

WUDAC 2.14.2023 Meeting Notes

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC)

Tuesday | February 14, 2023 | 7:00 pm-8:30 pm

Online Meeting via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83246233594>

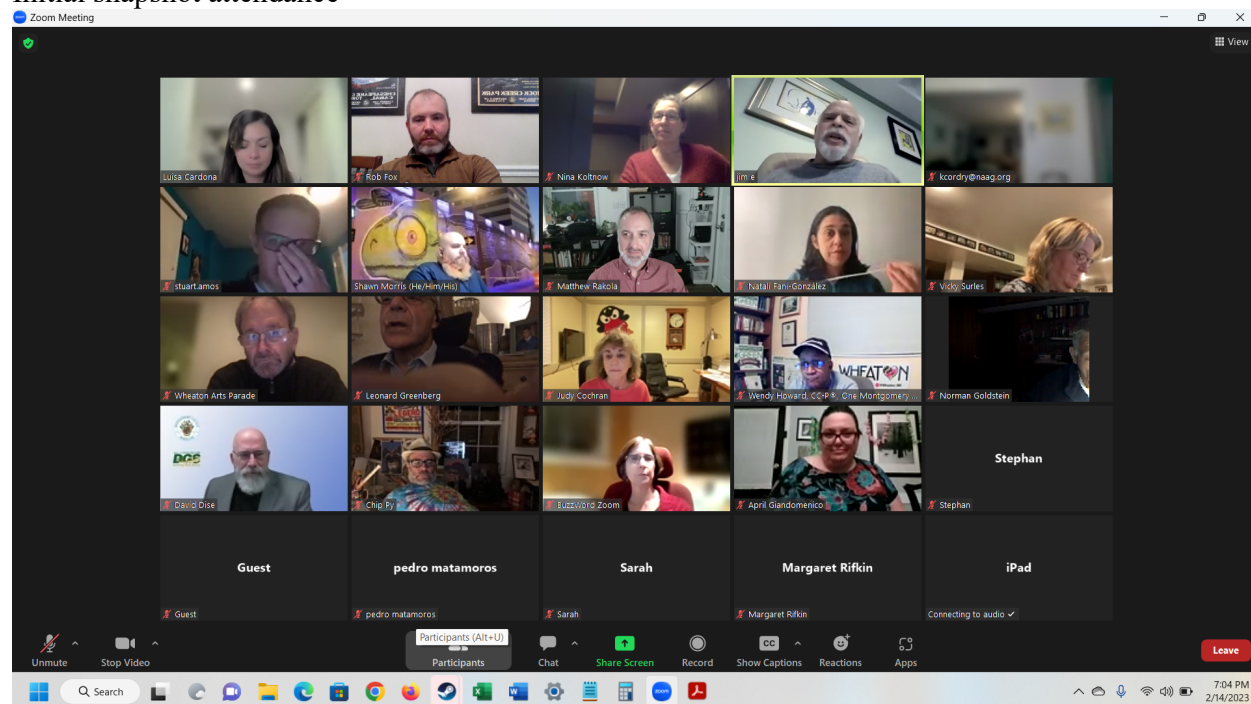
Meeting ID: 832 4623 3594

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Agenda

I. Call to order 7:00 pm

Initial snapshot attendance



II. Review/Approve minutes (Pending New Members) 7:02 pm

III. Community Concerns 7:05 pm

Limited to 2 minutes per speaker

Wendy Howard – want to talk about the One Montgomery Green event on community composting, workforce Montgomery 4-6

Leonard Greenberg – concerned about cultural arts center being moved up towards Arcola Ave, as it's a missed opportunity. The county has promised an economic engine for Wheaton for 40 years, but this will be too far from being an economic engine for the area. Ought to be a hearing on this to allow the public to have input on this matter and have a benefit for merchants.

Jim E – this is still up for discussion

Dan Thompson Wheaton Arts Parade – What WUDAC members are here

Vicky Surles – Wheaton/Kensington Chamber of Commerce on March 8, will have the 5th Kensington Wheaton Business Networking Expo, it's on their website. There will be free food tasting samples, businesses can get tables, a jazz combo and possibly some dancers. Wkchamber.org is the website, under events.

IV. Reports/Updates 7:15 pm

a. Elected representatives in attendance

Natali Fani-Gonzalez – town hall on transportation at the Wheaton Library next Saturday, presentation from DOT/Planning on progress on transportation projects, and would also like to identify places where we need more attention. Also have a meeting with Gov Wes Moore coming to Wheaton. Get funding for people to get around Wheaton safely and to connect key places in Wheaton. Been canvassing with her team in the area with the businesses to get their concerns, particularly safety concerns. Meeting with the police chief. DPS is under her purview so she's getting information from folks on their needs from DPS.

Jim E – we currently have 3 vacancies of our 11 member group, and we're currently reviewing applicants and are hoping to get new membership soon. We might be losing one or two other large or small business representatives. If you're local here and have 10+ employees you're considered a large business. We only have 8 active members officially and one of them is out today, we have a quorum of the other members at the moment though, so we're going to move forward with approving them.

Jim Epstein

New member Nina Koltnow

Karen Cordry

Rob Fox MCCAB Liaison

Stuart

Pedro

b. Wheaton & Kensington Chamber of Commerce, *Ali Oliver-Krueger*

2/7 had a meeting hosted by the CoC and small business community for the urban district and also had representatives from several county agencies and was very well attended. Thanks to Crystal and Luisa. 3/8 business networking session, always held at the armory at the town hall in Kensington, 3rd annual expo.

c. MCCAB, *Rob Fox*

Gilchrist Immigrant Resource

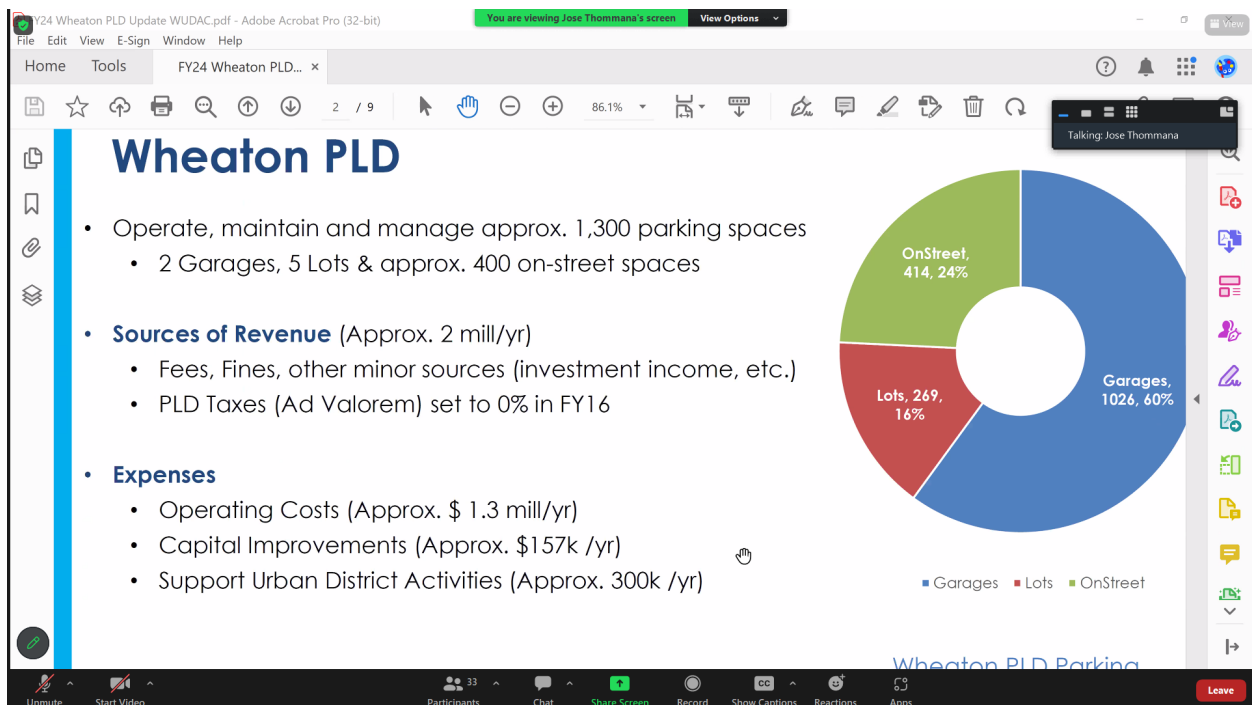
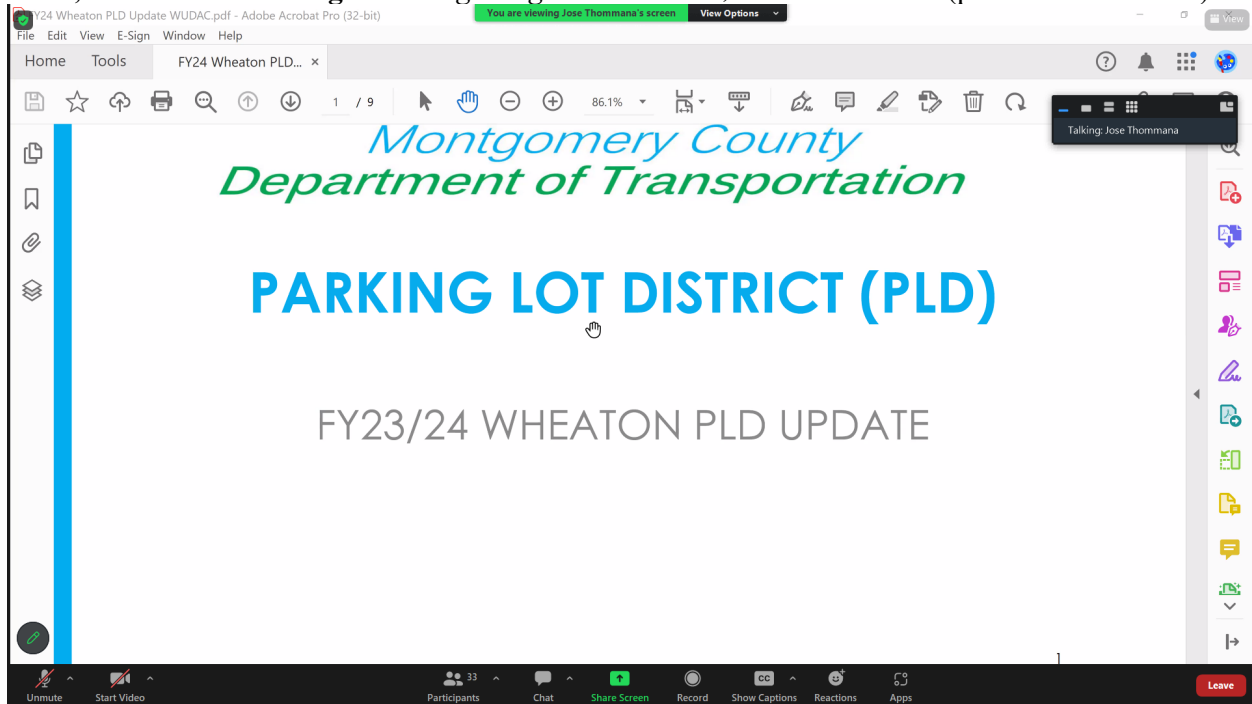
d. Mid-County RSC, *Luisa Cardona*

There was a shooting in front of the Reddie building, and the positive note is that it doesn't appear random, but we are looking for information from the public with a \$10k reward for it. The police department is working very actively and there are good leads.

Planning updates – on Thursday is the Wheaton planning board briefing. Pedestrian Master plan on 3/21 for another hearing. Changed the newsletter to biweekly to keep up with it more, but that might change once there's more staff again. There are two large business openings that they hope we can push out. Not everything that we wanted was in the budget proposal, but there are lots of competing needs and little funding. The capital improvement project budget will have a county executive forum on that for April.

V. Presentations 7:40 pm

DOT, Division of Parking – Parking Usage and Revenue, Jose Thommana (pronounced “Joe’s”)




Y24 Wheaton PLD Update WUDAC.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Pro (32-bit)

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Parking Rates

Garages: \$1.00 per hour
Wheaton Market Place (Garage 13)
Amherst (Garage 45)

Lots: \$1.00 per hour

On-Street: \$1.25 per hour

Monthly Permit: \$132 [Parking Convenience Sticker (PCS)]

Hours Requiring Payment

On-Street: Mon-Sat, 9am - 10pm
Lots: Mon-Sat, 7 am - 10 pm
Garages: Mon-Sat, 7 am - 10 pm

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WHEATON PLD

TOP OPERATING EXPENSES

- Security Services
- Enforcement
- Janitorial Services
- Utilities (Electricity/Gas, etc.)
- Maintenance (Electrical, Concrete, Water, Snow, Washdowns, etc.)
- Credit Card Fees
- Citation Processing
- Fine Revenue Collections
- Fee Revenue Collections

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

- Payment System Upgrades
 - Smart on-street single space meters
 - Pay-By-Space Machines in Lot 13, G13 and G45
- Multiple Payment Options
- EV Charging Stations (G13 & G45)



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Wheaton PLD

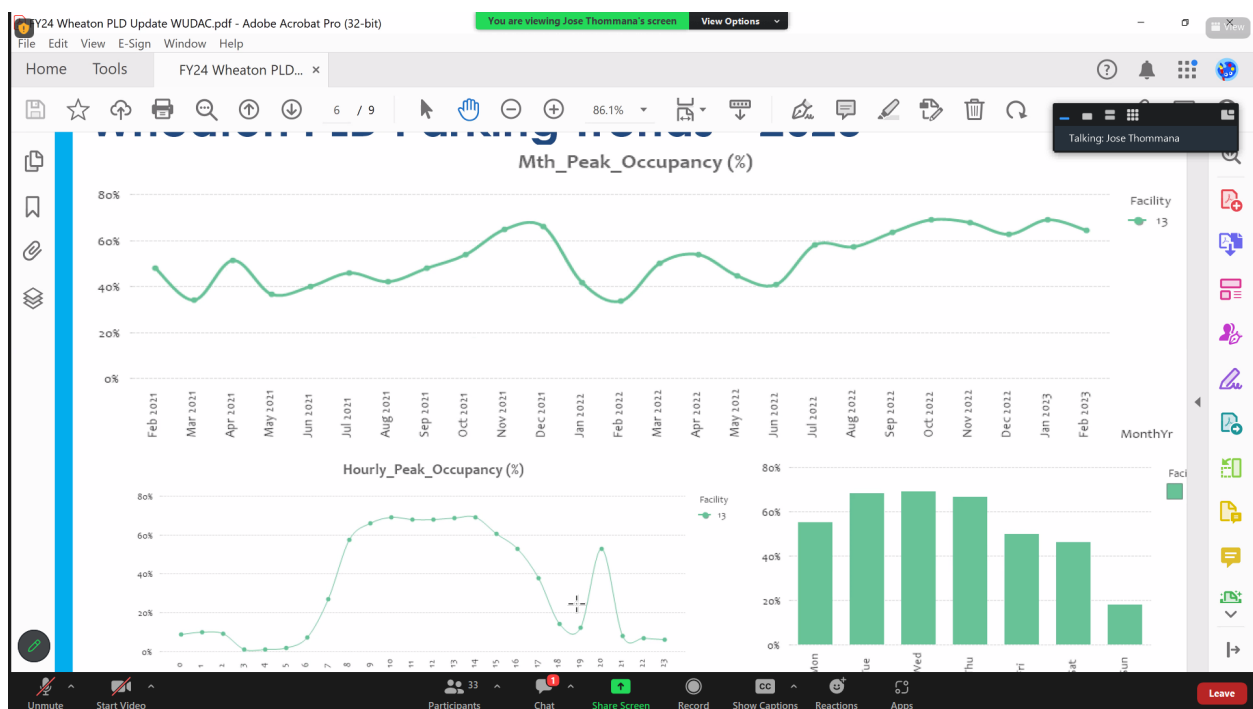
MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS & OTHER OPERATING COSTS

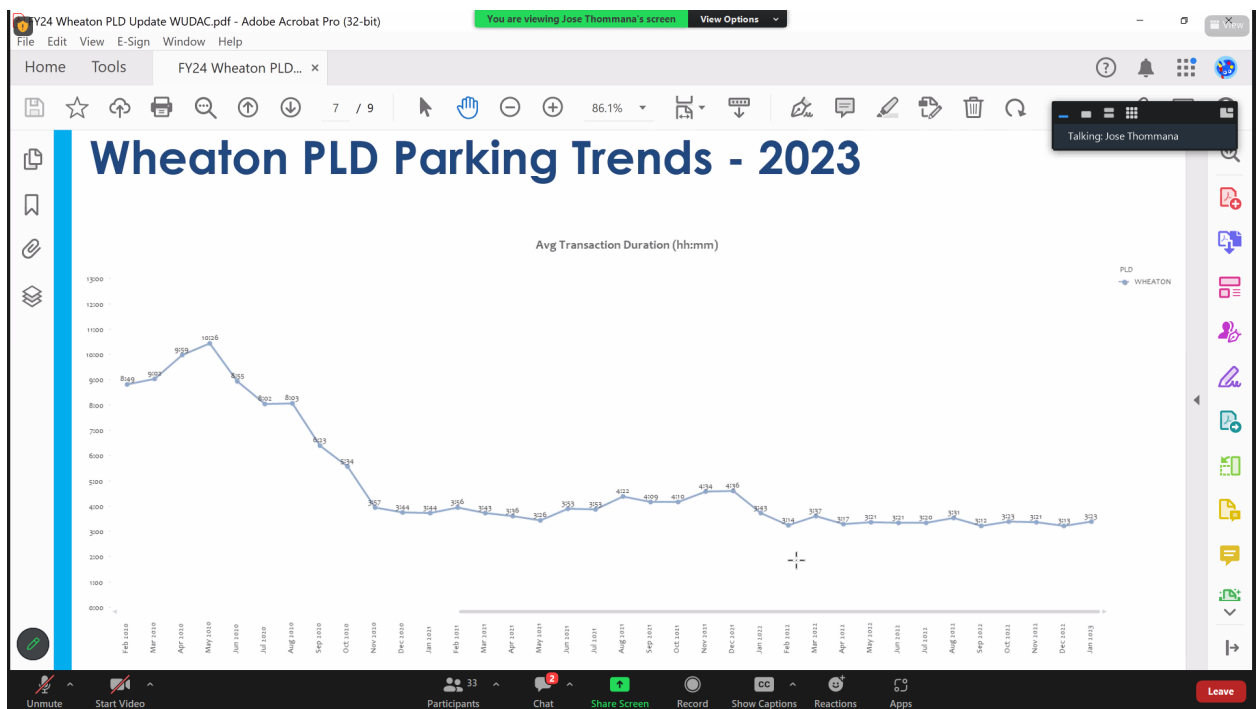
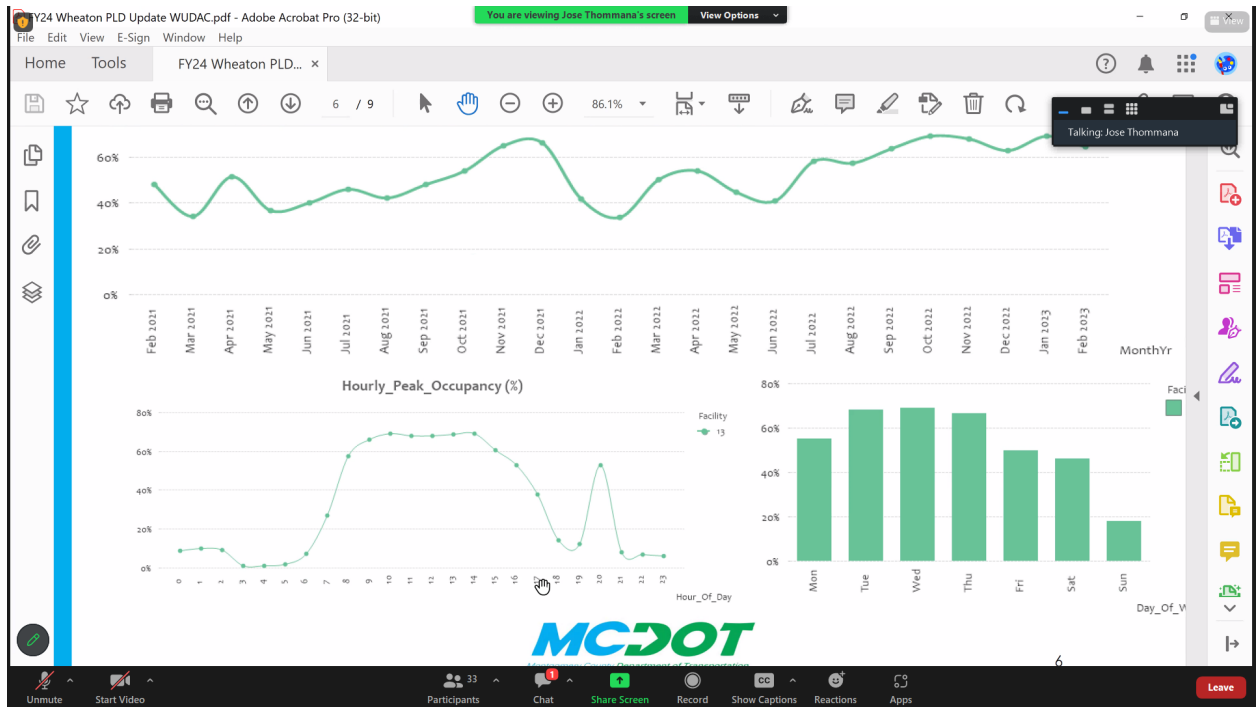
- Elevator Modernization & Repairs – G45
- LED Lighting Upgrades
- Solar Rooftop (G45)
- Funding Wheaton Urban District activities

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF DELAYING MAJOR CAPITAL NEEDS

- Reduced Parking Availability
- Operating Cost Impacts (Repair & Utility Costs)
- Safety

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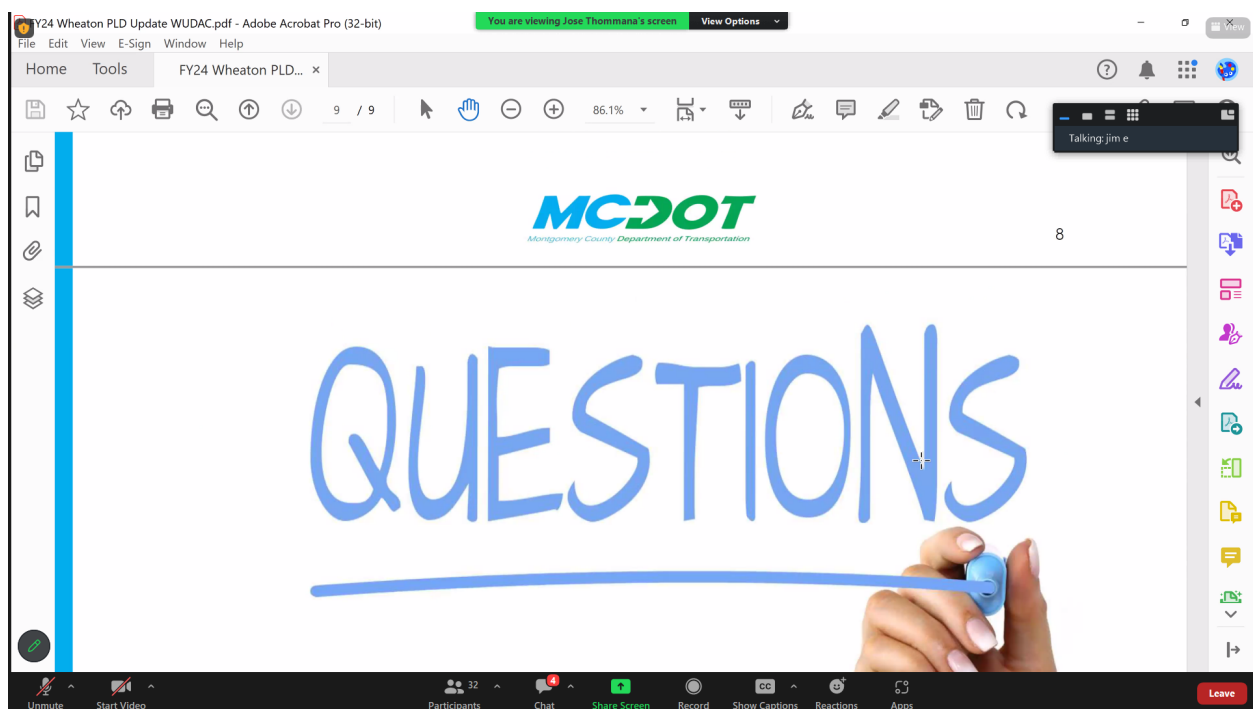
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Talking: Jose Thommana

Wheaton FY23 Proposed Plan

	Actual 2022	Estimated 2023	Projected 2024	Projected 2025	Projected 2026	Projected 2027	Projected 2028	Projected 2029
DESCRIPTION								
Beginning Fund Balance	591,312	1,070,658	1,236,453	1,311,795	1,210,877	1,031,473	805,964	407,741
Revenues	2,020,227	2,652,811	2,219,997	2,220,237	2,220,487	2,220,747	2,221,017	2,321,017
Transfers								
To General Fund	40,523	-72,511	-74,920	-76,246	-77,914	-79,730	-81,613	-83,615
To Urban District	-200,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000
To Bethesda PLD	0	0	0	-110,000	-110,000	0	0	0
Capital Budget	-6,689	-517,000	-147,000	-132,000	-170,000	-282,000	-409,000	-157,000
Operating Budget	-1,374,715	-1,593,969	-1,622,734	-1,702,909	-1,741,978	-1,784,525	-1,828,628	-1,875,517
Total Outflows	-1,540,881	-2,487,016	-2,144,654	-2,321,155	-2,399,892	-2,446,256	-2,619,241	-2,416,137
Revenue vs Outflow Gap	479,346	165,795	75,343	-100,918	-179,405	-225,509	-398,224	-95,117
Year End Fund Balance	1,070,658	1,236,453	1,311,795	1,210,877	1,031,473	805,964	407,740	312,622
Fund Balance as a % of Next Year's PSP	67%	76%	77%	70%	58%	44%	22%	16%
Expenses								
Target Balance	398,492	405,684	425,727	435,495	446,131	457,157	468,880	480,891
Fund Balance (Shortfall)	672,165	830,769	886,068	775,383	585,341	348,807	-61,140	-168,269

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Jim Epstein – when we're talking about Urban District funding, we're talking about parking lot activities. Is it correct that even though revenue is increasing, the \$2m is a drop in the bucket compared to Silver Spring or Bethesda, and the major chunk of district funding comes from general funding instead of the parking fees?

Jose – that is correct, the UD operations are funded by parking more in Silver Spring and Bethesda

Jim Epstein – Looking at the proposed CIP, I noticed the FY2023 was huge and the next 3 years drop down and then it triples again.

Jose – This is from the upcoming budget cycle, and when covid hit we deferred a lot of maintenance. Later on in the CIP we're seeing it increase a bit again, we're not spending any money and we're anticipating by 2028 we'll have things we'll need to fix.

Jim E – the current lot 13 garage was supposed to be public, but it's mostly employee usage now with less for the public. What's the plan for the future of what the trends are for having 700-900+ employees every day?

Jose – that's really hard to predict what's going to happen for the future, and I think the trend really is to gradually return a bit more to work than we are currently. If people are coming in one or two days, DOT can't fix a parking meter from home. The 4th level of the garage is having some minor repairs going on there, and expect to have that open up for more use soon. Had originally planned for 100 employee parking spaces with the rest for public, but if we see that there consistently end up being no spaces for the public we'll put in restrictions to make it difficult for employees to park there. Always keeping the paid parking, regardless of being a paid employee or not, you do have to pay.

Chip Py – from historical perspective, that's the same problem we had in Silver Spring in the 90s, the district was funded by parking garages but we weren't getting enough people to use the garages, and that went away after redevelopment. People will come if there's something to come to.

Department of General Services – Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center, Reedie Ave Retail Space and Building Usage, David Dise

In the retail space, have been looking at what to do for years. Originally had planned on a restaurant space but didn't get strong nibbles for that. Have been looking at anything of benefit to the community, a maker space, a market space. The executive wants to come and walk and get a sense of that. The space was originally roughed out for a single restaurant, and to split it up would require more plumbing/wiring to get it ready for that. We're open for ideas. Would love to provide more information but that's what we have for that.

The return to work post covid is something that's affecting everyone everywhere, even in general services I have some folks working quite effectively from home. The county spends about \$20m a year leasing space throughout the county. Some of those are in neighborhoods where we have health and outreach programs, and we also have quite a lot of offices in lease space, so General Services is leading an initiative to reduce leased space and post people back into county owned offices to reduce our overall leased budget. As we identify those leases we won't terminate the leases before their term, and at the expiration backfill space. Executive office space is 30% occupied, Municipal building also not currently fully occupied. Even though we don't own the Wheaton office building the lease cost there are pretty low as it's government to government. We're looking at that as a primary location for relocating folks. Most leases are running out in 3-5 years so it'll take time but is happening. We have a few operations targets for Wheaton but no definitive plans yet. Not giving departments the option, if they can fit in county owned space they will. We'll be issuing a report for the Executive's review before public consumption within the year.

Karen Cordry – when you terminate the leases will that result in further drives for people and will we actually have bodies there?

David – yeah we are intending it to be actual bodies occupying offices. Many groups have gone to a hybridized approach, which allows us to manage who is present and when. We have software for reserving office space to help groups manage.

Jim Epstein – to be clear on the unleased space, before any utilization, I presume there'd be some sort of a buildout and there'd need to be funds for that.

David – maybe, depending on what the use would be. If it were a flea market every now and then, an indoor farmer's market, a makers' space, making the buildout very minimal. If a restaurant came or another business was interested in the space that would be good as well.

Jim Epstein – is there any ability for public input on what we'd like?

David – there's an interest in getting public comment when there's options for consideration.

Jim Epstein – on the 3rd floor, the day care center will that be a DGS responsibility?

David – I don't know about that one, but Luisa might

Luisa – I e-mailed Karen at parks and planning but they've now sent out the RFP for approval within the next month. They've told us that so we have to keep on them. Then bidders can come in and tour the space. In addition there are discussions about parking lot space being available for outdoor play space for the children.

Chip Py – We're 6 years from turning a shovel, but the original promise in redeveloping Wheaton, and everything that was promised was that we'd get a retailer there that would draw people into the urban district area. When I google retail space for Wheaton nothing comes up. A year ago we had a meeting where the leasing person of that spot had it advertised there, but we need to ride herd on Jones Long Lesalle to get a tenant in there. We don't want to give up and do pickleball in there or cut out a space for the girl scouts. We were promised an active downtown. I sat at the checkerboard table and wished that we didn't have a large number of people and families there.

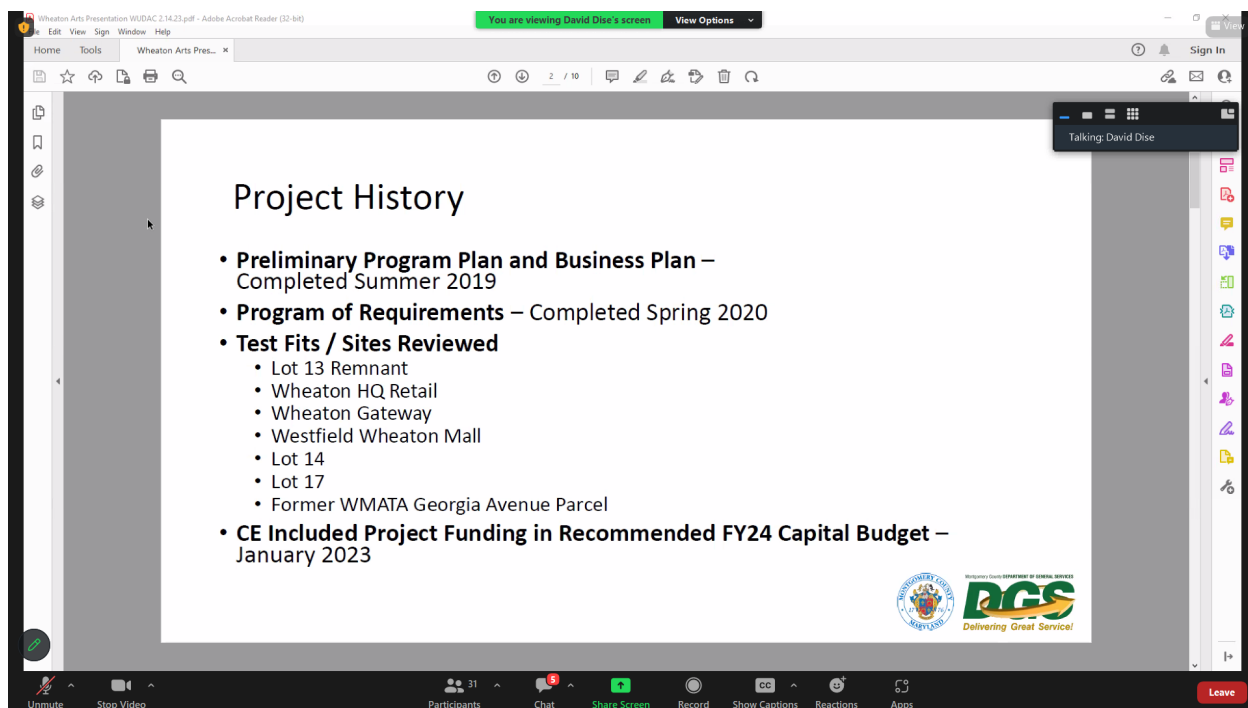
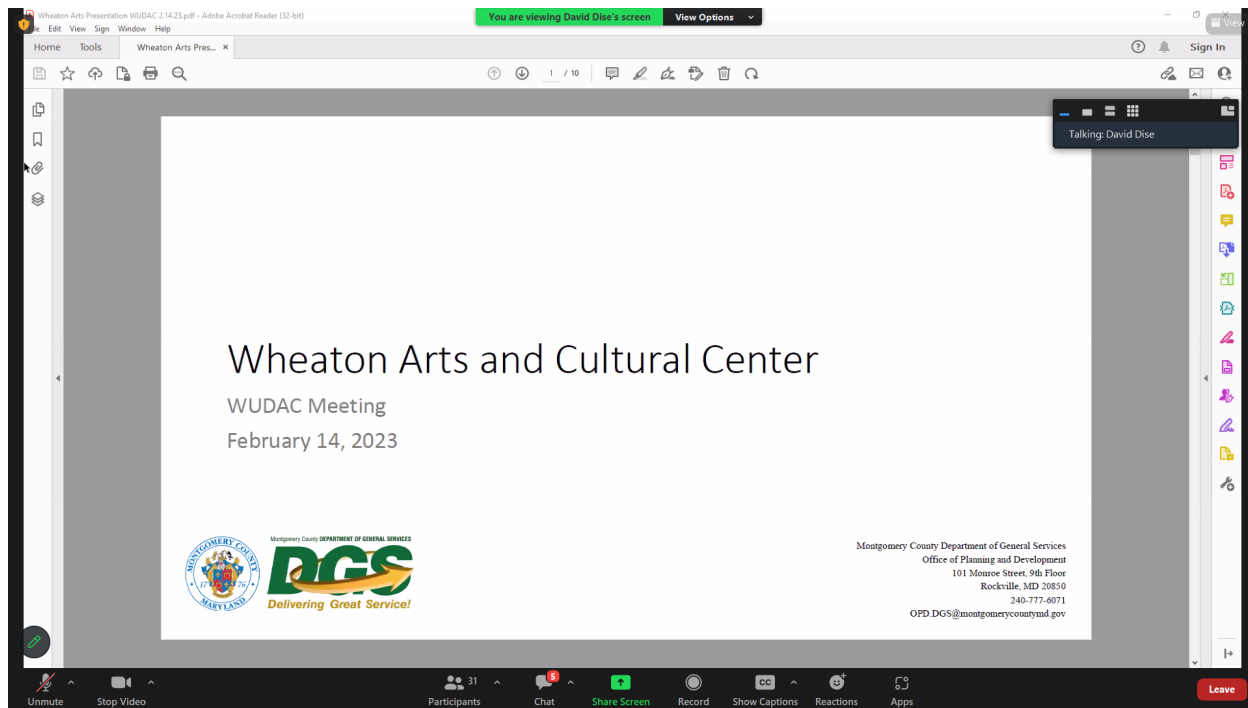
David – we've been trying and having people tour with us, but we don't get interest. Part of the challenge is there's no storefront to the storefront. If we had a partner that was serious and it required some modifications to the building, we'd certainly advocate for that. We're stymied by that. We simply haven't gotten serious inquiries for some time. A lot of this may be a residual covid impact, and we might get renewed interest but not right now.

Jim Epstein – I never understood it to be 12k feet for a restaurant, but 6k for indoor and outdoor seating as well and 6k for another entity.

Leonard Greenberg – We are the landlords for 60-75 tenants in the CBD, as defined by an appropriate map. We develop the anchor in. This is a combination of the arts and entertainment district and our desire to fill spaces. I presented him with a plan years ago, \$200k if the county would match, if the county would leave all or most the vacant space in downtown Wheaton, and then hire a team of tenant procurers to get in those small venues space for artists. Part of the other issue is that if you put the A&E district by Arcola, they have to drive there and get a parking space. The sweet spot for residency in downtown Wheaton is usually 1500sqft. We have a soft spot for small proprietors because they have their family working with them and they're invested. Turning over 3011 GA Ave,

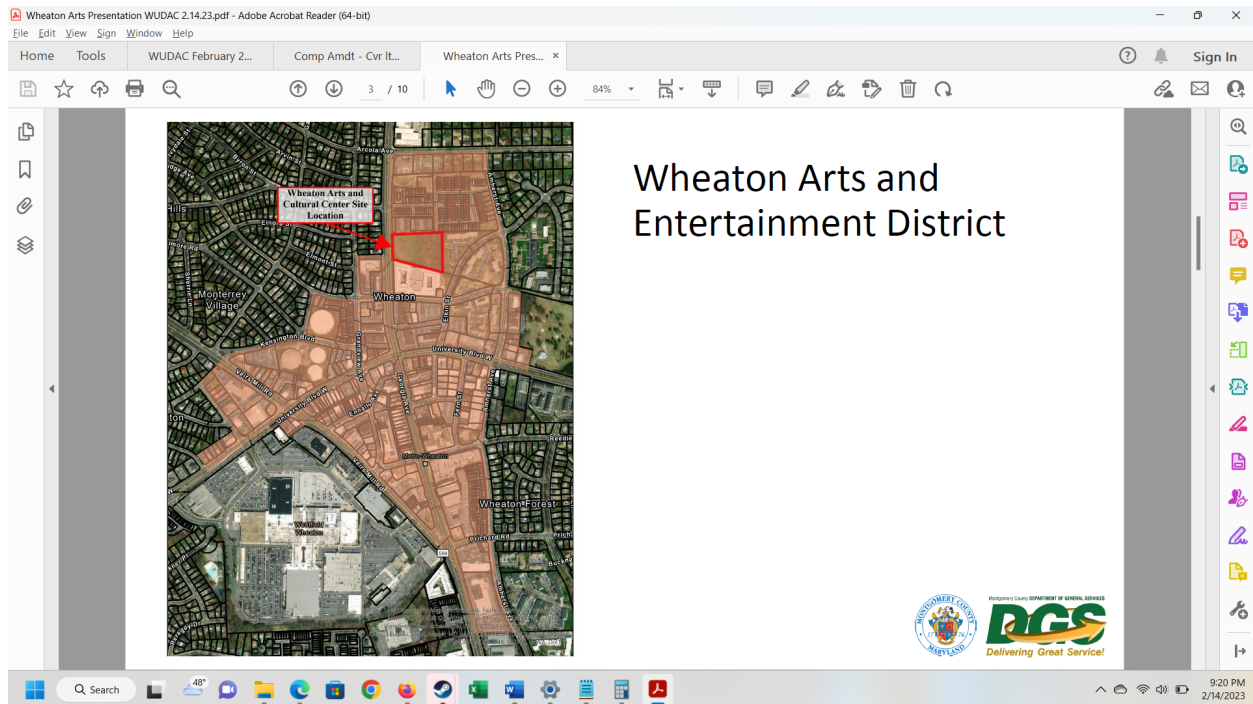
have a large bank interested in moving into one of 3 corners that are vacant. There's an artist community that can boost the community.

David – Let me give everyone a background on the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center.



Needs to be in the A&E district, meeting the requirements of the entire program requirements, ideally fit on a single floor (multiple floors impacts the flow and function of the facility, whenever I consider

a capital project I have to consider daycare and affordable housing. We want it to be accessible, multimodal, metro, foot car, and so on. There was a remnant of lot 13 that they tried for and it was very chopped up and much more expensive. The retail space was too small. Looked at Wheaton Gateway but that's requiring at least 2 floors and that would be a leased and not an owned space. Talked to Westfield mall and that wasn't viable. Lots 14 and 17 are identified as affordable housing sites, with an RFP sent out for proposals of those areas. Neither of them were good fits for this. Anything we do on a PLD lot requires adding parking, adding excessive costs to provide replacement parking. When we became aware of the MHD project on GA and the former WMATA property and started talking with them, that absolutely became a hand in glove function.

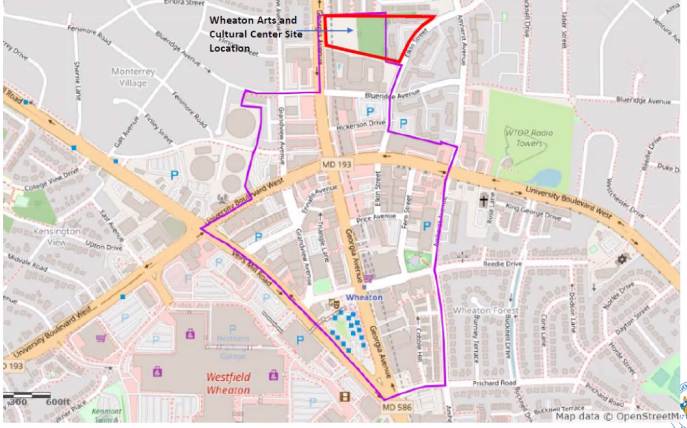


Wheaton Arts Presentation WUDAC 2.14.23.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader (32-bit)

You are viewing David Dise's screen View Options

Home Tools Wheaton Arts Pres...

Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center Site Location



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors

DES Department of Economic Services Delivering Great Service!

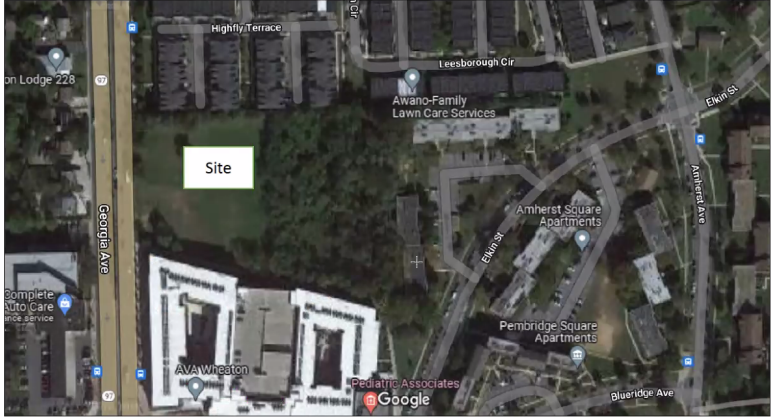
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Home Tools Wheaton Arts Pres...

Site Aerial



Site

AVA Wheaton

Pediatric Associates

Amherst Square Apartments

Pembroke Square Apartments

George Ave

Highfly Terrace

Leesborough Cir

Blue Ridge Ave

Google

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Wheaton Arts Presentation WUDAC 2.14.23.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader (32-bit)

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Arts and Cultural Center Layout

Participants: 31 Chat Share Screen Record Show Captions Reactions Apps

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Wheaton Arts Presentation WUDAC 2.14.23.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader (32-bit)

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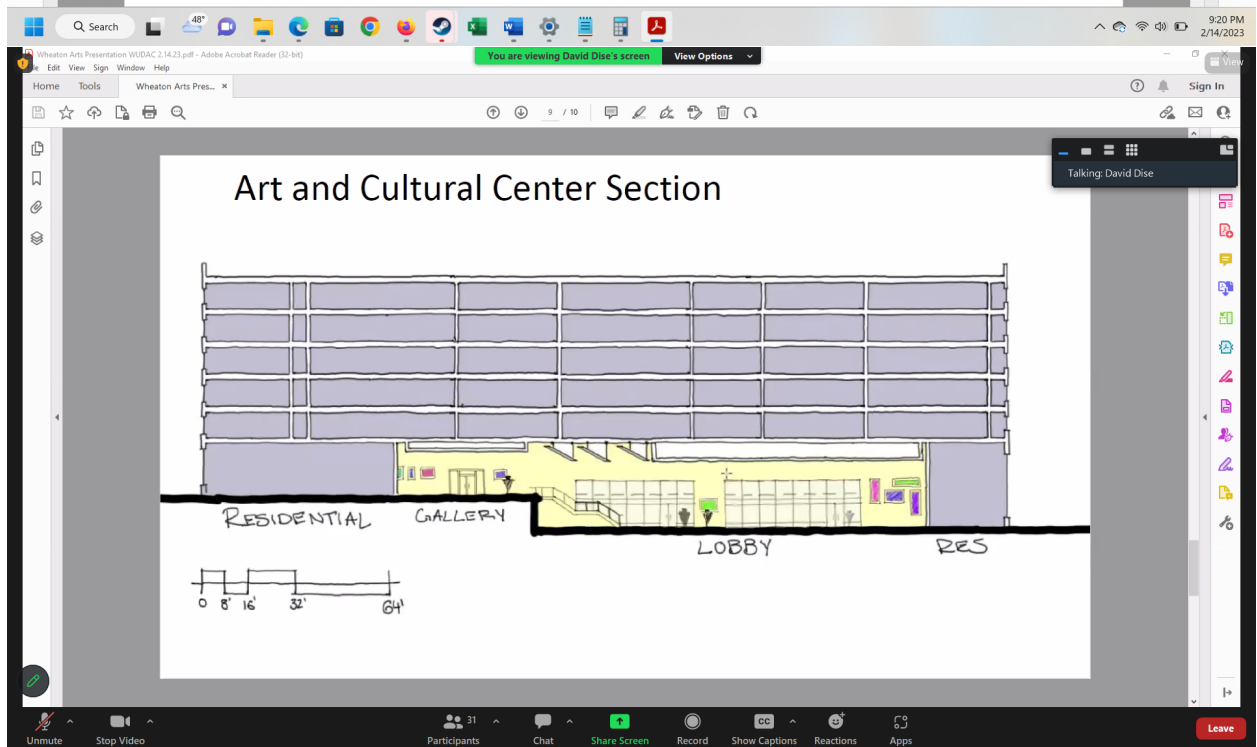
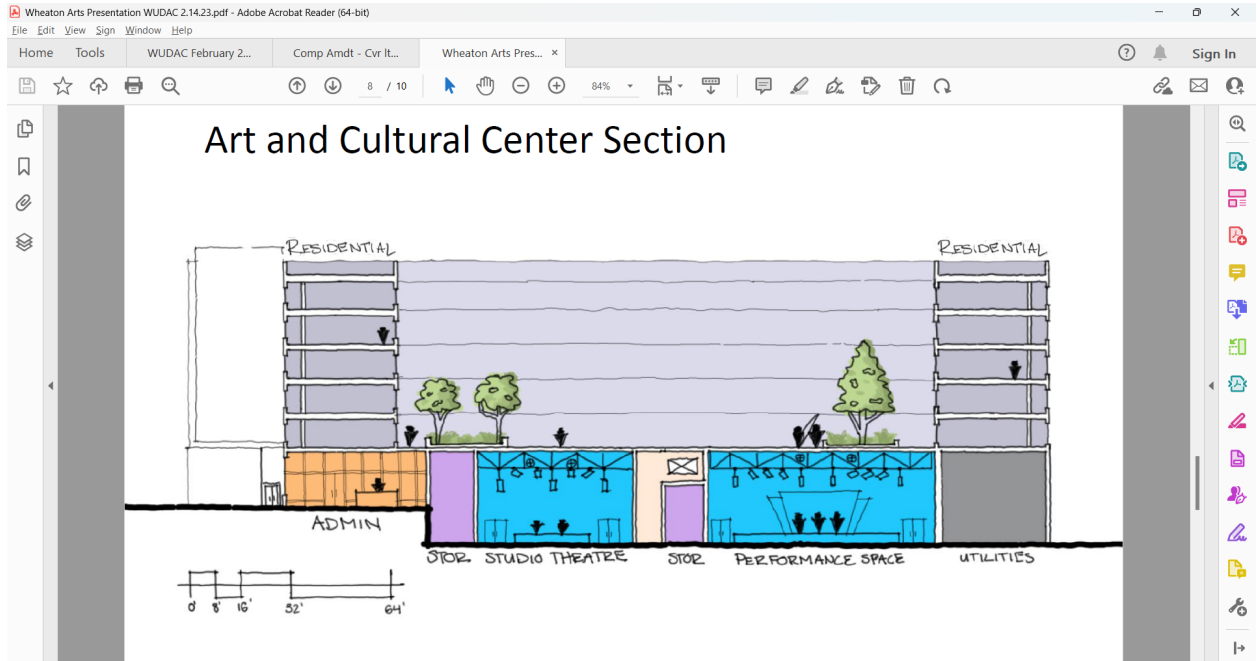
Arts and Cultural Center POR Components

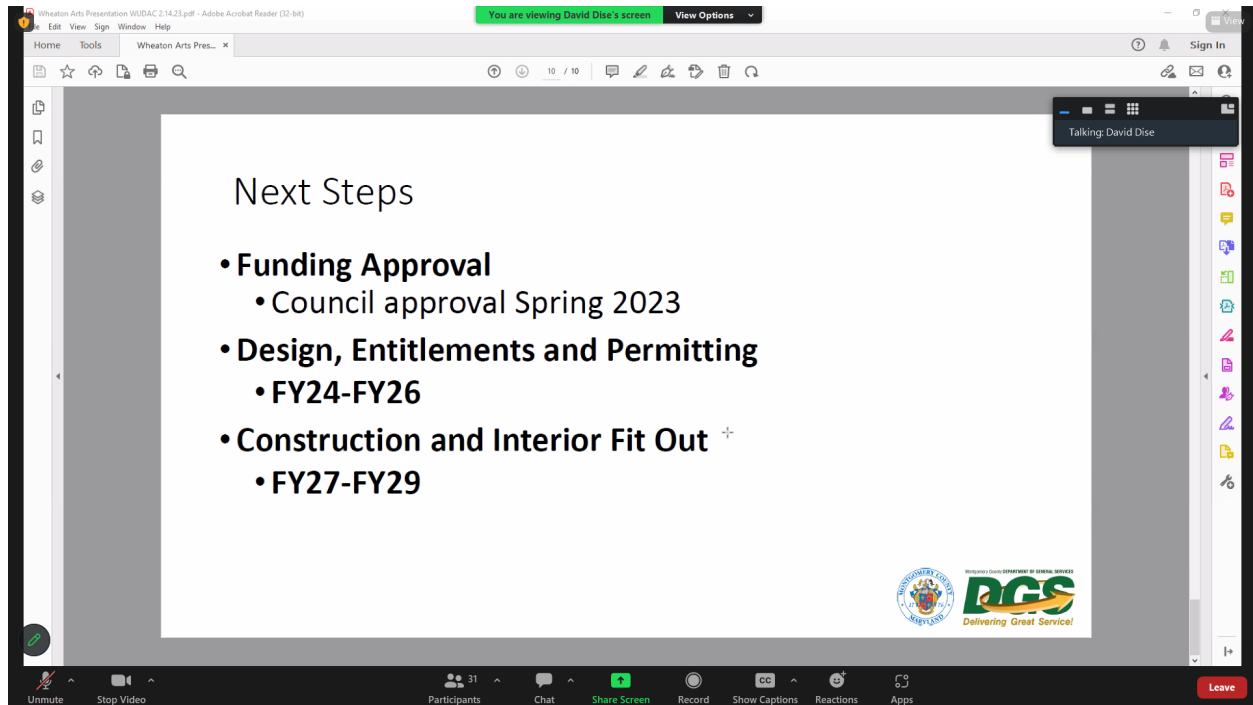
Room/Space	Area (SF)
A600 CLASSROOMS	3,340
A700 ADMINISTRATION	1,810
A800 SERVICES	390
A900 SERVICES	2,400
A100 PUBLIC SPACES	3,520
A200 PERFORMANCE SPACES	5,100
A300 STUDIO THEATRE	2,400
A400 PERF SUPPORT	1,260
A500 PERF SPACES	460
A600 STAGE SUPPORT	1,000
A700 SERVICES	1,270
A800 STUDIO SUPPORT	960

TOTAL: 18,400 SF
NOT INCLUDING MEZZ WASH SPACE

Participants: 31 Chat Share Screen Record Show Captions Reactions Apps

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Looked at as many sites as they could find that they thought it could be feasible. Proximity to metro is not necessarily a designator for revenue and success. People walk from the SS metro station up to Fillmore and AFI theater, and it is possible and can be done. Wheaton arts and cultural center will be .4 miles from the metro. This is what's moving forward and we can finally make it a reality.

Jim Epstein – when's the next meeting for public input going to be?

David – this is right now advocating is Natali and she's a strong advocate for this project. The layouts, finishing, programming will happen over the next couple of years. If MHP did a presentation it would just be on their portion of the project. The design phase hasn't really been started in earnest, what was shown is conceptual. The building shape will be the same.

Jim Epstein – are they add onto the existing inventory of affordable housing? Can it be more than 5 floors?

David – I don't know the answer to that.

Karen Cordry – how much sq footage will there be?

David – I want to say 40k sqft

Karen C – how much space was in lot 13?

David – lot 13 was 18k feet. With the unfinished floor being 11k feet.

Rob Fox – have there been any engagements with state or pre-planning for improving the sidewalks on the walking space between the metro and the location?

David – we talked to state about this project and improving the sidewalks, it's not part of this project to improve the sidewalks along GA but that would be a good project for improving things.

Leonard Greenberg – a report from park and planning commission payroll people from MoCo have recommended that the arts and entertainment building be in the CBD district south of University boulevard.

Wheaton Arts Parade – David and DGS think they've fulfilled all the requirements, but the last time the community saw the plans was 4 years ago. The requirements weren't presented as options or had discussions on them. You're not working from a shared vision that were endorsed by the community. You'll build something inadequate that won't serve the community and isn't what the community expected. We don't have a theater or studio center and we march the Wheaton arts parade to the town center, not off to the side.

Margaret Rifkin – For those of you who don't know me, please forgive me, but I will say that I'm an expert in planning, urban design, and walkability. I can say that I'm deeply concerned about the assumptions made here. Every time a project happens there are tradeoffs, and she's concerned that those tradeoffs weren't discussed with the community, the problems with walkability. Can we have the professional planners do a thorough review?

David – this project will have to go through reviews and comments

Natali – a community meeting is supposed to happen in March, but I don't have a date for that yet.

Rob Fox – if we have re-engagement with the community to discuss sites and criteria for what we want how far back would that put us on the process from where we're currently thinking?

Jim E – there's funding for site selection, but the info and the council doesn't actually say that a site has been selected specifically.

David – if it's not this site in this building, which is what the cost estimates have been based on, it will cost more and we don't know when it will occur. This is a project that's a wonderful opportunity to have an arts and cultural center, to have a partner that's very anxious and willing to bring it about. If we don't do this we don't know when we'll do it again. The \$20m is our portion of the base building and construction, with the next \$20m tranche for the buildout of the facility itself.

Jessica McVary – I'm here tonight on behalf of the Planning team, do want to correct that the draft study includes a specific recommendation related to the citing of the facility. The document references the facility and the work that's been underway, but does not include language about it's specific siting. Thank you to Luisa for mentioning the planning board will be discussing this this coming Thursday. One thing that we've been thinking about as a central theme to the study is connectivity and improving safety, connectivity, accessibility. That's a central theme of the study, not only connecting within the districts of Wheaton but among them, how to get to different places in a safe, comfortable and convenient way and are hoping the results of the study will help us in that direction.

Vicky Surles – the apartments would be new apartments, but they would be moving people from other apartments into them from ones being torn down.

David - The units to the east will be converted into townhomes and other developments.

Vicky Surles – but the existing housing would be torn down?

David – this isn't purely replacement housing, there's an increase in housing overall.

Ronni Warner – MHP will have 2 multi-family buildings, one a senior rental and the other a multi-family.

Leonard Greenberg – just because you can doesn't mean you should, and you're willing to spend money because you can't find another place to spend that money. I spoke with somebody who was tied into that and the CBD and this whole matter. They weren't even notified that this came up for discussion before this whole report came out. More importantly when planners who are afraid to speak up will go against the grain of what's right because they're afraid of upsetting things. There's no getting around doing the right thing for the right reasons, you could have 400 cars coming and going from that site, where are they going to park? There are places for people to come and go.

Jim Epstein – we have an opportunity for funding that may not come back again. Throwing away support for a project is something we'd want to be aware of and discuss other practical solutions that are available within the CBD area, let's hear about them, otherwise we're wasting our time.

Margaret Rifkin – 1st, thank you David and Ronni for coming. To reiterate – how do we get a review of the site selection and the walkability from the planning department, before the site plan is done?

Wheaton Arts Parade – the plan says development should be near the metro is what the plan said. It is sometimes better to not spend money in the wrong place rather than to spend it because you have it. We can wait a little longer and put it in the right place to build an urban center that's worth having 50 years from now.

VI. Old Business/Board Recruitment Updates 8:15pm

VII. New Business 8:25 pm

VIII. Adjourn 8:30 pm

NEXT WUDAC MEETING: March 14, 2023

18:54:54 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

https://www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgportalapps/Press_Detail_Pol.aspx?Item_ID=42853

3

19:04:05 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

Please introduce the WUDAC members present and their affiliations.

19:04:20 From Matthew Rakola to Everyone:

Hi, My name is Matthew Rakola. I've been a Wheaton resident for almost 10 years, living a few blocks east of the Wheaton metro station.

19:05:22 From Vicky Surles to Everyone:

Hi I'm Vicky Surles

19:05:36 From Judy Cochran to Everyone:

Judy Cochran....I'm with the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, reporting on what's happening in Wheaton/Kensington for the Land Use and Transportation Committee.

19:06:20 From April Giandomenico to Everyone:

April Giandomenico, President, Glenview Neighborhood Association (and small business owner, Rock Creek Learning)

19:06:34 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

Hi

19:06:56 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

I am Margaret Rifkin - The Art and Walkability Project...

19:08:09 From Wendy Howard, CC-P®, One Montgomery Green to Everyone:

Wendy Howard, One Montgomery Green, Wheaton Sustainable Innovation Zone

19:10:36 From Leah Haygood to Everyone:

Leah Haygood, resident

19:10:59 From Shawn Morris (He/Him/His) to Everyone:

To be clear, we cannot unmute people but we can request you unmute yourself.

19:11:22 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

<https://www.wkchamber.org/events-activities/mixers-networking-events/>

19:11:36 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

Will there be time for questions and comments re the Cultural Arts Center location tonight? I have concerns.

19:13:05 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

Information on the town hall can be found here: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/fani-gonzalez/>

19:13:36 From Nina Koltnow to Everyone:

Thank you for getting the Governor's attention on this, Natali.

19:14:24 From Kristy Daphnis to Everyone:

Wheaton 4D has one of the highest police vacancy rates.

19:16:19 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

FYI 2/22 is Ash Wednesday, so that can be tricky for those who observe so it may affect attendance - just sharing

19:17:06 From Natali Fani-González to Everyone:

Noted Peijisan. The great news: we will have TONS of follow up with other opportunities :)

19:21:58 From Wendy Howard, CC-P®, One Montgomery Green to Everyone:

Join Wheaton Sustainable Innovation Zone for a Community Event: Tackling Food Waste Wednesday Feb 15, 4-6p, Pls register <https://conta.cc/3XsPVwD>

19:24:40 From Kristy Daphnis to Everyone:

Luisa, is there a master calendar for the Wheaton area somewhere?

19:27:14 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

Not really but we do have a special events calendar on the WUD page. I can look into adding more on the MidCounty County Page Calendar

19:33:40 From Shawn Morris (He/Him/His) to Everyone:

Replying to "Luisa, is there a ma..."

By no means is this complete but you can select MidCounty in the service area on the right side of the screen for events <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcg/calendar.html>

19:34:10 From Matthew Rakola to Everyone:

Glad to hear about the Park Mobile competition. If I want to park for 30 minutes I pay almost as much in fees as I do to park.

19:34:20 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

Reacted to "By no means is this ..." with 👍

19:35:40 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

What UD activities does parking fund, besides Parking Day? Luisa, you don't have to answer now, but it would be good to know.

19:36:13 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

They funds go into general operations

19:36:30 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:

They don't go to a specific line item or event

19:51:10 From Chip Py to Everyone:

Why is it that when we Google "Retail Space for Rent in Wheaton" ? It doesn't come up??

19:58:42 From Matthew Rakola to Everyone:

Co-working space!

19:59:42 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

If there were a theatre and gallery next door a restaurant would be interested.

20:00:32 From Lisa Traiger (she/her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "If there were a thea..." with 👍

20:07:18 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

What does "there is no storefront" mean please?

20:14:37 From Chip Py to Everyone:

Tell it Lenny!

20:17:34 From Rob Fox to Everyone:

Replying to "What does "there is ..."

I think it means that the "front" of the location where the business is would be the municipal building, instead of signage and an entrance that's obviously for that business

20:19:23 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

FYI, this is one of the consultants reports from 2018. Studio space was a top priority.<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/DGS/Resources/Files/OPD/WheatonArtsFacilityStudyFindingPreliminaryFINAL.pdf>

20:19:38 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

Artists needs affordable housing and studio spaces to make our art. We are getting priced out of everywhere. Its a regional problem. DC artists have had to move to PG county and other counties and they are getting priced out there too now. It's a huge problem affecting the arts community. The designated A&E districts should have to guarantee a certain percentage of housing & work space along with a place to show our work and get recognition, commissions & sales! Artists are constantly told to work for "exposure" but we cannot pay rent or buy groceries with "exposure". Artists would come to Wheaton and be happy to work & live there if they felt they would be supported & not brought in to simply make it look nice to only the priced out once it attracts higher paying renters. It's a vicious cycle. Artists would come to live and stay if they felt it was a true win-win relationship.

20:21:12 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

But you didn't consider having only one theatre, and you didn't consider having two levels.

20:22:07 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

But you never presented it to the public until now.

20:23:30 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

EVERYBODY

20:26:21 From Shawn Morris (He/Him/His) to Everyone:

Here is the presentation from Mr Dise, and it will also be available on the wudac website tomorrow. (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/midcounty/boards/wudacindex.html>)

20:32:28 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

Artists always get put in the basement and for longevity and growth it doesn't work... it also pretty much guarantees we are the ones dealing with structural issues of the building over time such as water leaks... critter infestations.. and more. Ask local schools and the many that put their art programs into basements or lower levels... ask Einstein HS... and many more. It's a bad idea. I know from true experience. Every arts space I've been in has been a lower level and all have flooded and supplies, artworks and people's livelihoods can be destroyed.

20:33:15 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

As an expert on planning and walkability and the county - I would like to politely express my concern about the priorities upon which the site selection has been made and the assessment of the walkability of the location especially compared to the walkability in Silver Spring. These are significantly different walking experiences in many respects. Walking to the Fillmore from the SSMetro is not the same. Please send the site selection for review and comment by the Montgomery County Planning Department. Thank you!

20:34:26 From Chip Py to Everyone:

I find it troublesome that the CE announced this center as a done deal at the Wheaton Arts Parade in October and this is the first time that county has actually reached out to the people and stake holders in Wheaton.

20:38:50 From Lisa Traiger (she/her) to Everyone:

And please work on safe well-it and well-timed crossings on Georgia for neighborhoods on the opposite side of the street.

20:41:04 From Jessica McVary to Everyone:

Good evening. The draft Wheaton Downtown Study that Mr. Greenberg referenced is available here: https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Attachment-A-Wheaton-Downtown-Study-DRAFT-DOCUMENT_LEv3.pdf

20:43:03 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

Thank you Margaret. We need more caring passionate experts being listened to.

20:45:00 From Margaret Rifkin to Everyone:

The Planning Department should review site selection and walkability. Please.

20:45:38 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

The county government will have meetings but they won't change plans, they are not listening. We will have this thing, but we will not be happy with it.

20:47:51 From Jeannette Feldner to Everyone:

To repeat what I said at the Chamber meeting earlier, Wheaton is being given a building again instead of the Arts & Cultural Center we envisioned and hoped for years ago. I say again because we had a vision and plan for downtown Wheaton years ago, and then were told we were getting a building—the Park & Planning Bldg. And we should be happy about it and accept it. We had no choice. But here we are with no activity in the Urban District in the evening—a dark and barren place. No one walking around. No activity. And this new building and art space will not help our urban district one bit. Looking like we have no choice again. I hope this is not true.

20:48:35 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

I may not live to see it, but I would rather wait than waste the money by putting it in the wrong place. Think about what you want Wheaton to look like in 30 years.

20:49:41 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:



This entire proposed project just feels like MHP getting the apartment units they want and then some "throw away" space to be "multiuse" just to say they did something for the arts instead of the arts being the focus for the A&E district. Why can't we have BOTH? It doesn't seem impossible to have affordable housing AND a real thriving arts center with the space needed for all that true mutation-discipline arts center should have. I was a dance & performing arts teacher for 20 years...and a visual artist my whole life... having just 2 classrooms isn't fair and def isn't going to help the needs of the area... there are dance orgs and groups who would use it. There are visual artists who need work space and to feel "at home" in Wheaton.

20:52:00 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

And btw artists are like all humans and plants... we thrive in NATURAL LIGHT... being in a basement with no windows for natural is not ideal for any performing or visual artist. It's depressing

20:52:38 From Matthew Rakola to Everyone:

Whenever I see aerial images of Wheaton, like those on the Wheaton Downtown Study draft, I am struck by how many 1-2 story buildings there are with flat roofs. It's an inefficient use of space. I can't help but think that there is plenty of POTENTIAL square footage if we stop thinking in 2 dimensions (lot size) and start thinking about using existing lots more efficiently. Yes, it would require demolition, but also has a lot of possibility

20:53:14 From Pete Lublin to Everyone:

wheaton Arts Parade.. You are exactly right. Its going in the wrong place...No one is going to walk up the eye sore Georgia Ave to this facility. Lets not waist money and find the ideal location in the center of Wheaton... 40 million dollars is a lot of money to waist

20:53:38 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:



20:55:41 From Wheaton Arts Parade to Everyone:

I understand why the Co Exec did not announce this before the election. At the parade he said he had some good news for Wheaton. And this is the good news?

20:56:10 From Peijisan Art to Everyone:

If it's truly for artists why aren't artists and arts orgs being consulted as to what we know we want and Need??

20:57:37 From Lisa Traiger (she/her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "wheaton Arts Parade...." with 👍

20:58:22 From pedro matamoros to Everyone:

Wheaton needs the Art center right here in the Distric, for many reason that we all know, walkability, bringing people in the CBD, it would bring more money to the county etc. bring our community to Wheaton, etc. This feels all wrong and feels like not even the people that are making this decision really believe that this is the right site for it, and also is this going to be another half way done job just like this big county building ?

20:59:20 From Jeannette Feldner to Everyone:

I agree, Pedro. Nicely stated.

20:59:33 From Pete Lublin to Everyone:

You may have the funding... but don't put it in the wrong place..

20:59:57 From Nina Koltnow to Everyone:

I do recommend that everyone read through the Wheaton Downtown Study attached here by Jessica McVary. It has a lot of excellent and practical steps toward making the greater Wheaton area more walkable.

21:02:19 From kcordry@naag.org to Everyone:

It really does sound like the "all on one floor" criteria is a distinctly secondary concern. IF you go past that one point, sounds like you can definitely put in on the Lot 13 site area.