

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

Friday, February 2nd, 2024 @ 8:15 AM
Notes Taken By: Amanda Farber
Hybrid Meeting (Microsoft Teams and in-person)
B-CC Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane
East Room B

IAC MEMBERS AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS PRESENT

IAC Members: Amanda Farber, Co-Chair, Matt Gordon, Co-Chair, Andy O’Hare, Patrick O’Neil, Dedun Ingram, Dave Yampolsky, Naomi Spinrad, Chris Smith, Jad Donohoe, Joyce Gwadz, Michael Fetchko, Stacey Band

Other Participants: Rebecca Stryer, Henry Coppola, Elza HizeL-McCoy, TJ Dant, Pete Fosselman, Cindy Gibson, Russell Hines, Ryan Kim, Jason Weinstein, Pat LaVay

- Welcome to new IAC member Dave Yampolsky (Senior Vice President, Community Three)

1) Bethesda Downtown Minor Master Plan Update, Elza HizeL-McCoy, Chief, Down County Planning Division

- Soft cap was recently exceeded - Elza provided an update to the proposal to move forward on a Minor Mast Plan Amendment this year.
- Public engagement in March, April, May – asked IAC for help in outreach and questions and meeting formats; need to be clear about scope
- Pete Fosselman indicated happy to help provide space for community meetings (Regional Services Center; also can use library, Leland/Lawton Center, BCC cafeteria)
- Question about whether there will be surveys utilized
- Chris Smith stated that BUP had completed a comprehensive survey recently which might be helpful
- Request that announcements / information for the public be clear (non-planning jargon) and that there be at least 2 townhalls/meetings; and request to be clear about the schedule
- Possibility of short video by Planning for outreach

2) Lot 25/44 Update (Monument Realty; Broad Branch Development)

- Evolution of the prior project proposed for West Virginia
- Entitlements: Monument – Lot 25; Broad Branch – Lot 44 (BF Saul project is in the middle block in between the parking lots; completely separate project but working toward cohesive design of the greenway along all 3 blocks and Tilbury); separate development schedules
- Will replace approximately 145 parking spaces (current parking lots do not have high utilization but need parking for nearby businesses)
- The greenway on the 2 blocks will be dedicated to the County but developers will fund the design and improvements (no PIP funds); greenway will be ½ acre park on Lot 25; Broad Branch will also provide for updates to Chase Ave Park; greenway will include 10-foot path and goal is for it to feel like a “braided stream” across the blocks; Tilbury is supposed to be a shared use street
- Projects will provide additional deeply affordable units (11 additional rental MPDUs on Lot 25; 7 large affordable for sale condo units on Lot 44 with significantly reduced monthly fees; will have to follow requirements of MPDU program for resale)
- Lot 25 project entrance on Highland; parking entrance on Maple; central courtyard facing west; massing issue on Maple – reduced height on this side for compatibility; overall height 82 feet (zoned for 70 ft but additional height allowed due to parking and other agreements with County)
- Lot 44 project will include ¾ bedroom units (unique for new condos in downtown Bethesda) 43-foot wide greenway; 6 townhomes facing greenway; looking at waiver for loading – prefer to have on street space; trash and other impacts handled via public alley; may move curb to have wider sidewalk on West Virginia; looking at midblock crossing
- Question about other adjacent properties that are vacant and/or for sale – they would have to be included at future phases (if ever or at all) because of current plans, timeline, and financing

3) New Business

- Naomi Spinrad raised the issue of including capacity monitoring for the intersections of Little Falls and Hillandale and Little Falls and Arlington Road (looking at average vehicle delay. Naomi to draft letter and share with IAC for review.
- Need for Loading Study follow-up with Planning Staff when that is ready
- Matt Gordon raised the issue that the BOZ language needs clarification regarding residential and commercial FAR. Matt to draft letter and share with IAC for review.
- IAC voted on new Co-Chairs for 2024 - Dedun Ingram and Jack Alexander