

# Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC)

## Agenda

Friday, October 5, 2018

- I. GENERAL CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE UPDATE (5 min.)
- II. ZOM OFFSITE IMPROVEMENTS (15 min.)
- III. LOADING/DELIVERY BAY IMPROVEMENTS (5 min.)
- IV. WISCONSIN AVENUE SHA UPDATE (15 min.)
- V. MPDU LAW PROPOSED REVISIONS (15 min.)
- VI. NEW BUSINESS (5 min.)
- VII. NEXT MEETING- FRIDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2018

<http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-implementation-advisory-committee/>

### Meeting Notes and Attendees:

#### I. General Construction Timeline Update – Michael Brown, Planning Department

- At the July meeting, Diane Jones presented a website that would identify construction activity and permits associated with projects in downtown Bethesda. That website is still under construction.
- Planning Staff recommended the IAC create a spreadsheet that could be updated for each meeting by DPS until the website goes live. Christina Contreras, DPS would be the contact.
- Ken Hartman agreed to forward IAC members the project update emails sent from the individual development teams. A recommendation was made to construct a standard form for these updates to ensure the information is consistent and accessible.

#### II. ZOM offsite improvements – Amanda Farber, IAC

- (Co-Chairs' Note 10/11/2018: Responding to public requests, ZOM has agreed to pay into an open space fund rather than directly provide public open space improvements)



- With the recent approval of the ZOM project by the Planning Board, there was concern that the proposed offsite improvements do not fulfill the developer's obligation as required.
- Friends of the Library and Bethesda Garden Club also planned to make improvements to the same site proposed by the ZOM.
- CBAR is drafting a letter outlining issues including a question about transparency and how the offsite proposal will be publicly vetted.
- Questions/issues raised to explored by IAC staff:
  - There should be a process to review proposals for offsite improvements.
  - What is the enforcement of conditions regarding offsite improvements?
  - Can a fund be established to receive payment for offsite improvements?
  - Is the amenity list in the sector plan (pg. 151-152) also fundable projects?
- Planning staff, in coordination with BCC Services Center and BUP will explore and follow-up with a report at a later meeting.

### III. Loading/Delivery Bay Improvements – Amanda Farber, IAC

- Delivery trucks and moving vans are found to repeatedly block sidewalks and bike lanes.
- It was suggested that loading bays should be better designed to accommodate off-street loading.
- Referencing previous projects, Ken Hartman cautioned against loading design that overwhelms the sidewalk and pedestrian realm.
- It was noted that some residential buildings may restrict days/times for moving, contributing to the issue.
- Enforcement of such parking violations is rare and it's unclear if the legal statutes are fully understood.
- It was pointed out that many retailers and restaurants in Bethesda are street-loaded, and that over-zealous enforcement would impact their businesses.
- It was suggested there needs to be an education component to property and facility managers concerning scheduling deliveries.
- Ken Harman suggested a discussion with representatives from BCC Chambers, BUP, and Police command at their regular meeting.

### IV. Wisconsin Avenue SHA update – Amanda Farber, IAC

- A letter from SHA was presented to the IAC. Email attached.
- It was suggested that a SHA rep be invited for regular updates and to improve communication about the details of the projects.

### V. MPDU Law Proposed Revisions – Lisa Govoni and Pam Dunn, Planning Department

- Planning staff gave an overview of the affordable housing legislation currently being considered by the county council. Presentation attached.

### VI. New Business

- Veronique Marier announced she will vacate the position of executive director of Bethesda Green but will continue to attend IAC meeting through the end of the year until her replacement is selected.

### VII. Next Meeting – Friday, November 2, 2018



Meeting Attendees:

IAC Members and Staff:

Amanda Farber, Jad Donohoe, Anna Fierst, Dedun Ingram, Naomi Spinrad, Jon Weintraub, Steve Long, Emily Vaias, Jack Alexander, Patrick O'Neil, Michael Fetchko, Rick Ammirato, Ken Hartman, Veronique Marier

Other attendees:

Michael Brown (Planning Department), Pam Dunn (Planning Department), Lisa Govoni (Planning Department)



**From:** Derek Gunn

**Date:** October 4, 2018 at 5:40:46 PM EDT

**To:** Amanda Farber

**Cc:** Andre Futrell, Christopher Bishop, Shannon Coyne, Stephanie Coates

**Subject:** **Montgomery County: MD 355 (Wisconsin Avenue) at Avondale Street, Middleton Lane, and Chase Avenue**

Dear Ms. Farber:

This is in response to your pedestrian safety concerns at the subject locations in Montgomery County. The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) District Three traffic engineering staff appreciates the opportunity to share with you efforts in progress along the subject corridor.

During our previous evaluation of the subject pedestrian crossings, we identified several improvements that we are currently pursuing. For all three crossings, to provide guidance to approaching motorists on the proper location to stop along MD 355 when pedestrians are within the crosswalk, we have asked our maintenance forces to install stop lines and "Stop Here for Pedestrians" signage for both directions of MD 355. These improvements, which include pavement markings, will be included in a list of locations that are to be handled by our maintenance team's pavement marking contractor and will be completed this Fall based on scheduling.

In response to concerns at the crossings at Avondale Street and Middleton Lane, we are pleased to inform that our MDOT SHA Office of Traffic and Safety (OOTS) recently approved installation of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) with pedestrian warning signs along northbound MD 355, south of Commerce Lane/Avondale Street and along southbound MD 355 north of Middleton Lane. Pedestrian push buttons will be installed at each crosswalk to activate both sets of beacons. These pedestrian-activated warning beacons are anticipated to increase motorist awareness of pedestrians that are present at the crosswalks. Additional information regarding RRFBs can be found at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) website link [https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/interim\\_approval/ia21/index.htm](https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/interim_approval/ia21/index.htm).

In response to concerns regarding pedestrian mobility and safety at MD 355 at Chase Avenue, our MDOT SHA District Three Traffic and Utility offices are actively working within the development plan review process to ensure a safe, marked pedestrian crossing is maintained at this location.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me directly at 301-513-7498 or 1-800-749-0737. I will be pleased to assist.

Sincerely,

Derek L. Gunn, P.E.

Assistant District Engineer for Traffic (Montgomery County)

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