



Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) September 6, 2024

Meeting Notes

Notes Taken by Joyce Gwadz

Friday, September 6, 2024 8:00 AM

Hybrid Meeting (Microsoft Teams and In Person)

B-CC Regional Services Center

4805 Edgemoor Lane

IAC Members and Other Participants Present

IAC Members: Dedun Ingram, Co-Chair, Jack Alexander, Co-Chair, Naomi Spinrad, Patrick O'Neil, Matthew Gordon, Amanda Farber, Dave Yampolsky, Joyce Gwadz, Michael Fetchko, Stacey Band, Andrew Saul, Christopher Smith

Other Participants: Brandan Stuckey, Jeff Burton, Elza Hisel-McCoy, Robert Kronenberg, Christopher Conklin, Adele Waugaman, Irene Lane, Barney Rush, Conor Curran, Henry Coppola

WOODMONT AVENUE STREETERY UPDATE

Chris Conklin, Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation

- The meeting began with a discussion of the bike lanes on Woodmont Avenue between Bethesda Avenue and Elm Street, and on nearby streets.

- The community reaction to the streeterly area on Woodmont Avenue between Bethesda and Elm, with parking removed, has been positive.

However, the businesses there wanted better circulation and access, including more convenient parking for “quick-stop” trips. Parking for 8-10 cars was restored. Mr. Conklin was not sure of the term, one hour or possibly two hours.

IAC members commented that if the street parking here is to be for “quick stops,” it should be very short term (such as 15 minutes).

Location of the signage for the new parking spaces needs to be reconsidered, as they are not readily seen from the street.

NORFOLK AVENUE STREETERLY – AMENITY FUNDS ALLOCATED

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Division Chief, Down-county Planning.

- Background – Amenity Fund money from Zom was allocated to the Norfolk Avenue Streeterly, but the streeterly is not now going forward.

Initial expenditures were made for street furniture. Parks is working with the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) about BUP possibly taking the furniture for other uses.

A balance of approximately \$170,000 remains. Planning Staff has proposed leaving these funds with BUP to be used for place-making and mural projects in Bethesda.

- IAC reaction to the proposals was positive. Jeff Burton notes that there are one or two projects that might be helped by funds, for example, a possible mural on the Capital Crescent Trail railroad bridge. Mr. Hisel-McCoy explained that the intention is that the funds be used for a public benefit.

BETHESDA Minor MASTER PLAN UPDATE – Elza Hisel-McCoy, Division Chief, Down-county Planning.

- The focus of the update is raising the density limit in the Bethesda Downtown Plan. The previously distributed power-point preliminary draft of considerations was reviewed. Mr. Hisel-McCoy confirmed that a full build to permitted heights would be a quite large density number.

- The goal is to have a density limit tied to the Plan horizon, so there won't be a need for future amendment. Modeling at one million square feet per year is being considered, looking at 11 million additional to 2025, 16 million to 2040, and 21 million to 2045. An IAC member noted that the maximum possible under existing permitted heights is likely unrealistic.
- Consideration of the impact of the contemplated increased density on schools, and the adequacy of parks and other green space, transportation, etc. was raised.
- Discussion followed regarding the Park Impact Payments (PIP), whether and how the payments and/or the payment schedule might be subject to adjustment. It was noted that the PIP was never intended to cover the full cost of parks in Bethesda. IAC members commented that not only does Bethesda need the parks contemplated by the Plan to accommodate additional density, but also Bethesda needs the Rec Center contemplated by the Plan.
- Several IAC members pointed out that the scope of the review contemplated by the Plan is the density cap, and that the overall understanding is that other aspects of the Bethesda Plan are to remain in place for the remaining term of the Plan except in extraordinary circumstances.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM.

[Bethesda Downtown Implementation Advisory Committee Website](#)