

Submitted June 11, 2025

Approved June 11, 2025

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING NO. 4-2025  
Wednesday, April 9, 2025**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session at City Hall  
and virtually via WebEx at 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, April 9, 2025

**PRESENT**

Jaime Espinosa - Chair

Eric Fulton                      Suzan Pitman  
Shayan Salhuddin              Meng Sun

**Present:** Nicholas Dumais, Senior Assistant City Attorney  
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Zoning  
Jenny Snapp, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Development Services  
John Foreman, Development Review Manager  
Kimia Zolfagharian, Principal Planner  
Christopher Davis, Senior Planner

Chair Espinosa opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the members of the Planning Commission. He outlined the agenda for the meeting.

**I. REVIEW AND ACTION**

**A. Waiver Application WAV2025-00013** - to Permit a Reduction of 44 Parking Spaces at 1251 West Montgomery Avenue, located in the MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) Zone; Rockville Motel Associates, LLC, c/o Jeff Wilder, Applicants

Mr. Wasilak swore in Christopher Davis, who presented the staff report and recommendation of approval.

Mr. Wasilak swore in Vince Biase of Lerch Early and Brewer, who presented the request on behalf of the applicant. He stated that the request meets two of the criteria for the granting of a parking reduction and is in line with the city's thinking about parking.

Commissioner Fulton moved, seconded by Commissioner Pitman, to approve Waiver application WAV2025-00013. The motion was approved unanimously.

**II. BRIEFING**

**A. Briefing on Project Plan PJT2025-00021 and Level 2 Site Plan STP2025-00505**, Applications to Amend the Planned Development for Rockville Center, Inc. to Permit a Change of use from

Office to Residential and/or Commercial, with up to 550 Dwelling Units at 255 Rockville Pike in the PD-RCI (Planned Development - Rockville Center, Inc.) Zone; 255 Rockville Pike LLC, Applicants.

Ms. Zolfagharian presented an overview of the proposal.

Bob Elliott of 255 Rockville Pike LLC, applicant, presented the application. He explained that, due to market conditions, they are presenting two options for future development of the site: the original concept which would add up to 550 multifamily units in two phases; and the reuse of the building for retail use.

Commissioner Fulton asked if the pedestrian infrastructure around this building, particularly along East Middle Lane, could be improved. Mr. Elliott responded that they have asked the city and state if the right turn lane onto MD 355 could be removed. Commissioner Fulton asked if amenities could be located along the building frontage on the pedestrian promenade. Mr. Elliott responded that they would plan to have balconies and quasi-public space there, but they had not fully thought out how it could work in the retail scenario. He noted that there is a terrace at the Metro bridge that some prospective users have expressed interest in utilizing.

Commissioner Pitman stated that the proposal is very exciting. She asked what would trigger determination on which way to go between the options being considered. Mr. Elliott answered that the recent changes in the market have upended their original plan, but wanted to bring forward the option to proceed under the project plan, but that the site plan would determine how they move forward and will be based on the conditions and projections at the time.

Commissioner Salahuddin thanked the applicant for giving the site considerable thought. He asked why the single tenant option had not been considered previously, and whether the brutalist architecture would be modified. Mr. Elliott answered that the prior owner was focused on office or R&D use, while the current owners are more nimble in terms of potential future use. They purchased the property due to its location and the 435 parking spaces that exist on the property and want the opportunity to transform it. He stated that they have studied how to improve the façade, which would ultimately depend on the future use and tenant.

Commissioner Sun thanked the applicant for the presentation and concurs with her fellow commissioners on the importance of the project. She noted that the façade is unpleasant and uninviting, and she hopes that the applicant would make it more inviting. She also asked if there will be storefronts on the promenade so that it would be activated. She also asked how the tall residential building would work with the proposed mid-rise building in terms of construction. Mr. Elliott responded that there is a challenge to the Rockville Pike frontage given that the building entrance on that façade is rarely used. He pointed out that the upcoming BRT will impact the property for use as storm water management. For the promenade, they would like to create a courtyard in that location for the residential option, particularly when there are more residents present. He noted that the construction challenges has not been figured out yet and is only in concept form. Commissioner Sun suggested that uses other than retail along the promenade might make sense if it is not feasible.

### III. COMMISSION ITEMS

- A. Staff Liaison Report** – Mr. Wasilak noted that the next Planning Commission meeting would be on April 23, with two items scheduled, including the public hearing on the Shady Grove Metro Station annexation plan and a work session on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite, which would cover the development review process.

The next meeting will be on May 14, and the Commission's Annual Report is likely to be on the agenda given that there is a presentation to the Mayor and Council on June 9. In addition, a Project Plan briefing is also likely to be on the May 14 agenda.

Chair Espinosa noted that he will be out of town for the next meeting, but would chair the meeting virtually. He will ensure that someone in the chamber will be able to help with the public hearing.

- B. Old Business** – None.

- C. New Business** – None.

- D. Minutes Approval** – Meeting No. 3-2025, March 12, 2025: Commissioners Fulton and Sun pointed out minor edits to be made. Commissioner Fulton moved, seconded by Commissioner Salahuddin, to approve the minutes for March 12, 2025 with the verbal edits included. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. FYI/Correspondence** – None.

### IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Salahuddin moved, seconded by Commissioner Fulton, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Commission Liaison