

2nd Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7155 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda	Meeting Date:	7/24/2019
Resource:	Individually Listed Master Plan Site Farm Women’s Market (#35/14-1)	Report Date:	7/16/2019
Applicant:	Charles T. Hathway, Agent	Public Notice:	7/10/2019
Review:	2 nd Preliminary Consultation	Staff:	John Liebertz
Proposal:	Site and building alterations, comprehensive rehabilitation, and new construction		

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicant revise the proposal based on feedback from staff and the HPC and return for a third preliminary consultation.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Individually Listed Master Plan Site
STYLE: Vernacular
DATE: 1932

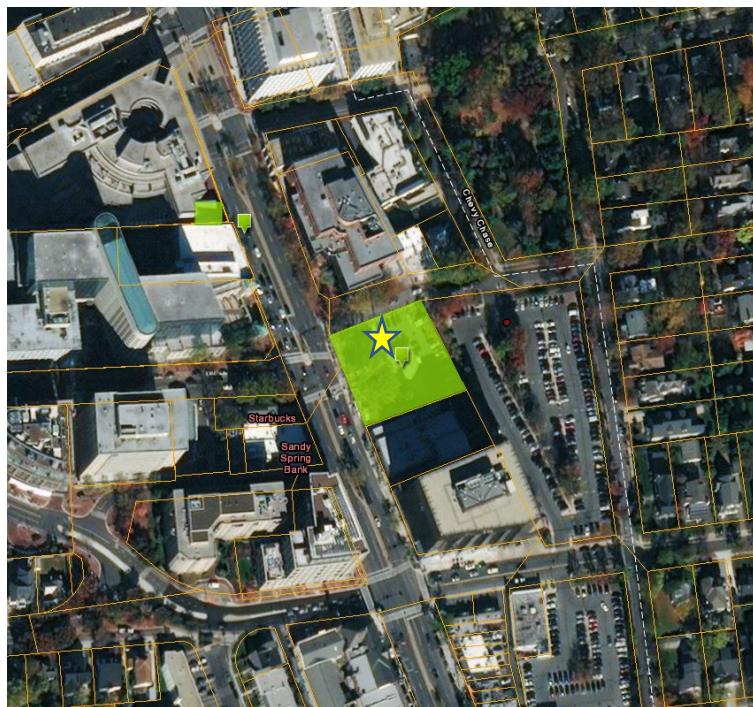


Figure 1: The Farm Women’s Market is identified with a yellow star.

The “Historic Structure Report: Farm Women’s Cooperative Market” states the following:

The Farm Women’s Cooperative Market is significant as a surviving example of a purpose-built farm women’s market constructed as part of the progressive reform movement of Home Demonstration Clubs. The Montgomery County Farm Women’s Cooperative was started in 1932 as a means to promote a woman’s economic contribution to her family. The idea, which followed a national movement, was spearheaded by Blanche A. Corwin, a US Department of Agriculture home demonstration agent assigned to Montgomery County. The first of three farm women’s markets established in Montgomery County, Maryland during the Great Depression, the building served as the only purpose-built structure to house a farm women’s market in the county. The building promoted an ethos of thrift and economy through its flexible layout. It survives today as the only example of such a building in Montgomery County, Maryland.¹

Montgomery County designated the Farm Women’s Market with the adoption of the Master Plan for Historic Preservation in 1979. It has been recognized as a unique historic site with a cherished heritage for many decades. The Farm Women’s Market (#35/14-1) is unique in Montgomery County and the State of Maryland.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes a multiphase commercial and residential redevelopment project that includes the parcel containing the Farm Women’s Market and the adjacent properties to the south, east, and west (across Wisconsin Avenue).

The environmental setting for this historic site comprises the entire existing parcel. Any alterations within this boundary, including but not limited to new construction, hardscape, tree removal, street improvements, site storage, and signage require HAWP approval from the HPC. Given the size and scope of this project it is to be expected that several HAWPs would be required.

At this stage of the process, the applicant seeks general direction from the HPC on the following: 1) construction of a subterranean parking garage primarily outside of the boundary of the environmental setting; 2) construction of new landscape/hardscape including tree removal and streetscape improvements; 3) relocation of the Farm Women’s Market 13’ to the north; 4) comprehensive rehabilitation of the Farm Women’s Market; and 5) construction of an addition to the east of the Farm Women’s Market.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and additions for new construction to an Individually Listed Master Plan Site, decisions are guided by the Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards (Standards). The newly adopted *Bethesda*

¹ EHT Tracerics, “Historic Structure Report: Farm Women’s Cooperative Market,” (2019): 22.

*Downtown Plan (2017)*² and *Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines (2017)*³ contain specific guidance for streetscape treatments, setbacks, design, public amenities, and preservation which also pertain to this block and the larger areas under consideration with the Sketch Plan.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to ensure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
 - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
 - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
 - (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
 - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
 - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
 - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.

² http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BDP-COUNCIL-ADOPTED-MAY2017_SMALL-FOR-WEB.pdf

³ http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/BDP-Urban-Design-Guidelines_Approved-July-2017_for-web.pdf

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, space and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

Sketch Plan & Site Plan Process

The applicant has filed a Sketch Plan for consideration by the Planning Board which encompasses the parcel containing the Farm Women's Market, as well as the parcel immediately to the south and parcels on the western side of Wisconsin Avenue; the proposal will be heard at a yet-to-be scheduled meeting in 2019. The most recent Sketch Plan filings, which were partially included in the HPC submission for the January 2019 Preliminary Consultation, can be viewed at this link: http://www.mcatlas.org/Development_Info/default.aspx?apno=320190030

After Sketch Plan approval, the applicant will be required to file both Preliminary and Site Plan applications to the Planning Board for approval. It is expected that many aspects of this proposal will be changed, redesigned, and refined as staff, the public, the Bethesda Downtown Advisory Panel (DAP), and the HPC have the opportunity to review the plans and give feedback that the applicant will incorporate into subsequent submissions.

HPC Preliminary Evaluation #1: January 9, 2019

At the first preliminary consultation, the HPC provide feedback on whether the alterations, broadly considered and proposed for the environmental setting, were compatible with or detrimental to the historic character of the site. Mclean Quinn, EYA, discussed the project and overall goals. He noted: 1) the context of the surrounding area and present conditions

(prevalence of surface parking); 2) the plan for the overall block/area including a park per the *Bethesda Downtown Plan* (2017); and 3) the request to construct a subterranean parking lot (approximately 300 spaces) on the site by Montgomery County.

Emily Eig, EHT Traceries, presented the history and significance of the Farm Women's Market and draft Historic Structure Report. The report documented existing conditions, identified character-defining features, and outlined preservation recommendations for the rehabilitation of the building.

Major topics discussed were the: 1) below-grade parking underneath the environmental setting; 2) relocation of the market to the north (between 13' and 20'); 3) new landscaping that consists primarily of open lawns; 4) detached, two-story, retail pavilion building to the east (outside of the environmental setting); and 5) high-rise apartment building to the south (outside of the environmental setting).

The HPC provided the following feedback:

- Include additional historic context regarding the Farm Women's Market, an evaluation of the market as a building type, and its overall historic significance;
- The underground parking should be located outside of the environmental setting;
- Provide additional justification for the permanent relocation of the historic building 13' to 20' to the north and its impact to the environmental setting moving forward;
- Concerns regarding the architectural compatibility between the two-story retail pavilion building and the Farm Women's Market;
- The high-rise apartment building should have additional step backs to lessen its effect on the historic site;
- Landscape in the environmental setting should include additional hardscaping to reflect the site's historic context;
- Provide additional information on the health of and impact to the two sycamore trees on Wisconsin Avenue; and
- Subsequent submissions/options should address the compatibility of the proposal with respect to the history of the Farm Women's Market.

Current Proposal: Overall Scope

The applicant responded to the HPC comments and submitted major design amendments and supplemental information for the second preliminary evaluation. The revised proposal includes the following changes:

- 1) Removes the underground parking from the majority of the environmental setting (no structured parking will be located below the market);
- 2) Omits the detached, two-story, retail pavilion building and replaces it with a one-story addition to the Farm Women's Market; and,
- 3) Amends the site plan to recall the historic setting associated with markets and includes information regarding the existing trees.

Current Proposal: Parking Garage and Building Relocation

Staff supports the proposed underground parking and the relocation of the building 13' to the north. The parking garage, located within less than 10 percent of the environmental setting, would not destroy materials, features, or spatial relationships that characterize the property.

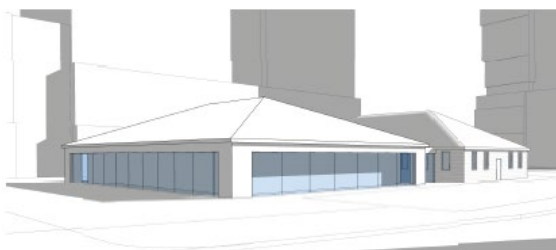
The relocation of the Farm Women's Market within the environmental setting would have minimal adverse effects to its integrity of location or setting and will not diminish character defining features of the building or landscape. The building would retain an orientation, setting, and general environment directly comparable to the historic location. The building would still express the property's association as a market, and it remains in the same architectural landscape (dense urban area). In addition, the comprehensive rehabilitation of the Farm Women's Market would require the building to be temporarily moved to install a new foundation and conduct other structural repairs (per the existing conditions and recommendations as outlined in the draft HSR). In addition, shifting the building 13' to the north would increase overall architectural compatibility by providing greater relief from the proposed adjacent high-rise building (as zoned for in the *Bethesda Downtown Plan*) and providing an appropriate setting within the new development.

The HPC should consider the following topics:

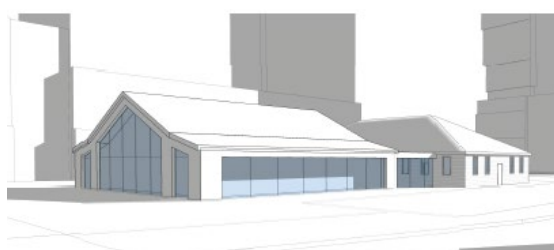
- 1) Appropriateness and potential adverse effects from moving the historic building to a different location on the site;
- 2) Appropriateness and potential adverse effects from building below-grade structured under a minimal part of the rear portion of the environmental setting; and
- 3) Requirement of at least a Phase I Archaeological Survey within the environmental setting to ensure protection of any potential artifacts.

Current Proposal: Addition to the Farm Women's Market

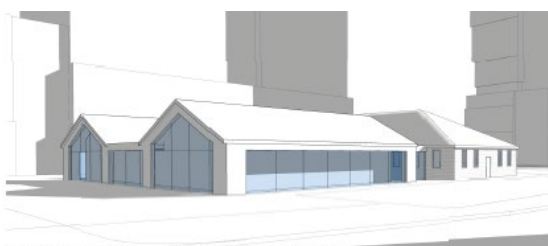
The applicant has removed the two-story detached retail pavilion building from consideration and proposes an addition to the Farm Women's Market. The applicant has presented five (5) conceptual approaches for an addition to the rear of the Farm Women's Market. Those proposals are named as Option 1: Hipped Pavilion, Option 2: Shed, Option 3: Double Shed, and Option 4: Pavilion (pages 27-30). All four of these options are a variation on the concept of buffering the proposed new addition from the historic Farm Women's Market by means of a hyphen. The dismissed fifth option (as shown in Sketch 1 on page 25) shows an addition without a hyphen between the historic building and new construction.



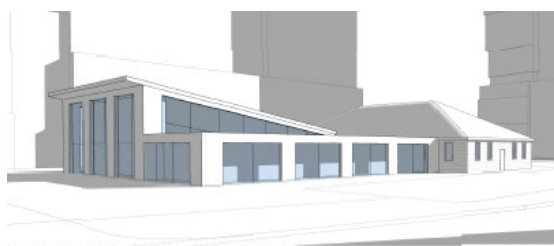
VIEW FROM THE NE ALONG WILLOW LANE
Option 1: Hipped Pavilion.



VIEW FROM THE NE ALONG WILLOW LANE
Option 2: Shed.



VIEW FROM THE NE ALONG WILLOW LANE
Option 3: Double Shed



VIEW FROM THE NE ALONG WILLOW LANE
Option 4: Pavilion

Staff finds the preliminary height for the conceptual addition to be compatible with the Farm Women's Market, unlike the previously proposed detached, two-story, retail pavilion building. The previous concept presented in January maximized the height allowable by zoning (35') and negatively impacted the historic setting and views from Wisconsin Avenue as it exceeded the ridgeline of the market by 10'. All of the proposed additions for consideration in this preliminary consultation would be equal to or less than the ridgeline of the market (25'). Therefore, the market would remain the central focal point within the setting as views of the addition would be obscured when looking east from Wisconsin Avenue.

Staff concurs with the applicant's assessment that a direct addition as shown in Sketch 1 (page 25) would diminish the building's integrity of design due to the incompatible proposed footprint and scale. The remaining four detailed options (pages 25 and 27-30) separate the addition from the original market by means of a recessed hyphen. The hyphen: 1) minimizes adverse effects to the east (rear) elevation and overall form of the historic building; and 2) retains a greater degree of the market's architectural significance as the only remaining women's cooperative market in the state. Staff concurs with the applicant's approach to explore further only additions attached by means of a hyphen.

The HPC should consider and discuss the applicant's overall conceptual approach. A useful point of reference is the "Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for New construction in Historic Districts" that outlines four different strategies for additions to historic buildings. These strategies comport with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation*. The strategies are:

Literal Replication:

- Prioritizes compatibility with the historically significant architectural resources and minimizes differentiation between the old and new construction.

- Sustains the historic character of an existing setting but violates the proscription in the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards against the creation of a “false sense of historical development.”
- Requires the scale of the addition to be small when compared to the historic building.

Invention within a Style:

- Seeks not to replicate the original designs, but to add new elements in either the same or closely related architectural style.
- Intention is to balance differentiation and compatibility but weighted in favor of compatibility to sustain a sense of continuity in architectural language.

Abstract Reference:

- Correlates to a historic setting while avoiding literal resemblance or working in a historic architectural style.
- Seeks to balance differentiation and compatibility (particularly with respect to massing) but weighted in favor of differentiation.

Intentional Opposition:

- Strategy to oppose the historic setting and highlight architectural style through differentiation.

The four options depict various massing, roof forms, and general fenestration patterns that would establish the baseline for the design. The options suggest one of the four different strategies outlined above. For example, Option 1: Hipped Pavilion (page 27) correlates to the hipped-roof of the Farm Women’s Market and offers a conservative form and design approach (“invention within a style”). Option 2: Shed (page 28) and Option 3: Double Shed (page 29) both utilize historical precedents for farm markets, but differentiate from the subject building’s hipped-roof and fenestration (“abstract reference”). On the other hand, Option 4: Pavilion (page 30) distinguishes itself from the architecture of the historic building type and setting (“abstract reference” and/or “intentional opposition”).

The HPC should consider the following topics:

- 1) Appropriateness of the applicant’s overall conceptual approach.
- 2) Appropriateness of the approximate size/footprint, location, massing, and fenestration pattern of the four proposed options.

Current Proposal: Site Plan

Staff supports the preliminary site plan and removal and replacement of the trees. The revised site plan reinforces the historic setting of a market in lieu of a building within a park-like setting. This revision replaced manicured lawns with hardscape (patios, outdoor market space, and paved areas) to the west and north of the building. In addition, the revised plan calls for two new shade trees to replace the present Sycamore trees that frame the façade from Wisconsin Avenue. Information presented by the applicant suggests that removal of the existing gravel would impact

70 to 80 percent of the critical root zone for each tree. Therefore, staff recommends removal and replacement of the trees in this case.

The HPC should consider the following topics:

- 1) Appropriateness of design and location of any proposed landscape and streetscape improvements within the parcel boundaries.
- 2) Appropriateness of removing existing mature trees, and existing hardscape.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of topics to consider:

<p><u>Parking Garage and Building Relocation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Appropriateness and potential adverse effects from moving the historic building to a different location on the site. 2) Appropriateness and potential adverse effects from building below-grade structured under a minimal part of the rear portion of the environmental setting. 3) Requirement of at least a Phase I Archaeological Survey within the environmental setting to ensure protection of any potential artifacts. 	<p><u>Staff Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff supports the proposed underground parking and the relocation of the building 13’ to the north. • The parking garage, located within less than 10 percent of the environmental setting, would not destroy materials, features, or spatial relationships that characterize the property. • The relocation of the Farm Women’s Market within the environmental setting would have minimal adverse effects to its integrity of location or setting and will not diminish character defining features of the building or landscape. • Staff recommends at least a Phase I Archaeological Survey.
<p><u>Addition to the Farm Women’s Market</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Appropriateness of the applicant’s overall conceptual approach. 2) Appropriateness of the approximate size/footprint, location, massing, and fenestration pattern of the four proposed options. 	<p><u>Staff Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff finds the preliminary height for the conceptual addition to be compatible with the Farm Women’s Market. • Staff concurs with the applicant’s use of a recessed hyphen to separate the new addition from the historic building.

<p><u>Site Plan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Appropriateness of design and location of any proposed landscape and streetscape improvements within the parcel boundaries. 2) Appropriateness of removing existing mature trees, and existing hardscape. 	<p><u>Staff Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff supports the preliminary site plan and removal and replacement of the trees.
---	---

Staff recommends that the applicant revise the design based on the feedback from the HPC and submit additional information for a third preliminary consultation.