



**ADVISORY PLANNING BOARD  
APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING  
Greenbelt Community Center  
October 9, 2013**

Approved Minutes Prepared by Jaime Fearer

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Gibbons, Matt Johnson, Jeff Lemieux, Maria Silvia Miller, and Nicole Williams

COUNCIL LIAISON PRESENT: N/A

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Celia Craze and Jaime Fearer

OTHER ATTENDEES: Bill Orleans

II. Agenda was approved with addition of “Work Session with Advisory Group Chairs”

III. The September 25, 2013 minutes were approved with minor edits

IV. Vote on APB Report 2013-5: Detailed Site Plan – Sign Plan for Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station

- Mr. Gibbons asks to clarify the parenthetical six months in recommendation #4 with an added “i.e.”.
- Ms. Miller brings up concerns about commercial signage in general.
- The final report was adopted by a vote of 5-0, with two Board members absent, and is attached at the end of these minutes.

V. Work Session with Advisory Group Chairs

- Mr. Gibbons shared an overview of the work session.
- Ms. Miller proposed that a board member should have no more than three unexcused, consecutive absences before disciplinary action is considered.
- Mr. Johnson discussed issues with arriving at quorum
  - The question arose if a board member can call in and still contribute to quorum; Ms. Craze later inquired with the City Solicitor, Mr. Manzi, and he said a call-in can contribute to quorum, assuming the board has the necessary equipment.
  - Mr. Gibbons said that APB is in compliance with appropriate public notice for meetings as well as for posting meeting minutes on the City’s website.
  - Mr. Gibbons brought up the required planning commissioner/board training; he thinks it would be good for the entire board to refresh this training.

VI. Review of the Cherrywood Lane roundabout

- The following notes were discussed and will be shared with the project engineer for further comment and may not necessarily be implemented or found to be feasible:

- Dash/dot the bike lane marking 50-200 feet in advance of the taper and/or shared-use path on-ramp
- Dash/dot the bike lane through the exiting taper, and resume solid line once full bike lane width is available
- Install shared-lane markings (“sharrows”) after the taper on all entrances to the roundabout (and at specified location at all exits?)
- Look into updating bicyclist on- and off-ramps to the shared-use path (i.e.; angled, steeper ramps for both ramp up and ramp down)
- Bicyclist symbology and/or shared use signage on shared-use path
- Open ramp flare at pedestrian crossing at east side of the roundabout to accommodate bicyclists; consider appropriate signage (see signage at Greenbelt Road/Rhode Island Avenue crossings to the College Park Trolley Trail
- Consider additional bicyclist on-ramp to the shared-use path just east of the “bottom” of the circle
- Install a raised crosswalk, with two pedestrian refuges, on eastern side of the roundabout (possibly extending the median that creates the right slip lane for the second refuge); take into account safe and appropriate site distances at the crest of the bridge
- How best to slow automobile traffic before the crossing? Would it make sense to begin the taper down from two lanes to one even closer to the U.S. Courthouse?
- Also notes to look into painting the crossings at Ivy Lane across Cherrywood Lane (and/or three-way stop)
- Discussion also included questions about the necessity of the slip lane on the roundabout
- Check all gore zones (yellow-striped areas where the lanes split) for proper markings (i.e.; single or double striping, cross striping, etc.), and also check the yellow median line on Metro Access Drive
- Install cyclist markings (sharrows) in appropriate areas of the entering and exiting bike lanes
- Install an additional speed bump—or possibly a raise crosswalk to facilitate crossings between bus stops—closer to the Indian Creek bridge on Metro Access Drive
- Paint merge markings on the exiting slip lane onto Cherrywood Lane, install Yield sign if not already in place (if treated as a yield rather than as a merge, perhaps drivers will avoid dangerous acceleration)
- Trees at the Metro Access Drive crossing and at the southbound crossing onto Cherrywood Lane need to be trimmed for better sightlines
- Examples images can be found in Mr. Johnson’s Greater Greater Washington post: <http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/19008/greenbelt-roundabout-includes-innovative-bike-bypass/>

VII. North and South Core updates

- Ms. Craze shared the current updates on progress and coming construction at the South Core; there are no new updates on the North Core.

VIII. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Master Plan updates

- Ms. Fearer hopes to take the plan to Council for approval on Monday, November 25, 2013.
- Mr. Gibbons proposed that board members look through the tables and prepare priority rankings for the FY15 budget process, with a goal of discussing these rankings at the December APB meeting.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

**SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan – Sign Plan for Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station**

**BACKGROUND:** Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station (Franklin Park), formerly known as Springhill Lake Apartments, is zoned Mixed-Use Infill (M-U-I), which requires that all proposed improvements are shown on an approved detailed site plan. Since the redevelopment of the subject property to a mixed-use development never occurred, there is no approved detailed site plan on file for the property. As a result, the County is requiring Franklin Park to obtain detailed site plan approval for all existing and new signs proposed for the property.

Within the last two years, Franklin Park has been allowed to reface its major monument gateway signs and to install new directional signs. These signs have valid County and City sign permits. In addition to these signs, Franklin Park is requesting detailed site plan approval for two new monument signs, eight street signs, twenty-seven banner signs, and four building banner signs (two are existing). The current proposal represents a reduction of what Franklin Park was originally proposing in response to concerns raised by City planning staff.

The detailed site plan requires Prince George's County Planning Board approval, and has been referred to the City by Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning (M-NCPPC) staff for review and comment.

**ANALYSIS:** The Board is supportive of Franklin Park's efforts to invest in signage and to promote a sense of place and create community spirit. The sign plan proposed, while robust, represents a positive investment in the community, and the City should be supportive of Franklin Park's efforts to bring about positive change. While the Board understands that the City Council has a vision for a unified street sign program for the entire City, the Board does not believe Franklin Park should be denied permission to install unique streets signs that are an upgrade from the City's typical suburban street signs. The Board supports installation of the street signs proposed by Franklin Park on all City and private streets with the exception of Cherrywood Lane, which should be consistent with the City's suburban street signs. In terms of the design of Franklin Park's proposed street signs, the Board feels the Victorian elements of the sign (i. e. , the base and bracket) are not appropriate, and the base and brackets should be redesigned to respect the modern elements of the newly installed gateway signs.

The Board understands Franklin Park's desire to install banner signs as a means of promoting a sense of community, and is supportive of the installation of the signs as proposed. The Board would like to see Franklin Park work with the City to identify opportunities for the banners to promote the City and/or City events. The Board is also supportive of the proposed monument signs, both existing and proposed. However, the Board is concerned that the proposed sign plan is missing a key component, wayfinding signs. Currently, it is difficult for visitors to navigate around the development and there is a need for wayfinding signs. It is a missed opportunity that the proposed sign plan does not include such signs, and the Board strongly encourages Franklin Park to consider additional signs to assist visitors in getting around the development.

There are currently two building banner signs located on the gable of two buildings along Edmonston Road. Franklin Park is asking permission to keep these two existing signs, as well as permission to install two additional signs along Edmonston Road. These signs are marketing signs and are intended to be visible from the Beltway ramp. The newly adopted *Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* recommends that building signs be limited to 10 percent of the façade area. Franklin Park is asking for an amendment to this requirement since the existing signs are 106

and 153 square feet above allowable area. The Board understands the importance of marketing the property and does not object to four building banner signs. However, these signs should be considered temporary real estate advertising signs, and per the Prince George's County Zoning Code should be considered temporary, be limited in duration (i.e., six months at a time), and should only be displayed when vacancy levels warrant. The signs should also adhere the 10 percent requirement of the *Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and Development District Standards.

The Board is pleased with Franklin Park's willingness to invest in its community, and feels the City should be supportive of all efforts by Franklin Park to create a sense of community and place. While the sign plan proposed may be lacking in wayfinding signs, and may represent a departure from the City's efforts to have a unified street sign program and to limit signage along City rights-of-way, the Board believes the City should be fully supportive of the proposed sign plan and continue to work with Franklin Park on wayfinding signs.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Board recommends City Council support the detailed site plan for signs at Franklin Park with the following conditions:

1. The Applicant revise the design for the brackets and base of the banner signs to not include Victorian architectural elements and rather incorporate elements that respect the design of the new monument signs;
2. The Applicant agrees to work with the City to identify opportunities that may exist to include reference to the City and/or city events in the seasonal banner signs;
3. The City supports installation of street signs on all public and private streets, with the exception of Cherrywood Lane; and
4. The building banner signs be approved as temporary real estate advertising signs with limited time periods for display (i.e., six months at a time) and the banners meet the 10 percent façade area requirement of the Development District Standards in the *Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Gibbons  
Chair

This report was adopted by a vote of 5-0, with two Board members absent.