

Submitted June 9, 2022  
Approved June 15, 2022

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING NO. 08-2022  
Wednesday, May 11, 2022**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session  
via WebEx at 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, May 11, 2022

**PRESENT**

Suzan Pitman - Chair

Andrea Nuñez                      Sam Pearson  
John Tyner, II

**Present:** Nicholas Dumais, Senior Assistant City Attorney  
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Zoning  
Nelson Ortiz, Principal Planner  
Faramarz Mokhtari, Senior Transportation Planner

Chair Pitman opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m., noting that the meeting was being conducted virtually via WebEx.

**I. REVIEW AND ACTION**

**A. Minor Site Plan Amendment Application STP2022-00439, to Remove a Parking Restriction Note on the Site Plan for Thomas S. Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Parkway; Montgomery County Public Schools, Applicant**

Mr. Wasilak introduced the proposed amendment, noting that while the amendment qualifies as minor amendment, the proposal requests changes to the original conditions of the approval previously imposed by the Planning Commission in 1999. Thereby, Mr. Wasilak added that it was important to present the subject proposal to the Commission for its review and action.

Mr. Ortiz presented the subject amendment, describing that the Commission had originally approved a use permit application (equivalent to what is a site plan application currently) in June of 1999 to allow for an expansion and modernization of the existing Thomas S. Wootton High School. The use permit approval included a condition that the bus loop would incorporate approximately 56 new after-hours spaces and 24 bus spaces. Mr. Ortiz continued that in December of 2021, notice was by the City to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) that such after-hours condition had been violated and was not being abided by. He added that MCPS had filed the subject application in response to the City's violation in order to remove a note on the previous approved site plan that restricts vehicular parking within the bus loop to after-hours,

with no other changes proposed at this time. Mr. Ortiz explained that the proposed change would allow vehicular parking within the bus loop at all times rather than only allowing for vehicle parking other than buses at certain times.

Mr. Ortiz noted that staff had analyzed various components of the site and application including conducting a site visit, retaining police reports, public comments and identifying existing parking constraints on-site. He noted that several comments had been received from the public noting their concerns with parking conditions on the site. Mr. Ortiz summarized that with staff's analysis of the parking plan presented by the applicant with this request, staff found that the subject request met the required findings of the application's original approval and thereby, recommended approval of this application, subject to the condition of one additional security member being added to the bus loop entrance, and that the parking capacity and bus loop configuration be addressed during MCPS's FY2027 major capital improvement program process.

Chair Pitman inquired about how the proposed application would address the County and the City's "Vision Zero" initiative to further prevent traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Mr. Mokhtari responded that in response to Vision Zero several traffic calming facilities had been installed around the school which contributed to the goals of Vision Zero. Mr. Ortiz added that staff's analysis of traffic incidents at the school dated back to 2010 in which there were no incidents which occurred on the school premises or during school hours.

Gary Mosesman of MCPS commented that the existing on-site parking conditions of the site had been present for the last 20 years, and added that MCPS had taken several steps to ensure the safety of students and faculty in the use of the parking lots and vehicular circulation. He added that MCPS would be undertaking a comprehensive review of the school site once again to modernize and update the site to current requirements during its FY2027 capital project process.

Chair Pitman expressed some concern about the proposed condition to add an additional security member to the bus loop and emphasized the importance of increased training for staff to help enforce the parking rules already in place. Commissioner Tyner commented that he previously visited the school site regularly for a period of time and noted that during such time, he did not observe and major issue with vehicular movements on the site. He added that the Commission may have an additional opportunity to review the school site and traffic at the site when MCPS presents its plans for upgrading the school site and vicinity.

Upon discussion with Mr. Dumais, Chair Pitman inquired that in lieu of the proposed condition requiring an additional security member at the bus loop entrance, could the Commission require MCPS to submit their traffic circulation policy to the Commission. Mr. Dumais noted that such documentation would most likely be public record and could be obtained by the Commission by

request. He added that MCPS does have the authority to not comply with the Commission's conditions, given that its actions are compliant with the state's land use regulations.

Commissioner Nuñez indicated her support for not requiring the additional security member. Mr. Mosesman indicated that he could forward the school's traffic circulation policy to the Commission.

Commissioner Tyner made a motion to approve minor site plan amendment application STP2022-00439, subject to the findings and conditions presented in staff's report, with the exception of removing conditions 1 and 2, and replacing such conditions with a new condition 1 which would state that MCPS and Wootton High School intensify enforcement and monitoring of the traffic and circulation patterns at the school, revising condition 3 to become condition 2 and remove language from such condition indicating an additional security member and condition 4 being revised to become condition 3. Commissioner Nuñez seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. Proposed Concept for RedGate Park

Mr. Ortiz briefly overviewed that staff was bringing this item before the Commission to obtain its feedback on the proposed concept plan for RedGate Park to further offer such recommendations to the Mayor and Council on a final plan for the park site. He noted that the City had held several public information and comment session to gain input from the public on the concept plan for the park.

Commissioner Tyner indicated that he was not comfortable with making a recommendation on the concept plan at this meeting given the number of concerns noted from the public and the need to have duplicative programming at the park which may be present at other facilities within the City. Commissioners Tyner and Pearson indicated that they would like additional time to consider the proposed concept plan. Commissioner Nuñez and Chair Pitman indicated their concerns with the proposed amphitheater but the Commission agreed to further discuss the proposed concept plan at its next meeting.

## III. COMMISSION ITEMS

- A. **Staff Liaison Report** – Mr. Wasilak reported that the Commission's next meeting on May 25, 2022, would include the review and action on the first record plat of the previously approved Potomac Woods development.
- B. **Old Business** – Chair Pitman inquired about the issue of future meetings and whether the Commission should consider a hybrid option of in-person and virtual component meetings. Commissioner Tyner and Commissioner Pearson indicated that given the current minimal

numbers of Commissioners, it would be more cohesive to remain virtual rather than considering the hybrid option, so as not to have competing directions for members of the Commission. Mr. Wasilak recommended that having at least three Commissioners present in the Council chambers for a hybrid meeting would assist in providing a presence for those attending in-person.

Chair Pitman proposed that the Commission adopt a hybrid meeting concept with a caveat of the Commissioners providing their schedules ahead of time to ensure that Commissioners will be present in the Council chambers.

Commissioner Tyner noted that he has a schedule conflict for the upcoming June 8 meeting. Mr. Wasilak indicated that the proposed meeting in June could possibly be shifted to accommodate Commissioner Tyner. Commissioner Nuñez proposed having one meeting in June given the anticipated agenda load.

- C. New Business** – Chair Pitman indicated a meeting which she had with Planning and Department of Public Works staff to review traffic and transportation policy to understand what the requirements are in the City and to explore if there are any updates that may be needed. She added that such meeting revealed that the City uses strict standards and lowering such standards could make current traffic in the city worse rather than better. She added that the Traffic and Transportation staff would provide additional training to the Commission and would invite members of the Traffic and Transportation Commission to such meeting.

Commissioner Doug Ierley of the Traffic and Transportation Commission added that he would welcome collaboration with the Planning Commission to fully understand the traffic and transportation policies of the City and aid in project reviews.

- D. Minutes Approval**– Chair Pitman asked if there were any changes needed to the draft minutes of the Commission’s March 23, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Pearson made the motion to approve the March 23, 2022 minutes as drafted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nuñez. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.
- E. FYI/Correspondence** –Mr. Wasilak indicated there was one piece of correspondence each for both the Wootton High School and Redgate Park items.

#### **IV. ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Nuñez moved, seconded by Commissioner Pearson, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:41 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Commission Liaison