How would you describe Fenton Village?

- Unique and full of small businesses, which is a nice thing
- Unorganized

Walking down Georgia Ave on a nice day in Fenton Village is so great, especially when you can hear music and smell food from the restaurants.

There has been a rapid change in just 5 years.

Awesome food. Interesting ethnic shops. Greenspace is lacking. There's a lot of character but it also has a strip mall kind of look. "I don't want to give up the character."

Does not have a sense of place. Needs more greenspace.

Unorganized

Lots of variety. Preserve active storefronts. Parking lot areas should be redeveloped.

It feels like little Ethiopia and a mix of other ethnicities representing the county.

Great food, coffee, shopping, new wine shop and cafes and street activity. I love walking around but there is not much green space.

I love GEORGIA Ave—I guess I meant Fenton Street

It's really loud on Friday/Saturday nights when the clubs/bars are up and running (normal times)

Authentic and eclectic.

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I want to give up the character.

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It's walkable. A lot of great coffee shops and restaurants. Too expensive to live in the heart of it.

+1 to walkable. You can get almost every need met in Fenton Village, I said small businesses but also one of my main grocery stores (Safeway) is there too.

It's remarkably diverse when you walk around. That's one of the things I love about it

I'm a white person in Fenton Village all the time, feel very welcomed and safe there, including in black-owned business.

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Fenton Village Visioning will focus on:

- What's unique about Fenton Village?
- Fenton Street experience
- Focus on specific sites
- Topics you want to discuss
Fenton Village

Tonight’s discussion will focus on the area inside the white dashed line.

Legend
- Cultural
- Industrial
- Institutional/Civic
- Mixed-Use: Residential
- Mixed-Use: Commercial
- Multi Family
- Commercial (Office + Retail)
- Parks
- Parking and Transportation
- Single Family Detached

Miles
0 0.125 0.25 0.5
Fenton Village

How has Fenton Village been shaped by the previous plan?

Overlay Zone adds controls that limit density and height along east side of Georgia and the east side of Fenton; allows more density and height in the midblock.

This allowed commercial spaces to remain small scale, for smaller businesses. Also provided for a transition to East Silver Spring.
Fenton Village

How has Fenton Village been shaped by the previous plan?
Fenton Village Overlay Zone has shaped the neighborhood. Is this something we want to preserve? Or change?

I believe we do not want to preserve the bell curve. I believe the taller buildings should be along the heavily travelled boulevards.

I hear an interest in keeping the older historic areas now but do we want it to look that way in 2050? A lot of the stores can be in any store front. Will the new plan allow for replacement of the stores.

I like the bell curve look with the center high density. Yes, the low rise businesses are what make it special. If it's all high rises it's going to become like the downtown area.

I think Georgia Ave can support more density. But there's a lot value in a charming/functional 'main street' on Fenton that is a nice scale up against East Silver Spring houses.

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We need a holistic approach instead of segregating it from other areas.

The county has certain housing goals and there will be a point where Bethesda will be tapped out and we will need to increase density in Fenton V.

Would like to see the storefronts made more attractive.

There's a lot of culture here and there are very few if any other little Ethiopeas. We should preserve this.

Not a fan of height limits especially near a metro. Nevertheless, I hear what people are saying and there are vacant spaces we can utilize first.

There needs to be more building type variety along Georgia. No more big block buildings, they need to be broken up.

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Agree - love the low rise buildings!

We don't want to just become an undefined suburb of DC, so I think the vision has to retain a certain amount of character.

Newer builds have been so generic, making our neighborhood look like many others. I think our goal is holding on to unique character and appropriate scale.
Feedback points to east side as more comfortable for pedestrians. Do you agree? What makes it more comfortable?

Agree that the delivery cars stopping in the working lanes is often an issue. A permanent lane closure is worth considering. Is there a way to create dedicated short-term parking?

A lot of west side has curb cuts and that might be part of the problem. Widening the sidewalk can help improve the pedestrian experience.

It is fun to walk past shops and restaurants and less fun walking by parking lots with driveways where cars are passing in and out.

I think it could be helped by shutting down a lane on Georgia more permanently, as we did very successfully over the summer.

A lot of double parking occurs in the area of the northern dot.

The west side of Georgia has two surface parking lots for pedestrians to cross and it is just not as interesting as the east side.

I am pretty equally comfortable walking on both sides of Georgia, and agree that crossing isn't great but am not sure what is to be done there.

I don't think its the building heights that make the east/west side feel different. It has to do with the businesses that are there. We need to do the same on the west side.

Astrolab - a great attraction on the West side of Georgia

We need to accommodate for the businesses (pick up and take out). No increased street parking.

About the west side, we used to have Urban Butcher, and RIP Arts Atlantic such a loss. New spaces are coming like Spice Street and expect we'll have more as others have mentioned.
Fenton Street

What is the pedestrian experience like along Fenton Street? How can it be improved?

There needs to be some places to sit! Lots of people gather at Thayer and Fenton on the west side at the bus stop, but people just want park benches and tables.

I don’t see the gas stations as an issue, there is a dedicated sidewalk in front. A place that does feel treacherous to me is at 7-11. It’s the only place where I’ve had a close call with a car over many years.

The stretch on the east side between Silver Spring and Sligo is treacherous. The tow lot is pretty raty (literally) and the 7-11 parking lot is dicey is pass on foot.

Nowhere to sit along Fenton. People want to sit outside but there are no parklets or seating.

A bit off topic, but if there’s a way to rename Easley St after literally anyone/anything else that would be great. Easley was a developer that promoted segregated housing in Silver Spring.

The lighting is terrible. It’s safer to walk in the alley than Fenton. The bricks on the walkway need to go.

When there is construction there should be a temporary sidewalk. We didn’t have a sidewalk on the east side of Fenton when the Central was being constructed. That was a real issue.

No shared spaces. The bikeway plan will make it a safer walk.

There’s a need for more security. People break into customers cars.

The streetscape is narrow and trees may compromise sidewalks.

More street trees (2x). A real greenway could make it more interesting.

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There’s a need for more security. People break into customers cars.

More street trees.

Consider commuter line.

More street trees.

Yes, running for a bus on those bricks is no fun.

When there is construction there should be a temporary sidewalk. We didn’t have a sidewalk on the east side of Fenton when the Central was being constructed. That was a real issue.

Strengthen connection along Fenton. Southern end is MoCo College and the connection would greatly improve area.

Street trees are great in a vacuum but the main function of sidewalks need to be functional.

Trees serve an ecological purpose. A lot of thought needs to be put into making it walkable and bikeable. There needs to be a compromise in what’s in the ROW.

Do people want to walk on a street with no trees, harsh light and heat? Pedestrians and street trees go hand-in-hand.

I think the sitting space in front of the new Fenton Silver Spring apartments is a nice example. I see people sitting there often - It’s nice to see people out and sitting.

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We need shade everywhere possible, please. And bus-proof trees.

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Fenton Street

What is the pedestrian experience like along Fenton Street? How can it be improved?

- There is a real opportunity to bring students a mile down for lunch or coffee or Plaza art supplies, etc.
  I've lived here for 15 years and it never occurred to me that there was an opportunity to link the community to the
  If people are coming from the college
  Not enough density here. Lots of room for improvement.

- We need to preserve the industrial area.
  These are not many left in the county.

- We need to create places for the future.

- It seems like a listening session focused on hearing from students about this specific question could be really valuable.
Safeway Site

- making sure their elevator works more consistently so you can take advantage of the parking garage without worrying you'll have to carry your groceries down the stairs.
- Rebuilding Safeway is a great idea.
- Corner where the gas station is could become a civic plaza.
- Retain grocery store.
- This is remnant of the SS suburban character and it needs housing and business below.
- Ground floor Safeway is a good idea.
- I know the dry cleaners on Fenton is very run down, but if that '50s look could be preserved, that would be great.
- Just like the Wheaton Safeway was mentioned; there's an example of almost the same on Georgia Ave Safeway in Petworth, DC that was rebuilt 6-7 years ago.
- Beautiful art is needed here. Art on the building or sidewalks.
- Combine other properties around it and create something attractive. Incentivize this option.
- Market rate development with grocery on main floor.
- To maintain a supermarket, and Safeway is a more affordable option than Whole Foods. It seems like adding residential on top of Safeway is a natural option, not sure how that interacts with our neighbors.commo.
- Getting very crowded as more people move here and having Safeway as another option is good. Other than Giant and Safeway, there really aren't any other regular grocery stores (not Whole Foods) in a really dense area.
- Retain grocery store.

- Corner where the gas station is could become a civic plaza.

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Parking Garage 4 / Lots

Going back to the asset of the alleys, breaking up this block sounds like a nice idea.

We're in need of parking in Fenton Village. There are 200 businesses there and not enough parking.

I'm a fan of loft type housing. Silver Spring would be a great place to further encourage artists to live here. That would be an interesting site for that.

I'm indifferent about size of block. We need more housing not a parking lot.

The parking lot needs to go. Possibly break it up into different parcels and create walkway. A good site for housing development.

Loft and art type housing

I'm a fan of loft type housing & Silver Spring would be a great place to further encourage artists to live here. That would be an interesting site for that.

More arts in the area is in keeping with the Thrive plan. Mixed affordable housing for teachers and artists.

Stormwater makes a difference.

It's an underutilized site. Create a mid-block connection.

Now that there's public parking under Flyer and Spring St., seems redundant. That could be the parking for Kalida, etc.

Maintaining the Alley network is a good idea

We need the parking. Look how much parking was created for downtown SS. There are 198 businesses in Fenton Village and very little parking.

Also, just to say, the VFW has a program of concerts and outdoor space and it's great and the only thing like it in the neighborhood. Preserve that, copy that, more of that.

This is a block with a very active alley.

Mixed affordable housing

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Do you use the community garden adjacent to Fenton Urban Park?

We’ve been studying programs in other urban areas where vacant or underutilized lots are turned into community gardens or farms. While Silver Spring does not have a high vacancy rate, there are opportunities for activating parcels in this way, either for temporary use or more permanent use.

Current community garden on E/W highway is a tough site. Community gardens are best as buffers and transition rather than embedded into the urban area.
Community Gardens / Agriculture

Could any of these sites become a garden or urban farmland?

No, I don't think the gardens can serve as plots, which is a data point in terms of how many people these spaces serve or can serve.

Roof gardens are a legitimate suggestion, and in this area, better than street level.

I do not think the gardens are a good idea where suggested.

Imagine dedicating more space to gardens or farms. My sense is that a limited number of people use community gardens (like the people who have the plots) but I don't know much about the types that you mention with rooftop gardens.

Yep, agree, the roof garden idea is an interesting one.

I do not think this is a good location for a community garden.

The road is useful for the daycare pickup along Georgia.

Should the frontage road along Georgia stay or go? Some say go, others say it needs to stay for deliveries.
Fenton Village

What else do you want to talk about?

I'm so glad that the daycare is coming and approved! Too late for my family but a huge need, and with more apartments coming, imagine many people will walk to daycare too.

I think in all of this, you need to factor in people with children. Children need places to play. Almost all the comments I heard tonight don't seem to accommodate all types of families.

Fair point on family housing, but traditional single family housing is available just about everywhere else, including a block east. This is one of the (few) few areas that allows something else so we need to maximize it.

Basketball courts, some kind of rec center, would be fantastic.

Please keep an eye on what will keep downtown SS active in 2040-2050.

1. Increased housing. 2. Allow for commercial rooftop uses. 3. Recreation spaces are needed.

Good point on the children. There are some great parks to the north and east of this area, and they get a good amount of use, think about making obvious pathways to those parks.

Will the stretch of townhouses survive or can they be redeveloped?
What do we want to share during wrap-up?