Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 8700 Colesville Road, Silver Spring  
Meeting Date: 9/19/18

Resource: Montgomery Arms Apartments  
Report Date: 9/12/18
Individually Listed Master Plan Site

Review: Preliminary  
Public Notice: 9/05/18

Case Number: 36/07-002A  
Tax Credit: No

Applicant: Corey Pitts, Montgomery County DOT  
Staff: Rebeccah Ballo

Proposal: Construction of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station and associated signage

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the applicant make revisions based upon the HPC’s and staff comments and return with a revised proposal for a second preliminary consultation or a HAWP.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Site (Montgomery Arms Apartments)
STYLE: Art Deco
DATE: 1941

Statement of Significance:

Constructed in 1941, the Montgomery Arms Apartments provide a fine example of small scale Art Deco style apartments which reflect the intense development of the Washington area in multi-family housing during the years prior to World War II. Design elements characteristic of the Art Deco style that are found in the Montgomery Arms Apartments include horizontal string courses and shallow wall setbacks, use of decorative glass block, flat roofs, as well as entries and decorative panels which emphasize geometric and stylized designs. In addition, the Montgomery Arms complex represents the growth of Silver Spring during this period as a major 20th-century community in Montgomery County.

The Montgomery Arms Apartments include three late Art Deco style apartment buildings arranged around a landscaped courtyard, located at the northern corner of the intersection of Colesville Road (Rt. 29) and Fenton Street in downtown Silver Spring. In addition to the courtyard, landscaped areas are located between the buildings and sidewalks along both Fenton Street and Colesville Road. A surface parking lot takes up the remained of the parcel north to Cameron Street.
Figure 1: The Montgomery Arms Apartments is located within the red circle. The yellow hashed area denotes the greater Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) Locational Atlas District.

**PROPOSAL**

- Removal of pavement and construction of a new platform to accommodate the BRT stop.
- Installation of new signage identifying the BRT stop.

**APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:**

When reviewing alterations and additions to a Master Plan site several documents are to be utilized and guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include Montgomery County Code chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards). The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

*Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” Standards 2, 9, and 10 most directly apply to the application before the commission:

#2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
#9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

#10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8(b)
A HAWP permit should be issued if the Commission finds that:
1. The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of a historic site or historic resource within a historic district.
2. The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical archaeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which a historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto of to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter.
3. The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or

BACKGROUND
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-quality and high-capacity bus-based transit system that delivers fast, comfortable, reliable and cost-effective transit service. It does this through the provision of dedicated transit lanes, branded stations and buses, off-board fare collection, real time information and fast and frequent operations, among other things. Because BRT contains features similar to a light rail or metro system, it is much more reliable, convenient and faster than other bus services. With the right features, BRT can avoid the causes of delay that slow local bus services.

The 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and amendments, including the 2014 White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan, are the guiding policy documents for BRT in Montgomery County along US 29. This functional master plan identifies 10 bus rapid transit corridors and includes recommendations for:
• Master-planned right-of-way.
• Station locations.
• Recommendations for dedicated transit lanes.
• Number of additional lanes that can be added to the road to provide dedicated bus lanes.

The US 29 Bus Rapid Transit Project proposes a 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line along US 29 and local streets, from the Silver Spring Transit Center (SSTC) to the Burtonsville Park-and-Ride, as shown on the Corridor Map in Figure 1. The project has evolved from a previous conceptual plan, the US 29 Corridor Planning Study: Corridor Report (Maryland Department of Transportation, April 2017), and is currently being advanced by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration. This $31.5 million project is funded through County and federal funds, including a $10 million federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant from the Federal Transit Administration.
Figure 2: US route 29 BRT Corridor Map. Montgomery Arms Apartments is located adjacent to Fenton Street Station.

The Planning Board heard the Mandatory Referral Case for the entirety of the US Route 29 BRT project at its July 26, 2018 hearing (MCPB Item No. 12); http://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MR2018038-US-29-Bus-
Planning Department staff, including Historic Preservation staff, recommended that the Planning Board approve the Mandatory Referral. Comments were submitted and accepted regarding the need for additional design review and HAWP approval by the HPC for the Fenton Street Station platform located within the Montgomery Arms Apartments

STAFF DISCUSSION
The Fenton Street station consists of two platforms located near the intersection of Fenton Street and US 29. One platform measuring approximately 20’ by 10’ is located on the southern side of US 29, near the southeast corner of the US 29 / Fenton Street intersection. A second platform measuring approximately 65’ x 16.2’ is located on the northern side of US 29, near the northwest corner of the US29 / Fenton Street intersection. It is this second platform that requires HAWP review and approval under Chapter 24A.

This second platform, located on the northern side of US 29 is located fully within the Silver Spring CBD, but also partially within the boundaries of the Montgomery Arms Apartments Master Plan Historic Site (#36/007-002A). The parcel boundary of Montgomery Arms extends into the sidewalk in this area by approximately 10 feet; more than half of this platform is technically located within the parcel boundary of Montgomery Arms and will require a permanent easement to be constructed. The easement area is noted on the submitted plans and cross-section for this platform.

Construction of this platform and associated paving, signage, and any railings or other alterations will require a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP) and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). No alterations are currently proposed to the retaining wall, steps, or landscaped area of the Montgomery Arms Apartments.

While this platform will technically be located inside the boundaries of the Historic Site, the area is already paved and is a heavily used sidewalk. The construction of the BRT platform itself will not substantially change the character of the environmental setting. Staff would recommend approval of the platform itself as submitted.

The proposed station marker for this BRT stop is proposed to be located within the boundaries of the environmental setting. The marker is called out as F1 on the submitted site plan (Sheet 270 of 358). The marker would be located immediately adjacent to the kneewall of the apartment complex, to the left of the stairs leading from the sidewalk into the interior courtyard. As proposed, the station marker measures approximately 17’ tall, with a triangular base, tapering in width as the height increases. The base of the marker would be clad in a stone veneer, and the upper portions would be sheathed in powder coated metal, with a continuous horizontal band of LED lights spanning both materials. An integrated touch screen and map would be positioned on the lower portion of the marker and would be ADA compliant. The canopies shown in the application are not proposed for this BRT station, but would be used elsewhere in the corridor.

While staff recognizes that the station marker is a modern element of a busy transit corridor, its proximity and proposed height so close to the adjacent kneewall of the historic apartment building is potentially incompatible. The renderings submitted for this preliminary consultation do not show the station marker in place with the adjacent historic site. Staff recommends that the
applicant submit viewshed studies and renderings that place this station marker in its proposed context within the historic site boundaries. Staff would also recommend that the applicant consider relocating this sign outside the historic site boundaries, and/or consider a design that is not so tall.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**
Staff recommends that the applicant make revisions based upon the HPC’s and staff comments and return with a revised proposal for a second preliminary consultation or a HAWP.
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: corey.pitts@montgomerycountymd.gov
Contact Person: Corry Pitts
Daytime Phone No.: 240-777-7217

Tax Account No.: 
Name of Property Owner: Montgomery Arms Development Corp
Daytime Phone No.: 
Address: 10400 Detrick Avenue
Kensington
MD
20895
Street Number
City
State
Zip Code
Contractor:
Contractor Registration No.: 
Agent for Owner:
Daytime Phone No.: 

LOCATION OF BUILDING
House Number: 8700
Street: Colesville Road
Town/City: Silver Spring
Nearest Cross Street: Fenton Street
Lot: ____________ Block: _______ Subdivision: _______ Lot: _______ Block: _______ Subdivision: _______

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT, ACTION AND USE
1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:
☐ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alters/Renovate
☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck/Raze
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable
☐ Fence/Wall (fill in complete Section 4)
☐ Other: Sidewalk, ramps, and
marking

1B. Construction cost estimate: $ 140,000

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit 

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSION/ADDITIONS
2A. Type of sewage disposal: ☐ 01 WSSC ☐ 02 Septic ☐ 03 Other:
2B. Type of water supply: ☐ 01 WSSC ☐ 02 Well ☐ 03 Other:

PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL
3A. Height ______ feet ______ inches
3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:
☐ On property line/property line ☐ Entirely on land of owner ☐ On public right of way/assessment

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date: 8/20/18

Approved: 
For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: 
Signature: 
Date: 

Application/Permit No.: 849130 
Date Filed: 8/20/18 
Date Issued: 

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS
THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION.

1. WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT
   a. Description of existing structure(s) and environmental setting, including their historical features and significance:
      Constructed in 1941, the Montgomery Arms Apartments include a prime example of late Art Deco style apartment structures arranged around a landscaped courtyard. The complex is located at the northern corner of the intersection of Colesville Road (US 29) and Fenton Street in Silver Spring, Maryland. Two three-story buildings flank a long courtyard and are set with their narrow ends facing Colesville Road. In addition to the courtyard, landscaped areas are located between the buildings and sidewalks along both Fenton Street and Colesville Road. A brick retaining wall separates the edge of the property from the Colesville Road sidewalk.
      The Silver Spring Central Business District is an urban center with a mix of shops, restaurants, offices, civic uses, and residential apartments/condos. Uses immediately around the Montgomery Arms Apartments include: office, hotel, shops, restaurants, and entertainment.
   b. General description of project and its effect on the historic resource(s), the environmental setting, and, where applicable, the historic district:
      The US 29 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Improvements Project proposes a 14-mile BRT line along US 29 and local streets from the Silver Spring Transit Center to the Burtonsville Park and Ride. The project is consistent with recommendations in the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Plan.
      The project intends to construct a station at the northwest corner of Colesville Road and Fenton Street in front of the Montgomery Arms Apartments. The station will consist of a raised sidewalk and associated ramps in front of the existing brick wall of the apartments and a station marker. The project will not change or alter the existing wall.

2. SITE PLAN
   Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plot. Your site plan must include:
   a. the scale, north arrow, and date;
   b. dimensions of all existing and proposed structures; and
   c. site features such as walkways, driveways, fences, ponds, streams, trash dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and landscaping.

3. PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
   You must submit 2 copies of plans and elevations in a format no larger than 11" x 17". Plans on 8 1/2" x 11" paper are preferred.
   a. Schematic construction plans, with marked dimensions, indicating location, size and type of walls, window and door openings, and other fixed features of both the existing resources and the proposed work.
   b. Elevations (facades), with marked dimensions, clearly indicating proposed work in relation to existing construction and, when appropriate, context. All materials and features proposed for the exterior must be noted on the elevations drawings. An existing and a proposed elevation drawing of each facade affected by the proposed work is required.

4. MATERIALS SPECIFICATIONS
   General description of materials and manufactured items proposed for incorporation in the work of the project. This information may be included on your design drawings.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS
   a. Clearly labeled photographic prints of each facade of existing resource, including details of the affected portions. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.
   b. Clearly label photographic prints of the resource as viewed from the public right-of-way and of the adjoining properties. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.

6. TREE SURVEY
   If you are proposing construction adjacent to or within the drip line of any tree 6" or larger in diameter (at approximately 4 feet above the ground), you must file an accurate tree survey identifying the size, location, and species of each tree of at least that dimension.

7. ADDRESSES OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS
   For ALL projects, provide an accurate list of adjacent and confronting property owners (not tenants), including names, addresses, and zip codes. This list should include the owners of all lots or parcels which adjoin the parcel in question, as well as the owner(s) of lot(s) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

PLEASE PRINT (IN BLUE OR BLACK INK) OR TYPE THIS INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.
PLEASE STAY WITHIN THE GUIDES OF THE TEMPLATE, AS THIS WILL BE PHOTOCOPIED DIRECTLY ONTO MAILING LABELS.
MATERIALS AND FEATURES:

- **METAL PANEL**
  - RAL 5002
  - Metallic Finish

- **RECESSED LINEAR LED STRIP LIGHT**
  - Street facing edge only

- **REAL-TIME DIGITAL DISPLAY & INFORMATION PANEL**

- **METAL PANEL**
  - RAL 9003
  - Metallic Finish

- **MONOLITHIC STONE**
  - Olympic Black Granite
  - Finish: Flamed

GetOnBoard BRT
BUS RAPID TRANSIT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY
US 29
Reconstruct sidewalk to provide elevated platform and associated ramps from the traffic
Detail: camera north to the third planter box, install marker per included plan sheet. All changes occur from in front of the wall to the curb face.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner's mailing address</th>
<th>Owner's Agent's mailing address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Arms Development Corporation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10400 Detrick Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kensington, MD 20895-2440</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Association of Colesville LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c/o Property Tax Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>755 Crossover Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memphis, TN 38117-000C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colesville Joint Venture</th>
<th>Jemals Colemont LLC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c/o HBW Group</td>
<td>c/o Douglas Development Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1055 1st Street, Suite 200</td>
<td>702 H Street NW, Suite 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockville, MD 20850-8400</td>
<td>Washington, DC 20001-3748</td>
</tr>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zlotnick &amp; Kraft-Montgomery LLC</th>
<th>Alirma LLC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c/o Gerald P Grossberg</td>
<td>13913 Shannon Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6624 Wilson Lane</td>
<td>Silver Spring, MD 20904-1158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethesda, MD 20817-5540</td>
<td></td>
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