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## STAFF COMMENTS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

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**MEETING DATE:** JANUARY 21, 2009

**SUBJECT:** DRAFT OLDE TOWNE DESIGN  
GUIDELINES

**TITLE:** Design Guidelines for Future  
Development and Redevelopment in  
Olde Towne in Accordance with The  
Olde Towne Master Plan: MP-1-05

**REQUEST:** RECOMMENDATION OF PLANNING  
COMMISSION TO THE MAYOR & CITY  
COUNCIL

**ZONE:** CBD: Central Business District

**STAFF LIAISON:** Rob Robinson, Planner  
Trudy Schwarz, Community Planning Director

**Enclosures:**

Staff Comments

- Exhibit 1: Resolution R-64-05
- Exhibit 2: Approved Olde Towne Design Guidelines (1996 Plan)
- Exhibit 3: Draft Olde Towne Design Guidelines
- Exhibit 4: 1996 Illustrative Plan
- Exhibit 5: 2005 Illustrative Plan

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Staff is bringing forward to the Planning Commission draft Olde Towne Design Guidelines as a discussion item. There currently exists a collection of design guidelines for Olde Towne. (Reference exhibit 2) However, those guidelines were developed in conjunction with the 1995 Downtown Plan for the City of Gaithersburg, revised January 8, 1996. (Reference exhibit 4) Since that 1996 plan, the City identified Olde Towne as a special study area for the 2003 Land Use Master Plan.

The Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan, MP-1-05, was approved by Mayor and City Council resolution R-64-05 on July 18, 2005. (Reference exhibit 1) The future Olde Towne envisioned in MP-1-05 would require new, expanded design guidelines, rather than the antiquated guidelines currently adopted and not developed for this plan. Included in said resolution was the following:

"Following the adoption of the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan the City should begin formulating a collection of design guidelines for the five Planning Sectors. Concept plan proposals should go before the Planning Commission for courtesy review and comment. The Planning Commission will utilize the established design guidelines in their review of these concept plans."

The draft Olde Towne Design Guidelines has incorporated those elements still applicable from the current adopted set. (Reference exhibit 3) The draft Design Guidelines: includes guidelines not currently addressed such as hardscape elements and lighting; better reflects the current state of development design techniques; and expands upon guidelines such as signage to address and clarify deficiencies found in the current adopted set.

Staff is aware that Olde Towne is a diverse area with distinct traits for each sector. The development of these guidelines is often broad based to address universal conditions found within all the sectors. Project specific details, such as landscaping, will be dealt with at the site plan stage. Staff has included language in the draft guidelines allowing the Planning Commission to waive specific requirements if a proposed site plan element better furthers the intent and vision of the Olde Towne Master Plan. (Reference exhibit 5)

### **CONCLUSION:**

Staff is seeking from the Planning Commission guidance and recommendations on the various design elements addressed to create a user-friendly, comprehensive illustrative document to guide Olde Towne development over the coming years. Eventually, staff will seek a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission to the Mayor & City Council approving adoption of the guidelines by resolution.

RESOLUTION No. R-64-05

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
ADOPTING THE GAITHERSBURG OLDE TOWNE DISTRICT  
MASTER PLAN AND AN AMENDMENT TO THE  
GENERAL PLAN FOR THE CITY OF GAITHERSBURG  
MASTER PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT

AS APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED BY  
THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON JUNE 15, 2005

AS ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ON JULY 18, 2005

WHEREAS, § 3.05 of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland sets forth the function and duty of the Planning Commission to make and approve a general plan or amendments thereto and recommends the same to the local legislative body for adoption, to serve as guide to public and private actions and decisions to insure the logical development of public and private property in appropriate relationships; and

WHEREAS, § 3.08 of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland states that the local legislative body shall adopt the plan and or amendment thereto; and

WHEREAS, the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan amends and supersedes the Downtown Plan for the City of Gaithersburg, Maryland, last revised on January 8, 1996; and

WHEREAS, the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan is an additional plan element for community renewal and redevelopment and will further advance the purpose of the plan and is permitted by § 3.05 of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, a land use element of the City's General Plan is required by the State of Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 and § 3.05 of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, a well attended five-day public charrette was held in November of 2004 in which public input was used to create the draft Olde Towne Master Plan, and the draft Olde Towne Master Plan was presented to the Mayor and City Council and Planning Commission during publicly held meetings on November 22, 2004, and March 7, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a joint public hearing with the Mayor and City Council on May 16, 2005, on the Master Plan Amendment MP-1-05, known as, the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan and amendment to the General Plan revising and amending the 2003 Master Plan Land Use Element, and after careful survey and study of present conditions and anticipated future growth to the City and the adjacent area, the Planning Commission approved Resolution No. PCR-1-05 on July 6, 2005, being the approval of the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan and amendment to the 2003 Master Plan Land Use Element, and transmitted an attested copy of the same as its recommendation to the Mayor and City Council, which is hereby attached and incorporated as part of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan and amendments made from time to time, provide a general framework for assisting the Mayor and City Council and City Planning Commission in making land use policy and facilities decisions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council that the Master Plan Amendment MP-1-05, known as, the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan and amendment to the General Plan revising and amending the 2003 Master Plan Land Use Element, thoroughly reviewed by the legislative body during the joint public hearing conducted on May 16, 2005, approved by the City Planning Commission on July 6, 2005, and recommended to the legislative body (as PCR-1-05) is hereby adopted by the Mayor and City Council as an amendment to the General Plan for the City, the Downtown Plan for the City of Gaithersburg, Maryland, the 2003 Master Plan Land Use Element, as heretofore amended:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all other recommendations of the City Planning Commission, pursuant to the adoption of PCR-1-05 and all subsequent resolutions by the City Council, are hereby approved and ratified to the extent not inconsistent with this Resolution subject to the following revisions to:

#### **Sector 1**

- Page 21, amend the Sector 1 Improvement legend number 1 from "12-Story, Mixed Use Tower," to "Nine-Story, Mixed Use Tower."
- Page 22, replace the first paragraph with the following two paragraphs: (first) "This sector is characterized by a large City-owned, underutilized parcel known as the 'Y' site. The site represents significant importance to the historic development of the City of Gaithersburg. Prior to the construction of railroad tracks in the pattern of a 'Y' enabling early steam locomotives to turn and reverse direction on the site, the City of Gaithersburg was served by through trains only. The 'Y' pattern of tracks permitted trains to originate and terminate within City limits. The tracks have long since been removed, and the 'Y' site is now underutilized as a commuter parking lot." (Second paragraph) "The 'Y' site enjoys high visibility from Frederick Avenue and direct access from Fulks Corner Avenue and Summit Avenue. Accessibility to the site is further enhanced from points west by the direct connection to I-270 via Olde Towne Avenue/West Diamond Avenue. Proposed development in Sector 1 leverages this visibility and access, as well as the presence of the MARC rail station to significantly increase Olde Towne's density and preserve the historic character found along Diamond and Summit Avenues."
- Page 22, amend the text of the first sentence in the fourth paragraph from: "One building on the 'Y' site is proposed to reach up to 12 stories..." to "One building on the 'Y' site is proposed to reach up to nine stories...."
- Page 22, amend the text of the third sentence in the fourth paragraph from "The 'Y' site's rail history could be reflected in the final design of this plaza space," to "The 'Y' site's rail history (described above) should be reflected in the final design of this plaza space."

#### **Sector 3**

- Page 26, after the first paragraph under the title, "Northeast Corner of Diamond Avenue," add the following statement: "The houses located at 320, 408, 402, and 404 East Diamond Avenue (placed in order of significance), have been found to be significant to Gaithersburg by the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee and should be relocated and preserved, if possible. At such time as development is proposed for these properties, the developer of the proposed development shall actively pursue the relocation of the single family houses."

#### **Sector 5**

- Page 30, remove the word "rental" in the last sentence of the last paragraph under the title "Residential Development."
- Page 30, after the last sentence of the last paragraph under the title "Residential

Development," add the following statement: "In addition, a first floor retail/commercial component should be explored with any new development proposal."

**Proposed Building Heights**

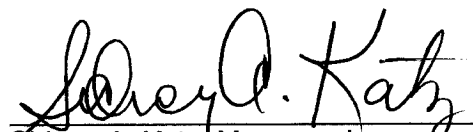
- Page 31, decrease the height of the proposed building on the "Y" site (Sector 1) from 12-stories to nine-stories. Amend the legend accordingly.
- Page 31, increase the height of the proposed redevelopment buildings (103,105, 107, and 111 North Summit Avenue), north of Gaithersburg Elementary School (Sector 5: Residential Development), from three-stories to four-stories.
- Page 31, decrease the height of the proposed building adjacent to and north of the Harding House at 20 South Summit Avenue (Sector 1), from four-stories to three-stories.

**Implementation Strategy:**

- Page 39, amend the text of the third sentence in the second paragraph from: "Unpredictable shifts in the economy and other market forces can make the depth of demand in the mid-term a little less specific," to "Unpredictable shifts in the economy and other market forces will alter this program as development progresses in the mid- and long-term stages."
- Page 39, after the last sentence of the second paragraph, add the following statement: "Additional studies to determine the adequacy of public facilities (schools, traffic, water and sewer, EMS services, etc.) will be required as development persists. It is recommended that appropriate public facility studies accompany all development proposals for city review and approval."
- Page 39, add the following third paragraph: "Following the adoption of the Gaithersburg Olde Towne District Master Plan, the City should begin formulating a collection of design guidelines for the five Planning Sectors. Concept plan proposals should go before the Planning Commission for courtesy review and comment. The Planning Commission will utilize the established design guidelines in their review of these concept plans."

Maps and illustrative material may be revised where necessary to conform to City Council actions. The text may be revised as necessary to achieve clarity and consistency and to convey the actions of the City Council.

ADOPTED by the City Council this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2005.

  
Sidney A. Katz, Mayor and  
President of the Council

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the City Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2005.



David B. Humpton, City Manager

# OLDE TOWNE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

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The following guidelines apply to all buildings within the Olde Towne Central Business District. However, the Olde Towne Community Development Corporation will review buildings and materials on a case-by-case basis. All commercial properties should specifically refer to the Commercial Storefronts section of these Guidelines. Structures listed on the City's historic inventory or are designated historic should refer to the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings.

## BUILDING WALLS

### MATERIALS

1. **Walls** shall be clad in smooth cut cedar shingles, wood clapboard, wood beaded siding, hardboard siding, stucco or brick.
2. **Exposed foundation walls** shall be brick, stone or parged block. Painted poured concrete may be used subject to the approval of The Olde Towne Central Business District, Inc.

### METHODS

1. **Walls** of more than one material shall only change material along a horizontal line (not a vertical or diagonal line), and the heavier material shall always go beneath the lighter material.
2. **Wood clapboard and wood siding** shall be painted.
3. **Brick** shall be in a horizontal running bond pattern.
4. **Stucco** shall be rough in texture, to match the old First National Bank Building at Diamond and Summit Avenues.
5. **Poured concrete** shall have a smooth finish.
6. **Trim** is required when there is a change in material or a change in plane.

## ELEMENTS

### MATERIALS

1. **Porches** shall be wood, or faced with brick or stone.
2. **Stoops** shall be brick or stone. Poured concrete may be used subject to the approval of The Olde Towne Central Business District, Inc. Stoops at secondary entrances may be wood.
3. **Posts, columns and railings** shall be wood, steel or wrought iron.
4. **Piers and arches** shall be brick or stone.

5. **Chimney enclosures** shall be brick, stone or stucco.

## **METHODS**

1. **Wood** shall be painted or stained with an opaque or semi-solid stain, except walking surfaces which may be unfinished.
2. **Wood posts** shall be no less than 6" by 6".
3. **Piers** shall be no less than 12" wide and 8" thick.
4. **Arches** shall be no less than 8" thick.
5. **Columns, pilasters, etc.**, of the Tuscan or Doric orders, shall be as prescribed by The American Vignola.
6. Spaces between **spindles and balusters** shall not exceed 2-1/2".
7. **Balconies** shall extend beyond the face of the wall at no more than 4' and shall be supported by exposed beams or brackets.
8. **The undercroft of porches** shall be enclosed with masonry or shall be skirted by lattice.
9. **Decks** may be placed only on rear elevations.

## **ROOFS**

### **MATERIALS**

1. **Visible roofs** shall be galvanized metal standing seam, copper, wood shakes, natural slate or asphalt shingles subject to the approval of The Olde Towne Central Business District, Inc.
2. **Gutters** shall be copper, steel or aluminum.

### **METHODS**

1. **Roofs** shall be simple, symmetrically pitched, and in the configuration of gables and hips. The pitch shall be between 6:12 and 14:12.
2. **Shed roofs** shall be permitted when the ridge is attached to an exterior wall. The pitch shall be between 3:12 and 14:12.
3. **Flat roofs** shall be permitted only when occupied and edged by a railing or parapet wall.
4. **Gable ends** shall have profile trim.
5. **Skylights and solar panels** may be placed on rear elevations or on side elevations if not visually prominent.
6. **Roofs** built of steel standing seam shall be painted or galvanized.
7. **Asphalt shingles** shall be black or dark grey and subject to the approval of The Olde Towne Central Business District, Inc.
8. **Copper** shall be allowed to age naturally.

## OPENINGS

### MATERIALS

1. **Windows** shall be wood, vinyl clad wood or ESP aluminum.
2. **Glass** shall be clear, except stained glass, art glass and frosted glass of not more than 10 square feet.
3. **Doors** shall be wood, embossed steel or fiberglass with a wood veneer, and glass.
4. **Doors** facing a street shall be hinged.

### METHODS

1. **Windows and window lites** shall be no more squat than square.
2. **Windows** shall be rectangular, except that a window may be circular, semicircular, hexagonal, or octagonal in shape, but only one such window may be placed on each elevation.
3. **Bay windows** facing a street shall extend to the ground or be structurally supported by brackets.
4. **Lintels** shall extend beyond the opening of a dimension equal to the height of the lintel.
5. **Muntins**, if provided, shall be real or mounted on the exterior surface.
6. **Single glass panes** in residences shall be no larger than 20 square feet.
7. **Total fenestration** (rough openings) on the front elevation shall not exceed 35% of the total surface area.
8. **Two windows** in the same rough opening shall be separated by a minimum 4" post.
9. **Windows** shall be no closer than 2' to the corners of the building.
10. **Shutters** shall be shaped, sized and proportioned to the window they serve.
11. **Shutters** shall be functional or provided with shutter dogs and mounted as if hinged to the window frame.
12. **Doors**, including garage doors, shall have glass, raised panels, or both.
13. **Storm doors and screen doors** shall be full view and free of decorative trim.
14. **Garage doors** facing a street shall not exceed 8' in height or 9' in width.

## COMMERCIAL STOREFRONTS

### MATERIALS

1. **Commercial storefronts** may be, in addition to door materials previously stated, aluminum.
2. **Signs** shall be wood or enameled steel. Signs may not be back-lit and must be

lighted by gooseneck lights, raised letters backed with neon, a projecting box situated below the sign with a fluorescent tube, or indirect lighting from ground lights.

3. **Awnings** shall be built of a metal structure covered with canvas or synthetic canvas.
4. **Outside tables, chairs and benches** shall be wood or metal.

## **METHODS**

1. **Storefronts** shall be designed individually.
2. **The storefront, doors, awning and signage** shall be a unified design.
3. **The storefront** should be detailed, while the rest of the building should be simple.
4. **Doors** shall be recessed a minimum of 3' and located near the center of the storefront, except at corners.
5. **Storefront glazing** shall be a minimum of 75% of the first floor elevation.
6. **Glass** shall be clear and frames should be wood.
7. A single external **sign** may be applied flush with the elevation at each floor level. The sign shall be a maximum of 24" in height by any length. Signs may contain multiple individual signs which refer to a tenant of the building.
8. A single external **blade sign** may be hung below the second floor window sill, perpendicular to the building.
9. **Blade signs** greater than 8' in height shall be mounted above the storefront, perpendicular to the building. These signs may extend 4' from the building and may extend as high as the lintels on the top floor.
10. **Signs** shall be externally lit.
11. **Neon signs** of no greater than 4 square feet are permitted inside storefronts.
12. **Address numbers** shall be a maximum of 8" in height. The quantity and location shall be as required by the Post Office.
13. **Awnings** shall be permitted to encroach the full width of the sidewalk.
14. **Awnings** shall be rectangular in shape with straight edges. Awnings may have side panels, but shall not have a bottom (soffit) panel.
15. **Awnings** shall be within reach at the drip edge.
16. The **vertical drip of an awning** may be stenciled with signage a maximum of 8" in height.
17. **Street elevations of corner buildings** shall be illuminated.

## **MERCHANDISING**

1. **Storefront displays** shall be illuminated by halogen lighting.
2. **Store lights** shall be activated at 60% capacity until 10 PM, emphasis should be on window display and back wall.

3. **Window displays** shall not have backdrops. Displays throughout the store shall be designed to be seen through the storefront.
4. **Signage** on glass shall be vinyl cutout letters (not posters nor handwritten).
5. **Merchandise** in the storefront and the back wall shall be displayed in a coarse grain (repetitively) to be legible from the sidewalk.
6. **Merchandise** shall be displayed, when possible, on tables (not shelves or racks), and associated with the lifestyle artifacts (flannel plaid with canoe oars).
7. **Name brand merchandise** should be promoted with signs.
8. **Shelves** shall be full but not crowded.
9. **The cash register** shall be as far to the rear of the store as feasible.
10. **A selection of merchandise** may be displayed outside the storefront.

### **MAINTENANCE**

1. **Sidewalks** shall be swept twice daily and machine-scrubbed and power-washed weekly.
2. **Doors** shall be washed daily and windows weekly.
3. **Painting** shall occur as often as necessary to conceal scuffing.

### **MANNERS**

1. Avoid signs with negative messages ("No Returns" or "You Break It, You Buy It").
2. Greet the customer "Good morning" or "Thank you for coming to our store".
3. Parking tickets shall carry a slight fine (a slap on the wrist, not punishment), and shall provide a grace period for immediate payment.

### **GARDENS**

#### **MATERIALS**

1. **Fences and gates** shall be wood pickets, lattice or boards, steel, wrought iron or ESP aluminum.
2. **Garden walls** shall be brick or stone.
3. **Retaining walls** shall be brick or stone, except for those in rear yards which may be poured concrete or pressure treated wood.
4. **Walks and paths** shall be brick, stone, slate, or concrete pavers.

#### **METHODS**

1. **Terminal posts in fences** (corners, openings, ends, etc.) shall be thicker and taller than other posts.
2. **Fences, walls and hedges** along streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., shall be between waist and chest height (the applicant's height).

3. **Wood fences** built of wood shall be painted white, or stained white with an opaque stain.
4. **Steel or wrought iron fences** shall be painted black or dark green.
5. **Brick walls** shall be a minimum of 8" thick and capped. The cap shall overhang a minimum of ½".
6. **Retaining walls** shall be between knee and chest high (the applicant's height).
7. **Poured Concrete** shall have a smooth finish.
8. **Patios** may be placed only on rear elevations.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **MATERIALS**

1. **Variations** may be granted (on the basis of architectural merit) by The Olde Towne Central Business District, Inc.
2. **Properties and improvements** shall conform to the *intention*, not the "letter," of The Architectural Regulations.
3. The following **shall be located in rear yards**: clotheslines, HVAC equipment, meters, solar panels, antennas, satellite dishes, garbage cans, dumpsters, play equipment, swimming pools (except those of the inflatable variety), etc.
4. The following **shall not be permitted**: penalized materials, copper anodized aluminum.
5. **Exterior light fixtures** shall be compatible with the style of the building.

### **The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings**

The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A **property** shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The **historic character** of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of **historic materials** or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a **physical record** of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. **Most properties change** over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own wrought shall be retained and preserved.

5. **Distinctive features**, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. **Deteriorated historic features** shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
7. **Chemical or physical treatments**, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. **Significant archeological resources** affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. **New additions, exterior alterations**, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. **New additions** and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## Olde Towne Design Guidelines:

The Olde Towne District is the City of Gaithersburg's focus of historical identity and distinctive in character. Olde Towne celebrates and reconnects with Gaithersburg's heritage. The vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Olde Towne is to be a place for living, working, shopping, and entertainment in a lively, safe, and diverse community environment.

The purpose of the Olde Towne Design Guidelines is to provide a framework for implementing the vision established by the Olde Towne Master Plan for the overall re-development of the district. The Guidelines allow various future and existing projects to blend and succeed; resulting in a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly urban center while preserving Olde Towne's historic character and charm. Olde Towne redevelopment projects will be evaluated on the degree to which the project demonstrates compliance with the intent of the design guidelines and the goals of the Olde Towne Master Plan.

The Design Guidelines provide a framework of design principles providing direction on the qualitative aspects of a development project. The guidelines will be used during the City's project review process to encourage the highest level of design quality, while at the same time providing flexibility in their application to specific projects. A project may not be required to meet all the design guidelines, with the exception of signage guidelines. Not all guidelines may be applicable to an individual project with innovative and otherwise preferable design concepts, or based upon unique project site characteristics. Alternative measures (architecture and materials) may be considered if the measures meet or exceed the intent of the design guidelines and further the goals of the adopted Master Plan. The Planning Commission has the ability to waive specific guidelines if they so deem it will further the goals of the adopted Master Plan. Any design aspects not addressed in these guidelines are to conform to the established requirements laid forth in the City of Gaithersburg City Code and any applicable adopted City regulations.

## DESIGN FEATURES:

New buildings and additions should not imitate historic buildings, but should be compatible with them. Designs that are contemporary interpretations of traditional Olde Towne building features may be considered and incorporated. New developments should express uniqueness in form and should be designed specifically for the particular building site within the context of Olde Towne and not as a generic building design type that may be found anywhere.

## BUILDING SITING:

- Front setbacks lines shall be located 0 to 10 feet from the property lines, unless the setback is pedestrian-oriented and contributes to the quality and character of the streetscape, benefiting the public realm.

- Orient the primary façade and locate the primary entrance toward the public street unless the function precludes it.
- Design street corner buildings so they address the corner by placing the main building entrance at the intersection, wherever possible.

#### ARCHITECTURE:

- The principal building façade or one that faces a public street is to have a base, middle, and a top. This may be accomplished through the use of color, the arrangement of façade elements, or a change in materials.
- Doors at entryways should be designed to not interfere with pedestrian movement on adjacent sidewalks
- 360-degree architecture, where all sides of a building have been detailed to complement the primary façade in architecture, massing, and materials is encouraged.
- A building with more than 50 feet of street frontage should be divided into increments through articulation of the façade using architectural techniques.
- Break-up front façade massing with vertical and horizontal articulation through variation in the wall plane (defined by recesses and reveals), placement of window and door openings, or divisions/ breaks in building materials.
- Recessed or projecting entries, for articulation, in ground level frontage are encouraged.
- Floor-to-floor heights above the first story should appear to be similar with first floor non-residential uses providing pedestrian scaled architecture.
- The use of corporate “chain” architecture is not allowed. Corporate tenants should design their buildings to fit the scale and character of Olde Towne.
- Changes in vertical plane are encouraged at places in exterior walls where floor-to-roof control joints are required

#### MATERIALS:

- Utilize building materials that have a human scale. Traditional materials including wood, brick, stone (including cast stone), fiber cement siding (synthetic wood) , and stucco should be used as the primary building materials.
- Tile, stone, glass block, copper flashing, metal and wood should be considered for accent materials.
- Concrete blocks/ masonry units are not allowed to be the predominate material on façades or sides of buildings fronting public right of ways.
- Aluminum, vinyl or fiberglass siding is not allowed.
- Larger blank panels, such as preformed concrete, cementitious fiberboard, or smooth stucco, are to avoid blank walls by incorporating additional architectural details or textures.
- Decorative metal panels are permitted

- Material changes are to occur at intersecting planes to appear substantial and integral to the façade.
- Material or color changes at the outside corners of structures are to be avoided.
- In general lighter weight materials should be located above heavier materials rather than below them

#### ROOFS:

- Roof lines should be varied in height, and long horizontal roof lines should be broken up.
- Solar panels are encouraged, but should be non-visible from the pedestrian scale.
- The roof of a new building should be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.
- Pitched roofs, such as hip, mansard, gable or shed roofs are allowed.
- Roofing materials should be non-reflective, and muted colors should be used.
- Allowable roof materials include real or artificial slate (black or dark gray), architectural grade shingles, non-reflective standing seam metal, clay tile, and metal shingles.
- Flat roofs are preferred with parapets that articulate the rhythm of the buildings.
- Parapets should have sufficient detail, such as precast treatments, continuous banding, or projecting cornices, lentils, caps, or corner details.
- Parapets should appear integral to the roof and not “added on”.
- Any interior side of a parapet visible from the street should be finished with the same materials and a similar level of detail as the front façade.
- Rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened.
- Green roofs are encouraged.

#### WINDOWS:

- All exterior elevations are required to have windows, unless prohibited by code.
- A minimum of forty percent (40%) of the first floor façade for non-residential buildings, facing a public right of way, should be a window surface.
- The use of decorative opaque or reflective glass on first floor non-residential buildings windows is allowed.
- Windows should be recessed and with mullions (when appropriate to window style) to develop shadow lines.
- Windows must be single-, double-, or triple-hung, picture, or casement windows.
- On upper floors, the windows should be vertically oriented. Arched tops, columns framing the windows and decorative lintels are encouraged.
- Circular, half-round, irregular, or elliptical accent windows are allowed. Paired quarter-round windows may be used in pairs flanking another architectural feature.

- Shutters, if used, are to be wood, synthetic wood, or vinyl and of a sufficient size to appear operable to cover the opening if both sides are closed.
- Windows may not be any closer than eighteen inches (18") to the ground.

#### GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS:

- Gutters will be constructed of aluminum, galvanized metal, steel, or copper.
- Copper gutters are permitted to retain their copper color or take on a weathered patina.
- Gutters and downspouts shall be integrated into the design in terms of color, shape, and location.
- Downspouts are encouraged to be located at the rear of the building unless required by specific conditions to be located elsewhere.
- Drainage design is not to create ice on walkways

#### AWNINGS, BALCONIES, CANOPIES:

- Awnings and balconies may project no more than five feet (5') from the building façade.
- Awnings, balconies, covered arcades, and canopies may project into the public ROW, provided an easement has been granted.
- An architectural cornice or similar roof treatment must accompany any flat roof over an entry portico or porch.
- A parapet will be used to edge any flat roof when used as an exterior deck and accessed from the interior of the building.
- Balconies projecting from any story above ground level are permitted on any façade.
- Undersides of balconies shall be finished.
- Balconies may be constructed of metal, synthetic materials, or pressure treated wood, but must be complementary to the building material of the façade to which they are attached.
- Covered arcades should be complementary in material and color to the main structure on which they are attached.
- Canopy materials should be complementary in material and color to the main structure on which they are attached.
- Awnings should be of a durable, water repellent and fire-fade resistant commercial grade fabric, canvas or similar material having a matte finish. Plastic or fiberglass awnings are not allowed.
- Awnings may be retractable.
- For pedestrian scaled visual variety, the use of the same unbroken awning across multiple storefronts or buildings is not allowed. Long expanses of awning should be broken into segments and relate to a window or door opening beneath them.

- The structural supports of the awning should be finished to match or complement the awning fabric.
- Awnings should be mounted above display windows or entrances and below the cornice or second story window sills.
- Awnings (including the supporting structure), balconies, covered arcades, and canopies must be at least eight feet (8') above the sidewalk at the lowest point.

## SIGNS:

The following guidelines will be applicable to the CBD zone only and are binding pursuant to Chapter 24, Article IX of the City Code. If a conflict exists between these guidelines and the provisions of Chapter 24, Article IX, the guidelines shall control. Sign elements not specifically addressed by these guidelines will adhere to the provisions of Chapter 24, Article IX

- A sign must be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- The amount of all sign square footage together on one façade cannot exceed 10% of the total non-residential related facade square footage.
- Multi-story, multi-family buildings will submit a comprehensive sign package for Planning Commission approval.
- A sign shall appear to be in scale with the façade to which it is associated.
- Sign location on a building should emphasize design elements of the façade itself and should not obscure architectural details or features.
- All signs, with the exception as noted, are to be externally illuminated. Gooseneck style down-lighting is the preferred method.
- Wall Mounted Signage within 20 feet (but not less than 12 feet) of a public street curb-edge is permitted to use internally illuminated channel letters not greater than twelve inches in height, subject to approval by the Planning Commission.
- All signs may not be located on those portions of a commercial or industrial building or structure facing abutting residentially improved property which are not separated by an improved public road from the property upon which said signs are located, except where the Planning Commission finds that an unlighted sign is compatible with the design principles of the building and residential area.
- Monument signs should not be greater in size than thirty-six square feet, from grade to top, with a maximum height of six feet.
- Monument signs are to include the property's street address.
- Projecting (blade) signs are allowed.
- There is a limit of one projecting sign per façade, per tenant, facing a public road.
- Projecting signs may not extend vertically above the wall mounted sign height line of the façade upon which it is mounted.
- Projecting signs shall maintain a minimum vertical distance of eight feet (8') above any sidewalk.

- Projecting signs may not be greater than twenty-four square feet in total area measured by sign height by horizontal distance from building face to outermost sign edge.
- The maximum horizontal projection from the building face is four feet. The maximum distance between the projecting sign and building face is one foot.
- Projecting signs cannot block or obscure sign details, windows or cornices of the building upon which they are placed.
- Projecting signs must be non-internally illuminated and constructed of painted wood or metal or a synthetic substitute. Unfinished materials, including unpainted wood, are not allowed.
- Projecting signs can project into public ROW
- Signs on awnings or canopies shall not exceed 24 inches in letter height.
- Multi-commercial tenant and/or multi-use developments are to submit a comprehensive sign package for Planning Commission approval at the time of Final Site Plan.
- Signs featuring icons - including, but not limited to, icons in the form of any product, person, or logo - are allowed.
- An integrated window sign is permitted and may be either painted or etched.
- An integrated window sign may not cover more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total window area.
- Glass etching is the preferred Window Sign treatment.
- Neon signs are allowed if placed inside windows and may not cover more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total window area.
- Sign materials and color schemes shall be compatible with that of the building facade. Painted wood and metal are appropriate materials. Unfinished materials, including unpainted wood, are not allowed.
- Painted signs on blank walls were common historically and are allowed on masonry façades only and must comply with the 10% allowable signage, unless approved by the AIPP committee.
- All signs shall not have a vertical height projecting above the roofline or parapet wall.
- Individual building addresses should be visible from the street.
- In general sign materials should compliment the style and materials of the building

#### FENCES AND WALLS:

- Screening fences and walls should be consistent with the architectural style of the adjoining building in terms of colors and materials and complement the associated architecture.
- Terraces adjoining a street or pedestrian walkway may have a hedge or low wall not to exceed three feet in height, constructed of pre-cast stamped / decorative concrete or brick.

- Dumpsters must be screened on all sides with complementary materials to the building(s) it serves.
- Chain-link, vinyl, and razor wire fencing is not permitted when visible from the public right-of-way, unless required by law.
- Concrete masonry units are not allowed as decorative, screening, or retaining walls unless faced with either stone or brick.
- Planters may be incorporated into and used as decorative screening walls.
- If parking is adjacent to a public right-of-way, screen the lot vehicles with a low wall, fence, or hedge.

#### LIGHTING:

- Lighting in Olde Towne should illuminate façades, entrances and signage while providing public safety.
- Lighting should be designed to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the buildings.
- Any colored lighting schemes should provide continuity and complement adjacent building lighting.
- Building and signage lighting must avoid harsh lighting and be indirect.
- Shaded gooseneck lamps are encouraged for exterior building and sign illumination.
- Wall-mounted light fixtures are not allowed to extend above the height of the wall to which the fixtures are mounted.
- The use of wall sconces, lanterns, or other lighting to delineate building entrances is encouraged.
- Street lighting proposed within any public ROW, will be of a type approved by the Department of Public Works

#### PARKING:

- Locate parking behind buildings or in the interior of lots.
- Structured parking is encouraged.
- Structured parking should be context sensitive in design and appearance with comparable building materials used wherever possible.
- Parking sites should provide areas for public bicycle parking.
- Surface parking areas are to be buffered from public sidewalks or streets through the use of screen walls or landscaping.

#### STREETSCAPE:

- A continuous overhead cover, offering adequate pedestrian protection from the elements should be provided along the right-of-way.

- Continuous cover may be accomplished by combining projections from buildings (awnings and canopies); an open, to the street, arcade; or the planting of street trees.
- Appropriately wide sidewalks should be provided from corner to corner along all property lines.
- New utility upgrades and services to properties should be installed below ground.
- Tree wells for street trees are to have a minimum dimension of six by six feet.
- Appropriate landscaping for tree wells is encouraged.
- Decorative metal fencing, with a minimum of eight inches in height, bordering tree wells is encouraged.
- Tree grates are not allowed.
- The inclusion of “Green Streets” design elements is encouraged.
- The ability to provide for outdoor seating, subject to ADA compliance, is encouraged.

#### HARDSCAPE ELEMENTS:

- Developments should incorporate enhanced transit stops and shelters into their design.
- Developments are encouraged to provide hardscape amenities which may include benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding signs, and bicycle racks.
- Landscape elements, such as the use of decorative planters, should be included in all project designs.
- The inclusion of public art is encouraged, subject to approval of the AIPP Committee.
- Decorative and permeable pavings are encouraged, subject to DPW approval.



- EXISTING BUILDING
- PROPOSED BUILDING
- PARKING



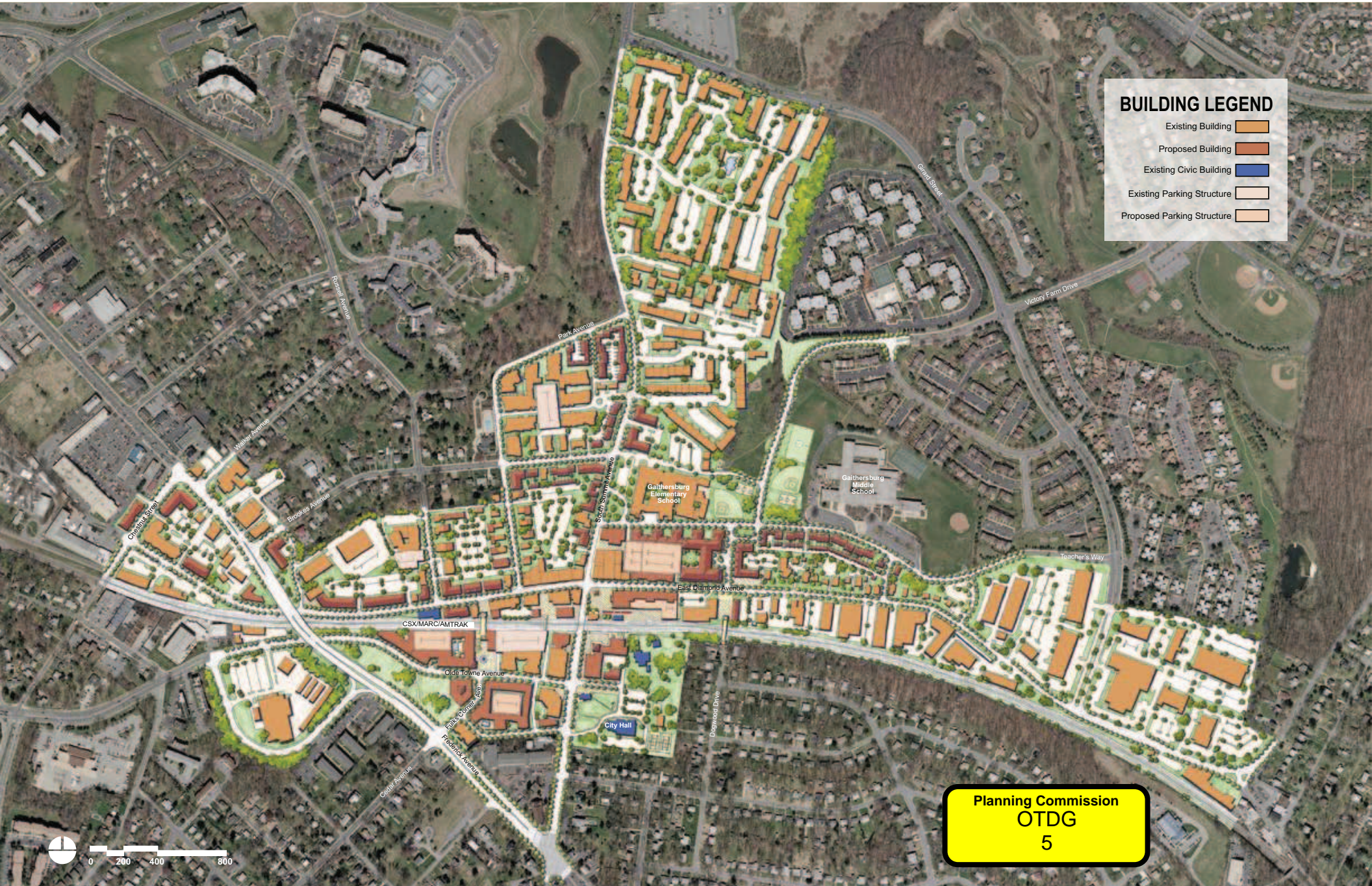
**8.**  
**ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN**

**DOWNTOWN GAITHERSBURG**

**CITY OF GAITHERSBURG, MD**

**ANDRES DUANY**  
**ELIZABETH PLATER-ZYBERK**  
TOWN PLANNERS

CHARRETTE DATE: SEPTEMBER 7-12, 1993



**BUILDING LEGEND**

- Existing Building
- Proposed Building
- Existing Civic Building
- Existing Parking Structure
- Proposed Parking Structure



**Planning Commission**  
**OTDG**  
**5**