Silver Spring Downtown Plan
Boundary Study
AGENDA

• RECAP
• WHAT IS A CBD?
• PLAN CONTEXT: ADJACENT PLANNING AREAS
• PLAN CONTEXT: WASHINGTON D.C.
• WALKSHED ANALYSIS
• OPPORTUNITY SITES
• BOUNDARY OPTIONS / APPROACH
Staff presented Scope of Work to Planning Board on March 26, 2020 for the upcoming Silver Spring Downtown Plan.

Staff recommended maintaining Sector Plan Boundary from 2000 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan.

Discussion centered around “missing middle” housing and opportunities for diverse and affordable housing in and around Silver Spring.

Planning Board asked staff to prepare possible options for expanding the boundary of the plan area in light of that discussion.
PLAN TIMELINE

• OVERALL SCOPE: JUNE 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2022

• Scope of Work: June 2020

• Existing Conditions / Engagement / Visioning: June 2020 – May 2021

• Staff Draft: Fall 2021

• Planning Board Draft/Hearing/Worksessions: Fall / Winter 2022

• County Review/Hearing/Work Sessions: February – June 2022

• Council Approval of Plan: Summer/Fall 2022
WHAT IS A CBD?

• **Central Business Districts** were districts designated for dense office/commercial and financial use to be the main business area of a city during the 1980s and 1990s.

• With the rewrite of the Countywide Zoning Ordinance in 2014, CBD areas were removed from ordinance, along with CBD-specific zoning. The current CR zones are not restricted to previously designated Central Business Districts.

• Parking Lot Districts and Urban District boundaries typically align with CBD boundaries, and the community generally understands these to be denser areas, but there is no longer a zoning-related significance to CBDs.
PROPOSED PLAN BOUNDARY

• Includes full 2000 Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan Boundary.

• St. Michael’s parcels along south side of Wayne Ave are included.
PLAN CONTEXT

• 2000 sector plan area shares a boundary with five distinct planning areas and the District of Columbia.

• North & West SS MP recently split along Georgia Avenue corridor via FG/MH Sector Plan boundary.
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PLAN CONTEXT: D.C.

• Three Washington D.C. neighborhoods are adjacent to south Silver Spring,
• Silver Spring is connected to DC via numerous transportation routes.
PLAN CONTEXT: D.C.

- Commercial corridor along Georgia Avenue extends to the south into D.C.
- The Parks at Walter Reed:
  - 3.1 million sf residential
  - 400+ affordable units
  - 325K sf office
  - 190K sf retail
WALKSHED: TRANSIT CENTER

- Much of downtown Silver Spring is within a ½ mile walkshed from the Metro station/Transit Center.
WALKSHED: PURPLE LINE @LIBRARY

- If the center of a ½ mile walkshed is the Purple Line station at the Silver Spring Library, then much of East Silver Spring is captured.
TRANSIT CENTER: 1 MILE RADIUS

- A 1-mile radius from the Transit Center captures large swaths of surrounding neighborhoods. This can be regarded as a “micromobility-shed.”
**WALKSHEDS**

• Combined walksheds indicate blocks that are ½ mile / ten minute walk from high-capacity transit stations within downtown Silver Spring
OPPORTUNITY SITES

• There are numerous opportunity sites within the proposed Plan Boundary.

• A number of these may be appropriate for “missing middle” housing:
  • Outside the commercial core
  • Within a ½ mile of transit (rail, bus)
  • Underutilized, with smaller parcel size
  • Adjacent to single family neighborhood
OPPORTUNITY SITES

• Several opportunity sites have 1.5 FAR which is appropriate for “missing middle” housing.
**CURRENT CAPACITY IN PLAN BOUNDARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Capacity (GFA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Existing on the Ground</td>
<td>24,157,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Capacity: Current Mapped Zoning</td>
<td>40,364,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Unbuilt Capacity:</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,206,665</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved in Pipeline:</td>
<td>3,043,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built from 2000 – 2020:</td>
<td>9,600,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Within the proposed boundary there are numerous opportunity sites to accommodate a diverse mix of housing types in downtown Silver Spring.
BOUNDARY OPTIONS

• **Option A:** Plan boundary as recommended by staff, + **county-wide approach** to allow diverse housing types.
COUNTY-WIDE APPROACH: MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING STUDY

• 2018 Missing Middle Housing Study recommended various paths forward including ZTA or a county-wide Missing Middle Functional Master Plan.

• Report recommended NOT pursuing the change through the slow master/sector plan process one planning area at a time.
COUNTY-WIDE APPROACH: MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING STUDY

• Zoning Codes changed in:
  • Minneapolis, MN
  • Seattle, WA
  • Olympia, WA
  • Portland, OR
  • Austin, TX
  • Charlotte, NC

• Study to begin soon in Arlington, VA
COUNTY-WIDE APPROACH: THRIVE 2050

Draft housing policies and actions include:

• Provide diverse housing types near high-capacity transit, jobs and community services.

• Expand housing options near transit by relaxing the zoning code to allow “gentle density.”

• Develop strategies to remove barriers to encourage development of diverse and affordable housing types.
BOUNDARY OPTIONS

• **Option A:** Plan boundary as recommended by staff, + county-wide approach to allow diverse housing types.

• **Option B:** Boundary expansion along neighborhood edges to north and east.
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COMMUNITY COMMENTS

• Support for expansion of plan boundary re: diverse housing types
• Support for Option A, including support for county-wide approach to missing middle; opposed to any boundary expansion of this plan;
• Opposed to boundary expansion and opposed to denser housing in SS neighborhoods regardless of process
• Opposed to any major planning during a pandemic
COMMUNITY COMMENTS

• Lack of public participation/transparency in plan boundary discussion
• Fear of “annexing” residential neighborhoods into the commercial core
• Concerns about automatic upzoning
• Major changes to character of neighborhood during a pandemic
• Comments can be viewed online at
  https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/silver-spring/silver-spring-downtown-plan/
DISCUSSION