

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC)

Agenda & Draft Minutes

Friday, September 9, 2022, 8AM (Virtual Meeting)

Notes taken by Patrick O'Neil

- I. **4405 East West Highway (Perseus TDC); Pat Harris, Lerch Early & Brewer (20 minutes)**
- II. **Bethesda Lane Public Open Space (FRIT); Pat Harris, Lerch Early & Brewer (15 minutes) (POSTPONED)**
- III. **7340 Wisconsin Avenue (Greystar); Pat Harris, Lerch Early & Brewer (20 minutes)**
- IV. **Update on Amenity Fund; Elza Hisel-McCoy, Down County Planning, Chief (10 minutes)**

NEW BUSINESS (as needed to close of meeting)

- I. 4405 East West Highway

The Project's attorney, Pat Harris, introduced the applicant, Perseus, who gave an overview of the proposed plans to convert an old office park to a multi-family development. The property is Zoned CRT-1.5; H-100 with a required 50 foot setback from East-West Highway. The project proposes a 6-story building with ground floor retail and 2 levels of below-grade parking. It also seeks to consolidate two curb cuts into one. Perseus described their architectural, streetscape and massing approaches. The Project is scheduled to go before the Planning Board in November.

IAC questions/comments included the following:

- Will East-West Highway be expanded? Ans – The applicant is making some dedications and DOT is currently determining what the street section will look like. The current

thinking is that the pavement width will not be expanded but there may be a potential bike lane.

- Ms. Farber said she liked the Project and asked for undergrounding of utilities and a tree canopy between the Project and BCC High School. Ans – The applicant will look at the tree canopy option.
- What is the stormwater plan? Ans – The SWM Concept Plan will be submitted at Preliminary Plan
- What will be the number of units and parking spaces? Ans – The number of units are expected to be 325-358. The mix of units has not yet been finalized but there will be 20% MPDU's. Parking is expected to be about 200 spaces.
- What are the plans for the house at the corner at Pearl Street? Ans – Mr. Hisel McCoy says that Planning Staff has talked with the owners as a preliminary consultation.
- What are the Public Amenities? Ans – The applicant is working on them as part of the Optional Method points requirement (125 points)

III. 7340 Wisconsin Avenue

The Project's attorney, Pat Harris, introduced the applicant, Greystar, and stated that the proposed site at Montgomery Avenue and Hampden Lane (i.e., the former Exxon property) is tight and has been vacant since 2009. Greystar described the Project as a multi-family Sketch Plan proposal and then introduced the architect, SK&I. The architect stated that the densities and heights will not change from current approvals, but the porte cochere will be removed. The building will be 25-stories, with a 6-story base and setbacks as the building gets higher. The ground floor will be a lobby area with some retail at the southeast portion of the site to coordinate with existing retail. There will be a 25-foot sidewalk on Wisconsin Avenue and at least 15-foot sidewalks on Hampden and Montgomery. The Project will also be providing Montgomery Avenue bike lanes and other improvements.

IAC questions/comments included the following:

- Where will space for quick deliveries be provided? Ans – The applicant expects that this will occur on street like other projects. The Committee then expressed concern that the pending urban loading study, which would seek to address the issue more broadly, is on hold.
- Can the vacant property be cleaned up before construction? Ans – The applicant will contact the owner about this.

- What coordination is taking place with the building to the west (not yet built)? Ans – There is not expected to be access between the buildings.
- Concern was expressed about Montgomery Avenue bike lane impacts. Ans – Mr. Hisel-McCoy said that the Project is supposed to receive the bike lanes that have been constructed on the east side of Montgomery Avenue.
- What are the parking numbers? Ans – About 150 space for a rate of .5.

IV. Update on Amenity Fund

Elza Hisel-McCoy reminded the Committee that the purpose of the fund is to allow private developers to meet their public open space requirements by paying into a fund. Not many developers have taken advantage of the opportunity because the payment formula (i.e., % of property value) results in a sizable payment. ZOM Bethesda is the only project that has made a payment - \$785,000.00. The Planning Board is authorized to use the funds for public space improvements in Bethesda.

IAC questions/comments included the following:

- Who can petition for the use of funds? Ans – Usually an agency makes the petition, but there could be some flexibility for creative petitions (e.g. BUP or even the IAC). The key is that the petitioner needs to demonstrate the ability to implement the improvement, which would include control over the property, a budget, insurance and contracting ability.

NEW BUSINESS (none)

Next meeting Friday, October 7, 2022

Attendees

Jad D, Amanda F, Andy O'Hare, Michael F, Pete Fosselman, Jack A., Naomi, Dedun, Jeff B, John, Joyce, Matt Gordon, Jeff B, Cindy G, Cashielle, Patrick O'Neil, Stacey Band, Henry Coppola, Stephanie D, E. Hisel-McCoy, Hyojung G, Pat Harris, Mike Weiss, John C, Niels, C. Hoffman, Kristi, C. Smith, H. Copolla, A. Czahkowski