\$ 4,100,000
Ped / Bike Focused	M-13 <b>Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) Sidewalk Gaps, Near-Term and Long-Term Bikeways</b>	Assumes the proposed Separated Bike Lane along the south side of Veirs Mill near Connecticut Ave would be initially built as a sidepath, to be replaced with a Separated Bike Lane after long-term reconstruction of Veirs Mill Road. Not accounted for in the Veirs Mill Reconstruction / BRT Alternative 3 cost. These bikeways may only be implementable after or concurrent with reconstruction of Veirs Mill. Assumes some share will be built by private development in the vicinity of the Randolph intersection.	\$ 12,200,000
	<b>Aspen Hill Rd</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (North side). There is a likelihood that a near-term sidewalk project would go straight to implementing the long-term sidepath.	\$ 1,000,000
	<b>Barbara Rd</b>	Sidepath (side TBD)	\$ 500,000
	<b>Broadview Rd</b>	Trail	\$ 300,000
	<b>Colie Dr</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (South side). Assumed that near-term implementation would precede redevelopment. If redevelopment occurs, it is anticipated that the applicant would be conditioned to provide the long-term treatment (sidepath). There is a potential that any capital project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk.	\$ 1,000,000

<b>College View Dr</b>	Neighborhood Greenway	\$	400,000
<b>Connecticut Ave (MD 185)</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term projects to provide sidepath on both sides as well as contraflow bike lanes in the service roads. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk.	\$	2,000,000
<b>Ferrara Ave / Ferrara Dr</b>	Neighborhood Greenway	\$	200,000
<b>Gridley Rd</b>	Sidewalk	\$	600,000
<b>Glorus PI</b>	Neighborhood Greenway	\$	100,000
<b>Havard St</b>	Sidepath (East side)	\$	600,000
<b>Newport Mill Rd</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (East side). There is a likelihood that a near-term sidewalk project would go straight to implementing the long-term sidepath.	\$	1,700,000
<b>Parker Ave</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (side TBD). There is a likelihood that a near-term sidewalk project would go straight to implementing the long-term sidepath.	\$	1,100,000
<b>Parkland Dr</b>	Sidepath (side TBD)	\$	1,200,000
<b>Randolph Rd</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk. Long-term separated bike lanes projects including reconstruction of curb lines.	\$	23,700,000
<b>Selfridge Rd</b>	Neighborhood Greenway (with a short portion of trail/sidepath). Sidewalk	\$	800,000
<b>Twinbrook Pkwy</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (both sides). There is a likelihood that a near-term sidewalk project would go straight to implementing the long-term sidepath.	\$	3,300,000
<b>Valleywood Dr</b>	Near-term reconstructing of sidewalk to provide a buffer. Long-term sidepath project (side TBD). There is a likelihood that a near-term sidewalk project would go straight to implementing the long-term sidepath.	\$	700,000
<b>Rebuild Ped/Bike Bridge over Joseph's Branch Creek</b>	Existing bridge is located between Valleywood Dr and Moline Rd.	\$	800,000
<b>Improve Matthew Henson At-Grade Crossing</b>	Lowest unit cost assigned to address minor treatments that may remain necessary after SHA has converted the signal to a full signal.	\$	100,000
<b>Matthew Henson Grade Separation Build Trail Bridge Over Veirs Mill Rd</b>	Assumes a 685' length bridge at 12' width over Veirs Mill, with a 125' flat span over Veirs Mill and 280' of lead-up on each side (with 5' landings every 30'). Duplicative project with the alternative of "Reconstruct Veirs Mill Rd over Trail" below. This line item is <b>NOT</b> currently tallied into the total.	\$	11,200,000
<b>Matthew Henson Grade Separation Reconstruct Veirs Mill Rd over Trail</b>	Assumes 80' wide bridge with 15' clearance over trail; bridge beginning 200' NW of Trail and 150' SE of trail. Turkey Branch Pkwy severed from Veirs Mill. Access road remains at-grade & Edgebrook connection preserved. SW side ped/bike facilities remain along access road; no ped/bike facilities on SW side of Veirs proper. Assumes switchbacks (with 5x10' landings every 30' slope) on each side to provide ADA access between Veirs Mill and Turkey Branch as well as Edgebrook. Potential for cost savings if build as part of Veirs Mill Reconstruction / BRT Alternative 3. Duplicative project with the alternative of "Reconstruct Veirs Mill Rd over Trail" above. This line item <b>IS</b> currently tallied into the total.	\$	44,400,000
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COST</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>175,300,000</b>

### Operating Budget Impact

	<b>Bus Rapid Transit</b>	Same operating budget impact/cost for Alt 2.5 as well as Alt 3.	\$	4,800,000
	<b>Bikeshare</b>	At full build-out	\$	700,000
<b>Total Estimated Annual Operating Budget Impact (OBI)</b>			<b>\$</b>	<b>5,500,000</b>

**Notes**

- (1) Total estimated costs are \$286.4M, \$175.3M - County, \$106.6M - State, and \$7.5M Private. Only County costs are shown in the chart above. It is typical practice, along State corridors, to assume a 50/50 split in costs unless there is strong cause to assume otherwise. In practice the actual splits in such costs may vary significantly.
- (2) Operating costs are representative of annual costs at full build-out of the plan.
- (3) Secondary and Tertiary Residential streets (even those with missing or inadequate sidewalks) are currently deemed to be adequate per Pedestrian Level of Comfort analysis and are therefore not included in this estimate.
- (4) Rounding - Individual values rounded up to nearest \$100,000, which is the cause of any apparent summation discrepancies
- (5) Inflation - All Dollars are in 2019 Dollars.

6

**Cost Estimates for the  
Veirs Mill Corridor Plan**

Assumptions	
Plan Year = 2019	
Plan Lifetime (yrs) = 2045	
All costs are Capital only; Maint+Operations costs not included.	
Individual values are rounded up to the nearest \$100,000. "Approx Total Cost" column is a summation of the County, State/Fed, Private Devel, etc columns, compounding this rounding.	

Project		Near-Term	Long-Term	Approx Total Cost	County	State / Federal	Private Devel	Notes
Inter-changes	Veirs Mill Rd & Randolph Rd		X	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Already master planned. As this plan proposes an intent to eliminate the proposed interchange this cost is not considered to be applicable to this FIS (and could arguably be considered a cost savings).
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Transit	Mixed Traffic BRT	X		\$ 79,200,000	\$ 39,600,000	\$ 39,600,000	\$ -	BRT Alternative 2.5. This accounts for the entire corridor between Rockville and Wheaton; not only the portion within the master plan area. Estimated O&M cost of \$4.8m/yr.
	Dedicated Lanes BRT / Veirs Mill Reconstruction		X	\$ 68,800,000	\$ 34,400,000	\$ 34,400,000	\$ -	BRT Alternative 3. This is the incremental cost above the cost to implement Alternative 2.5. The total cost of Alternative 3, on its own, is estimated at \$147,900,000. This does not include the master planned bikeways, which are listed as a separate line item in this FIS. This does not include master planned grade separation of the Matthew Henson Trail. Estimated O&M cost remains the same as 2.5 at \$4.8m/yr.
	Improve Bus Lane Compliance	X		\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ -	Improving compliance of motorists heeding the existing bus lane along eastbound Veirs Mill approaching Wheaton.
	Improve Bus Stop Access & Quality	X		\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	Miscellaneous small-scale projects.
	Bikeshare	X		\$ 1,800,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ 1,400,000	Capital costs only, including station installation, bikes, and 1 set of bike replacements. Does not include Operations, which are estimated at \$700k/yr at full build-out. Likely to be built out by private contributions, though grants or a public CIP may also be feasible.
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			\$ 150,100,000	\$ 74,500,000	\$ 74,200,000	\$ 1,400,000	
Intersections	Veirs Mill Rd / Randolph Rd		X	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Intersection fails LATR. No mitigation is identified.
	Connecticut Ave / Randolph Rd		X	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Intersection fails LATR. No mitigation is identified.
	Veirs Mill Rd / Connecticut Ave		X	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Intersection fails LATR. No mitigation is identified.
	Veirs Mill Rd / Connecticut Ave Remove Channelized Rights		X	\$ 1,200,000	\$ -	\$ 1,200,000	\$ -	Cursory review indicates likely impacts to four utility poles, all pedestrian poles, and one inlet, in addition to geometric work involved with closing slip-lanes and reducing curve radii at the intersection proper.
	Eliminate Unsignalized Left-Turns		X	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	Unit price \$250,000 each, across an estimated 8 intersections: - Veirs Mill at Robindale, Parkland, Gridley, Clairidge, Newport Mill - Randolph at Collie, Connecticut - Connecticut at Randolph  Costs assume signal modifications and potential geometrics treatments to accommodate longer left-turn queues. There may be some duplicative costs, as these intersection projects might be implemented concurrent with or supercede other projects along the Veirs Mill Corridor.

10

**Cost Estimates for the  
Veirs Mill Corridor Plan**

Project		Near-Term	Long-Term	Approx Total Cost	County	State / Federal	Private Level	Notes
Intersections	Convert Dbl-L to Single-L		X	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	Unit price \$500,000 each, across an estimated 6 locations: - Veirs Mill at Twinbrook, Aspen Hill, Randolph (x2) - Connecticut at Veirs Mill (x2)  Costs assume traffic analyses, signal modifications, and geometrics treatments to remove the 2nd lane as well as potentially lengthen the remaining lane to accommodate longer left-turn queues. There may be some duplicative costs, as these intersection projects might be implemented concurrent with or supercede other projects along the Veirs Mill Corridor.
	Protected Crossings	X		\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	Unit price \$500,000 each, across an estimated 10 intersections: - Veirs Mill at Arbutus, Matthew Henson, Harvard, Bushey, Andrew, Pendelton, Norris, Galt - Twinbrook at Halpine/Alderbrook, Vandegrift  Costs assume new signals &/or geometrics as necessary. There may be some duplicative costs, as these intersection projects might be implemented concurrent with or supercede other projects along the Veirs Mill Corridor.
	Protected Intersections		X	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	Unit price \$500,000 each, across an estimated 8 intersections where separated bike lanes intersect with other separated bike lanes or shared use paths: - Veirs Mill at Twinbrook, Aspen Hill, Parkland, Harvard, Randolph, Connecticut, Valleywood, Newport Mill  There may be some duplicative costs, as these intersection projects might be implemented concurrent with or supercede other projects along the Veirs Mill Corridor.
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 15,200,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 15,200,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
New Roads	B-1 Rock Creek Mill Rd		X	\$ 5,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,100,000	Extension to Twinbrook Pkwy.
	B-5 Gannon Rd		X	\$ 4,100,000	\$ 4,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	Extension to Randolph Rd. Would occur as part of redevelopment, but as the redevelopment is likely to be that of a County property costs are assumed to be public costs.
	B-x Gridley Rd		X	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	Extension to Colie Dr. Is included in text but is not shown in maps.
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 10,200,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,100,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,100,000</b>	
Ped / Bike Focused	M-13 Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) Sidewalk Gaps	X		\$ 7,800,000	\$ 3,900,000	\$ 3,900,000	\$ -	
	M-13 Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) Near-Term Bikeways	X		\$ 4,800,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ -	Assumes the proposed Separated Bike Lane along the south side of Veirs Mill near Connecticut Ave would be initially built as a sidepath, to be replaced with a Separated Bike Lane after long-term reconstruction of Veirs Mill Road.
	M-13 Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) Long-Term Bikeways		X	\$ 12,200,000	\$ 5,900,000	\$ 5,900,000	\$ 400,000	Not accounted for in the Veirs Mill Reconstruction / BRT Alternative 3 cost. These bikeways may only be implementable after or concurrent with reconstruction of Veirs Mill. Assumes some share will be built by private development in the vicinity of the Randolph intersection.
	Aspen Hill Rd	X		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively negating this cost estimate.
	Aspen Hill Rd		X	\$ 900,000	\$ 900,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (North side)
	Barbara Rd		X	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (side TBD)
	Broadview Rd		X	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	Trail

11

**Cost Estimates for the  
Veirs Mill Corridor Plan**

Project	Near-Term	Long-Term	Approx Total Cost	County	State / Federal	Private Devel	Notes
Colie Dr	X		\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. Assumed that implementation would precede redevelopment. If redevelopment occurs, it is anticipated that the applicant would be conditioned to provide the long-term treatment (sidepath). There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively negating this cost estimate.
Colie Dr		X	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	Sidepath (South side). Approximately 75% of the segment is along commercial property frontage; likely to redevelop over the lifetime of the plan.
College View Dr		X	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Neighborhood Greenway
Connecticut Ave (MD 185)	X		\$ 1,600,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 800,000	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively reducing or negating this cost estimate.
Connecticut Ave (MD 185)		X	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	Contraflow Bike Lane (West side service road)
Connecticut Ave (MD 185)		X	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000	\$ -	Sidepath (West side)
Connecticut Ave (MD 185)		X	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	Contraflow Bike Lane (East side service road)
Connecticut Ave (MD 185)		X	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	Sidepath (East side)
Ferrara Ave / Ferrara Dr		X	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	Neighborhood Greenway
Gridley Rd	X		\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidewalk
Glorus Pl		X	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	Neighborhood Greenway
Havard St		X	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (East side)
Newport Mill Rd	X		\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively reducing or negating this cost estimate.
Newport Mill Rd		X	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (East side)
Parker Ave	X		\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively reducing or negating this cost estimate.
Parker Ave		X	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (side TBD)
Parkland Dr		X	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (side TBD)
Randolph Rd	X		\$ 2,300,000	\$ 2,300,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidewalk
Randolph Rd		X	\$ 21,400,000	\$ 21,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Assumes reconstruction of the curb lines will be required to accommodate separated bike lanes.
Selfridge Rd	X		\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidewalk
Selfridge Rd		X	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Neighborhood Greenway (with a short portion of trail/sidepath)

Ped / Bike Focused

12

**Cost Estimates for the  
Veirs Mill Corridor Plan**

	Project		Near-Term	Long-Term	Approx Total Cost	County	State / Federal	Private Devel	Notes
Ped / Bike Focused	Twinbrook Pkwy		X		\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively reducing or negating this cost estimate.
	Twinbrook Pkwy			X	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (both sides)
	Valleywood Dr		X		\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	Reconstructing sidewalk to provide a buffer. There is a potential that any project here would go straight to implementing the sidepath rather than reconstructing sidewalk; effectively reducing or negating this cost estimate.
	Valleywood Dr			X	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Sidepath (side TBD)
	Rebuild Ped/Bike Bridge over Joseph's Branch Creek		X		\$ 800,000	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -	Existing bridge is located between Valleywood Dr and Moline Rd.
	Improve Matthew Henson At-Grade Crossing		X		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	Lowest unit cost assigned to address minor treatments that may remain necessary after SHA has converted the signal to a full signal.
	Matthew Henson Grade Separation Build Trail Bridge Over Veirs Mill Rd			X	\$ 11,200,000	\$ 11,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	Assumes a 685' length bridge at 12' width over Veirs Mill, with a 125' flat span over Veirs Mill and 280' of lead-up on each side (with 5' landings every 30').  Duplicative project with the alternative of "Reconstruct Veirs Mill Rd over Trail". This line item is <b>NOT</b> currently tallied into the total.
	Matthew Henson Grade Separation Reconstruct Veirs Mill Rd over Trail			X	\$ 44,400,000	\$ 44,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	Assumes 80' wide bridge with 15' clearance over trail; bridge beginning 200' NW of Trail and 150' SE of trail. Turkey Branch Pkwy severed from Veirs Mill. Access road remains at-grade & Edgebrook connection preserved. SW side ped/bike facilities remain along access road; no ped/bike facilities on SW side of Veirs proper. Assumes switchbacks (with 5x10' landings every 30' slope) on each side to provide ADA access between Veirs Mill and Turkey Branch as well as Edgebrook. Potential for cost savings if build as part of Veirs Mill Reconstruction / BRT Alternative 3.  Duplicative project with the alternative of "Build Trail Bridge Over Veirs Mill Rd". This line item <b>IS</b> currently tallied into the total.
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 112,300,000</b>	<b>\$ 96,700,000</b>	<b>\$ 14,200,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,400,000</b>	Secondary and Tertiary Residential streets (even those with missing or inadequate sidewalks) are currently deemed to be adequate per Pedestrian Level of Comfort analysis and are therefore not included in this estimate.	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</b>		\$53m (county near)	\$120m (county long)	<b>\$ 286,400,000</b>	<b>\$ 175,300,000</b>	<b>\$ 103,600,000</b>	<b>\$ 7,500,000</b>	Roadway TPAR status is unknown.	

13

14

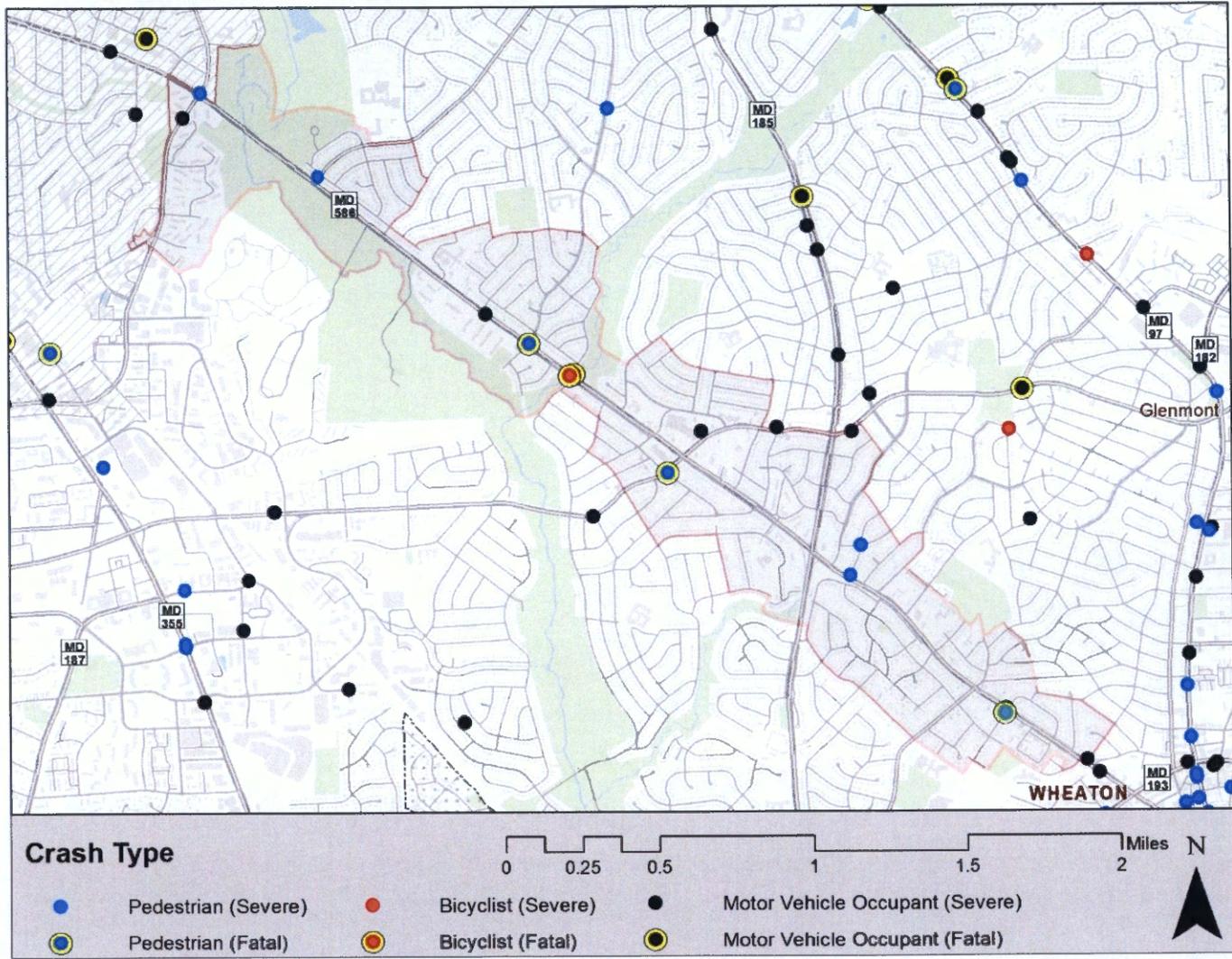


Figure 1: Severe and Fatal Crashes on and Near Veirs Mill Road (2015-2017)

Table 9. Existing Condition (Year 2016) Traffic Delay

ID	E-W Road	N-S Road	Delay Standard	AM		PM	
				Delay	Ratio	Delay	Ratio
1	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586 / MD 28)	Rockville Pike (MD 355)	120	39.9	0.33	76.2	0.64
2	Rockville Pike (MD 355)	First Street	120	51.9	0.43	44.5	0.37
3	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Twinbrook Pkwy	71	77.7	1.09	75.5	1.06
4	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Robindale Rd	59	7.1	0.12	3.8	0.06
5	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Randolph Rd	80	70.1	0.88	57.1	0.71
6	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Connecticut Ave (MD 185)	80	74.5	0.93	103.4	1.29
7	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	University Blvd (MD 193)	120	52.4	0.44	64.7	0.54
8	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Georgia Ave (MD 97)	120	27.2	0.23	25.1	0.21
9	Parklawn Dr	Twinbrook Pkwy	120	39.6	0.33	37.2	0.31
10	Randolph Rd	Connecticut Ave (MD 185)	80	84.0	1.05	87.7	1.10

Three intersections in the master plan area exhibited failing conditions during either the AM or PM, or both the AM and PM peak hour(s) of travel:

- Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) at Twinbrook Pkwy (Intersection 3), exceeded the North Bethesda policy area congestion standard during the AM and PM peak hour of travel.
- Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586) at Connecticut Ave (MD 185) (Intersection 6), exceeded the Kensington/Wheaton policy area congestion standard during the PM peak hour of travel.
- Randolph Rd at Connecticut Ave (MD 185) (Intersection 10), exceeded the Kensington/Wheaton policy area standard during the AM and PM peak hours of travel.

Table 12. HCM Delay Results- 2040 Scenarios

ID	E-W Road	N-S Road	Delay Standard (seconds)	2040 No Build		2040 Veirs Mill Corridor Plan		2040 Veirs Mill Corridor Plan Mitigated (Congestion standard increased to 100 secs in Plan Area)	
				AM	PM	AM	PM		
1	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586 / MD 28)	Rockville Pike (MD 355)	120	40.5	115.1	40.8	116.4	40.8	116.4
2	Rockville Pike (MD 355)	First Street	120	86.1	67.7	87.0	68.8	87.0	68.8
3	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Twinbrook Pkwy	71	190.9	149.6	191.6	159.1	98.2	82.0
4	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Robindale Rd	59	6.7	3.6	7.0	3.4	7.0	3.4
5	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Randolph Rd	80	124.2	87.6	122.1	88.2	115.0	75.0
6	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Connecticut Ave (MD 185)	80	75.6	102.9	74.7	101.6	74.7	101.6
7	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	University Blvd (MD 193)	120	47.1	53.3	47.2	53.3	47.2	53.3
8	Veirs Mill Rd (MD 586)	Georgia Ave (MD 97)	120	28.1	24.6	28.1	24.8	28.1	24.8
9	Parklawn Dr	Twinbrook Pkwy	120	52.0	74.9	54.7	80.8	54.7	80.8
10	Randolph Rd	Connecticut Ave (MD 185)	80	117.9	111.7	120.4	112.7	102.4	74.0

16

For your consideration, is an alternative to the Veirs Mill Corridor Plan's recommendation to eliminate the proposed grade separation at Veirs Mill Rd. and Randolph Road from the 2004 Master Plan of Highways and Transitways. The plan on page 54 states "A grade-separated interchange at this intersection is inconsistent with the overall transportation goals of this plan, which seek to improve conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users on Veirs Mill Road and the surrounding communities". We wish to challenge this premise and demonstrate a grade separation design that is consistent with the plan's objectives and provides a superior solution than the status quo for all stakeholders.

Figure 18 from the corridor plan illustrates features of road treatments and alignments conceptually. However, it fails to illustrate how these features would be applied at the scale of the real intersection at Veirs Mill and Randolph. Therefore, we submit the following:

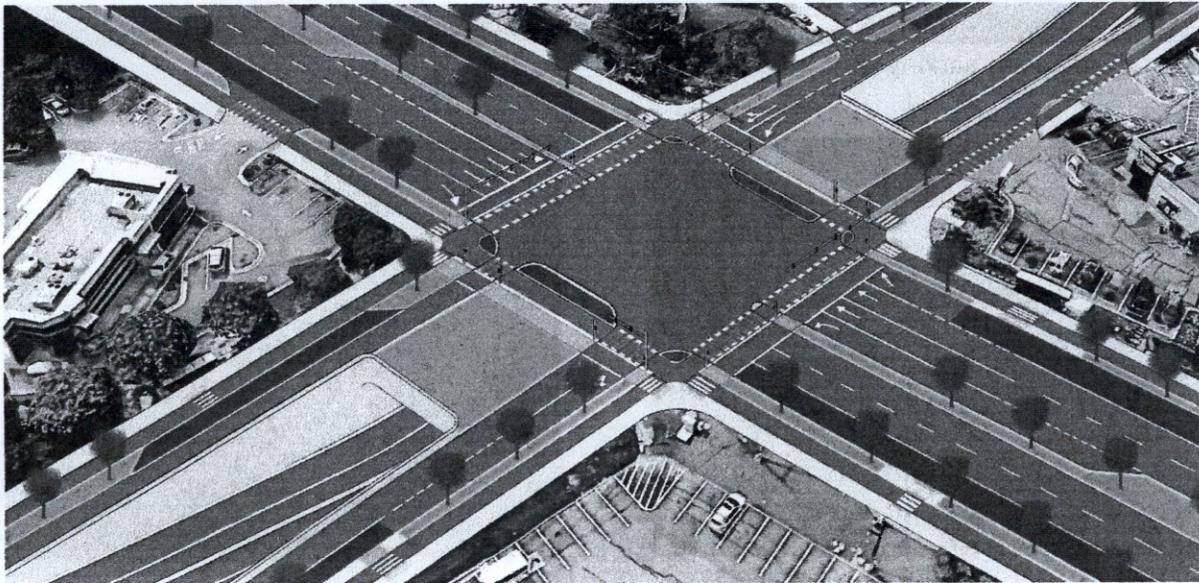


Figure 1, Vision Zero Concept with grade separation at Veirs Mill and Randolph, looking South from the North Corner (base map aerial view credit: google maps).

This conceptual design incorporates the intersection treatments consistent with a protected intersection design. It provides for: countdown signals, high visibility crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, physical barriers separating bicycle lanes, curbed extensions protecting bicycle and pedestrian crossings, and dedicated lanes for transit. It is consistent with the lane alignments for Veirs Mill Road illustrated on Figure 13 from the corridor plan. Also, due to the grade separation, which eliminates Randolph thru traffic from light timing considerations, the number of left turn lanes from Veirs Mill road can likely be reduced to one lane for each turn as recommended in section 2.5.3: Street Network Recommendations. With incorporation of pedestrian refuge islands, the maximum number of lanes for a pedestrian to cross is reduced to a maximum of four.

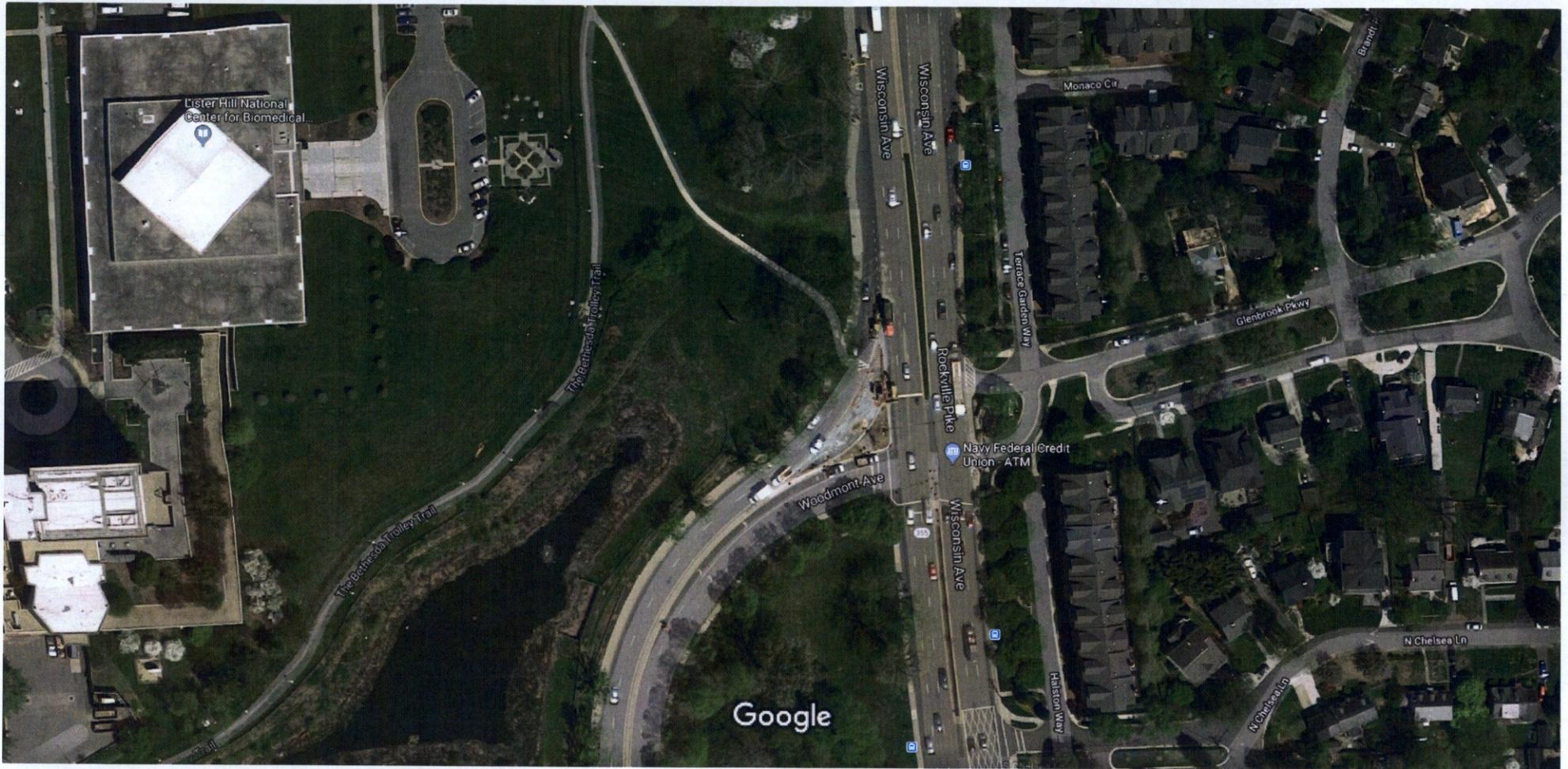
We respectfully request that this design be included in the plan in some fashion, if at the very least as an alternative intersection recommendation.



Imagery ©2019 Google, Map data ©2019 Google 50 ft

81

- Stella Werner Council Office Building ... rd Av ...
- 707 North Calvert Street Baltimore, MD



Imagery ©2019 Google, Map data ©2019 Google 50 ft

19

- Stella Werner Cour I Office Building W Av...
- 707 North Calver Street Baltimore, MD

## 1.7 Summary of Recommendations

**Table 1: Short-Term Recommendations Summary**

	Description	Category
1	Encourage continued community partnerships with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and Montgomery Housing Partnership.	Land Use
2	Implement short-term improvements on the Stoney Mill Square property by organizing existing uses to clarify vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and identifying potential areas where interim open space could be established to guide the ultimate open space configuration.	Land Use
3	Implement school speed zone on Veirs Mill Road between Galt Avenue and Connecticut Avenue.	Transportation
4	Prior to commencing construction of Montrose Parkway East, modify the project to include sidewalks, crosswalks and bikeways on Veirs Mill Road.	Transportation
5	Improve pedestrian infrastructure for the length of Veirs Mill Road and on residential streets that provide a connection between existing and proposed transit and to schools, parks and community facilities.	Transportation
6	Rebuild the pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Joseph's Branch Creek between Valleywood Drive and Moline Road.	Transportation
7	Develop an interim continuous bicycle network along Veirs Mill Road and parallel streets to provide a connection between existing transit and community uses.	Transportation
8	Improve access to and quality of existing bus stops.	Transportation
9	Expand the Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area boundary to include the area between Robindale Drive and the eastern plan boundary.	Transportation
10	Consider the elimination of the proposed interchange at Veirs Mill and Randolph Road from the <i>Master Plan of Highways and Transitways</i> . If such an interchange is constructed, it must be constructed in such a way that would not inhibit pedestrian, bicycle and transit accessibility. In addition it should minimize disruption to local businesses and homes.	Transportation
11	Support the alignment and implementation of the short-term alternative for the Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) bus rapid transit.	Transportation
12	Evaluate proposed BRT station locations to prioritize those that have proximity to higher density land uses, have potential for near-term redevelopment and provide improved access to community facilities.	Transportation
13	Explore opportunities to improve compliance with the existing bus- and right-turn only lanes, including strategies such as enhanced or illuminated signage, striping, colored pavement demarcating bus lanes, pavement material and automated speed enforcement.	Transportation
14	Introduce additional protected crossings that eliminate conflicts and have high rates of compliance.	Transportation
15	Improve the Matthew Henson Trail crossing by providing a protected crossing that eliminates conflicts and has a high rate of compliance, a direct crosswalk connection and additional pedestrian-scale lighting.	Parks / Transportation
16	Improve the visual presence of and connectivity to community destinations.	Civic

20

**Table 2: Long-Term Recommendations Summary**

	Description	Category
1	Preserve and maintain the existing residential scale and character.	Land Use
2	Retain the majority of existing multi-family residential development.	Land Use
3	Rezone select properties near the commercial center, Metrorail or future bus rapid transit stations to achieve variation in housing types.	Land Use
4	Rezone strategic properties adjacent to Veirs Mill Road to permit higher density residential uses near future bus rapid transit stations.	Land Use
5	Transform Veirs Mill Road into a multimodal complete street including dedicated lanes for bus rapid transit.	Transportation
6	Create a street type and design standards for high-quality transit corridors in residential communities through Montgomery County's Complete Streets Design Guide.	Transportation
7	Reduce target speeds on Veirs Mill Road.	Transportation
8	Add Veirs Mill Road as a Speed Camera Corridor as part of the Safe Speed Enforcement Program.	Transportation
9	Eliminate unsignalized left turns where feasible to improve safety of pedestrians and cyclists.	Transportation
10	Limit left turn lanes to a single lane where feasible at signalized intersections.	Transportation
11	Improve the lane continuity on Veirs Mill Road.	Transportation
12	Create additional street connections with long-term redevelopment to enhance connectivity and improve walkability.	Transportation
13	Provide a sidepath on the north side of Veirs Mill Road that transitions to two-way separated bicycle lanes and a sidewalk at areas with commercial land use. Provide a combination of two-way separated bicycle lanes, sidepaths and sidewalks on the south side of Veirs Mill Road. Provide bikeways on priority residential streets.	Transportation
14	Incorporate protected intersection treatments into the design and construction of street improvement projects.	Transportation
15	Remove the channelized right-turn lanes at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and Connecticut Avenue.	Transportation
16	Retrofit existing signalized intersections with the design and implementation of long-term redevelopment or infrastructure projects, such as BRT, to improve safety.	Transportation
17	Provide a grade-separated crossing at the Matthew Henson Trail.	Transportation / Parks
18	Create publicly accessible open space with long-term redevelopment.	Parks
19	Redesign Parklawn Local Park.	Parks
20	Provide a connection to Matthew Henson State Park from the east.	Parks
21	Provide an improved gateway to the Holiday Park Senior Center.	Civic
22	Consider opportunities to integrate evening programming for youth.	Civic
23	Increase tree canopy cover and diversity of tree species.	Environment
24	Minimize and mitigate impervious surfaces.	Environment
25	Reduce energy consumption and improve air quality.	Environment
26	Protect natural resources.	Environment

21

PHED Committee #2  
March 4, 2019

**MEMORANDUM**

February 28, 2019

TO: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee  
FROM: Pamela Dunn, Senior Legislative Analyst  
SUBJECT: Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan  
PURPOSE: Worksession to development recommendations for Council consideration

**Participants:**

Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Gwen Wright, Director, Montgomery Planning Department  
Carrie Sanders, Area 2 Chief, Montgomery Planning Department  
Jessica McVary, Planner Coordinator, Montgomery Planning Department  
Lisa Govoni, Housing Planner, Montgomery Planning Department

This is the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee's second worksession on the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan. A separate memorandum from Glenn Orlin addresses the transportation issues in the Plan. This memorandum addresses Master Plan issues that were included in the Staff report for the first worksession but not discussed. The first worksession covered land use and zoning recommendations for three of the four districts that make up the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan area: Newport Mill, Connecticut/Randolph, and Robindale. This report covers recommendations on land use and zoning for the Twinbrook District and on parks, trails and open space, the environment and public facilities. It also revisits the land use and zoning recommendation for the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site following the discussion of Gannon Road Extended. Testimony relevant to the report is attached on ©3-36.

**Councilmembers may wish to bring their copy of the Plan to the meeting.**

## PLAN GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Twinbrook District

The Twinbrook District extends from the Rock Creek crossing on Veirs Mill Road to the western Plan boundary along Twinbrook Parkway. The District is primarily characterized by the Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and multiple garden-style apartments constructed within a park-like setting. The sites within the Twinbrook District that are recommended for rezoning include the following garden apartment complexes: Rock Creek Woods, Halpine View, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet. These developments provide a source of market-affordable rental housing to the community. Rock Creek Woods and Halpine View provide market-affordable rental housing to households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income. Parkway Woods and Halpine Hamlet, which are owned and operated by the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) respectively, provide subsidized rental housing within the District. The Twinbrook District is positioned near existing and future transit, including the Twinbrook Metrorail Station and a future BRT station on Veirs Mill Road. Due to this proximity and the age of these units, the apartments in this area are susceptible to redevelopment. Maps 24, 25, and 26 on pages 101-103 show the existing zoning and the proposed zoning and land use for this district.

**Testimony (general):** The Council received testimony from the County Executive regarding his concern with rezoning the four multi-family properties in the Twinbrook District, citing potential displacement of residents and loss of market-affordable housing. The Council also received testimony from the Sierra Club, advocating for even greater density at each of the Plan's six BRT stations while also praising the Plan's emphasis on preserving existing market-affordable housing.

### Rock Creek Woods Apartments

Text in Master Plan: page 99

Map in Master Plan: page 102

Existing Zoning: R-20

Proposed Zoning: CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85

**Plan Recommendation:** The owners of the Rock Creek Woods Apartments have indicated that redevelopment of the property is highly likely due to the age of the buildings and challenges with the site's layout and utilities. The Plan recommends rezoning Rock Creek Woods from R-20 to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85 to allow redevelopment of higher-density residential uses near the future BRT station.

**Testimony:** The Council received testimony from Bullis Tract LLC, owners of the Rock Creek Woods Apartments, supporting the Plan's recommended rezoning of its property. The owners emphasized the need to renovate their property due to aging and deteriorating utility infrastructure.

With the redevelopment of Rock Creek Woods, the Plan recommends maximizing residential development with a minimal amount of commercial density to fulfill the requirements of the Optional Method of Development of the CRT zone. The Plan also recommends that any optional method project including residential units provide a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs, and that providing two- and three-bedroom units be a priority for public benefit points.

**Halpine View Apartments, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet**

Text in Master Plan: page 100

Map in Master Plan: page 102

Existing Zoning: R-30

Proposed Zoning: CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85

**Plan Recommendation:** The Plan recommends rezoning the remaining properties in the Twinbrook District to a Commercial/Residential zone to facilitate higher density residential development near existing and future transit. Specifically, the Plan recommends rezoning the Halpine View Apartments, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet from R-30 to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85.

For Halpine View<sup>1</sup>, like Rock Creek Woods, the Plan recommends maximizing residential development with a minimal amount of commercial density to fulfill the requirements of the Optional Method of Development of the CRT zone. The Plan also recommends that any optional method project, including residential units, provide a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs and provide five percent market-affordable units pursuant to a rental agreement with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) for 20 years. The Plan states that redevelopment must be phased to ensure maintenance and/or creation of a minimum of five percent market-affordable units. The Plan also requires that, under redevelopment, a range in unit sizes must be provided; at a minimum, 17.5 percent of all new units must be two- and three-bedroom units, which includes replacement of the 307 two- and three-bedroom units existing today.

In addition, the Plan covers recent actions regarding Aspen Hill Road Extended. Consistent with previous master plans, the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan supports the abandonment of Aspen Hill Road Extended, recommending that the County return the land to the property owner. Testimony received from the property owner's representative clarifies that the parcel was conveyed by a deed in fee simple (at no cost). As such, the Aspen Hill Road Extended parcel can only be disposed of through the County's disposition process. The County and Halpine View have not been able to agree on a fair value for the return of the parcel (even though it was originally conveyed at no cost). The property owner has requested that the parcel be returned in exchange for the requirement that Halpine View provide 30 percent of the dwelling units attributable to the density of the 1.9-acre parcel in the form of MPDUs.

**Testimony:** The Council received testimony regarding Halpine View Apartments from Bob Dalrymple, the property owner's representative. This testimony supports the Plan's proposed rezoning for Halpine View, as well as all the affordable housing and unit type recommendations. The testimony also supports numerous design recommendations for the site and advocates for the return of Aspen Hill Extended in exchange for increased MPDUs.

With respect to Parkway Woods and Halpine Hamlet, representatives from HOC and MHP (the owners and operators of these properties, respectively) informed Planning staff that both properties were recently renovated under a tax credit program that prevents redevelopment of these properties for 10-15 years.

**Testimony:** The Council received testimony from Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP), the developer of Halpine Hamlet Apartments, supporting the Plan's recommended rezoning of its property. MHP recognizes the potential for redevelopment to increase rental rates in the area – suggesting that the

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<sup>1</sup> The Plan appears to include Parkway Woods and Halpine Hamlet in the more specific recommendations for Halpine View; however, there is also property-specific reference to Halpine View that contradicts this intent. Staff believes the recommendations related to affordable housing only apply to Halpine View. The text should be clarified.

best way to address the loss in market-affordable units is for the County to aggressively seek to identify County-owned sites where affordable housing can be located.

**Council Staff Recommendation:** There are six multi-family apartment complexes in the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan area. Two are not recommended for rezoning (Village Square – Wheaton and Rock Creek Terrace). Two have recently been renovated under a tax credit program, making them ineligible for redevelopment for the next 10-15 years (Parkway Woods and Halpine Hamlet). Two complexes have requested rezoning to facilitate redevelopment due to the age of the units and infrastructure (Rock Creek Woods and Halpine View). Rock Creek Woods and Halpine View currently provide market-affordable housing to the community; however, none of the units are income restricted.

The Council has faced the issue of rezoning market-affordable housing in other recent master plans, such as Lyttonsville and White Flint 2. The primary concerns with rezoning are the loss in market-affordable units, the potential displacement of current residents, and the loss of two- and three-bedroom units prevalent in older garden-style structures. However, these developments, given their age, face several challenges such as systemic problems with water and sewer infrastructure and mechanical systems nearing the end of their useful life. Rock Creek Woods and Halpine View, both built more than 50 years ago, have testified to these problems.

One option would be to retain the current zoning on these properties. This would ensure no displacement of residents in the near term and no loss in two- or three-bedroom units; however, as systemic infrastructure and utility issues worsen over time, property owners will most likely be required to upgrade and renovate existing buildings, even without an increase in density. This may necessitate vacating buildings. Once upgraded, there is no guarantee these units would remain affordable to families at or below 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). Additionally, there are no MPDUs in Rock Creek Woods or Halpine View, and renovation without a change in density would not require them. Retaining the current zoning doesn't necessarily result in no change to the affordability or tenure of residents in these units over the life of the Plan.

A second option would be to rezone these properties in conjunction with requirements to provide MPDUs, retain market-affordable rents through an agreement with DHCA, and incentivize no loss in the number of two- and three-bedroom units. This is primarily what the Plan proposes, as described above.

A third option would be to split-zone these properties. This option would allow for the requirements associated with affordable housing to be implemented on the rezoned portion of the site during the redevelopment process. The portion of the site not rezoned would receive no increase in density; as such, any renovation or rehabilitation would not require MPDUs, retention of residents, or market-affordable rents. During the Planning Board worksessions on this Plan and during worksessions on the Lyttonsville Plan, the idea of split zoning was raised. In both Veirs Mill and Lyttonsville, it was decided (either by the Board or the Council) that the entire site should be rezoned. This would provide the property owner flexibility to redevelop all or part of the site, using the total density of the site to offset the cost of providing additional MPDUs, restricting rents on some units to a level affordable to residents earning less than 80 percent of AMI, and retaining/constructing the same number of two- and three-bedroom units available today.

**Council Staff supports the second option with modifications.** Staff supports the Plan recommendation for Rock Creek Woods to be rezoned from R-20 to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85. Staff also supports the recommendation that any optional method project including residential units provide a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs, and that providing two- and three-bedroom units be a priority for

public benefit points. Given a primary land use goal of the Plan is to preserve and enhance market-affordable housing, Staff recommends that, with redevelopment, five percent of the units be provided at market-affordable rents pursuant to a rental agreement with DHCA for 20 years.

Staff supports the Plan recommendation for Halpine View, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet to be rezoned from R-30 to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85. Staff also supports the recommendation that any optional method project including residential units provide a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs.

Staff recommends the following modifications to the other recommendations for Halpine View. According to CoStar data, for all new multi-unit developments in Montgomery County built between 2014 and 2018, the unit mix was 9% studios, 53% one-bedroom, 35% two-bedroom, and 4% three-bedroom. However, not all developments offer three-bedroom units: for new multi-unit developments in complexes that provided three-bedroom units, the mix was: 7% studios, 52% one-bedroom, 32% two-bedroom, and 9% three-bedroom. Requiring redevelopment of Halpine View to provide a minimum of 17.5 percent of all new units as two- and three-bedroom units is below what the market is currently providing. Today, 54% of the units in Halpine View are two- and three-bedroom units (44% two-bedroom, 10% three-bedroom). Staff recommends that, with redevelopment, a minimum of 20 percent of the units be provided as two-bedroom units, and five percent of the units be provided as three-bedroom units. This goes far above the number of these types of units available today while remaining conservatively below what the market is providing, on average.

In addition, given the increase in units available under the new zoning for Halpine View, Staff recommends 10 percent of the units be provided at market-affordable rents for 20 years and that redevelopment be phased to minimize the displacement of residents and ensure maintenance and/or creation of a minimum of 10 percent market-affordable units. Language should also be added to the Plan to ensure that priority would be given to existing residents for the units under rental agreement and the two- and three-bedroom units.

On ©1-2 are tables comparing the Plan recommendation with Options 1, 2, and 3 outlined above.

### **Parks, Trails and Open Space Goals and Recommendations (pages 59, 88, 98, 104)**

The *2017 Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan*, developed by the Department of Parks, serves as the planning policy for parks and recreation in Montgomery County. The PROS Plan suggests that each master plan include an open space system that addresses specific needs, including active recreation destinations; a central “civic green” urban park; an interconnected system of sidewalks and trails to connect parks and open spaces; and wooded areas to provide a sense of contact with nature.

The parks located within and near the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan area fulfill the need for active recreation destinations. The Plan area also includes prominent trails that enhance connectivity between parks and open spaces. The Rock Creek Stream Valley Park and the Matthew Henson State Park also offer wooded areas to put visitors in contact with nature. While the existing park, open space and trail network addresses many of the needs within the Plan area, the community noted that the Veirs Mill Plan area lacks a central “civic green” or open space for public gathering and community events.

**Plan Recommendations:** The Plan offers one corridor-wide recommendation related to parks, trails and open space to improve the visual presence of existing and future community destinations, such as parks,

trails, open space and community facilities within and adjacent to the Plan area through enhanced connections and wayfinding. **Council Staff supports this recommendation.**

The Plan also makes property-specific recommendations with respect to parks, trails and open space, providing details regarding the types of elements to include in each facility/location.

For Stonemill Square, Veirs Mill Village, and the Department of Recreation Administrative Office site, the Plan recommends creation of a public open space, similar to a neighborhood green urban park (as defined in the PROS Plan), when the property redevelops. For Stonemill Square, the public open space should be at least one acre in size. For Veirs Mill Village, the public open space should be at least a quarter-acre in size, and for the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site, the public open space should be at least half-acre in size.

In the Robindale District, the Plan recommends Parklawn Local Park be redesigned when Bus Rapid Transit and/or improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities are constructed. In the Twinbrook District, the Plan recommends that, with the redevelopment of Rock Creek Woods, a public open space totaling a minimum of 1.2 acres in size (to be divided between the two properties) be provided when the complex redevelops. With the redevelopment of Halpine View, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet, the Plan recommends that a paved trail connection to the new Twinbrook Trail connector to the Rock Creek Trail and public open space totaling a minimum of 4.5 acres in size (including at least three open spaces a minimum half-acre in size) be provided.

While the Plan envisions these properties redeveloping in a coordinated fashion, that may not occur. Council Staff suggests that, with the redevelopment of Halpine View, a paved trail connection to the new Twinbrook Trail connector to the Rock Creek Trail and public open space totaling a minimum of 3.75 acres in size (including at least three open spaces a minimum half-acre in size) be provided. With the redevelopment of Parkway Woods, public open space totaling a minimum of a quarter-acre in size should be provided, and with the redevelopment of Halpine Hamlet, public open space totaling a minimum of a half-acre in size should be provided. **Council Staff supports the property-specific recommendations for parks, trails and open spaces; however, the combined recommendation for Halpine View, Parkway Woods, and Halpine Hamlet should be separated into property-specific recommendations, as noted above.**

### **Environmental Goals and Recommendations (pages 60-61)**

The Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan is in the Rock Creek watershed and crosses five sub-watersheds: Veirs Mill Mainstream, Turkey Branch, Kengar, Joseph's Branch, and Kensington Branch. Most of the development in the corridor occurred before stormwater management regulations were established. The long-term goal of transforming Veirs Mill Road into a multimodal complete street with bus rapid transit offers opportunities to add green infrastructure such as street trees and stormwater management.

The Plan sets environmental goals that provide a basis for the Plan's recommendations. These goals include increasing tree canopy cover and diversity of tree species; improving water quality through stormwater management retrofits and impervious surface reduction; reducing energy consumption/increasing air quality; and protecting and improving natural resources. To achieve these goals, the Plan makes several recommendations.

**Plan Recommendations:** To increase tree-canopy cover, the Plan recommends incorporating street trees along Veirs Mill Road, using advanced planting techniques to increase the soil area for tree roots, and establishing a minimum 30 percent tree canopy cover for new or retrofitted surface parking areas.

**Council Staff supports these recommendations with one modification.** The Zoning Ordinance currently requires that each parking lot maintain a minimum tree canopy of 25 percent coverage. While a 5 percent increase in coverage may seem like a small increase, it is unclear whether this, in combination with significant stormwater management retrofits, would be feasible on every site. **Staff recommends adding “where feasible” to this requirement and allow for a case-by-case evaluation at the time of redevelopment.**

To minimize and mitigate stormwater run-off from paved, impervious surfaces, the Plan recommends encouraging compact development, reducing sediment load from existing development through stormwater management retrofits, and incorporating site-specific innovative stormwater management practices into the development of the BRT lanes and stations. These actions are all likely to occur through the development or redevelopment process and provide reasonable flexibility in their implementation. **Council Staff supports these recommendations.** The Plan also recommends retrofitting unused rights-of-way and private institutional and commercial properties with easements to provide stormwater retention facilities. Staff is not sure how this recommendation would be implemented. The Committee may want to ask Planning staff how they see this recommendation achieved.

To reduce energy consumption and increase air quality, the Plan recommends prioritizing safe pedestrian connections to existing and proposed transit, locating existing and proposed transit stops to provide safe access to communities on both sides of Veirs Mill Road, and working with private institutional and commercial property owners to promote shared parking facilities. **Council Staff supports these recommendations.**

**Testimony:** The Council received testimony from the Rock Creek Palisades Citizens Association advocating for improved air quality, greater stormwater management, and maintenance of tree cover in the Plan area. Wheaton Hills Civic Association also provided testimony to support improved stormwater management and protection of Joseph’s Run (the stream that flows into Wheaton-Claridge Park).

To protect and improve natural resources, the Plan recommends avoiding stream crossings and other impacts to natural resources as much as possible when altering or adding to the transportation network; enhancing and expanding existing natural areas with forest and tree plantings required by new development; and minimizing grading to preserve areas of steep slopes and highly erodible soils. **Council Staff supports these recommendations.**

### **Community Facilities Recommendations (pages 62-67)**

**Plan Recommendations:** The residents of the Veirs Mill Corridor Plan area are well-served by community facilities, including parks, trails, community centers, libraries and schools. The Plan does not recommend any new facilities but recommends improved connectivity between transit and existing facilities to strengthen, enhance, and promote these facilities and their services. The Plan also recommends improving the gateway to the Holiday Park Senior Center from Veirs Mill Road to enhance its visibility, integrating evening programming for youth should the facility modernization plans, as

recommended in the Recreation Facility Development Plan, be undertaken. **Council Staff supports these recommendations.**

The Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan area includes parts of the Downcounty Consortium of schools and three other MCPS high school clusters—Richard Montgomery, Rockville, and Walter Johnson. Tables 6 and 7 on page 65 of the Plan list all the schools in the Plan area and the projected enrollment impact of the Plan. Full build out of the Plan’s development potential is estimated to result in approximately 286 elementary students, 116 middle school students, and 162 high school students. It is estimated that build out of the Plan, requiring redevelopment of several properties, will take 20-30 years. During this timeframe school enrollment and student generation rates will fluctuate, making it impossible to precisely gauge the impact on schools. Nevertheless, the Planning Department will evaluate development applications for school adequacy against the available capacity identified through the Adequate Public Facilities annual school test.

Should the need arise to accommodate additional students as a result of this Plan, MCPS would determine if space is available at nearby schools within the cluster or in adjacent clusters; if not, an addition or additions would be considered. If capacity of existing schools (with additions) is insufficient, then opening a new school would be evaluated. A new school could be provided, either by reopening a former school site or as a newly-constructed facility. The Plan provides a detailed list of numerous former school sites within and near the Plan area. In addition, it is noted that MCPS is currently planning for a significant addition to Northwood High School and is planning for the reopening of Woodward High School. Both facilities will provide high school capacity to the Plan area. The Plan’s recommendation with respect to school facilities is to ensure options for providing adequate student enrollment capacity within the Richard Montgomery Cluster and the Downcounty Consortium, particularly at the high school level. **Council Staff supports this recommendation.**

## **Connecticut/Randolph District**

### **Department of Recreation Administrative Office**

Text in Master Plan: page 83

Map in Master Plan: page 84

Existing Zoning: R-60

Proposed Zoning: CRN1.0 C0.0 R1.0 H65

**Plan Recommendation:** The Plan recommends rezoning the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site from R-60 to CRN1.0 C0.0 R1.0 H65 to allow the construction of medium density residential development near the commercial center. Rezoning to CRN with a residential density of 1.0 would allow approximately 110 townhouses, 200 multi-family units, or some combination to be built on this site.

**Testimony:** The Council received testimony from Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) suggesting this County-owned property should be used to its maximum potential to provide affordable housing in this area. MHP questioned its ability, as an affordable housing developer, to construct Gannon Road Extended. The Committee deferred recommendation on this site until its review of the transportation recommendations.

**Council Staff supports the Master Plan zoning recommendation for this property, but would modify the language on pages 83 and 87 of the Plan, respectively, as follows:**

“The Plan recommends rezoning the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site from R-60 to CRN1.0 C0.0 R1.0 H65 to allow the construction of ~~medium-density~~ residential development near the commercial center.”

“Redevelopment on this cluster should deliver a mix of uses near the corner of Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road, and transition to residential uses compatible with the ~~single-family residential scale toward the south and east~~ neighborhood along Bushey Drive.”

**Table 1**

		<b>Planning Board</b>	<b>Option 1- No Change in Zoning</b>	<b>Option 2 – Council Staff Recommendation</b>	<b>Option 3 (n/a)</b>		
<b>Rock Creek Woods</b>	Units	525	269	525			
	MPDUs	79	0	79			
	Guaranteed Market Affordable <sup>1</sup>	0	0	26			
	MPDUs + Market-Affordable	79	0	105			
	% Existing Units Guaranteed Affordable	29%	100% (not guaranteed)	39%			
		<b>Planning Board</b>	<b>Option 1- No Change in Zoning</b>	<b>Option 2 – Council Staff Recommendation</b>	<b>Option 3 – Split Zone the Site</b>		
<b>Halpine View<sup>2</sup></b>	Units	1880	564	1880	R-30	282	CRT 990
	MPDUs	282	0	302		0	168
	Guaranteed Market Affordable <sup>1</sup>	94	0	188		0	50
	MPDUs + Market-Affordable	376	0	490		0	218
	% Existing Units Guaranteed Affordable	67%	100% (not guaranteed)	87%		100% (not guaranteed)	22%

Planning Board: Rezone to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85, require 15% MPDUs, 5% Guarantee Market-Affordable Rents for Halpine View

Option 1: No change in zoning

Option 2: Rezone to CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85, 15% MPDUs, Guarantee Market-Affordable Rents 5% Rock Creek Woods, 10% Halpine View

Option 3: Split Zone Halpine View – Retain R-30 half the site, CRT other half (require 15% MPDU, 5% Guaranteed Market-Affordable)

<sup>1</sup> Market-Affordable – Affordable for Families Earning < 80% Area Median Income

<sup>2</sup> Options 2 and 3 include 30% MPDUs on Aspen Hill Rd Extended

①

**Table 2**

Halpine View	Existing	Planning Board	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	
					R-30	CRT
<b>Total Units</b>	564	1880	564	1880	282	990
<b>Two Bedrooms Units</b>	250	250	250	376	125	198
<b>Three Bedroom Units</b>	57	57	57	94	27	50
<b>Change in Two- and Three-Bedrooms</b>	0	0	0	163	0	96

**Planning Board:** Require 17.5% of total units must be two- and three-bedroom, at a minimum replacing existing 307 two- and three-bedroom units  
**Option 1:** No rezoning; no loss in two- and three-bedroom units less redevelopment without additional units or renovation – no loss not guaranteed  
**Option 2:** Require 20% two-bedroom units, and 5% three-bedroom units  
**Option 3:** Split zoned (half site remains R-30, other rezoned to CRT); R-30 portion – no loss in units, CRT portion apply 20% and 5% requirements

Good evening. Greg Ossont testifying on behalf of County Executive Elrich.

The County Executive is pleased to see that the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan recognizes the diversity of the master plan area, with its majority-minority demographic and a varying range of income levels. He also applauds the Plan's strong support of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

The Executive wants to focus on two major elements of the Plan: one is the importance of pedestrian, cycling, and auto safety along the corridor; the other is maintaining affordable rental housing opportunities for the hundreds of residents of the area below the 60% AMI range.

He has two major concerns: one is the very significant costs of the public safety projects recommended in the plan; the other is the likely displacement of current residents and a net loss of affordable housing for a population already burdened by rental housing costs.

The 15 pedestrian incidents since 2015 that seriously injured 9 people and resulted in 6 fatalities is simply unacceptable, and the Executive wants to take steps to address this horrific situation. Given the county's fiscal constraints, the Executive asks that you separately identify and prioritize short-term safety improvements so that we can begin to budget for the most critically needed near-term solutions.

As many of you already know, the County Executive has made clear that fundamental to any successful strategy to increase affordable housing is preservation of market-rate affordable housing. He has tasked DHCA with developing innovative options for creating and maintaining housing affordability and family-sized apartments without assuming that older garden style apartments or other naturally occurring affordable housing must be torn down and redeveloped.

That is why he is concerned about the Plan's recommendation to rezone the four multifamily properties in the Twinbrook District. These currently provide almost 1,000 rental units, including many 2- and 3-bedroom apartments with rents that range from a low of \$746 for a studio apartment to a high of \$1,985 for a 4-bedroom unit. And according to data provided by CountyStat (see attached document), about 45% of the residents in this area are below the 200% of the federal government's poverty level, (which is \$51,500 for a family of four) and about half of the residents are rent-burdened.<sup>1</sup> Viewed through a racial equity lens, this plan threatens to reduce available affordable housing in an area where approximately 80% of the population is nonwhite.

These concerns have raised questions for the County Executive: If you rezone these properties, how many units will the redeveloped sites provide? What is the net loss in the number of units that now serve this population? How many residents will be displaced and never come back? For the Twinbrook district, the Plan calls for 15% MDPUs, 5% "market-rate affordable" units (which disappear after 20 years), and "a minimum 17.5% of two- and three-bedroom units"<sup>2</sup> – there is not enough information here to really understand what the end results will be, although it will most

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<sup>1</sup> Rent burdened is defined as paying more than 30% of household income for rent.

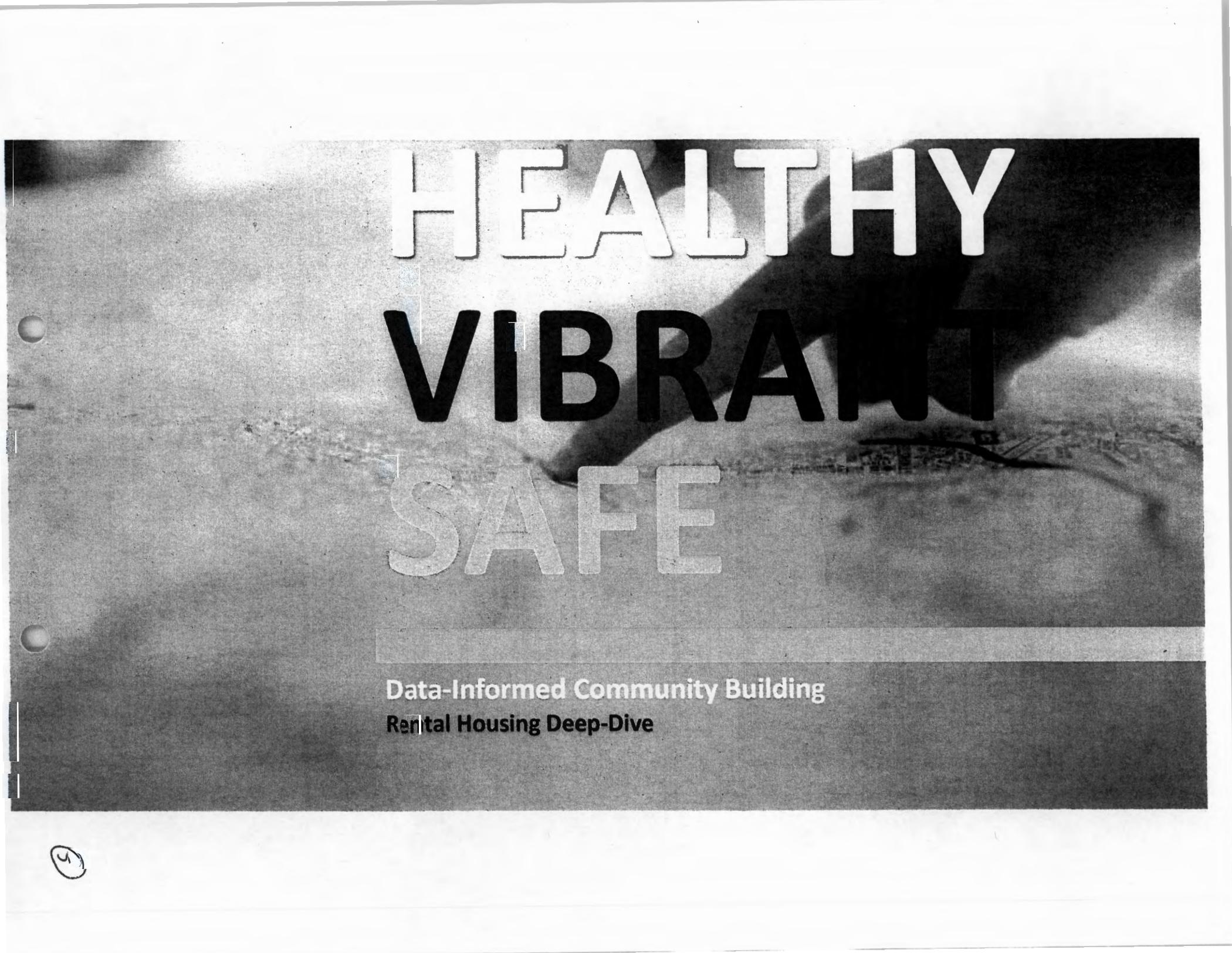
<sup>2</sup> Page 100 of the Planning Board Draft of the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan

certainly mean fewer truly affordable units appropriate for families. Concern about the "missing middle" in the housing market must not over-ride the need for maintaining and expanding housing for the working poor. The plan as currently presented threatens to reduce the existing stock of available family-size apartments. Not only, is there is no requirement to replace the existing number of 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom units, there is no requirement to expand beyond what exists now. In other words, this plan threatens to increase the affordable housing crisis. The Executive urges you to address the growing affordability gap by preserving the existing unit mix and rents and increasing the supply for the most vulnerable in the rental housing market.

Briefly, on other subjects, the Plan recognizes that opportunities for environmental enhancements are not limited to redevelopment or expensive transportation related capital improvements. The Executive encourages strong language that supports environmental enhancements to existing neighborhoods and the County's parks and open spaces as a means of reducing flooding in the Turkey Branch area and improving the quality of life for the Veirs Mill Corridor communities.

Finally, the Executive asks for more time to weigh in on the proposed rezoning of the two county-owned sites near the commercial core of the Connecticut/Randolph District (currently occupied by the Department of Recreation administrative offices, a surface parking lot, and a small playground).

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. The Executive branch looks forward to participating in the upcoming work sessions.



**HEALTHY**

**VIBRANT**

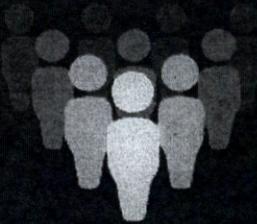
**SAFE**

**Data-Informed Community Building**  
**Rental Housing Deep-Dive**

## POPULATION

Montgomery County is the most populous county in Maryland and is home to 1,058,810 residents. Most of these residents live in unincorporated areas within the County.

*Montgomery County has grown an estimated 89% since 2010*



## INCOME

Montgomery County is one of the most prosperous counties in the US with a median household income of \$103,178. The Median Home Value is \$467,500.

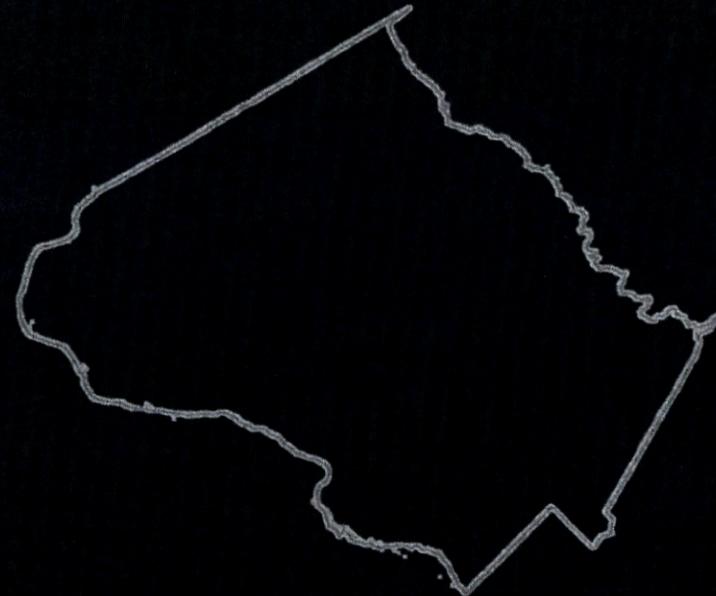
*#17 highest median household income among all US counties*



## EDUCATION

Montgomery County is one of most educated counties in United States. 58.3% of Resident have attained a Bachelors degree and 31.6% have attained a post graduate degree.

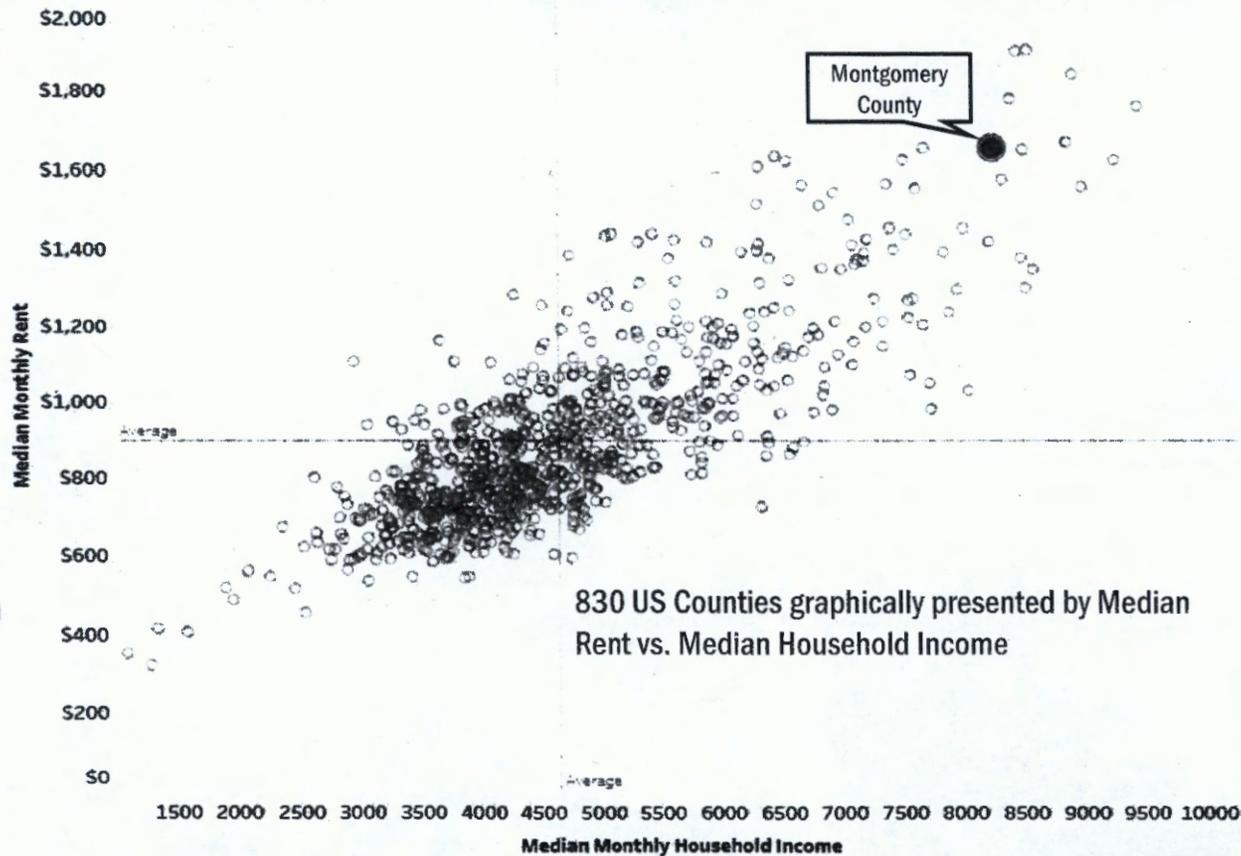
*#7 highest in percent attaining post-graduate degree among US counties*



**Montgomery County, Maryland**

# Rental Housing Market

## Overview of Rental Housing



### Summary Data

**Estimated Renter Occupied Units  
126K or 34.4%**

**Renter Housing Burdened  
51.1%**

**75% of Units Reside in:  
Silver Spring, Rockville, Gaithersburg, &  
Bethesda**

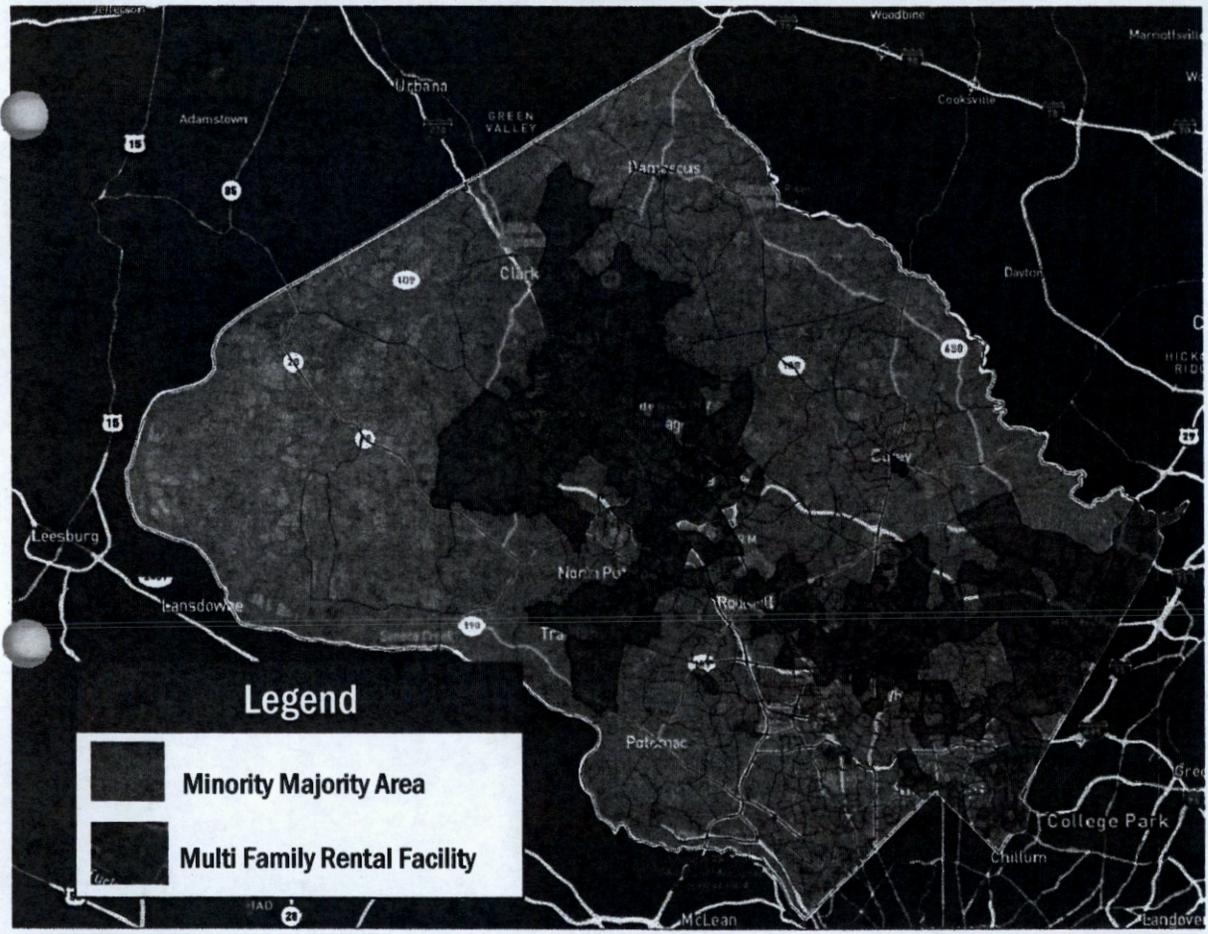
**Average 2 Bedroom Rent:  
\$1,714/month**

### Source

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5yr estimates DP04 2016  
Montgomery County Rental Survey 2018

# Demographics of the County

## Census Block Groups that are Majority Non-White Hispanic



### Overview

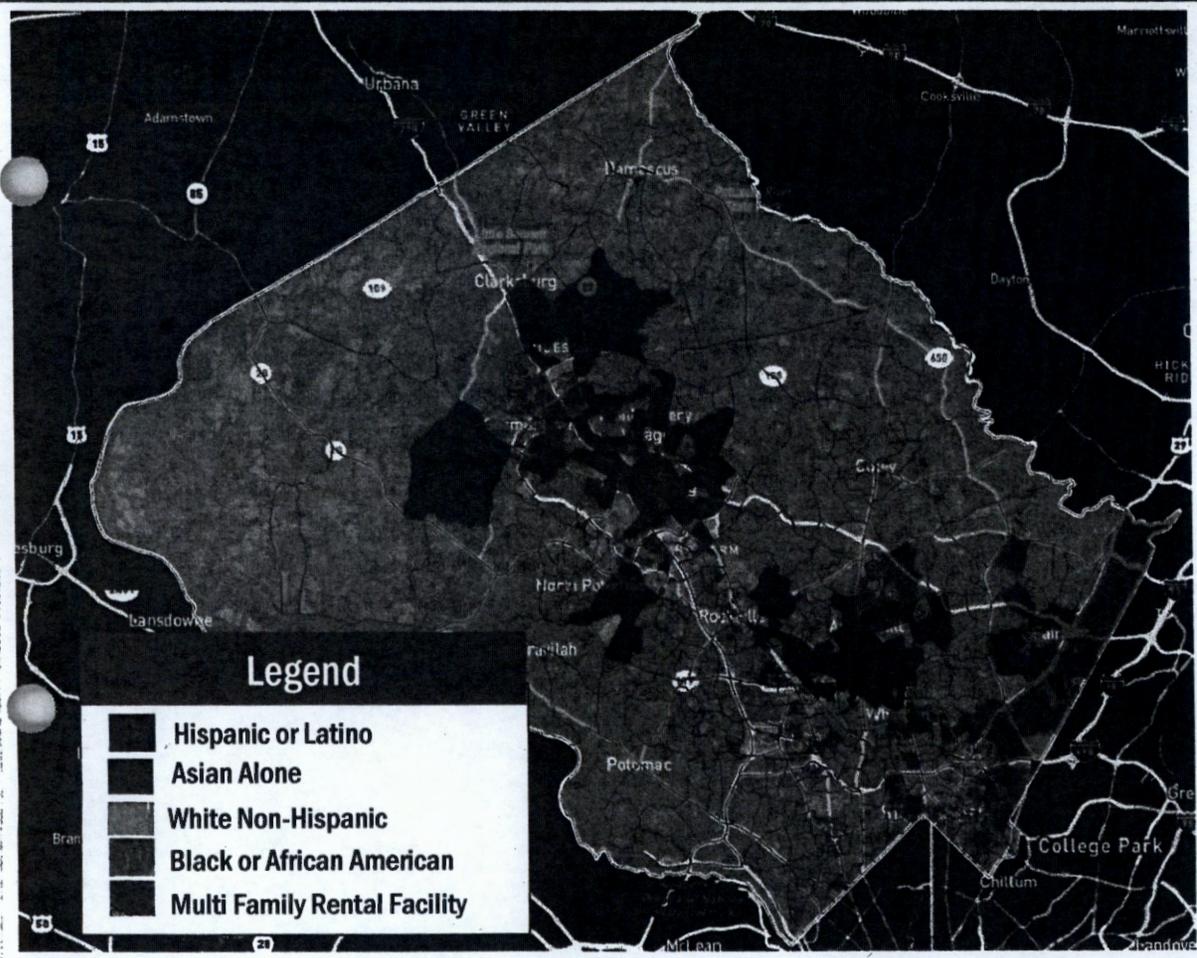
**A Diverse County**  
**304 of the County's 614 Census**  
**Block Groups are Minority**  
**Majority**

**Renters are Diverse**  
**An estimated 70% of the**  
**County's renters live within these**  
**Minority Majority Census Tracts**



# Demographics of the County (cont.)

## Census Block Groups by the Plurality Race



### Overview

#### Disparities Across Ownership

**Black or African American**  
**37.2k of the 65k Black or African American-Headed**  
**Households are Renters (57%)**

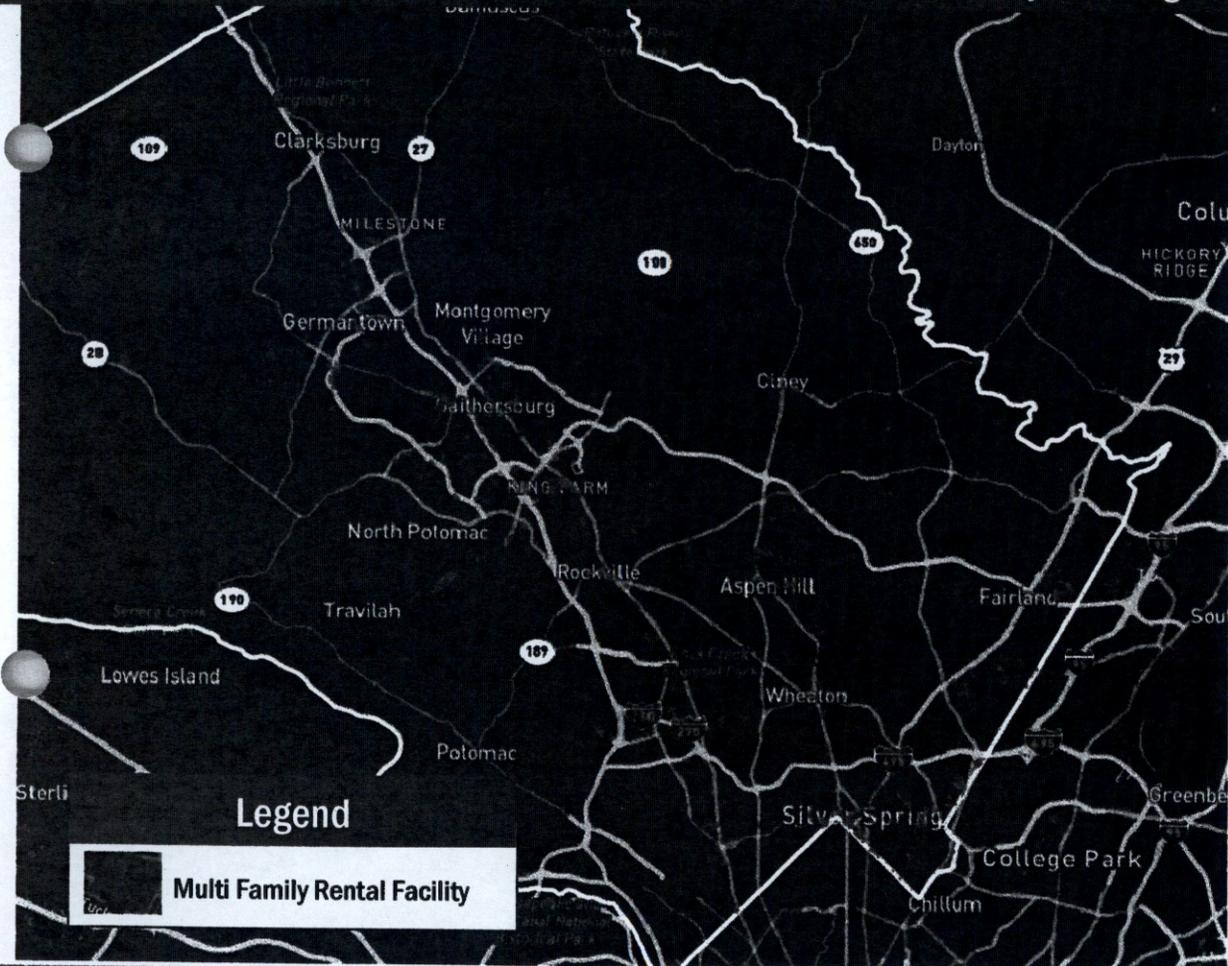
**Hispanic or Latino**  
**25.3k of the 49.7k Hispanic or Latino-Headed**  
**Households are Renters (51%)**

**White Alone**  
**48.3k of the 196.2k White Alone-Headed**  
**Households are Renters (25%)**

9

# Rental Housing Market

## All Multi-Family Buildings



### Overview

- 80-90K rental units are licensed by DHCA each year as licensed multi-family facilities.
- Another 30-40K+ units reside in private condominium/townhouse/single-family rentals and “grey-market” rentals that go unlicensed.
- Municipal Multi-Family Facility data that is not administrated by DHCA may be less accurate than rental facility data in our purview.

### Notes/Source

Source: Montgomery Planning Department



# Deep Dive into High Density Renter Communities (HDRC)

data-driven performance ▪ strategic governance ▪ government transparency ▪ culture of accountability



# Deep-Dive Analysis

## Purpose

**Purpose:** The purpose of this analysis is to take a deep-dive look into high-density rental communities (HDRCs) in the County to identify community characteristics and possible objective indicators of distress. The following analysis will use multiple datasets to provide a holistic view into the demographics, fiscal, and physical characteristics of specific rental communities.

# Deep-Dive Analysis

## Methodology

**STEP 1: Import All Rental Facilities  
Units >4**



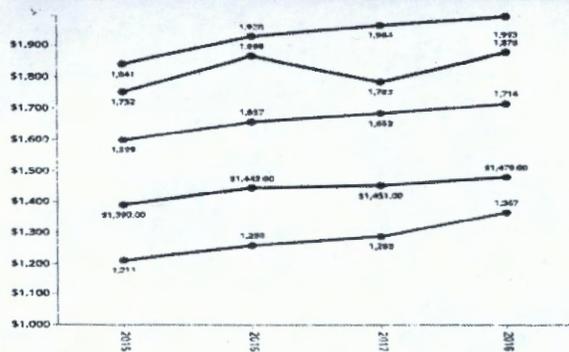
**STEP 2: Create Buffers 250 meters to  
produce high density rental communities**  
(Approximately from the EOB to Starbucks or 2.25 Football Fields)



**STEP 3: Filter Out any HDRC's that are less  
than 400 units & manually group where  
necessary**



**STEP 4: Join in Rental Survey Information and  
Code Enforcement data**



**STEP 5: Join by location HDRC's and census  
blockgroup Information for contextual  
demographic information**

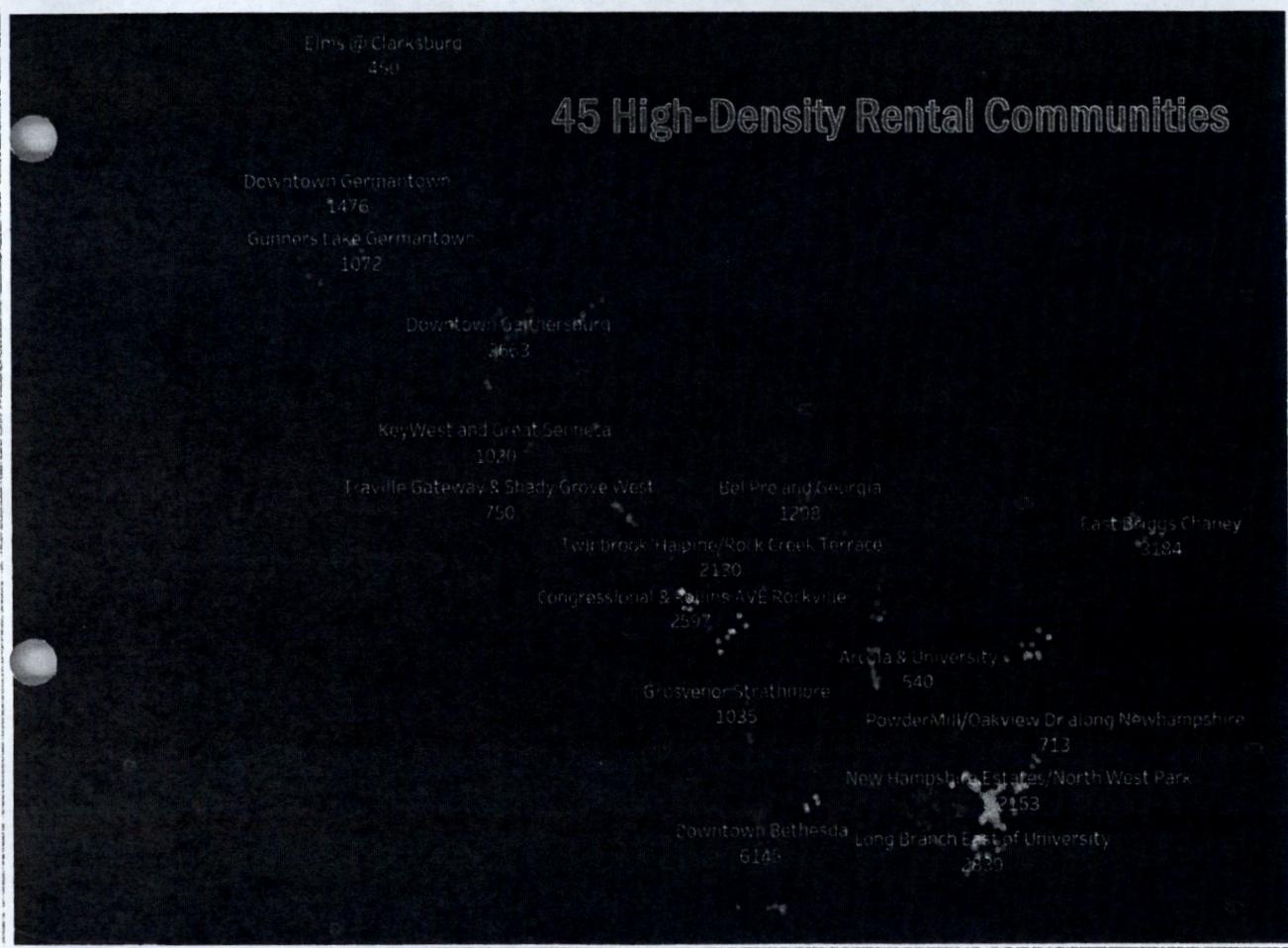


**STEP 6: Join by location HDRC's and  
Crime Data for further contextual insight**



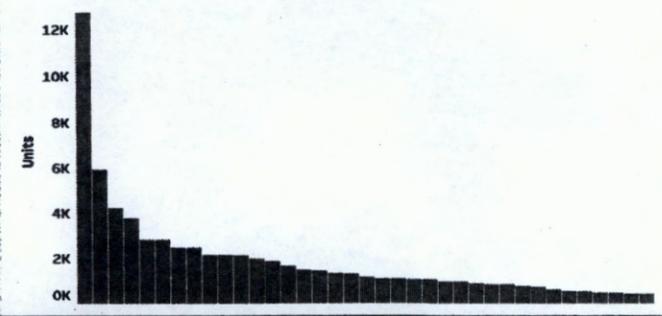
# Deep-Dive Analysis

## Output



## Overview

- The steps on the previous slide provide us with an objective way of defining HDRCs
- The product of these steps generate 45 communities ranging from 400-13,131 in Downtown Silver Spring.
- Median Units= 969 Units



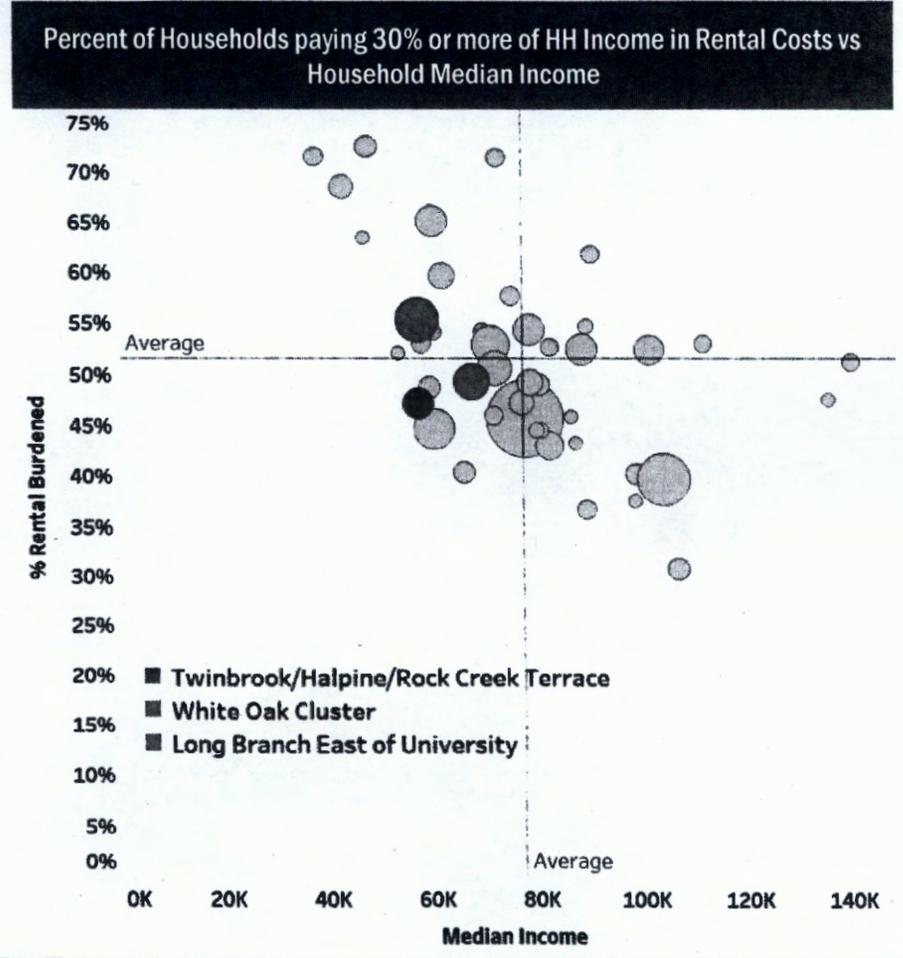
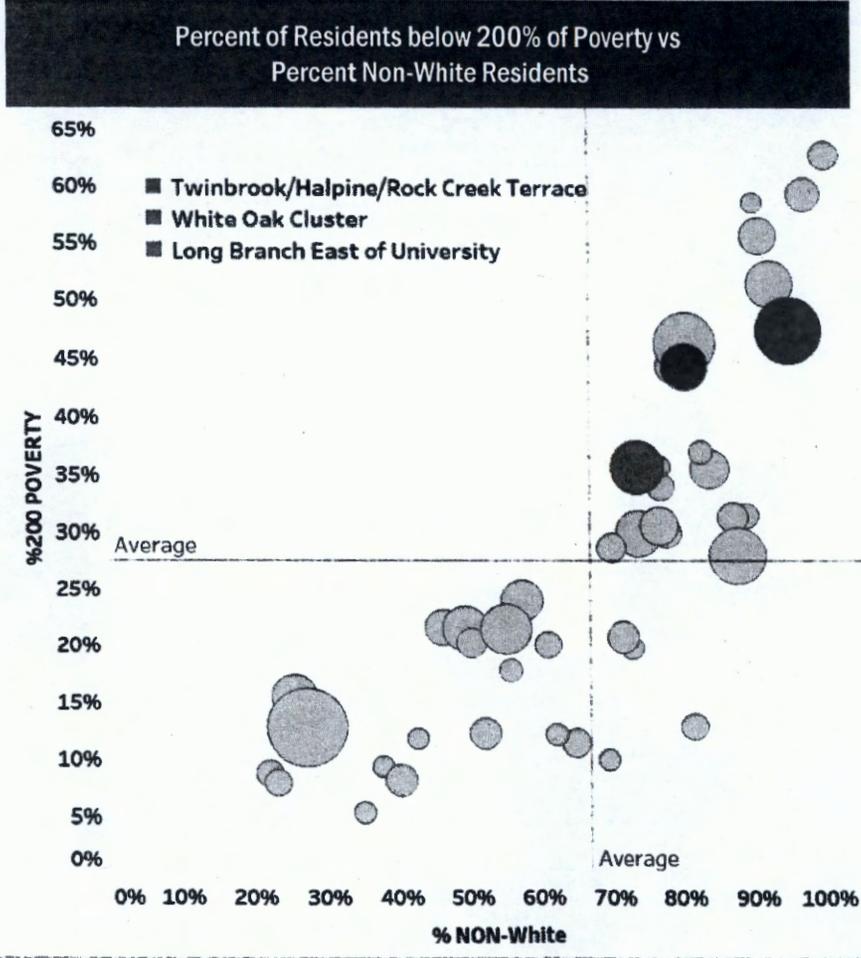
## Notes/Source

**Source:** MCG Department of Housing and Community Affairs  
**Note:** Please find the 3 manual alterations in the Appendix, Municipalities TP, Rockville, Gaithersburg may have less accurate than rental facilities administrated by DHCA.

14

# Deep-Dive Analysis

## 45 HDRCs by insightful data points



15

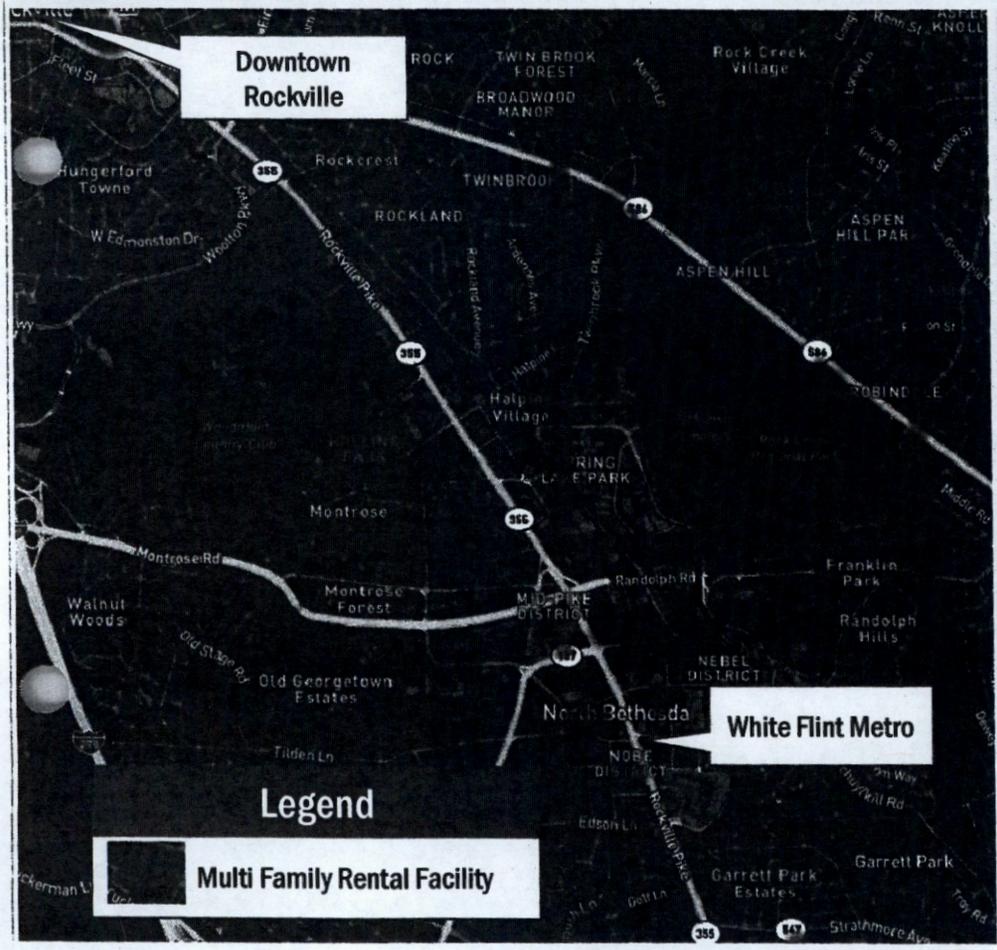


# Priority HDRCs

data-driven performance ▪ strategic governance ▪ government transparency ▪ culture of accountability

# Priority HDRCs

## Twinbrook/Halpine/Rock Creek Terrace



### Cluster: Twinbrook/Halpine/Rock Creek Terrace

Facilities: 7  
 Units: 2,130 (304.3 unit avg)  
 Violations per 100 Units (FY17&FY18): 12.4

1 Bedroom Avg Rent: \$1,255  
 2 Bedroom Avg Rent: \$1,430

5

# Priority HDRCs

## Twinbrook/Halpine/Rock Creek Terrace: Demographics



Note: All demographic information is presented as a representation of the HDRC's surrounding community. Demographic information and crime data are aggregated figures of each HDRC's corresponding census block groups (shown in blue above).

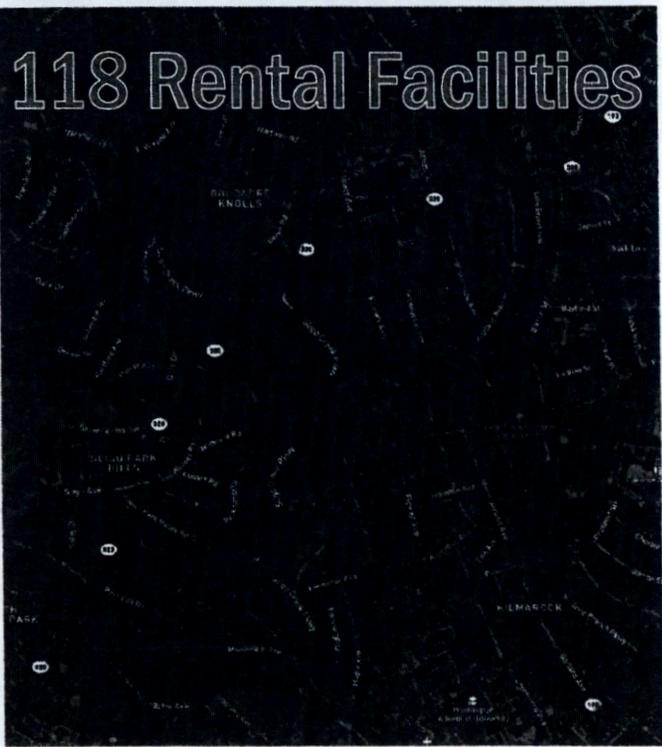
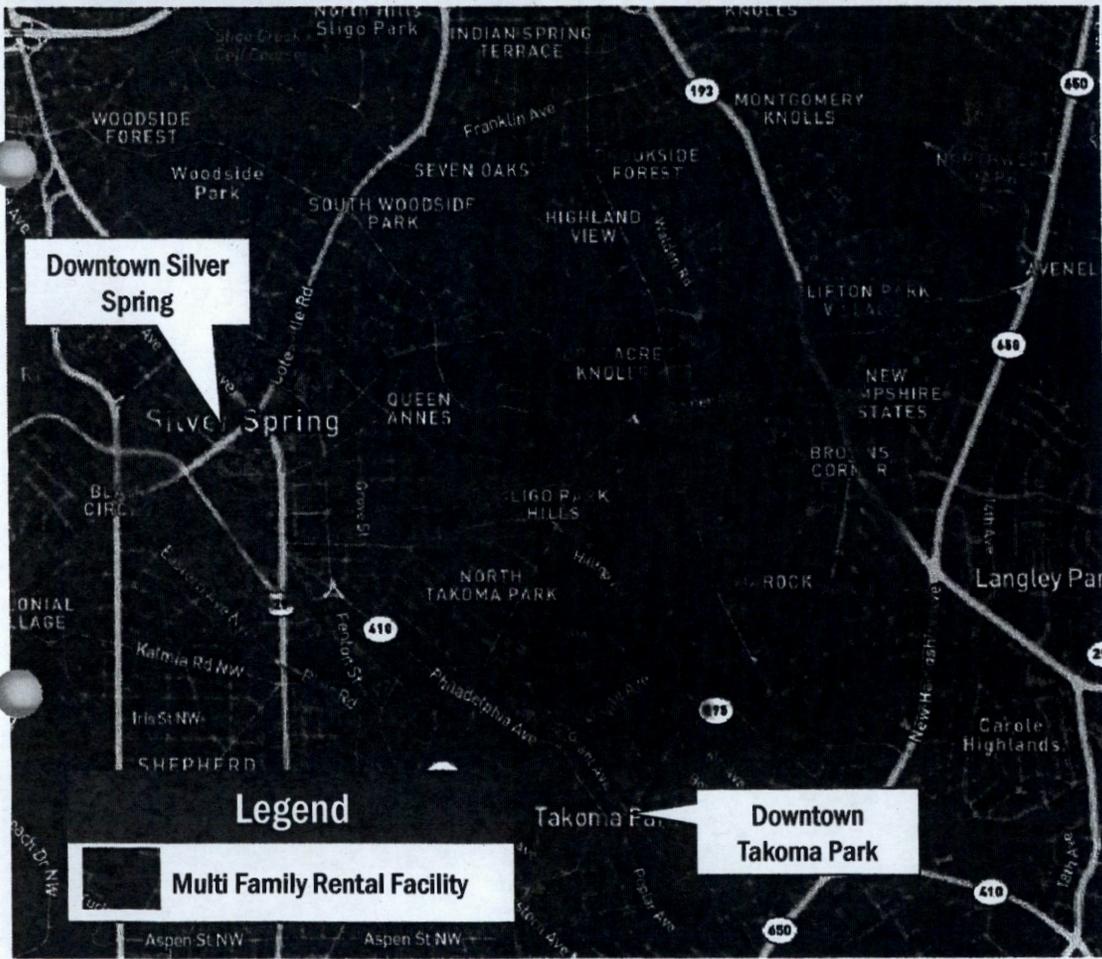
### Cluster: Twinbrook/Halpine/Rock Creek Terrace

Variable	Value	Rank among 45 HDRCs
% Rental Burdened Households	47%	31
Median Income	\$57,230	39
% At or Below 100% of Poverty	16%	11
% At or Below 200% of Poverty	44%	9
% Black	24%	21
% Hispanic	33%	13
% Non-White	80%	15
% Foreign Born*	53%*	
% LEP HH	19%	8
Crime per Capita 10K	291	29

\* Census Tract level aggregation

18

Long Branch East of University



**Cluster: Long Branch East of University**

<b>Facilities:</b> 118	<b>1 Bedroom Avg Rent:</b> \$1,069
<b>Units:</b> 2,828 (23.9 unit avg)	<b>2 Bedroom Avg Rent:</b> \$1,314
<b>Violations per 100 Units (FY17&amp;FY18):</b> 95.5	

19

# Priority HDRCs

## Long Branch East of University: Demographics



Note: All demographic information is presented as a representation of the HDRC's surrounding community. Demographic information and crime data are aggregated figures of each HDRC's corresponding census block groups (shown in blue above).

### Cluster: Long Branch East of University

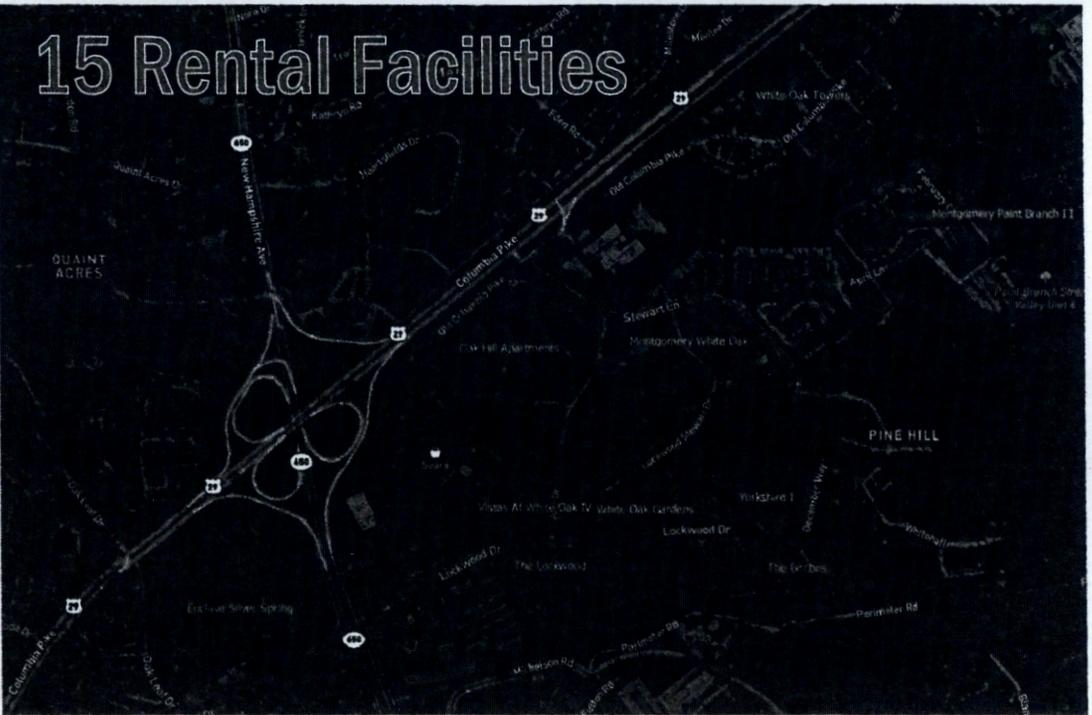
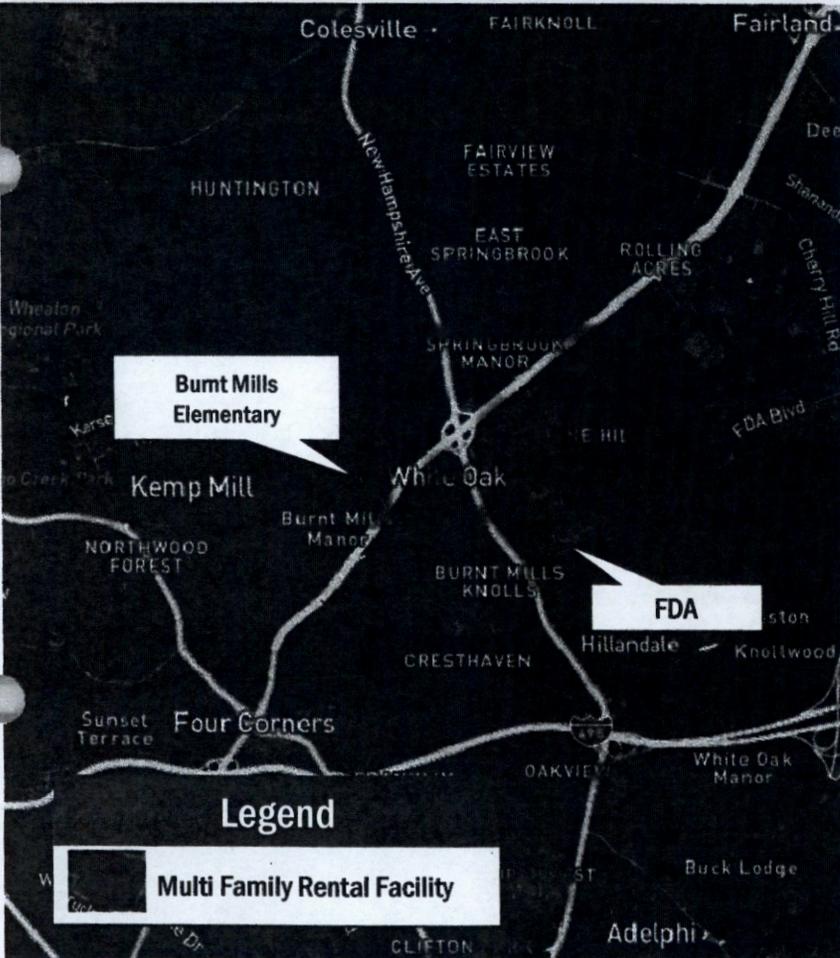
Variable	Value	Rank among 45 HDRCs
% Rental Burdened Households	49%	25
Median Income	\$67,337**	30
% At or Below 100% of Poverty	15%	14
% At or Below 200% of Poverty	36%	12
% Black	25%	19
% Hispanic	40%	8
% Non-White	74%	22
% Foreign Born	38%*	
% LEP HH	17%	11
Crime per Capita 10K	393	23

\* Census Tract level aggregation \*\* weighted average of 10/11 block groups 16

20

# Priority HDRCs

## White Oak Cluster



### Cluster: White Oak

Facilities: 15  
 Units: 4,239 (283 unit avg)  
 Violations per 100 Units (FY17&FY18): 55.4

1 Bedroom Avg Rent: \$1,346  
 2 Bedroom Avg Rent: \$1,538

21

# Priority HDRCs

## White Oak Cluster: Demographics



Note: All demographic information is presented as a representation of the HDRC's surrounding community. Demographic information and crime data are aggregated figures of each HDRC's corresponding census block groups (shown in blue above).

### Cluster: White Oak Cluster

Variable	Value	Rank among 45 HDRCs
% Rental Burdened Households	55%	11
Median Income	\$57,143	40
% At or Below 100% of Poverty	16%	13
% At or Below 200% of Poverty	47%	6
% Black	61%	2
% Hispanic	26%	17
% Non-White	95%	3
% Foreign Born	42%*	
% LEP HH	7%	27
Crime per Capita 10K	603	13

\* Census Tract level aggregation

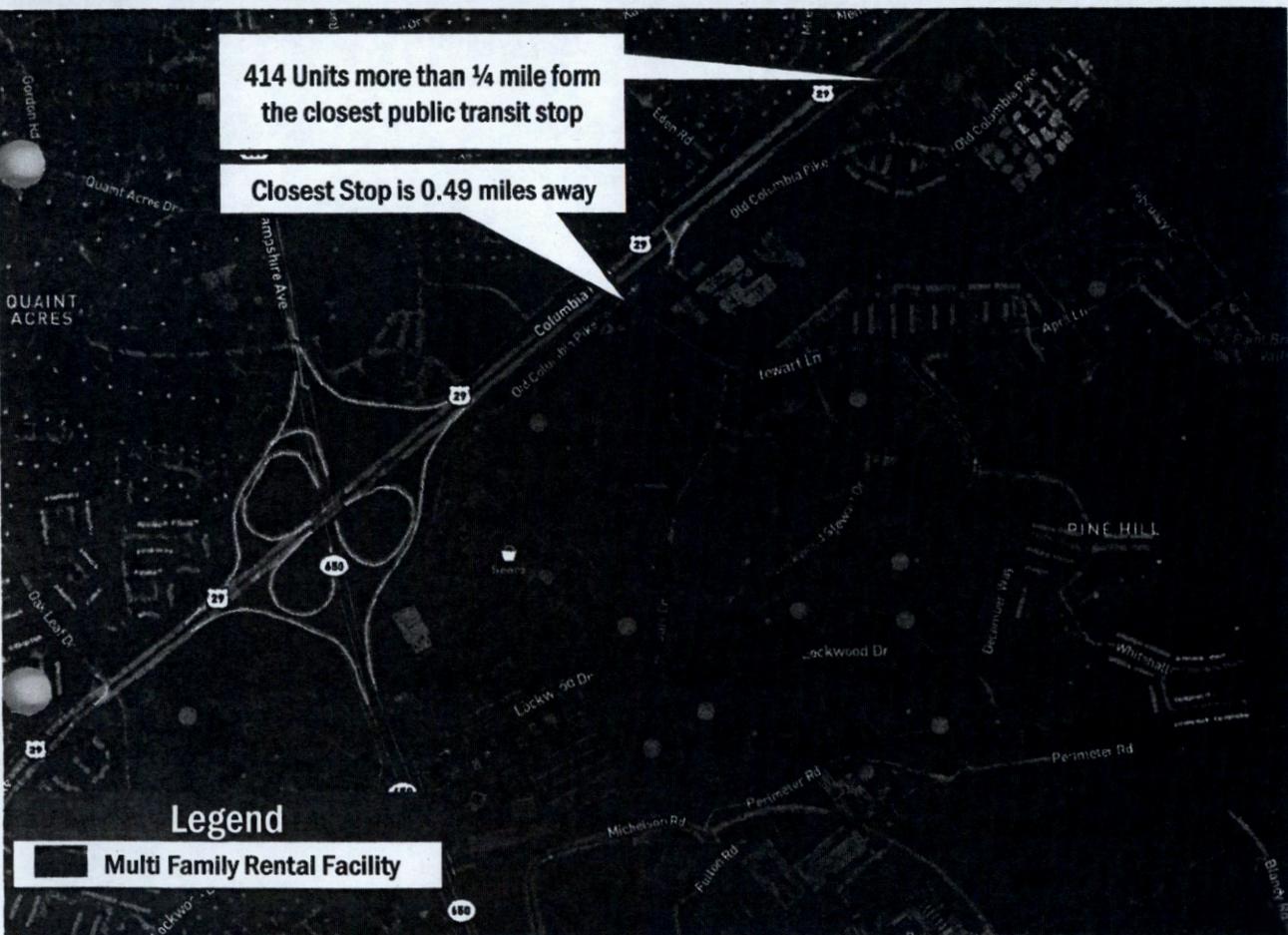
22

# Public Transit Access: White Oak Cluster

Accessibility to Public Transit on SUNDAYS (lowest frequency day of the week)

414 Units more than 1/4 mile from the closest public transit stop

Closest Stop is 0.49 miles away



## Source/Note

- **Note:** Shown are the White Oak Cluster Households that are disconnected from public transportation on weekends(Sundays).
- **Source:** Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

## Legend

### Single-Family Transit Accessible Residences by Trip Frequency

10 150+

Single-Family Households **outside** 1/4 mile from Public Transit

- Active Bus Stops on Sunday
- Multi-Family Property **outside** of 1/4 mile of public transit access point
- Multi-Family Property **inside** 1/4 mile of public transit access point

23

**Sierra Club testimony to MoCo Council**

**On Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan**

**February 7, 2019**

Good evening! I'm Tina Slater, Transportation Chair of the MoCo group of Sierra Club, standing in for our Chair, Dave Sears, who is unable to attend this rescheduled hearing.

Overall, we are pleased and impressed with the current draft of this important plan.

Sierra Club's starting point in our review of such plans is – How will this plan help to address Climate Change? – which is the number one environmental issue facing our community and our planet.

In MoCo, one important way to address climate change is to work hard to give residents and workers more and better opportunities to get where they want and need to go without getting in the car and driving. This plan is consistent with that approach. The stated transportation goals (page 31) are commendable – “a safe, efficient and comfortable complete street that serves pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists.”

We applaud the focus on improving pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure.

We urge the Council to bring BRT to Veirs Mill Road as quickly as possible. And be sure that BRT includes dedicated lanes – without dedicated lanes, the R (for Rapid) is false advertising. A truly rapid BRT is the core of this plan; without BRT, the rest of the plan falls apart.

We know that this corridor is a state highway; and thus the State Highway Administration will need to be a willing partner in several aspects of plan implementation. Please let Sierra Club know where you think we could be helpful in urging SHA to do the right things to ensure plan success.

A second important way that MoCo can address climate change is to take full advantage of transit stations as locations for mixed use, mixed income, attractive, high density neighborhoods. Here we think the plan is too timid. Don't get us wrong – we are not suggesting that the BRT stop at the corner of Veirs Mill and Randolph should have Bethesda-level densities. But we do think it's imperative that the county take full advantage of our investment in a shiny new BRT by providing many more BRT customers who can easily walk to the BRT stations. These higher density neighborhoods at each of the corridor's six BRT stations will also make great locations for affordable housing (MPDUs, and other) – enabling many lower income families to have access to first rate transit. <sup>ADUS</sup>

And speaking of housing – we applaud the plan's emphasis on the preservation of existing market-rate affordable housing.

In all, this is a good plan. We think it could be made even better with a stronger push for higher density neighborhoods within walking distance of each of the six new BRT stations.

And I repeat – a truly rapid BRT is the core of this plan. Let's get the Veirs Mill BRT designed and in place as quickly as possible. And let's be sure that it's running in dedicated lanes, so that it's truly rapid.

LYNOTT, LYNOTT & PARSONS, P. A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

11 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

SUITE 220

JOSEPH A. LYNOTT, III  
JAMES L. PARSONS, JR.  
JOSEPH A. LYNOTT (1928 – 2018)

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[jlynott@LLPlawfirm.com](mailto:jlynott@LLPlawfirm.com)

January 25, 2019

Hon. Nancy Navarro  
Council President  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
[countycouncil@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:countycouncil@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Re: Rock Creek Woods Apartments and the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan

Dear Ms. Navarro and members of the council:

I am a member of Bullis Tract LLC, a family-owned entity t/a Rock Creek Woods Apartments ("RCW"), which owns a 270 unit garden apartment complex located at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Parkway. On behalf of RCW, I am writing in support of the recommendation of the Montgomery County Planning Board in its draft of the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan to rezone its property from R-20 (multiple family, medium density) to CRT-1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-85.

The RCW property consists of two parcels totaling 12.21 acres at the northern gateway of the Veirs Mill Corridor located on the southeast and southwest corners of the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Parkway (see Exhibit "A"). The property is immediately adjacent to the proposed Twinbrook Bus Rapid Transit Station recommended in the Countywide Transit Corridor's Functional Master Plan (2013). The southern portion of the property lies within three quarters of a mile of the Twinbrook Metro Station. The property is adjacent to Rock Creek Park to its east and the City of Rockville, with its concentration of neighborhood-serving retail uses, to the north.

The project consists of nine garden apartment buildings constructed in mid-1960s with a total of 270 units. The property is encumbered by two tributaries of Rock Creek and the eastern portion of the property has a sharply rolling terrain with occasional abrupt grade changes (see Existing Site Plan – Exhibit B). The apartment buildings and associated mechanical systems are nearing the end of their useful life, and the apartment units are approaching the point of functional obsolescence. The supporting utility infrastructure of the project, most notably its aging water and

LYNOTT, LYNOTT & PARSONS, P. A.

Hon. Nancy Navarro  
January 25, 2019  
Page 2

sewer lines, are a frequent source of service interruptions. Despite substantial capital expenditures for repairs in recent years, the project's water and sewer lines are in need of replacement.

Although the property has been well maintained, the project is lacking modern market necessities and amenities. Among other matters, the project lacks ADA accessibility, modern fire code protection, energy efficient construction, building security and storm water management and forest conservation protections. Because of the age and design of this 1960s era project, the buildings and their apartment units cannot be physically retrofitted to modern standards, nor can the project be economically redeveloped or revitalized at its current development density.

In addition, because the project was constructed many years prior to the MPDU law, none of the 270 units are MPDUs.

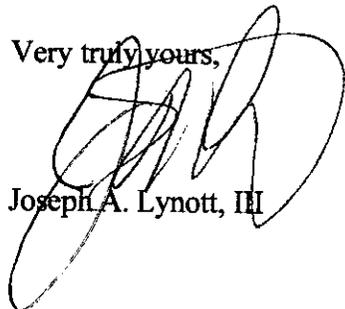
The recommendations of the Planning Board recognize that the RCW project cannot be economically redeveloped as a multi-family project if the land is limited to its existing density, and in the absence of redevelopment, the project will gradually decline into obsolescence and disrepair depriving its residents of ADA accessibility, MPDUs, fire code and security protections and other modern amenities.

In recognition of the project's physical constraints and its close proximity to public transportation, the Planning Board has recommended rezoning the RCW property from R-20 to CRT-1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-85 "to permit strategic redevelopment of higher density residential uses near the future potential BRT Stations" (P.B. draft, p.99). As also recognized by the Planning Board, redevelopment of the project can better protect the natural resources and green space of this uniquely situated property while at the same time facilitating a significant increase in affordable housing.

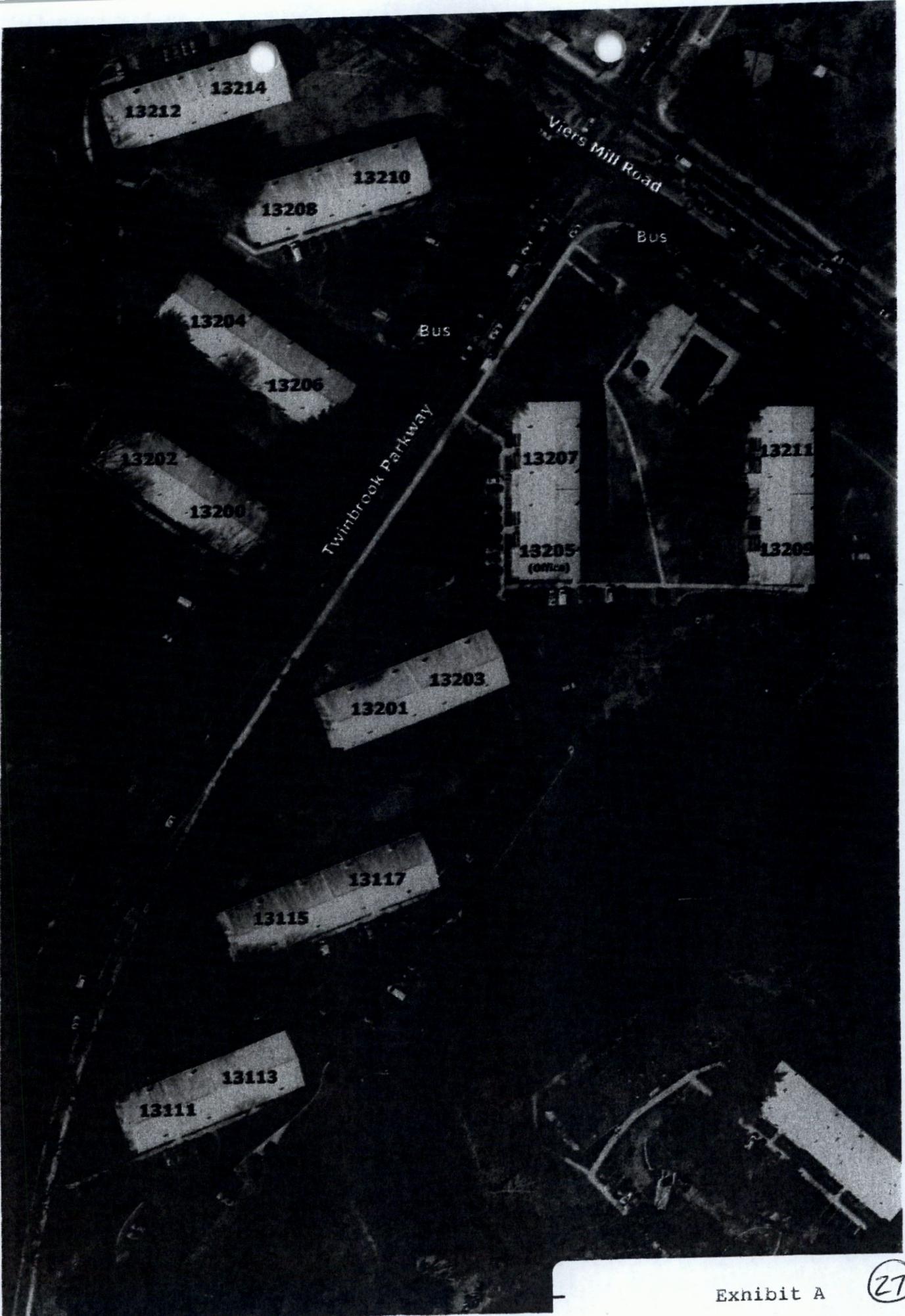
For the foregoing reasons, RCW respectfully requests that the County Council adopt the recommendation of the Planning Board and rezone its property to CRT-1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-85.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

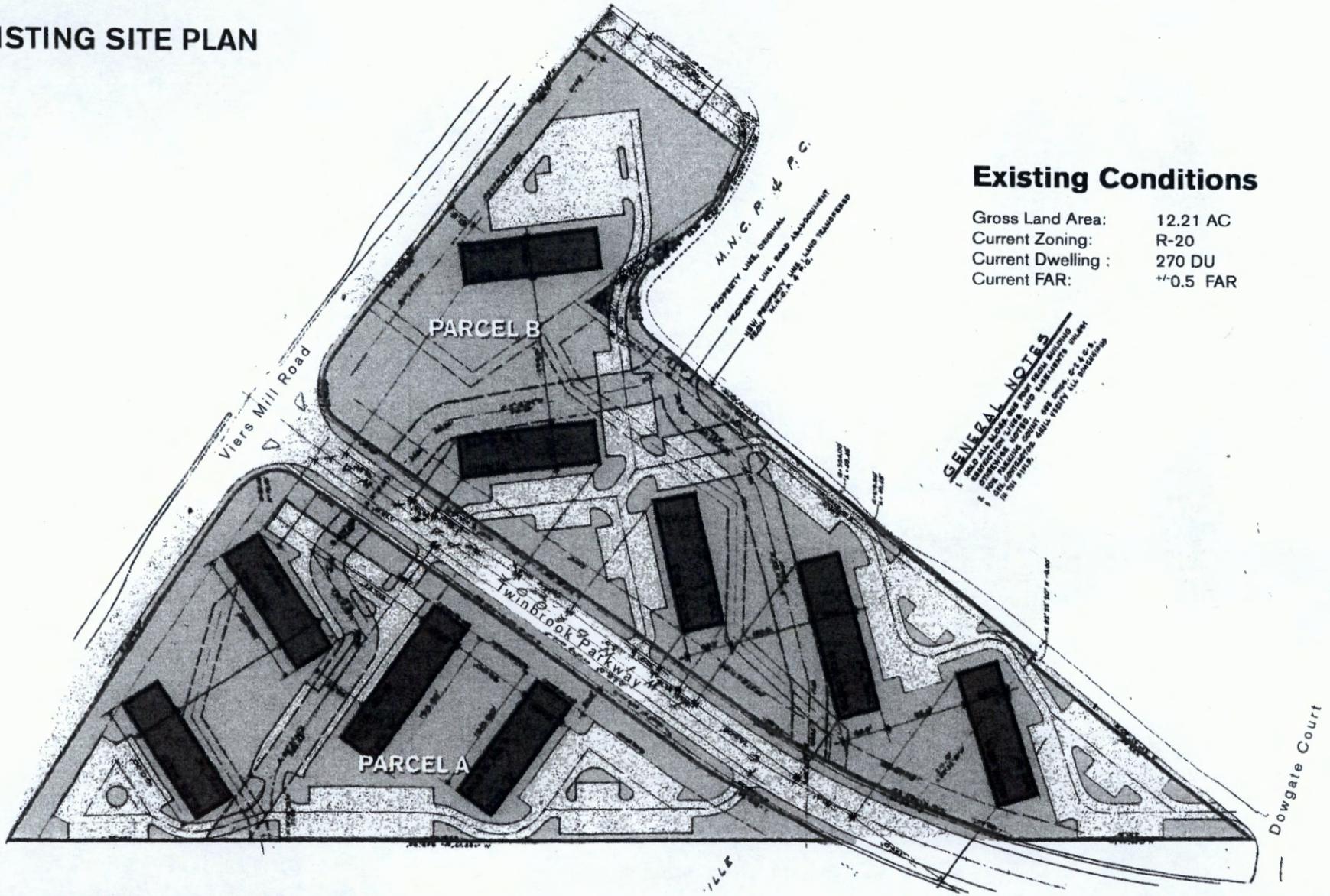
Very truly yours,

  
Joseph A. Lynott, III

JAL,III/dk



# EXISTING SITE PLAN



## Existing Conditions

Gross Land Area:	12.21 AC
Current Zoning:	R-20
Current Dwelling :	270 DU
Current FAR:	*0.5 FAR

**GENERAL NOTES**  
 1. ALL AREAS SHOWN ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.  
 2. ALL AREAS SHOWN ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.  
 3. ALL AREAS SHOWN ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.  
 4. ALL AREAS SHOWN ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.  
 5. ALL AREAS SHOWN ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

**Rock Creek Woods Apartments**  
 Rockville, MD

BULLIS TRACT LLC. | **hord | coplan | macht**  
 April 20, 2018

Exhibit B

82

**LINOWES**  
**AND BLOCHER LLP**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

February 4, 2019

**C. Robert Dalrymple**  
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**By Email Delivery**

Council President Nancy Navarro  
and Members of the County Council  
Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Re: Halpine Park LLC's Written Testimony for the Montgomery County Council's Public Hearing Record on the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan (the "Master Plan")

Dear President Navarro and Members of the County Council:

On behalf of Halpine Park LLC ("Halpine"), owner of the Halpine View apartments located at 12813 Twinbrook Parkway, 13001 Twinbrook Parkway, and 5508 Dowgate Court in Rockville ("Halpine View" or the "Property" – shown on the attached tax map), we are submitting this letter as our written testimony for the Montgomery County Council's (the "Council") February 7<sup>th</sup> public hearing on the Master Plan (specifically, the Planning Board Draft dated December 2018 – the "Public Hearing Draft"). Halpine worked closely with M-NCPPC Staff and the Planning Board on the Public Hearing Draft and is in general agreement with it as it pertains to the Property, but there remains one issue that should be addressed and resolved through the Master Plan, that being the return of a small parcel of land conveyed in 1964 at no cost from the Property by the Property owners to Montgomery County for the construction of Aspen Hill Road Extended, but which parcel is no longer needed for this purpose and thus should be recommended in the Master Plan for redevelopment by Halpine as part of the redevelopment of the remainder of Halpine View (as described herein).

The Property is located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Halpine Road, and confronts the City of Rockville's municipal limits to the west of Twinbrook Parkway. The Twinbrook Metrorail station is approximately ½ mile from the Property, and the proposed Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") station at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Veirs Mill Road is located within ¼ mile of the Property. The Property consists of approximately 37.31 acres and was developed with 564 garden-style apartments and ancillary surface parking in the mid-1960's. The Property is currently zoned R-30 (Residential Multi-Unit Low Density – 30) pursuant to the Countywide District Map Amendment that took effect on October 30, 2014, stemming from the County's comprehensive re-write of the Montgomery County Zoning

Council President Navarro  
and Members of the County Council – Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan Public Hearing Record  
February 4, 2019  
Page 2

Ordinance (Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code). The District Map Amendment confirmed the Property's existing R-30 zoning which was last evaluated through the Approved and Adopted 1992 North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan. All of the existing 564 dwelling units at Halpine View pre-date the County's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit ("MPDUs") regulations and thus no MPDUs or other regulated affordable dwelling units presently exist at Halpine View.

As highlighted in blue on the attached Tax Map Excerpt, the Property is divided by a narrow, vacant parcel of land owned by Montgomery County that was previously part of the Property but was acquired by the County from the owners of the Property at no cost (nominal consideration of \$10.00) in 1964 for the intended construction of Aspen Hill Road Extended (totaling approximately 1.9 acres in size, the "Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel"). As is confirmed in the Public Hearing Draft, the Aspen Hill Extended Parcel is no longer needed or feasible for construction of a public street. As explained more fully below, the process of trying to have this parcel returned to the Property from which it came at no cost has proven to be more difficult than we believe it needs to be, and Halpine is looking at this Master Plan as an appropriate opportunity to facilitate the return to private ownership and the redevelopment of the parcel, with the rest of the Property as the highest and best use, generating tax revenue for the public benefit from a parcel otherwise generating none. As discussed more below, this would also provide additional affordable housing (MPDUs), providing even greater return to the public over existing circumstances.

Halpine View has been successful as a rental community for many years; however, the age and condition of these dwelling units do not support continued long range investment by Halpine. The cost of continued maintenance of these aging units is substantial given that many of these units do not have amenities that are comparable to many of the more recently developed multifamily housing properties in the near vicinity, with such amenities being necessary and critical to competitively respond to market demands. In addition to the existing condition of the garden style apartments that comprise Halpine View, there is currently no meaningful pedestrian or bicycle connectivity either internal to the community or linking the community to the surrounding neighborhoods, parks, or transit. Furthermore, the existing improvements do not respect the important natural environmental features on the Property (the existing improvements at Halpine View pre-date many of the environmental regulations now in effect, e.g., stormwater management, forest conservation, floodplain, etc.), which a planned and phased redevelopment of the Property would incorporate and feature as an amenity. Given these circumstances, Halpine is seeking zoning and land use recommendations for the Property that will allow for a long-term redevelopment strategy for the Property to include new dwelling units (including market-rate, MPDUs and market-rate affordable units) to replace existing improvements in a phased manner that will ultimately result in a project with the amenities and modern features that can compete

Council President Navarro  
and Members of the County Council – Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan Public Hearing Record  
February 4, 2019  
Page 3

for market share into the future. The Public Hearing Draft is consistent with this desire of Halpine.

Halpine thus fully supports the Public Hearing Draft's recommendation to rezone Halpine View from the R-30 zone to CRT-1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-85, to include the following residential components: (a) a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs as the highest priority public benefit; (b) 5 percent market-rate affordable units in the form of existing or new units (or some combination thereof) pursuant to a rental agreement with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs for 20 years; and (c) a range of unit sizes, including those that accommodate larger families in the form of 17.5% of all new units comprising two- and three-bedroom dwelling units. *See Public Hearing Draft, p. 100.* In summary, the Public Hearing Draft's land use and zoning recommendations will facilitate a transit-oriented redevelopment that would also result in the delivery of regulated affordable housing (where none presently exists), enhanced pedestrian and vehicular connectivity, a centralized public open space, and conformance with environmental regulations that presently are not addressed (as the existing improvements pre-date many of the regulations now in effect). Halpine also supports the "design guidelines" recommended for redevelopment of the Property as reflected on page 100 of the Public Hearing Draft.

While Halpine supports the Public Hearing Draft as it relates to the Property, Halpine is requesting that the County Council specifically include in the Master Plan the appropriate disposition and redevelopment of the vacant Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel (again acquired by the County from the Halpine owners at no cost in 1964). Even more specifically, the Master Plan should identify that the Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel be returned to Halpine so that it can be integrated into a comprehensive redevelopment of the Property with additional MPDUs and all of the other public benefits and enhancements described above and provided for in the Public Hearing Draft. As it became obvious over the years that Aspen Hill Road would never be extended through Rock Creek Park (and the Parklawn Cemetery), and thus that Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel would not be utilized for the purpose for which it was originally acquired (at no cost), Halpine has attempted to no avail to reacquire this 1.9 acre Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel from Montgomery County through extensive process over the last several years, including through a formal abandonment petition which resulted in a Planning Board Resolution approving the return of the "paper" street right-of-way to the Property<sup>1</sup>. As the Aspen Hill Road Extended

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<sup>1</sup> The Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan No. 11964054A on December 19, 2013, which allows for the abandonment of the unbuilt Aspen Hill Road Extended right-of-way that currently divides the Property such that this abandoned area of approximately 1.9 acres could be incorporated into the Property for redevelopment. In addition to this abandonment process, Halpine has previously requested that the Property be included in planning boundaries of the Twinbrook Sector Plan, White Flint II Master Plan Amendment, a Minor Master Plan Amendment for the Property, and the planned Aspen Hill Master Plan Amendment. In addition to these comprehensive planning and zoning processes, Halpine filed Pre-

Council President Navarro  
and Members of the County Council – Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan Public Hearing Record  
February 4, 2019  
Page 4

Parcel was conveyed by a deed in fee simple (at no cost) rather than through the more typical record platting process in 1964 (for reasons unknown), the County has taken the position that the abandonment process was of no consequence (though the County participated in that process) and that instead as a fee simple parcel the Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel can only be disposed of through the County's disposition process set forth in Article X of Chapter 11B of the County Code. Furthermore, the County and Halpine have not been able to agree on a fair value for the return of the Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel to Halpine (even though it was conveyed to the County by Halpine at no cost), and the County (through the Department of General Services) has essentially suspended all discussion relating to the disposition of the right-of-way parcel until after the Master Plan process is completed (also for reasons not clear to Halpine).

Halpine believes that this disposition process and the best result thereof can and should be provided for through the Master Plan. Halpine proposes that the Master Plan recommend that the Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel be returned to Halpine and be redeveloped with the original Property, with consideration for this return being a requirement that Halpine provide 30% of the dwelling units attributable to the density of this 1.9 acre site being MPDUs. By identifying this disposition as part of the Master Plan, this unbuilt Aspen Hill Road Extension Parcel will be developed appropriately and in accord with the Public Hearing Draft along with the remainder of the Property, allowing the coordinated redevelopment of the ±37 acre Halpine View site, adding more affordable housing and the delivery of the important public benefits identified above (e.g., MPDUs, 5% market-rate affordable units regulated through an agreement with DHCA, 17.5% new and updated 2- and 3-bedroom units, public open space, pedestrian and vehicular connectivity improvements, and compliance with modern environmental regulations).

Therefore, we respectfully request that the County Council revise Page 100 of the Public Hearing Draft to specifically recommend that the unbuilt Aspen Hill Road Extension Parcel be returned to the Property from which it came (at no cost) in exchange for Halpine's commitment to provide 30% MPDUs as part of its inclusion of this 1.9 acre site, bringing the revenue and public benefits from this currently non-productive parcel of land that will never be used for its originally intended use as a public street.

We thank you for consideration of these comments, and we look forward to continuing to work with you, the Council staff and other stakeholders on the Master Plan. We will be present at the February 7<sup>th</sup> public hearing to supplement these comments with oral testimony. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Preliminary Plan No. 720110090 in 2011, which sought the Planning Board's advice and feedback on a potential rezoning application from the R-30 Zone to the PD-60 (Urban High Density Category) Zone. Halpine has exhausted significant resources in these failed efforts to have the Property reviewed as part of either a comprehensive planning and zoning exercise or a piecemeal zoning approval.

Council President Navarro  
and Members of the County Council – Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan Public Hearing Record  
February 4, 2019  
Page 5

Very truly yours,

**LINOWES AND BLOCHER LLP**

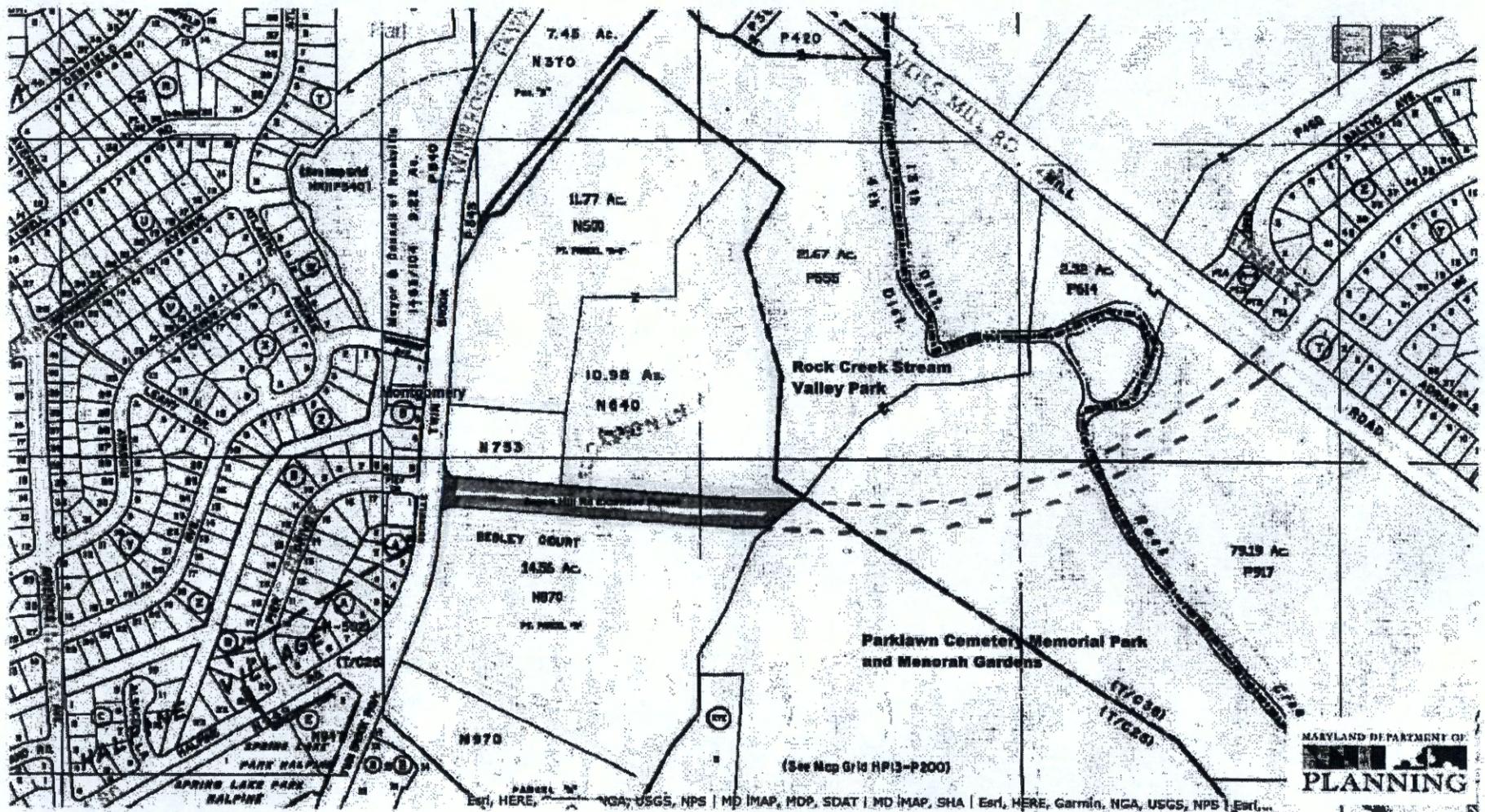


C. Robert Dalrymple



Matthew Gordon

cc: Members, Montgomery County Council  
Ms. Marlene Michaelson, Executive Director of the County Council  
Ms. Pamela Dunn, Senior Legislative Analyst  
Mr. Timothy Goetzinger, Acting Director of DHCA  
Mr. Ronnie Warner, Depart. of General Services  
Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Ms. Jessica McVary, M-NCPPC  
Ms. Carrie Sanders, M-NCPPC  
Mr. Brian Alford, Grady Management  
Mr. George Covucci, Halpine Park LLC



☐ = Halpine View property (+/- 37.31 acres)

▬ = Aspen Hill Road Extended Parcel (+/- 1.9 acres)

34



19

12200 Tech Road, Suite 250, Silver Spring, MD 20904 • Phone: 301-622-2400 • Fax: 301-622-2800

TESTIMONY ON THE VEIRS MILL CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN  
BY STEPHANIE ROODMAN OF MONTGOMERY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP, INC.  
FEBRUARY 7, 2019

February 7, 2019

Good evening, Council President Navarro and members of the Council. My name is Stephanie Roodman, and I am testifying on behalf of Montgomery Housing Partnership, the largest non-profit housing developer in Montgomery County.

MHP is the developer of Halpine Hamlet Apartments, a community of 67 mainly affordable one and two-bedroom apartments, located just off of Twinbrook Parkway. We support the Planning Board's recommendations to rezone our property from R-30 to CRT 1.25, with a maximum height of 85 feet. While we have no near-term plans to redevelop the property, several other market-affordable housing communities north of ours in the Twinbrook District may wish to demolish and redevelop sooner rather than later. A recent study released by the Planning Department provides new insights into what could happen if these properties are redeveloped. While redevelopment of existing multifamily buildings has been rare in the last 25 years, demolition and redevelopment by market rate developers does tend to result in a loss of affordable units. When affordable housing developers such as MHP or HOC are involved and when the County has found county owned land, additional affordable units have been developed to offset what would otherwise be a reduction in affordable housing from redevelopment. By upzoning the garden style apartments for redevelopment, the affordability of rental housing in the Twinbrook corridor will be lost if there is not a concerted effort to preserve or replace them. To the extent that the sector plan is incentivizing redevelopment along this corridor, the plan should ensure a one for one replacement of the potential loss of market rate affordable housing – this can best be done by the county aggressively seeking to identify county-owned sites where affordable housing can be located in this plan.

For example, the plan contemplates the redevelopment of the Department of Recreation's administrative offices near the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road once the department relocates to the county office building that is currently under construction in downtown Wheaton. However, under the design guidance section, the plan recommends the site for "attached single-family building types or stacked townhouses to transition to adjacent single-family neighborhoods." Any redevelopment of the property should be compatible with the existing neighborhood, but we would put forward that midrise multifamily construction is also appropriate for the site and can be configured such that it is in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. We therefore request that the design guidance be amended to give equal consideration to multifamily housing. Also, language should be included to encourage affordable housing on the site. As many of you know, only 1500 units of new housing came online in 2018 in the county, which is woefully short of our county's needs. We must maximize the use of county-owned land for housing if we hope to increase housing production in Montgomery County.

Another barrier to building affordable housing at this site is the planned extension of Gannon Road to Randolph Road. The plan anticipates that the extension of this road would be the responsibility of the private developer. This would add significant costs to any redevelopment of the site and pose a serious challenge in particular to building affordable housing at the site. We request that the Council assess the

35

utility of this road extension and the unintended consequences that it may create for redevelopment of the property.

Another county-owned property which the Council should target for affordable housing is the Holiday Park Senior Center. The plan recommends that the zoning remain at R-60, or detached single family housing. We believe the surface parking lots surrounding the senior center are a prime opportunity for housing, especially senior housing given its immediate adjacency to a senior center. Notwithstanding the fact that solar canopies were constructed on the parking lot two years ago, the county could accomplish both its housing and sustainability goals by utilizing the surface parking lots for housing with solar on the rooftop. And again, language should be included to identify this site for affordable housing.

Lastly, we would ask that the Council take a close look at the zoning recommendations for houses of worship along Veirs Mill Road. Many churches, both locally and nationally, are experiencing declining congregations, and they may not have as much need for the amount of land that is currently dedicated towards parking or other uses. In light of these realities, we should provide religious institutions with zoning that allows them to remain in place, but which also encourages them to serve out their mission by providing affordable housing to members of our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on the plan.

**MEMORANDUM**

March 1, 2019

**TO:** Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee  
**FROM:** Pamela Duntz, Senior Legislative Analyst  
**SUBJECT:** Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan  
**PURPOSE:** Addendum to Staff report for worksession to development recommendations for Council consideration

Additional correspondence was received from the County Executive after the Staff report for this worksession was posted (see ©1-2).

The County Executive commented on the two County-owned properties in the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan area: the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site; and the Aspen Hill Road Extended parcel.

**Department of Recreation Administrative Offices**

Text in Master Plan: page 83

Map in Master Plan: page 84

Existing Zoning: R-60

Proposed Zoning: CRN1.0 C0.0 R1.0 H65

**Plan Recommendation:** The Plan recommends rezoning the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site from R-60 to CRN1.0 C0.0 R1.0 H65 to allow the construction of medium density residential development near the commercial center.

**Executive Recommendation:** “Concur with the Planning Board recommendation with a slight adjustment to the commercial FAR, and request rezoning these parcels to CRN1.0 C0.5 R1.0 H65.”

**Council Staff Recommendation:** Before receiving the Executive’s proposal, Council Staff wrote in support of the Master Plan zoning recommendation for this property, offering a slight modification to the accompanying text in the Plan (pages 8-9 of the Staff report) based on testimony by Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP).

The Executive's request for commercial density of 0.5 FAR on this property could result in more than 130,000 square feet of commercial uses. This is approximately equal to the amount of commercial development on the Stonemill Square site today. Council Staff does not believe this amount of potential commercial development is appropriate for this location as the site abuts single-family detached homes and is adjacent to many existing commercial uses; however, allowing for the flexibility for small-scale commercial uses with redevelopment is not unreasonable. Council Staff supports rezoning the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site to CRN1.0 C0.25 R1.0 H65. This would allow for up to approximately 65,000 square feet of commercial uses. If the Committee supports CRN1.0 C0.25 R1.0 H65, Council Staff recommends modifying the accompanying text in the Master Plan as follows:

"The Plan recommends rezoning the Department of Recreation Administrative Offices site from R-60 to CRN1.0 C0.25 R1.0 H65 to allow the construction of ~~medium density residential~~ and small-scale commercial development near the commercial center."

"Redevelopment on this cluster should deliver a mix of uses near the corner of Veirs Mill Road and Randolph Road, and transition to residential uses along Bushey Drive compatible with the single-family-neighborhood ~~residential scale toward the south and east along Bushey Drive.~~"

#### **Aspen Hill Road Extended**

Text in Master Plan: page 100

Map in Master Plan: page 102

Existing Zoning: R-30

Proposed Zoning: CRT1.25 C0.25 R1.25 H85

**Plan Recommendation:** Consistent with previous master plans, the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan supports the abandonment of Aspen Hill Road Extended, recommending that the County return the land to the Halpine View property owner.

**Executive Recommendation:** While the zoning map does not depict zoning on rights-of-way, primarily for ease in reading the zoning map, the Code indicates that zone boundaries must run to the centerline of each right-of-way. The Executive supports the rezoning of the Aspen Hill Road Extended parcel consistent with the rezoning of the surrounding property, provided that any future use of the County parcel preserve market-rate affordable units or increase affordable units.

The Council received testimony regarding Halpine View Apartments from Bob Dalrymple, the property owner's representative. This testimony supports the Plan's proposed rezoning for Halpine View, and requests that the Aspen Hill Road Extended parcel be returned in exchange for the requirement that Halpine View provide 30 percent of the dwelling units attributable to the density of the 1.9-acre parcel in the form of MPDUs.

**Council Staff Recommendation:** Council Staff supports rezoning Aspen Hill Road Extended consistent with the rezoning of the Halpine View Apartments, and having the parcel returned to the property owner in exchange for the increase in affordable units as proposed by the property owner.



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

MEMORANDUM

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

February 28, 2019

TO: Hans Reimer, Chair  
Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive *ME*

SUBJECT: Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide my land use recommendations for two County-owned properties within the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan: the Department of Recreation Administrative offices located on Bushey Drive and the former Aspen Hill Road extension or 'paper street'.

In anticipation of the Department of Recreation relocating to Wheaton in 2020, Executive staff is currently developing options for reuse of the properties consistent with my administration's initiatives and objectives. Further, any future use of the properties must consider the surrounding residential community as well as the commercial uses adjacent to the site. In doing so, it is important that the Master Plan recommendation provides flexibility in considering possibilities for this County asset. I concur with the Planning Board's recommendation, with a slight adjustment to the commercial FAR, and request rezoning of these parcels to *CRN-1.0, C-0.5, R-1.0, H-65*.

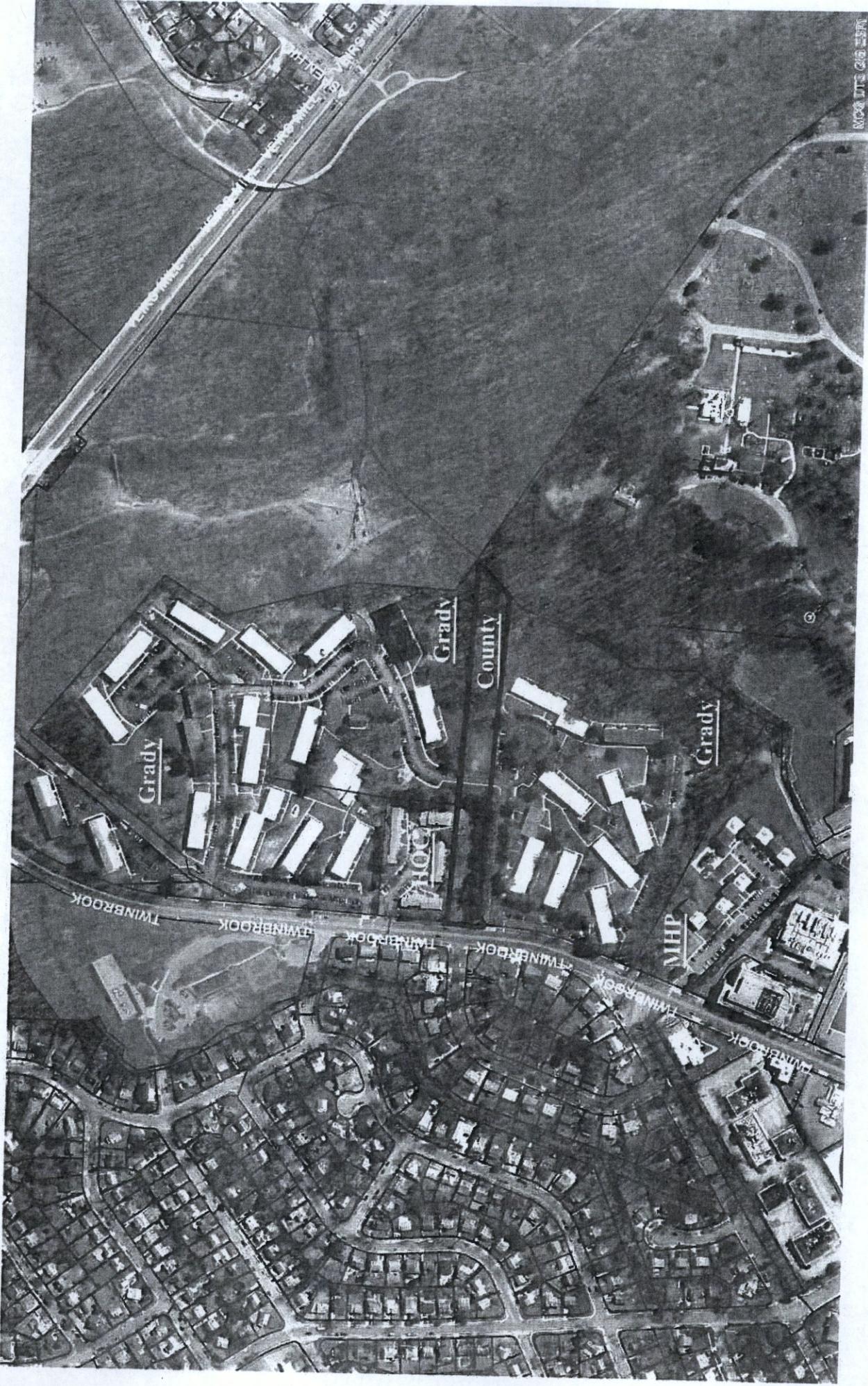
Additionally, it is important to note that the Aspen Hill Road extension 'paper street' currently has no zoning. Should the PHED Committee decide to rezone the surrounding parcels, I support an identical zoning for the County parcel street. Again, any future use of the property must consider the surrounding residential community and I remain concerned about the potential for a net loss of affordable units in this area. Any future use of the County parcel should preserve market rate affordable units or increase affordable units. I remain concerned about rezoning properties and facilitating redevelopment projects that result in a net loss of affordable units, particularly units available to households at or below MPDU levels.

I hope this information is helpful. Executive staff will be available to answer any questions during the upcoming worksession.

ME/go

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