

CITY OF HYATTSVILLE
UPDATED PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2021

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7Dn7MQBTTjuZyTJn8M4YaA

1. Introduction of Committee & Guest Members (7:00 PM)

- Maureen Foster, Committee Chair
- Todd Dengel, Committee member
- Yohannes Bennehoff, Committee member
- Greg Barnes, Committee member
- Nkosi Yearwood, Committee member
- Marshall, Committee member
- Sam Denes, Council Liaison
- Edouard Haba, Committee Liaison
- Ben Simasek, Committee Liaison
- Jim Chandler, Staff Liaison
- Kate Powers, Support Staff
- Taylor Robey, Support Staff
- Tom Haller, Presenter
- David Bickel, Presenter
- Matt Michetti, Presenter
- Doug Carter, Presenter
- Stefano Terricola, Attendee

2. West Hyattsville Multifamily Development – Detailed Site Plan

- Presentation ○ Bobby Gilbane, Applicant ○ Tom Haller, Applicant's Representation
- Project Background ○ The project site is located just to the north of the West Hyattsville metro station. The property included in the DSP application includes part of the original land in the preliminary Riverfront plan, north and west of the tracks as they underground near Little Branch Run, and adjacent to the property previously

owned by WMATA. ○ The WMATA parcel was not accessible until the Riverfront at West Hyattsville project developed.

- The townhouse along Little Branch Run will face the proposed multifamily buildings.

- Phase 1 included the townhomes. Individuals were started moving in to the townhomes starting in July 2021. Phase 1 also included the medical office building which is currently being built. ○ Phase 2 includes the second multifamily building. ○ The development is set up for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to take advantage of the existing site.

- The applicant has proposed a pedestrian promenade between the two multifamily buildings. The promenade will also include retail to serve both residents and metro users. The retail will have frontage along the promenade, the bike/ped access point, as opposed to the main road.

- The Phase 1 multifamily building will include a unit mix ranging from studios to 2 bedrooms. ○ We are hoping to be seen by the Planning Board in December this year, with building stabilization in May 2025. ○ Our original plan addresses floodplain impacts, with floodplain mitigation on Park and Planning land. This recreation area includes an amphitheater, lighting, and access to metro. The area will be accessible to both residents and trail users. The applicant noted the importance of connectivity of open space and parkland and visibility of the trail for safety reasons.

- The applicant is proposing the green amenity space be expanded with the development of the multifamily buildings. ○ The applicant wants to create a sense of place, with a continuity of thought, design, function, and landscaping. ○ This development will include connection to the Northwest Branch Trail. The applicant wants to bring the trail into the community. ○ The promenade will include outdoor seating, retail, amenities, and access to the tunnel to the metro station. The private pool associated with the multifamily building will also front the promenade. ○ Architectural features proposed are a result of the site itself. The applicant wants to create an attractive environment for people to live. ○ The applicant was included a lot of articulation and has worked with the dramatic curve entering the site from Ager Road. The first deep articulation is the entrance to the building and garage along Little Branch Run. The garage has been moved back away from the roadway, towards the metro station.

- The plaza created is diagonal due to an existing WSSC easement. Utilizing the easement was an opportunity to create visual interest to both residents and metro users. The multifamily building courtyard will front along the easement.

- The applicant wants to create a light, bright, airy, and vibrant product.

- The applicant uses color in their design, which can be seen in the front entrance, drop off area, and garage entrance.
 - There is an art wall near the entrance and the applicant intends to work with local artists to create this feature.
 - The dramatic curve, articulation, recesses, balconies, and color create visual and textural interest.
 - The building courtyard will show movies and include an internal pool for residents.
 - There is a use of vertical and horizontal panels throughout the design to create continual interest.
 - Most of the ground floor has a masonry base.
 - The applicant plans to make the parking structure into a colorful event.
 - The design illustrates the detailing, articulation, and drama of the building design.
- Clarifying Questions
 - Yohannes: How many parking spaces will be provided in each building? Is it above the minimum required?
1. Bobby: Phase 1 is projecting 300 parking spaces in the structured garage, which is roughly a 1:1 ratio. The TDDP does not have a minimum parking requirement. We are below the maximum allowed.
 2. Yohannes: Was the parking structure designed for adaptation if parking utilization is low to make more amenity or residential space?
 3. Bobby: No, we try to “right size” the parking knowing there will be great use of metro and other modes of transportation. We may be able to create additional storage in the garage if the parking is underutilized.
 4. Yohannes: Is there only one entrance to the structured garage in Phase 1?
 5. Bobby: Yes, one entrance for vehicles and two entrances for bicycles.
 6. Yohannes: Have you had any luck securing affordable housing funding from Amazon?
 7. Bobby: We are still having conversations with them and other development groups. We have nothing new to announce at this stage. Once we know one way or another, we will let you all know.
 8. Yohannes: Will the unit sizes or distribution change at all if Amazon funds are awarded for affordable housing?
 9. Bobby: No, we would not revise unit types or sizes. We tried to create and offer a variety of unit types to a variety of tenants.

10. Yohannes: Do you have any goals or plans for the retail space? What types of clients are you trying to attract?
11. Bobby: The thinking continues to advance, and it is important to us to highlight local talent and business. We are not looking at chain retailers, we are looking for great local businesses.
12. Yohannes: Can you talk about the landscape alternative compliance you've requested?
13. Tom: The requested alternative compliance is due to the location of the building in relation to the metro. The landscape manual treats all rails the same. The manual calls to be set back further from the metro site. If we conformed to the requirements, the multifamily buildings would need to be set back and include a 40' buffer of landscaping. We want to be close to the metro as a service and amenity. Additionally, the proposed plantings will enhance the visibility of trail, and simply not attempt to screen the trail.
14. Yohannes: Are there any other variances we should know about or discuss?
15. Tom: We have some nonconforming elements, and several amendments are due to the TDDP being 15 years old. Fortunately, the TDDP is currently being updated. One example is that the TDDP requires incandescent lighting while we are proposing the use of LED lighting. The applicant is proposing stamped concrete while the TDDP requires the use of pavers. All buildings require a rear alley however, this doesn't make sense for the configuration of this site. Additionally, the building is required to occupy 80% of the frontage, while the proposed building will occupy 64% of the frontage to increase architectural articulation along the façade.
16. Yohannes: Is there a plan for the retail services and trucks that will be servicing the ground-floor business? Will patrons and employees have garage access or on-street parking?
17. Bobby: There will be a loading dock adjacent to the entrance of garage available for residents and large deliveries.
18. Yohannes: Have you gotten a commitment from the County to add a signalized streetlight at Ager Road?
19. Bobby: No, we do not have a commitment from the County. Previous traffic impact studies did not indicate that this element was needed.
20. Yohannes: Did this analysis include the anticipated impact related to the multifamily buildings and the Kaiser Permanente Office Medical Building?

21. Bobby: Yes, it did.
- Todd: The applicant is proposing a 300-space garage. Will there be one or two structure parking garages between the two multifamily buildings?
 - 1. Bobby: There will be two garages, one for each multifamily building.
 - 2. Todd: Will these spaces be only available to residents? Can retail patrons use the garage?
 - 3. Bobby: For the Phase 1 building, the garage is private and only accessible for residents. There is only 2,500 sf of retail proposed. Parking for patrons will be available along Ager Road. This will be parallel parking and certain spaces could be dedicated for employees. Phase 2 is to be determined.
 - 4. Todd: Will any of the parking be metered?
 - 5. Bobby: Yes, we have been working with the City to bring out portable solar powered meters, the first of which will be installed at the back end of the townhouses by the park. We will continue to work on this with the City.
 - Nkosi: Are there any County requirements regarding environmental sustainability for the project? If so, does the applicant intend on meeting them?
 - 1. Bobby: There are no county requirements, but all of our projects need to meet some level of sustainability. We are aiming for a green globes bronze or silver accreditation.
 - Marshall: Does the 1:1 parking ratio only take into account residents? If so, does this mean there are zero visitor parking spaces in the garage?
 - 1. Bobby: The parking ratio is slightly more than 1:1, which accommodates parking visitors.
 - 2. Marshall: Will there be parking available both in the structured garage and outside the garage for visitors?
 - 3. Bobby: Yes, and the parking along Little Branch Road will be available on both sides of the road, with some ability for visitors to park.
 - 4. Marshall: Have you thought about utilizing oddball spaces for motorcycle parking?
 - 5. Bobby: I'm not sure, I do not have that information in front of me.
 - 6. Marshall: Is there a required minimum or maximum number of handicap spaces?
 - 7. Bobby: Yes, there are minimum code requirements related to ADA accessibility.

8. Marshall: Are you confident there will be no negative noise impacts inside the project apartments? How do you plan to mitigate noise impacts?
9. Bobby: We have done significant investigation on this topic. We anticipate the apartments will be in pretty good condition when it comes to noise impacts without much attenuation. Through standard building materials and our analysis, we are confident we can reduce outside noise and vibrations below the threshold for habitable spaces. It will be well below 45 decibels.
10. Marshall: Does this mean you are not doing anything additional to reduce noise?
11. Bobby: Yes, standard materials and upgraded windows on the side adjacent to the metro will improve the sound quality.
12. Tom: There is a condition of approval requiring the applicant to provide the building plans to an acoustical consultant. They must certify building materials for decibel rates to ensure they are sufficient. They will make sure the applicant achieves an adequate level of noise.
13. Marshall: Does this building design include the use of any hardie panels?
14. Doug: Yes, it does.
15. Marshall: Approximately what percentage of building coverage includes hardie panels?
16. Doug: Roughly 70-75% of the coverage includes hardie product – both panel and plank.
17. Marshall: Will any masonry or brick be included above the first floor?
18. Doug: No, it will not.
19. Marshall: Is residential green space or tot lot included as part of this project?
20. Bobby: Outside we have two courtyards, one is passive, and one is active with entertainment elements facing the promenade. There will also be a gym and lounge inside the building.
- Greg: When looking at the proposed amendments, I noticed that the applicant asked for an accommodation to allow deviation from the use of double hung windows. Why is this?
 1. Tom: The TDDP has some specific requirements related to window types. Standards windows cannot be within 30" of a building corner.

2. Doug: When providing operable windows, we must meet code. In terms of materials, we are in the early stage. We haven't decided if we will be using metal or fiberglass or something else. We haven't made that determination yet. The size of the windows will be a critical factor for residents and ventilation.
3. Greg: I would recommend the use of double hung windows, as opposed to the single hung windows requested through the applicant's amendments. Double hung windows are easier to clean, and the single hung windows appear to be dirtier.
4. Doug: We will take this into consideration when refining the design.
5. Greg: As part of your amendments, the applicant is requesting parking space dimensions of 18.5x8.5. Can you further describe this request?
6. Doug: Cars are becoming smaller now, so this is a common sense move. All one size spaces are more efficient versus having both full size and compact spaces. Different sized parking spaces creates difficult parking for tenants as compact cars parking in full size spaces leaving larger cars without a place to park. We have been advocating for one standard size. What we are recommending makes sense in terms of usage, economics, and flexibility.
7. Greg: If you comply with current parking standards, how many spaces would you lose?
8. Doug: We would lose between 15 and 18 spaces in the garage.
9. Greg: The applicant is requesting an accommodation on the first floor of parking garage for a 9' ceiling.
10. Doug: At the entrance, the retail space is one of the elements pushing the ceiling higher, so we need to add extra height in the garage as well.
11. Greg: In terms of bike storage, what is the number of bike spaces available? Or the square footage being made available for bike storage?
12. Tom: The bike storage area can accommodate 34 bike parking spaces. Expanding this storage will depend on resident need and response.
13. Greg: Will the garage include EV charging accommodations?
14. Bobby: We will be providing EV chargers and the required wiring within the structured parking garage.

- Committee Comments ○ Greg: First off, I am excited about this development. It will be a welcomed addition. But I do have concerns about the parking associated with

the project and if there will be sufficient parking for residents, visitors, patrons, and employees. In terms of the size and distribution of units, it appears this project will cater to a younger, metro-friendly demographic. I think the limited number of bike storage spaces needs to be given some thought. I think overall, the applicant has put together a good plan.

- Marshall: I will echo the parking issues expressed by Greg. I also have concerns about the noise mitigation. We, the people who live here, know about transit noise complaints. We have heard this before, that the noise mitigation will be tenant friendly, but I encourage the applicant to go above and beyond to mitigate noise due to the building's proximity to metro. Also, I would like to see more masonry spread out beyond the ground floor. I like the project and I think it will have a good end result but it still needs some polishing.
- Nkosi: I echo some of Marshall's comments regarding noise mitigation. 45 dba is the typical standard, given the location, but I believe greater attention should be focused on mitigating the noise created by the metro tracks. Overall, I think the project is moving in the right direction. Thinking about the proposed design aesthetic, the building is going in a modern aesthetic. Everything is very clean. I believe more contemporary traditional residential elements should be included in the building façade. At a minimum, I would recommend the inclusion of Romeo & Juliette balconies to break up the façade a bit more and integrate a more traditional contemporary approach to what this residential building could be. The art components are fantastic but I think there are more ground floor opportunities, perhaps with the addition of stairs or stoops and more traditional residential elements. This could help define the streetscape more as well as the building. It's good to hear that the applicant is in talks with Amazon to secure affordable housing funds. I also think including at least some 2 and 3 bedroom units within the project is going in a good direction.
- Todd: Both Greg and Nkosi articulated it quite well. Nkosi made a good point about the potential additions to the ground level aesthetic. The layout and inclusion of art and greenspace throughout the whole project is great. The applicant is likely creating a destination point and this is why there is so much concern on the parking side. The applicant needs to understand the retail impacts before determining the garage capacity in Phase 2. It is a giant factor. We will need to know the retail impact to determine the parking need. If the second phase will allow for additional retail parking or visitor parking, that will

also be a factor. I applaud the incorporation of local talent for both building art and retail. I think that is important.

- Yohannes: I think you have too much parking associated with this project. I'd rather see the community and developer advocate for better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Ager Road is difficult to get to safely. It appears the County has disregarded the importance of community connectivity in this area. I would like to see the applicant and City work with them to improve the connection here. I also agree that more brick should be used on the first floor. Instead of going to knee/waist height, maybe the brick can go up to first story height. Also, in agreement with Greg's comments, I think the incorporation of EV charging in the structured garage is a great addition.

The Planning Committee sees the West Hyattsville Multifamily project as a welcomed addition to the community. We appreciate the art elements being incorporated into the project as well as the open space. We appreciate the architectural activation of the space with the inclusion of both vertical and horizontal features. We recommend additional brick and other more traditional elements be included along the streetscape especially on the ground floor to break up the facade and create a more residential feel. (6 in favor, 0 opposed).

The Planning Committee recommends the City Council encourage the developer to increased accessibility to the site for bicyclists and pedestrians. (6 in favor, 0 opposed)

The Planning Committee has concerns about the number of parking spaces available for visitors. We want to ensure the developer adequately meet the parking needs of both residents and visitors. (3 in favor/2 opposed/1 abstention)

The Planning Committee recommends close attention is paid to the parking in Phase 2 and ensure the structured parking garage associated with the second multifamily building supplements any parking needs created by the first multifamily building. (1 in favor/4 opposed/1 abstention)

The Planning Committee recommends the bike storage capacity be increased within the West Hyattsville Multifamily project. (5 in favor/1 opposed)

The Planning Committee has concerns with the potential noise and vibrational impacts to residents of the West Hyattsville Multifamily project. Given the experience in other areas of Hyattsville, the allowable noise mitigation for residential buildings may be inadequate. The Planning Committee recommends the City Council encourage developers to pay close

attention to the noise mitigation within the project and go beyond what is required. (6 in favor, 0 opposed)

3. Development Update

- West Hyattsville Multifamily Project, Preliminary Plan of Subdivision ○ Approved by Prince George's County Planning Board
- MPG Self-Service Storage Development ○ Approved by Prince George's County Planning Board
- Hyattsville Business Roundtable next week – October 27 ○ Highlighting Business Retention & Expansion Strategy ○ Register here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5rpKDn7MRB6R07BVZZPg5g
- Hyattsville highlighted in Washington Business Journal ○
<https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2021/09/27/hyattsville-has-big-development-brewing.html>

4. Committee Business

- Approve September 2021 minutes ○ Defer to next month
- Next Meeting: November 16 ○ Yohannes has a conflict and will not be able to attend

5. Additional Questions & Discussion

6. Adjourn (9:00 PM)