

# MAYOR & COUNCIL AGENDA COVER SHEET

**MEETING DATE:**

July 9, 2007

**CALL TO PODIUM:**

**Fred Felton**  
**Assistant City Manager**

**RESPONSIBLE STAFF:**

**Fred Felton**  
**Assistant City Manager**

**AGENDA ITEM:**

(please check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proclamation/Certificate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appointment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Hearing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ordinance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resolution
<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy Discussion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work Session Discussion Item
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: <b>From Staff</b>

**PUBLIC HEARING HISTORY:**

(Please complete this section if agenda item is a public hearing)

Introduced	
Advertised	
Hearing Date	
Record Held Open	
Policy Discussion	

<b>TITLE:</b>
Guidance on a Memorandum dated July 5, 2007 Concerning the Montgomery County's Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan Process

<b>SUPPORTING BACKGROUND:</b>
Staff will be seeking guidance on the attached memorandum.

<b>DESIRED OUTCOME:</b>
Provide guidance to staff.

MEMORANDUM TO: Mayor and City Council

VIA: David B. Humpton, City Manager *DH*

FROM: Frederick J. Felton, Assistant City Manager *FJF*

DATE: July 5, 2007

SUBJECT: Division of the County's Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan

Montgomery Village President Robert Hydorn recently inquired as to whether the City of Gaithersburg has taken a position on Montgomery County Planning Board's decision to divide the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. I discussed this issue with Nancy Sturgeon who is the Lead Planner for the projects, and obtained copies of the attached letter from Robert Hydorn dated April 24, 2007 and the attached letter from Chairman Royce Hanson dated May 18, 2007.

The letters outline the issue in detail, but the following is a summary:

1. On April 5, 2007 the Planning Board accepted staff's recommendation to split the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. This decision appears to be within the Planning Board's purview, and does not require County Council action; however, the Council could provide input on this issue during their semi-annual review of the Planning Board's work plan.
2. A key focus of the Gaithersburg East Plan will be the proposed expansion of M-83, and the Planning Board believes it should be closely coordinated with the significantly delayed facility planning process being undertaken by the Montgomery Department of Public Works and Transportation.
3. The Planning Board has determined that the Gaithersburg West Master Plan should be undertaken first because of potential, pending, and approved development in the study area. According to Ms. Sturgeon, this review will focus on the Life Sciences Center, Johns Hopkins (Banks Farm), NIST, and the McGowan Tract. In addition, this will focus on issues associated with the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT).

It is noteworthy that the Montgomery Village Foundation has not yet taken a position on the decision to divide the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. From a planning perspective, staff believes the Planning Board's decision has merit and does not recommend that the Mayor and City Council ask the County Council to modify the decision. Staff believes it is particularly important for the County to move forward with the Gaithersburg Vicinity West Plan due to issues associated with the CCT, Johns Hopkins, and the McGowan Tract.

I will be seeking guidance on this issue during the June 9, 2007 Mayor and City Council meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or wish to discuss.

FJF/ms  
Attachments



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**  
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN**

May 18, 2007

Mr. Robert Hydorn, President  
Montgomery Village Foundation  
Board of Directors  
10120 Apple Ridge Road  
Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886-1000

**SUBJECT: Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan**

Dear Mr. Hydorn:

I am writing in response to your April 24, 2007 letter requesting clarification of the Planning Board's decision with regard to the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. The Planning Department is updating a series of master plans in the I-270 Corridor, including the completed *2000 Shady Grove Sector Plan* (covering the area east of I-270 around the Metro station), and the White Flint, Twinbrook, Gaithersburg, and Germantown plans. All of these plans are being comprehensively coordinated through the MD 355/I-270 Technology Corridor Project.

There are two existing master plans for the Gaithersburg area: the 1985 *Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan* and the 1990 *Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan*. The 1985 *Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan* recommended that the Shady Grove Life Sciences area be the subject of a more in-depth future study (i.e., a separate master plan amendment). In 1988, work began on the Shady Grove Plan and culminated in 1990 with the approval of the *Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan*.

When the Planning Department initiated updates to the 1985 and 1990 master plans, the original intent was to combine them into one large area, spanning both sides of I-270, with the City of Gaithersburg (which has its own planning and zoning authority) in the center. This fragmented geography, however, forced together areas that have unrelated and distinct land use characteristics, that are impacted by different regional transportation projects, and that are at different stages of development. The Planning Department believes that any master plan update for the Montgomery Village area should be closely coordinated with the M-83 (Mid-County Highway) Facility Plan currently being undertaken by the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation. As you know, that Facility Plan has experienced significant delays. At the same time, the areas west of I-270 are at a point in time where a master plan update is essential. Due to approved and pending development in and around the Life Sciences Center, including the Johns Hopkins University Belward Campus and the planned Corridor Cities Transitway, the Planning Department must move forward on a timely update of the 1990 *Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan*.

Mr. Robert Hydorn  
May 18, 2007  
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On April 5, 2007, as part of a series of updates on master plans, staff provided a status report on the Germantown and Gaithersburg Master Plans during the Planning Board's "Roundtable Discussion." During the Roundtable, the Planning Board takes up administrative matters as well as substantive items, which may include staff briefings and worksessions. The Planning Board does not take formal votes on issues presented and discussed as part of the Roundtable.

At the Roundtable on April 5, the Planning Board and staff discussed the issues outlined above, including the challenges of a large, fragmented geography, the need to coordinate the master plan updates with other ongoing studies, and the different stages of projects and development that result in one area that is ready to move forward with a master plan update (Gaithersburg west of I-270) and the other area (Montgomery Village/Gaithersburg east I-270) that should be coordinated with the M-83 Study, which has been delayed. The Planning Board agreed with staff that the best way for the Department to respond to these varied issues is to maintain the two existing master plans for the area and revise them sequentially (an amendment and update to the 1990 *Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan* followed by an amendment and update to the 1985 *Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan*). The Department will maintain the two existing planning areas with two separate master plan updates and processes. And, as mentioned in your letter, there will likely be some minor adjustments to the geography. In addition, at the appropriate time, staff will establish a Master Plan Advisory Group for each master plan update.

With regard to your letter's reference to the County Council's role in master plans, the Council discusses and sets the M-NCPPC work program twice a year (fall and spring) as part of the Commission's Semi-Annual Report. That report includes a master plan schedule. The County Council members may comment on any aspect of the master plan program they care to, including priorities, timing, work years allocated, or boundaries. The Council members' comments focus on the timing and delivery of master plans to the County Council, but occasionally boundaries are discussed as well.

We appreciate your interest in the master plan program and hope this letter has provided the requested clarification. We believe that the course of action outlined herein provides a logical, responsive approach to moving forward on the master plan updates for this area. We look forward to our continuing work with Montgomery Village. If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact Sue Edwards, Team Leader for the I-270 Corridor, (301-495-4518) or Nancy Sturgeon, Lead Planner for the Gaithersburg Master Plan (301-495-1308).

Sincerely,



Royce Hanson  
Chairman

RH:ns:ha 2007-0493



# MONTGOMERY VILLAGE FOUNDATION, INC.

10120 APPLE RIDGE ROAD  
MONTGOMERY VILLAGE, MARYLAND 20886-1000

(301) 948-0110 FAX (301) 990-7071 www.mvf.org

April 24, 2007

**RECEIVED**  
0493  
MAY 02 2007

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dr. Royce Hanson, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Hanson:

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery Village Foundation Board of Directors to seek clarification regarding the Planning Board's consensus agreement to divide the Gaithersburg Vicinity Masterplan into two segments: East and West.

Following a presentation on April 11th by Park and Planning staff during the Planning Board's roundtable discussion on the Gaithersburg Vicinity Masterplan, the Planning Board seemed to agree with the rationale provided by staff that creating two plans for Gaithersburg is a good idea, although no formal action was taken. We understand that in order to accommodate this goal, the two existing plans, the 1990 Shady Grove Area Masterplan and the 1985 Gaithersburg Vicinity Masterplan, will be retained for now, but with some adjustments.

We have been told that the County Council does not typically comment on masterplan boundaries and geography, but that as part of the Planning Department's semi-annual report to the County Council on its entire work program, a schedule of the masterplans is included in this report. We understand that during this process, Council members discuss the timing of masterplans, but they are not required nor do they typically comment on boundaries.

The Montgomery Village community has not yet taken a position on dividing the Gaithersburg Vicinity Masterplan, but we would wish to be able to provide input on such important a matter.

We ask that you please confirm that what we have been told is accurate information. As a community, we want to participate in a formal decision as to whether to divide the Gaithersburg Vicinity Masterplan into two segments: East and West.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert Hydorn, President  
MVF Board of Directors

cc: Council President Marilyn Praisner

Post#	Fax Note	7671	Date	6-20-07	# of pages	3
To	Fred Felton		From	Nancy Stung...		
Co. Dept.			Co.	MNCPPC		
Phone #			Phone #	445-1308		
Fax #	301-948-6149		Fax #	301-495-1304		