



February 4, 2014

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Civic Federation Testimony to County Council on White Oak Science Gateway Plan

I am Carole Barth, testifying on the Planning Board Draft White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan on behalf of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, as its President.

At their meeting on January 23 of this year the members of the MCCF Executive Committee voted, by overwhelming majority, to support the use of staging in master and sector plans as a process by which the county government can insure that adequate infrastructure is provided to accommodate the volume of development currently allowed in planning areas (as Council notably did in the recent White Flint and Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plans). The Planning Staff recommends a 3-phase staging plan, which was part of the original Planning Board Draft White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan submitted to Council last September (see attached).

Another concern of the Federation's Planning and Land Use Committee is that the Planning Board Draft has not provided Council members with the numbers for the total volume of development possible under the zoning changes proposed in this Plan. Instead, the Board has only provided a "projected build-out" scenario in their Draft Plan (up to 14 million square feet of commercial space, 8100 housing units, and 40,000 jobs).

A County Council duty imposed by State law is to insure that all land-use plans are in balance before being adopted, by calculating the amount of infrastructure (roads, transit, public safety services, and school capacity) needed to accommodate the full volume of development being proposed for each planning area.

Council members have not been given adequate information to determine whether the White Oak Science Gateway Plan is in balance, because the Planning Board Draft does not provide numbers on the full volume of development that could possibly take place in this planning area under the proposed zoning changes. Rather, the Board has only provided the Council with numbers on the amount of development they think will likely occur in this area during the life of the Plan. We urge Council members to demand all of the information you need in order to determine whether this Plan is in balance.

Thank you for considering the Federation's views on this matter.

attachment (1)

Table 6 Staging Plan Summary

Stage 1 4 million sf commercial or residential development	Stage 2 5 million sf commercial 2000 dwelling units	Stage 3 remaining development allowed by zoning
PREREQUISITES TO EACH STAGE		
Approve SMA Develop monitoring program Establish and fund White Oak TMD Create new WOSG Policy Area Document NADMS	Raise WOSG Policy Area CLV to 1600 Fund US 29 BRT OR Fund New Hampshire Avenue BRT OR Mobility improvements that provide equivalent capacity to BRT are fully funded for construction OR After a comprehensive mobility assessment, if the Council decides through an SSP amendment that mobility is adequate, and all Stage 1 development has use and occupancy permits, development can proceed	US 29 BRT is operational Fund New Hampshire Avenue BRT if this did not occur in Stage 2 Mobility improvements that provide equivalent capacity to BRT are fully funded for construction Three activity centers have attained on average at least 25% NADMS

Development capacity in each stage will be allocated at building permit (rather than at Preliminary Plan) through a Staging Allocation Request (SAR).