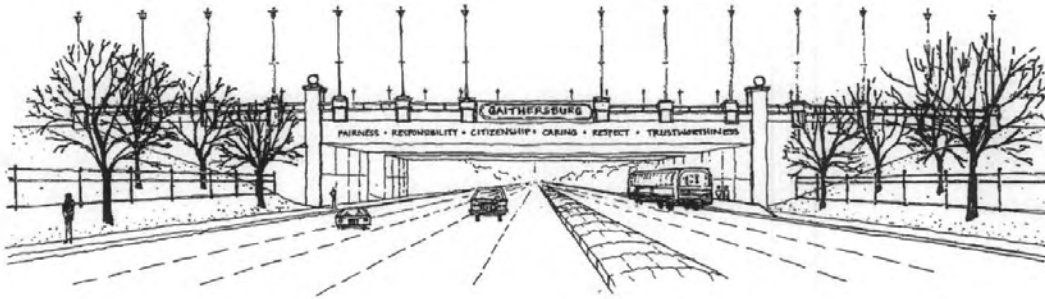


CITY OF GAITHERSBURG

SPECIAL STUDY AREA
FREDERICK AVENUE CORRIDOR
LAND USE PLAN

A MASTER PLAN ELEMENT



Gaithersburg

A CHARACTER COUNTS! CITY

Published January 2001

SPECIAL STUDY AREA
FREDERICK AVENUE CORRIDOR

Adopted January 2001

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**SPECIAL STUDY AREA
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INTRODUCTION

The *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* is a result of a recommendation made in the Land Use element for Neighborhood One of the City's 1997 adopted Master Plan. The Plan designated a portion of the North Frederick Avenue Corridor from Cedar Avenue to Montgomery Village Avenue as a Special Urban Design Corridor requiring additional study and a new guiding plan. The study was to focus on the development of a comprehensive approach to improve the aesthetic quality of the Corridor, to provide a safer pedestrian environment, to identify and preserve historic resources in the Corridor, and to ensure continued economic revitalization. Specifically, the recommendation noted that new land use designations should be considered once the Corridor Plan is completed. The new land use designations would allow the existing mix of retail, restaurants, offices, and residential, but also would allow future flexibility in redevelopment proposals and foster a continued mix of uses. The Master Plan also suggested that to implement these future ideas, the zoning of the area could be changed from C-1 (LocalCommercial), C-2 (General Commercial), and R-20 (Medium Density Residential) to MXD (Mixed Use Development), with some modifications to the text of the MXD zone. However, following the public hearing on this plan, an outline of a new zoning district was developed as a result of public input. The new zone is known as the CD (Corridor Development) Zone. This new zoning category has been developed through the text amendment process prior to final adoption of this plan. No property would be re-zoned until after the new zoning category is adopted for the City at large.

Subsequent to the Master Plan recommendations, additional zoning and design issues related to South Frederick Avenue and North Frederick Avenue (north of Montgomery Village Avenue) arose that required the expansion of the study limits.

WORK SCHEDULE

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in July 1998 for consultants to conduct the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan*. In September 1998, the RFP was awarded to EDAW, Inc., which subcontracted with several firms, including Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company, Gensler Architects, Moran Coventry Lighting, and Wells and Associates. The *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* was developed from October to December 1998 and included two, three-day planning charettes that were open to the public. The charettes generated a good deal of public participation, with over 150 residents, property owners, developers and public officials participating during the six days. After this intensive study period, the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* was completed and a final presentation given to the Mayor and Council and Planning Commission during a worksession on January 11, 1999. A joint public hearing for this Amendment to the Master Plan was advertised on March 17, 1999, with a hearing held on May 17, 1999.

EXISTING USE OF LAND

Frederick Avenue is a successful transportation and business corridor within the City of Gaithersburg and is also part of a major multi-jurisdictional business route extending from Washington D.C. to Pennsylvania. Over 50,000 vehicles use the Corridor every weekday, either traveling to destinations along the corridor or commuting to areas outside the City. Currently, Frederick Avenue is struggling with many of the same issues being confronted by transportation corridors throughout America. Generally, these issues stem from uncontrolled and unplanned development as urban populations grow and spread beyond their metropolitan centers. As a result, Frederick Avenue exhibits a cluttered and unpredictable building pattern, comprised of a wide range of land uses, including residential, commercial, office, service, hotel, church, civic uses, parking lots and public open space. Irregular building setbacks create a disorderly street edge. Signage and lighting standards are inconsistent, as are streetscapes and roadway standards. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic are not integrated into the overall street design, creating numerous difficulties for those using the Corridor.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND CORRESPONDING ZONING CATEGORIES

The following chart shows the relationship between the City's land use designations and corresponding zoning categories.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS	CORRESPONDING ZONING CATEGORIES
Low Density Residential	R-A (20,000 sq.ft. minimum/unit) R-90 (3 units average/acre) R-90 Cluster (3.5 units/acre)
Medium-Low Density Residential	R-6 (6 units/acre maximum)
Medium Density Residential	RP-T (9 units/acre maximum) R-18 (18 units/acre maximum) R-20 (21.5 units/acre maximum)
High Density Residential	R-H (54 units/acre maximum)
Mixed Residential	MXD (Mixed Use Development)
Residential-Office	R-B (Residential Buffer) R-O (Planned Residential)
Commercial-Office-Residential	C-B (Commercial Buffer) MXD (Mixed Use Development) CD (Corridor Development)
Commercial	C-1 (Local Commercial) C-2 (General Commercial) C-3 (Highway Commercial) H-M (Hotel-Motel)
Mixed Use	CBD (Central Business District)
Commercial/Industrial- Research-Office	MXD (Mixed Use Development) CD (Corridor Development)
Industrial-Research-Office	E-1 (Urban Employment) E-2 (Moderate Intensity Industrial Park) I-3 (Industrial and Office Park)
Industrial	I-1 (Light Industrial) I-4 (General Industrial)
Institutional	R-A (20,000 sq.ft. minimum/unit) R-90 (3 units average/acre) R-B (Residential Buffer)
Open Space	R-A (20,000 sq.ft. minimum/unit)

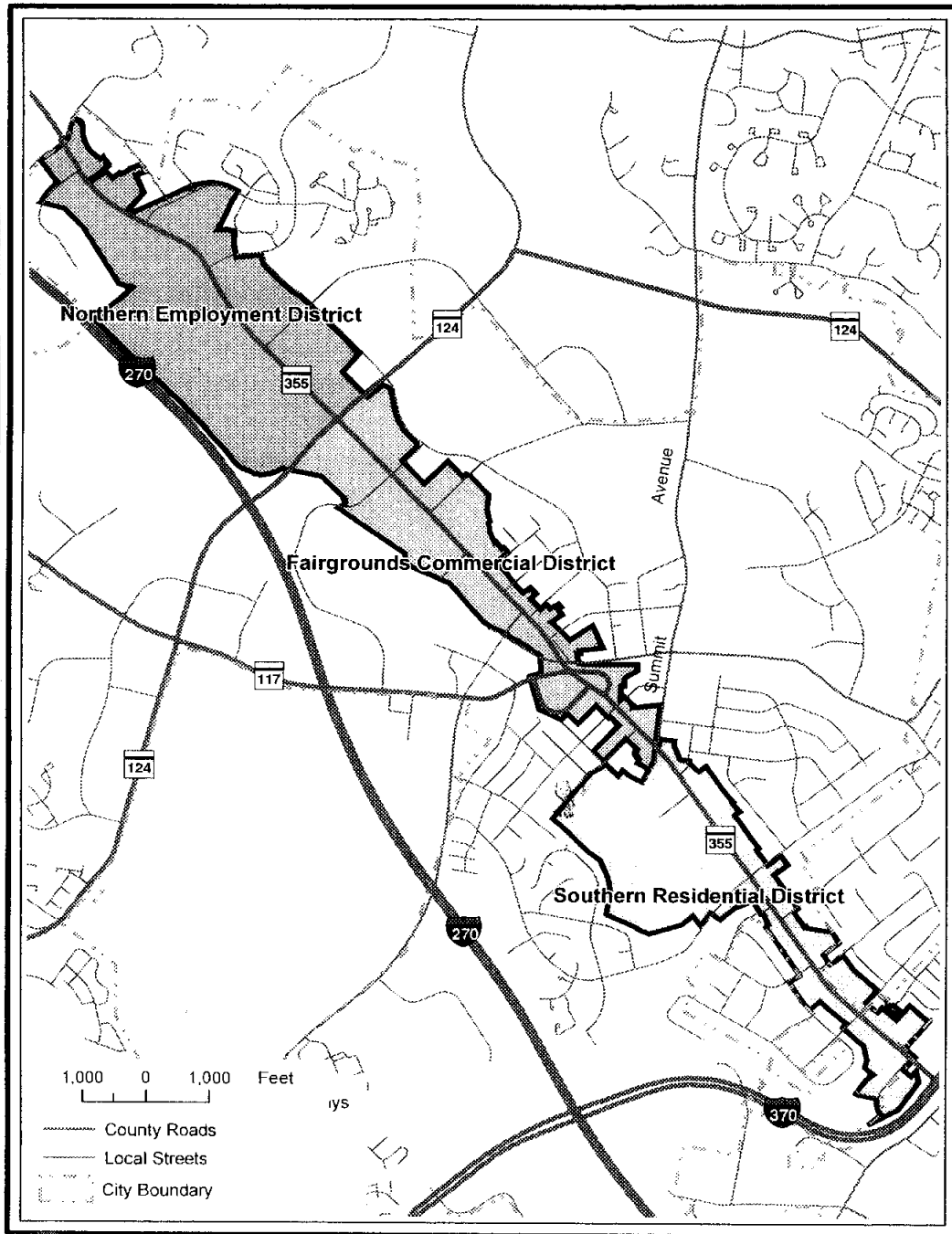
FREDERICK AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY AREA LIMITS

The Frederick Avenue Corridor constitutes a four-mile portion of state highway, Maryland Route 355, which extends the entire length of Frederick Avenue through the City from Shady Grove Road on the south, to Game Preserve Road on the north. The Corridor, except in very specific locations, extends one parcel deep on either side of the Frederick Avenue right-of-way and encompasses three land use neighborhoods: Neighborhoods One, Two, and Six.

Land use options/strategies for properties in each of three study areas along the Frederick Avenue Corridor are discussed in the pages that follow. The preceding map delineates the boundaries of the three study areas: Southern Residential District, Fairgrounds Commercial District, and Northern Employment District. Land use designations and zoning recommendations made in this plan will supersede any recommendations made for the same properties in the 1997 Land Use Plan. Any properties which are not specifically addressed in the text, maps, and charts herein will retain their 1997 land use designations as defined in the Neighborhoods One, Two and Six adopted Land Use Plans. All parcels within the Frederick Avenue Corridor, regardless of whether or not there is a change in land use designation or zoning recommendation, must adhere to the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* design code upon adoption of this special study. In addition, properties along the Corridor that are not undergoing a change in land use are eligible for subsequent comprehensive rezoning to the new CD Zone. Owners of properties not comprehensively rezoned are encouraged to apply for rezoning to the CD Zone in order to meet the goals and objectives of the Frederick Avenue Corridor Master Plan.

Within the corridor as described above, the historic resources along Frederick Avenue form a fourth and natural district of their own. This "heritage district" lies within the original City boundaries as shown on the Maddox Map of 1894. Acknowledgment of these resources as a "heritage district" will help to maintain the integrity of the original City limits, support the City's commitment to remembering its past, and stimulate economic improvement through the attraction of such a special area.

Many of the map designations have recommendations for zoning to be changed to a newly developed "Corridor Development" (CD) Zone. In most cases, this recommendation is made in order to provide the maximum design flexibility to redeveloping parcels so that they may more readily comply with the design code of the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan*. The "Regulating" and "Master Plan" portions of the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* will further regulate land use and development of these parcels. The CD Zone has been designed for use along a multi-parcel area in order for it to function properly along the Frederick Avenue Corridor. It is the intent that the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* serve as the guide for all development, and/or redevelopment, along the Corridor. A text amendment to create the CD Zone has been completed prior to the comprehensive rezoning of any parcels within this Study Area.



Frederick Avenue Corridor. Study area limits.

SOUTHERN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The Southern Residential District extends from Shady Grove Road on the south, to Summit Avenue to the north. The district is characterized by a predominance of residential land use patterns. There are single-family homes, multi-family dwellings, three churches, and scattered retail fronting Frederick Avenue. The retail is a mix of strip malls and converted single-family homes.

- A Designate P940** (Map Designation A) as **commercial/industrial-research-office**. This 7.03-acre parcel owned by the Casey Trust, if annexed into the City, should be designated as a mixed use development parcel. The location of the lot, situated at the southern entry point of the City, warrants development of a signature office building of high architectural merit. Due to its proximity to Interstate-370 and the related noise and limited access, this parcel is not considered suitable for either residential or retail uses. Therefore, the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* recommends office use specifically. In order to assure the desired type of development, the parcel should be zoned to the new CD Zone if, and when, annexation occurs. Currently, the parcel is zoned R-20 by Montgomery County, which is reflected in the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. This action will result in a rezoning of the property upon annexation and would require County Council approval. A maximum of 115,000 square feet office space is recommended.

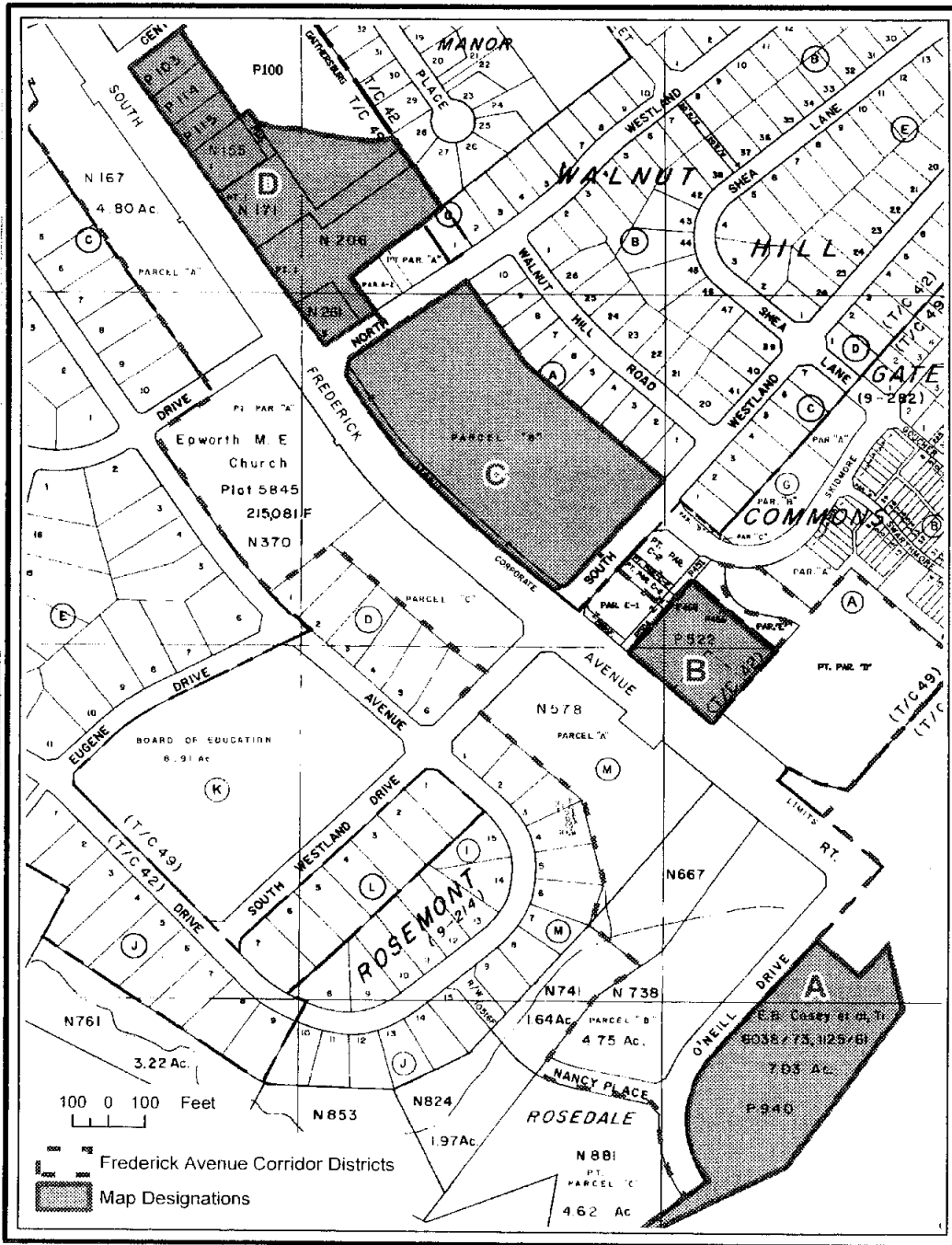
Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- Adopt commercial-industrial-research-office land use designation
- Rezone property to CD

- B Designate P522** (Map Designation B) as **commercial/industrial-research-office**. This 1.8-acre parcel owned by Abdollah Malekzadeh, if annexed into the City, should be designated as commercial-industrial-research-office. This property currently contains the Holiday Motel and Montgomery Taxi Service. This new land use designation will allow the parcel to redevelop in a manner consistent with the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan*. The Plan recommends an office building for this parcel that would mirror the footprint and style of the Casey Foundation Building directly across Frederick Avenue at 800 South Frederick Avenue. The presence of two office buildings of similar style and scale flanking either side of South Frederick Avenue would further enhance the gateway nature of the southern end of South Frederick Avenue. The Montgomery County zoning designation on the lot is C-2 and, if annexed, the property could be rezoned to the CD Zone. The height and size of the building should be similar to the existing Casey Office Building across the street.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- Adopt commercial-industrial-research-office land use designation
- Rezone property to CD



Part of Southern Residential District. Designations: A, B, C, and D.

- C Designate** Parcel B (Map Designation C) as **commercial/industrial-research-office**. This parcel contains the Walnut Hill Shopping Center and is not within the City limits. The property is recommended to be annexed into the City with a land use designation of commercial-industrial-research-office and a CD zoning category. The *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* recommends infill retail liner buildings along the street edge of South Frederick Avenue within the existing parking lot. The configuration of four buildings, as shown in the plan, is meant to be conceptual. Other building configurations could also be suitable at this location as long as the buildings are positioned along the street edge. A range of 20,000 to 30,000 square feet of additional retail space is recommended.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- Adopt commercial/industrial-research-office land use designation
- Rezone property to CD

- D** (Neighborhood One, Map Designation 13) **Designate** a portion of the Rashidian property (P100) as **commercial-office-residential**. This is the portion that is developable and is adjacent to the existing Macroland building. Since the property was recently annexed, it cannot be included in the subsequent comprehensive rezoning. Rezoning is not permitted within five years of annexation without County approval. **Retain** parcels P103, P114, P115, N155, P116, N171, N206, and N261 (Map Designation D) as **commercial-office-residential**. In the 1997 Neighborhood One Land Use Plan these five small parcels were designated as commercial-office-residential. This area is in transition and has already experienced some redevelopment to commercial uses. While this designation remains appropriate, this Special Study Land Use Plan recommends a change in zoning category to the Corridor Development Zone. The CD Zone will permit more flexible development of these properties and is better suited to the goals of the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan*. The lots are small in size and access should be from a shared common driveway in the rear of the lots, with ingress/egress from Central Avenue. This will help eliminate curb cuts along Frederick Avenue. Development is recommended to be in keeping with the residential character of this portion of the Corridor. Offices, light retail or live-work units in low-rise buildings are examples of what is envisioned. A maximum of 7,000 square feet of building area per lot is recommended.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations:

- Adopt commercial-office-residential land use designation
- Rezone parcels to CD

- E Designate** Parcel N999 (Map Designation E) as **commercial/industrial-research-office**. This 2.9-acre parcel located at the corner of West Deer Park Drive and South Frederick Avenue is a very visible site, and contains two aging office buildings whose floor plates are outdated for the current office market. The intent of this land use and zoning change will allow the site to redevelop. Any new development should strive to rehabilitate the stream valley buffer area, including SWM improvements. Preservation of the façade of 600 South Frederick Avenue is recommended given its relation-

ship to the street and its aesthetic appeal. Any new construction should be to the rear of 600 South Frederick and along West Deer Park Drive. This land use change will correspond to the CD zoning category in order to provide the most flexible development standards. A maximum of 75,000 square feet of total, post redevelopment, office space is recommended. The new CD Zone will provide greater flexibility in designing a development plan that is compatible with the neighborhood and meets the goals of the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan*.

Land Use and Zoning Actions Recommendations

- Adopt commercial-industrial-research-office land use designation
- Rezone parcels to CD

F Designate P521, N561, N574, P627, P679, P733, P732, P782, P784, P837, P864, P891, Lot 1 Block V, and Parcels P860, P861 (Map Designation F) as **commercial-office-residential**. These parcels, along the east side of South Frederick Avenue, are an area of mixed use development, including an existing funeral home, multi-family apartment buildings, two single-family dwellings that currently contain businesses, and a small retail center. The two houses are zoned Residential Buffer (RB) and currently contain uses that are consistent with that zone. However, due to use and design constraints of the RB Zone, these properties have experienced difficulty maintaining their viability given their location. This new land use designation, with corresponding CD zoning, will allow for the upgrade of the housing stock and permit redevelopment of the area to either multi-family units, light commercial uses, or office uses. Development is recommended to be in keeping with the residential character of this portion of the Corridor. Offices, light retail or live-work units in low-rise buildings are examples of what is envisioned. Strict adherence to the *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* in redevelopment scenarios is a must. While the new land use designation is not meant to alter the existing pattern of land uses, some increased density and first floor commercial and/or retail development in the residential buildings is acceptable and may spur redevelopment.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- Adopt commercial-office-residential land use designation
- Rezone parcels to CD

G Designate Parcels P364, P392, P393, P394, P417, P448, P449, P470, and P469 (Map Designation G) as **commercial-office-residential**. These eight lots located at the entryway to Olde Towne Gaithersburg are currently in transition. The City has spent many hours of discussion with adjoining residents and City officials regarding these lots. Due to the current deteriorating condition of several of the existing single-family dwelling units, continued maintenance issues, and the volume and noise levels associated with this intersection, the area can no longer sustain an exclusively residential land use. The *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* makes specific recommendations on

how these properties should be treated and recommends demolition of four of the existing houses with redevelopment of townhouse-style live-work units. The new units should be placed up to the street with parking in the rear. Architecture should reflect the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, a 10-foot green space buffer should be maintained between these parcels and the rear yards of homes directly behind these parcels on Peony Drive. The *Frederick Avenue Corridor Plan* recommends preservation of three existing residences (P364, P393 and P469) for future commercial or residential development. The use of these buildings should be consistent with those mentioned previously—light retail, office and residential. A land use designation of commercial-office-residential, with corresponding CD zoning, will allow the properties to redevelop in a positive manner. A maximum of 45,000 square feet of total building area is recommended.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- Adopt commercial-office-residential land use designation
- Rezone to CD