

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) Meeting Minutes

Friday, December 1st, 2023 @8:15 AM

Notes to be Taken by: Christopher Smith

Hybrid Meeting (Microsoft Teams and in-person)

B-CC Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane

East Room B

IAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Amanda Farber, Co-Chair, Matt Gordon, Co-Chair, Andy O'Hare, Patrick O'Neil, Dedun Ingram, Naomi Spinrad, Chris Smith, Jack Alexander, Jad Donohoe, Joyce Gwadz, Michael Fetchko, Stacey Band

1) Bethesda Downtown Minor Master Plan Update, Elza Hisel-McCoy, Chief, DownCounty Planning Division

- Soft Cap for BOZ - cap was exceeded this past summer, Staff presented to Board in Sept, IAC presentation was in Oct, public testimony also occurred in Oct
- The ZTA is no longer the staff recommendation. Elza outlined the following proposal to move forward on a Minor Mast Plan Amendment next year:
 - Feb, 24 to June, 24 - series of public sessions on what we want to look at (parks v transportation v density cap), plan to focus on implementation only (funding, prioritization etc). Staff does not want to reopen the Plan but have narrow focus on implementation with the amendment
 - July 24 - scope of work to be presented to the Board
 - Sept 24 - Staff to draft of Amendment to IAC
 - Oct 24 - Public Hearing on Amendment
 - Nov 24 – Planning Board Work Session
 - Goal is to have Amendment sent up to County Council by end year, 2024
 - Jan, 2025 County Council to vote on Minor Master Plan Amendment
 - ZTA will follow to make changes
- Existing hard cap will stay in place until ZTA is approved in 2025
- IAC will reconvene with Staff at Jan meeting to continue discussion on process and timeline

2) Parks Department Strategic Implementation, Darren Flusche, Division Chief for Park Planning & Stewardship and Henry Coppola, Long Range Planning Supervisor

- Parks opened discussion looking for feedback on priorities/feedback on how to implement parks goals in the Master Plan
 - Staff has split the recommended parks into two groups, based on how they will be implemented
 - Land Purchase by Parks
 - Developer Contributed Land or Built Park
- Jack Alexander - how long does it actually take start to finish to open a park
 - Fastest - Silver Spring Urban Rec Park - 5yrs from conception in Master Plan to opening of park (outlier)
 - More typical - 15 yrs depending on if there is a willing seller
- Jeff Burton - from BUP 5yr Strategic Plan – Veterans Park and Norfolk Ave were two big feedback items (people wanted to see improvements in these areas), and need for a dog park and Purple Line Civic Green
- Amanda F - noted the expectation from the Master Plan was we would have some of these parks delivered when the cap was hit
- Andy - prioritization should consider what is already in the works
 - Eastern Capital Crescent Green Way - in motion with recent acquisition, now a priority
 - Amanda asked for follow up on status of each park, and what is the pathway towards achieving the goal
- Irene Lane - Could we explore additional avenues to deepen collaboration with the Montgomery Parks Foundation, potentially enhancing our ability to expand philanthropic initiatives?
- Jack - can we do interim parks for these recent acquisitions?
 - Current plan is no, but IAC asked for Parks to look into funding sources for interim parks at these recent acquisitions
- Naomi - asking for an acquisition update at Veterans Parks, staff indicated they cannot discuss due to confidentiality
 - Henry noted they will come back with more information at a later date after discussing with Legal what they can disclose
- Norfolk Ave - not a master plan recommendation, Henry noted if we want to make that a priority, it's much easier to make it one of it's in the Master Plan
 - Jeff B recommended setting up a meeting to get everyone in the same page re Norfolk Ave

New Business

- Next meeting to be scheduled, Amanda to send out a Doodle Poll to schedule
- 2-Way Street Study letter sent via email, IAC Members to review and provide comments
- Need new chairs for 2024
- Several Member's terms are expiring. Term Limits were established via IAC internal rules. To be discussed at a later meeting if IAC rules should be modified to eliminate term limits.