



PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, October 27, 2021

7:00 PM

Meeting No. 18-2021

AGENDA

Suzan Pitman, Chair

Anne Goodman Andrea Nuñez
Charles Littlefield Sam Pearson
John Tyner, II

Jim Wasilak, Staff Liaison
Nicholas Dumais, Assistant City Attorney

Virtual meeting via WebEx
Watch LIVE on Comcast Cable Rockville Channel 11
and online at www.rockvillemd.gov
See page 3 for more information

- 1. Discussion**
 - A. Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy**

 - 2. Commission Items**
 - A. Staff Liaison Report**

 - B. Old Business**

 - C. New Business**

 - D. Minutes Approval**
 - 1. October 13, 2021**
-

E. FYI/Correspondence

3. Adjourn

PLANNING COMMISSION ONLINEMEETING and PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

I. Meeting Platform: WebEx

- A. Applicant Access: Provided by Planning and Development Services/IT
- B. Access for Oral Testimony and Comment: Provided by PDS/IT (see below)

II. Pre-Meeting Preparations/Requirements:

A. Written Testimony and Exhibits –

Written testimony and exhibits may be submitted by email to Jim Wasilak, Staff Liaison to the Planning Commission, at jwasilak@rockvillemd.gov , or by mail to:

Suzan Pitman, Chair
Rockville Planning Commission
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

and must be received no later than nine (9) days in advance of the hearing in order to be distributed with the Planning Commission briefing materials.

Written testimony and exhibits received after this date until 4:00 pm on the day before the hearing will be provided to the Planning Commission by e-mail.

B. WebEx Orientation for Applicants

Applicants must contact the planning case manager assigned to the Application no later than five (5) days in advance of the hearing in order to schedule WebEx orientation, which must be completed prior to the hearing.

C. Oral Testimony by Applicants and the Public

i. Applicants – Applicants must provide to the planning case manager a list of presenters and witnesses who will testify on behalf of the Application. The list must be provided to the PDS Staff project manager no later than five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing.

ii. Public Testimony/Comment on an Application – Any member of the public who wishes to comment on an Application must submit their name and email address to the Staff Liaison to the Planning Commission Jim Wasilak (by email at jwasilak@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 9:00 am on the day of the hearing to be placed on the testimony list. Members of the public who seek technical assistance from City staff must submit their name and email address to Jim Wasilak no later than two (2) days in advance of the hearing so that an orientation session may be scheduled.

If a member of the public is unable to meet the deadline to be placed on the testimony list, they can submit written testimony to the Staff Liaison to the Planning Commission by email to jwasilak@rockvillemd.gov.

III. Conduct of Online Meeting and Public Hearing:

A. Rules of Procedure –

The Meeting and Public Hearing will be held in accord with the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure, including the order of testimony and applicable time limits on testimony. The Rules may be viewed here:

[https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2023/Planning-Commission-- Rules-of-Procedure?bidId=](https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2023/Planning-Commission--Rules-of-Procedure?bidId=)

B. Oral Testimony –

During the hearing, the Chair will sequentially recognize each person on the testimony list and ask the host to allow the speaker to speak. Each speaker must wait to be specifically recognized by the Chair before speaking.

If during the hearing a party wishes to speak or a speaker wishes to request the opportunity to engage in cross-examination following specific testimony, the party must contact the Staff Liaison/Host by email at jwasilak@rockvillemd.gov or by text at (202) 839-0305 with the specific request. The Host/Staff Liaison will inform the Commission. The Chair will determine if the party may be heard.

C. Continuance of Hearing –

The Planning Commission, at its discretion, reserves the right to continue the hearing until another date.

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND APPLICANTS

I. GENERAL ORDER OF SESSION FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

1. Staff presentation
2. City Board or Commission comment
3. Applicant presentation (10 min.)
4. Public comment (3 min, or 5 min for the representative of an association)
5. Planning Commission Discussion and Deliberation
6. Decision or recommendation by vote

The Commission may ask questions of any party at any time during the proceedings.

II. PLANNING COMMISSION BROADCAST

- Watch LIVE on Comcast Cable Rockville Channel 11 and online at: www.rockvillemd.gov
- Replay on Comcast Cable Channel 11:
 - Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (if no live meeting)
 - Sundays at 7:00 pm
 - Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 1:00 pm
 - Saturdays and Sundays at 12:00 am (midnight)
- Video on Demand (within 48 hours of meeting) at: www.rockvillemd.gov/VideoOnDemand.

III. NEW DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

- For a complete list of all applications on file, visit: www.rockvillemd.gov/DevelopmentWatch.

VI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Additional resources are available to anyone who would like more information about the planning and development review process on the City’s web site at: www.rockvillemd.gov/cpds.

Maryland law and the Planning Commission's Rules of Procedure regarding ex parte (extra-record) communications require all discussion, review, and consideration of the Commission's business take place only during the Commission's consideration of the item at a scheduled meeting. Telephone calls and meetings with Commission members in advance of the meeting are not permitted. Written communications will be directed to appropriate staff members for response and included in briefing materials for all members of the Commission.

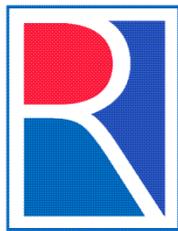


Agenda Item #:	<u>1</u>
Meeting Date:	<u>October 27, 2021</u>
Responsible Staff:	<u>Clark Larson</u>

SUBJECT: Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy

RECOMMENDATION
(Include change in law or Policy if appropriate in this section):

Hold a discussion and provide direction to staff on a proposed set of near-term policies and actions for the implementation strategy of the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan.



City of
Rockville
Get Into It

Planning Commission Staff Report

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2021

REPORT DATE: October 20, 2021

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Clark Larson, AICP, Principal Planner
Comprehensive Planning Division
240.314.8225 clarson@rockvillemd.gov

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy

BACKGROUND:

This agenda item is a continuation of a topic that the Planning Commission discussed briefly at their meeting on September 22, 2021, which is implementation of Rockville's newly adopted Comprehensive Plan (Plan), and formulating recommendations for near-term City action.

On October 27th, staff is returning for the Planning Commission to consider a set of near-term priorities for implementing the Plan and, should the Commission choose to do so, make a recommendation to the Mayor and Council in time for their development of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget, which would mean delivering its recommendation during the fall of 2021.

The State of Maryland requires that Planning Commissions report on Plan implementation at least every five years. As such, Rockville's Planning Commission has an important role to play in recommending how and when the many policies and actions of the Plan should be implemented, and then keeping track of progress.

During the September 22nd discussion, the Commission and staff recognized that development of a complete implementation framework covering the entire Plan, including Commission discussions, would not be possible to complete this fall; and that the Commission could continue to work on this framework over the next approximately six months. Staff is currently working to populate a complete implementation matrix with every policy and action contained in the Comprehensive Plan (both in the Elements and the Planning Areas), as well as their respective implementation mechanisms, timeframes, priorities, responsible parties, and other factors, and will be prepared to return to the Planning Commission early in 2022 to discuss the long-term implementation framework.

The Comprehensive Plan is available online at the following link: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/200>. Printed copies have been produced and are being sent to the Planning Commission prior to the October 27th meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Implementation Priorities for the Next Year

In anticipation of the city's annual budget deliberations for the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget, as well as to assist in departmental work plans over the next two years, staff suggests that the Planning Commission consider recommending the following 'near-term' implementation priorities to the Mayor and Council. These suggested priorities are presented by Element and theme with related policy and action numbers for reference where relevant.

The below list should not be interpreted as a list of the most important items of the Plan. There are many items of great importance in the Plan that are not in this list. Instead, this list is a draft of focus items for near-term implementation and is subject to updating, in particular after the more-detailed discussion that will take place in 2022. The list was produced by reviewing the Elements with the relevant City staff and identifying items that have near-term deadlines.

Land Use Element

- Conduct a **comprehensive update to the Zoning Ordinance**. There are many actions steps within the Land Use Element and in the Planning Areas that will be meaningful only if they are codified in the City's Zoning Ordinance. This effort is perhaps the highest priority action to make the new Comprehensive Plan's meaningful.
- Update the **Town Center Master Plan**. (Action 8.2 and Planning Area 1)
- Complete the **Rockville Metro Station Community Visioning and Concept Design Study**. (Action 8.3, and referenced in the Transportation Element)

Transportation Element

- Study, plan and implement **enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility** including completing the Pedestrian Master Plan and implementing the Bikeway Master Plan. (The Actions under Policies 2, 3, 4 and 5; and Actions 9.4, 17.1, 19.2, 19.3, 19.5, 19.10)
- Focus on the creation of a more **sustainable transportation system**, to enhance transit usage and reduce carbon emissions, including working with partners on improvements to the Rockville and Twinbrook Metro Stations and bus systems. (Policies 8, 10 and 11)

- **Coordinate and advocate** with other transportation agencies and jurisdictions for transportation improvements that increase safety, connectivity, and accessibility. (Applies to many policies, including, but not limited to, Policies 8, 10 and 20.)

Recreation and Parks Element

- **Identify and acquire properties** as they become available to fulfill critical parks needs to address parks deficiencies, with particular focus on growth areas and areas of the city identified as currently not within a 10-minute walk of a park (e.g., portions of the Twinbrook neighborhood). (The actions in Policies 1, 4 and 5, and also actions in the Land Use Element and in Planning Areas.)
- **Generate resources** for park acquisition through amending the **zoning ordinance** for more land and/or fee-in-lieu contributions. (Action 1.6 and the actions in Policy 6)
- Complete the plan for **RedGate Park** and commit resources to design and implementation of the plan. (Action 8.2)
- Identify a solution for, and invest in, the **King Farm Farmstead**. (Action 8.3)

Community Facilities Element

- Complete the City's **Space Master Plan**, which will define the uses of **6 Taft Court** (Action 2.5) **City Hall** and other city facilities (Actions 2.4, 2.5 and 2.9), and invest funds to implement that plan, as well as to implement the needs for emergency operations.
- Work with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Montgomery County Government on the **relocation from North Stonestreet Avenue of the materials and distribution facility**. (Action 7.2, plan policies in the East Rockville and Lincoln Park planning areas.)
- Ensure strong connections and partnership with **Montgomery College** (Policy 10 and Planning Area 7) as it develops its new 10-year Montgomery College Facilities Plan, whose update process has already started and is due to be completed by 2023. (Goal 4).

Environment Element

- Complete the **Climate Action Plan** and begin to implement **mitigation and resiliency** actions. (Actions 2.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7)
- Significantly expand **alternative vehicle fuel infrastructure, including charging stations for electric vehicles**, in locations across the city as well as on City property for use by the public and City fleet vehicles. Adopt **new requirements for the building code for electrical vehicle charging stations** in new construction (Action 4.3, Policy 14 of Transportation Element and Action 2.7 of Community Facilities Element.)
- Incorporate **energy efficiency, renewable energy, and alternative fuels** in City facilities, operations, and fleet vehicles and city building codes. Work to transition the City vehicle fleet to low- or no-emission vehicles as soon as possible. (Actions 4.4, 4.4, 6.6, 10.4)
- Transition all City-owned lighting and street lights to high-efficiency lighting, such as light-emitting diodes (LED). (Action 3.2)

Water Resources Element

- Prepare a **Flood Resiliency Plan**. The Comprehensive Plan references this concern in the series of policies that are within Goal 4, which addresses "stormwater management." Policy 14 is particularly relevant in the context of the recent impacts in Rockville of Hurricane Ida.

This policy calls for “Enhancing stormwater system resiliency in response to changing precipitation patterns and amounts due to climate change.”

Economic Development Element

- In partnership with Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI), develop **marketing/branding approach** for key business locations in the city, to promote the city as a desirable location to start, locate and grow a business, and to attract customers. (Actions in Policies 1 and 7, 82.4, 5.3, 5.4, 10.1, 11.1, 11.5, 11.6)
- Support the vitality of **Town Center** (Policy 10).
- Foster a positive and equitable business climate through implementing the FAST initiative (Action 5.7).
- Expand support for **programs for small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses** (Actions in Policies 5 and 6).
- Invest in a richer **arts, entertainment and social scene** (the actions in Policy 11).

Housing Element

- Complete a **Strategic Plan for Affordable Housing**, which would create a framework for implementing the policies and actions within Goal 2.
- Provide financial incentives for the production and preservation of affordable housing (Policy 8), including establishing **stable sources of funding for Rockville’s local Housing Opportunities Fund** (Action 8.2).
- **Amend the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program** with the goal of preserving units and expanding the supply of units (Policy 10, including the recommended actions).

Historic Preservation Element

- Complete and begin to implement the **Historic Resources Management Plan Work Program**, per Mayor and Council direction, as a long-term guide for actions. (Policy 1).
- Consider **new sites and districts** for future historic protection. (Actions 1.4, 2.1, 10.1)

Municipal Growth Element

- **Initiate outreach regarding annexation to property owners** in areas targeted for proactive annexation (Actions 1.3, 1.5, 3.1 and Policy 9), under direction from the Mayor and Council for priority target areas.

Planning Areas

Staff has been able to review the Elements to produce this draft list. Staff has not completed a review of the Planning Areas with respect to priorities. Updating the Zoning Ordinance is central to implementing recommendations throughout the Planning Areas. However, individual projects and other actions are not yet presented. Staff recommends moving forward with Elements-based recommendations to the Mayor and Council, while returning to discussing the Planning Areas in the near future. In the meantime, community requests for projects, which are part of the City’s budgeting process, can be compared with Comprehensive Plan recommendations for consistency.

Staff looks forward to the Planning Commission discussion, to be followed by the Planning Commission’s recommendations for short-term areas of focus.

NEXT STEPS:

Following this discussion, staff will continue to complete the implementation strategy tracking matrix and will return with a draft for the Planning Commission's review. Staff will ultimately seek the Planning Commission's recommendation of the broader implementation strategy for Mayor and Council consideration.