

City Council Work Session

Gateway Signage
and
Greenbelt Station
Pedestrian/Bike Trails

8 p.m., Monday
March 21, 2016

Council Chambers

City of Greenbelt
Department of Planning and Community Development
15 Crescent Road, Suite 200, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770
(301) 345-5417 Fax (301) 345-5418

Memorandum

TO: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager *MEM*
FROM: Terri S. Hruba, Assistant Planning Director
DATE: March 16, 2016
RE: Council Work Session – Gateway Sign Project

On July 1, 2015, the Greenbelt City Council held a work session with City planning staff to discuss the Gateway sign project. At the work session City staff provided a summary of the history and the status of the project. Staff presented two types of “Welcome to Greenbelt” signs, monument and pole mounted, that had received previous City Council approval. Staff also reviewed site locations that had been identified as possible receiving locations for the new signs.

At the conclusion of the work session there was consensus amongst council that additional work needed to be done on the design of the monument sign, including the need to explore the use of diverse building materials. Staff was also asked to review possible sign locations for further discussion.

Per Council’s direction, staff has been working with Sharon Bradley of Bradley Site Design, Inc. to develop conceptual designs for “Welcome to Greenbelt” signage and to identify where those signs should be located. Attached are proposed concept drawings of three “Welcome to Greenbelt” types of signs: pole mounted, column and monument and a sign location map for council consideration.

Staff has arranged for Sharon Bradly to attend the City Council work session on March 21, 2016 to present the attached materials in detail.

SIGN LOCATIONS

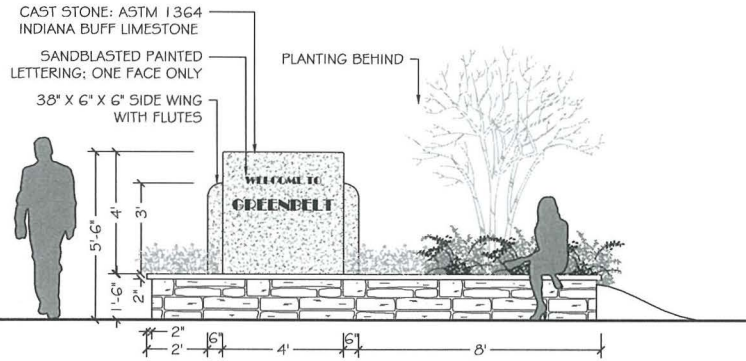


LEGEND

- GREENBELT
- MAJOR ROADWAY
- MONUMENT GATEWAY SIGN
- COLUMN SIGN
- POLE SIGN

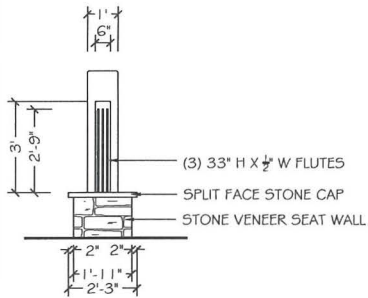


TYPICAL MONUMENT SIGN



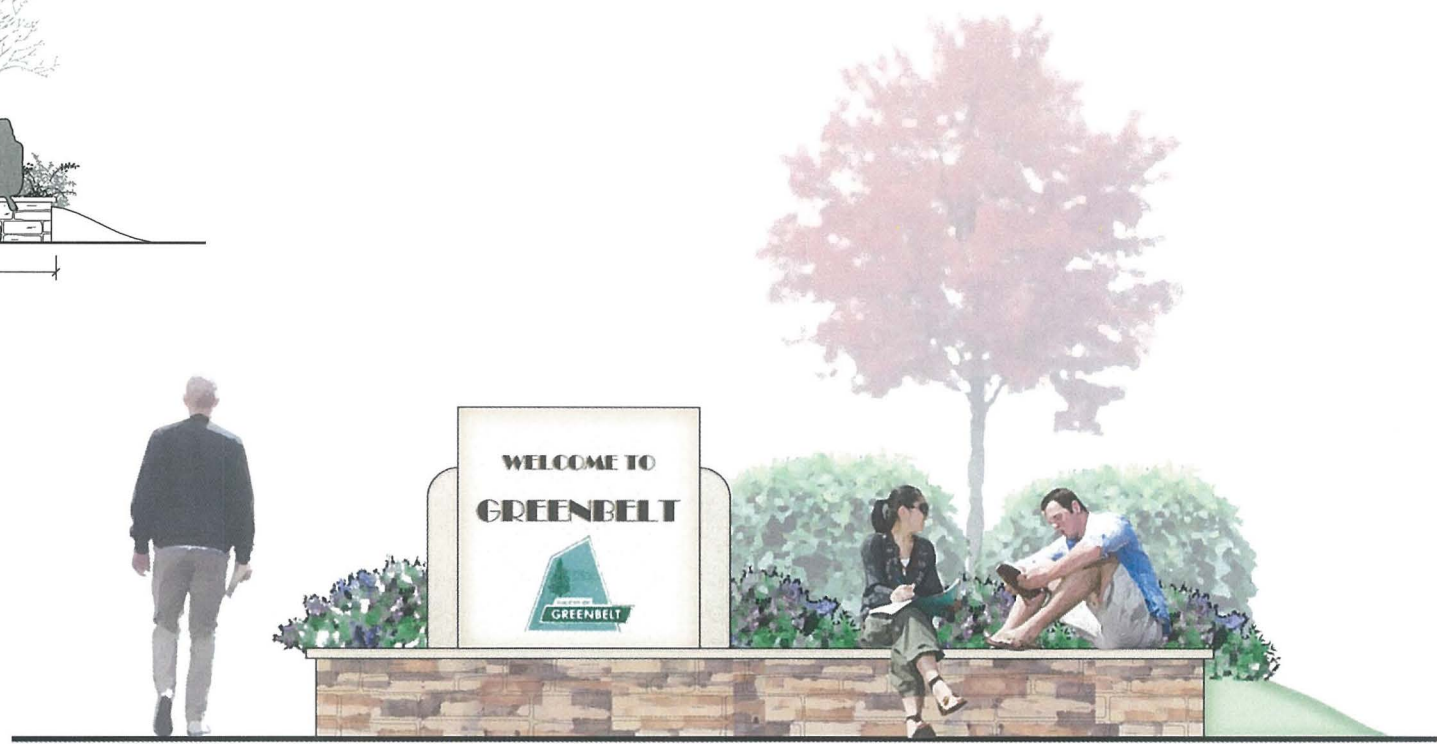
FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



SIDE ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

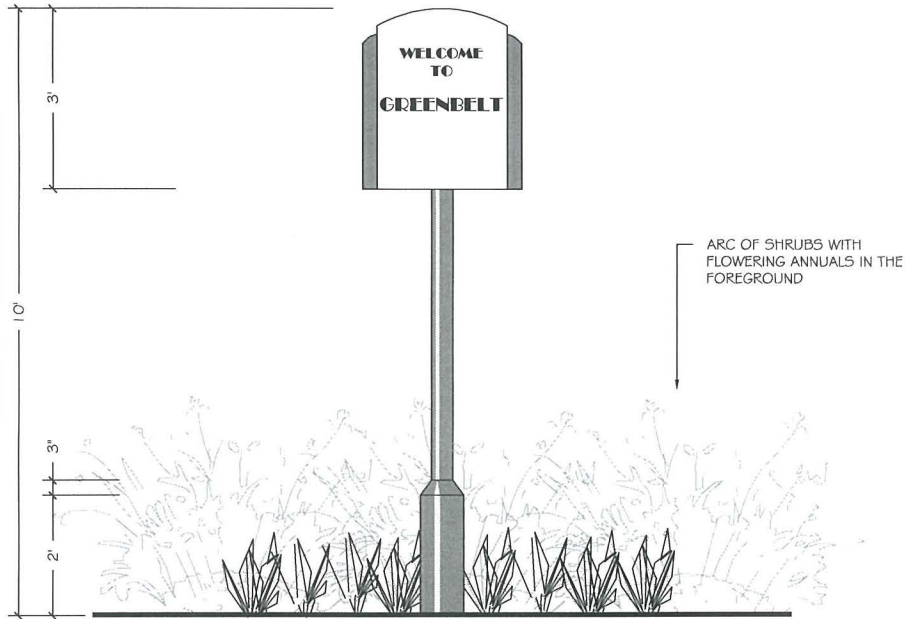


SIGN CONCEPT RENDERING

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



TYPICAL POLE SIGN



FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



SIGN CONCEPT RENDERING
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



Memorandum

TO: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager *MPM*
FROM: Jessica Bellah, Community Planner
VIA: Celia Craze, Director, Planning and Community Development
DATE: March 9, 2016
RE: Greenbelt Station South Core WMATA Trail Connection

Background

The WMATA trail was envisioned to serve as a hiker/biker trail connecting South Core residents directly to the Greenbelt Metro Station. The purpose of the trail was to ensure that a direct connection would be in place if the North Core was not developed in concert with the South Core. Woodlawn Development Group (Greenbelt Station South Core) is required as part of their development agreement with the City to construct the trail using all commercially reasonable efforts. Land on which the trail would be built is owned by WMATA. In addition, Renard Development (Greenbelt Station North Core) currently holds an option agreement to develop the land.

By early 2014, Woodlawn was in discussions with WMATA on navigating the process required for designing and implementing the trail connection. Following significant delay in moving forward, a meeting was organized in December 2014 between WMATA, Woodlawn, and the City to clarify the WMATA review and approval process. At that meeting, WMATA indicated that their approval would require a trail sponsor submit a connection request application showing a proposed trail alignment as part of a detailed engineered plan. In that meeting, it became clear that the most feasible route for developing the trail would require the City to serve as jurisdictional sponsor.

In February 2015, the City provided preliminary agreement to serve as Jurisdictional Sponsor of the trail for the purpose of accessing the WMATA property to conduct surveys and develop a trail plan. WMATA granted the access permit in summer 2015 and Woodlawn undertook surveys to prepare a near complete engineered plan for the trail. Following review and comment by the City Council and City Advisory Boards, a detailed preliminary alignment was developed. Earlier this year, the proposed trail alignment and connection request letter was submitted to WMATA for their review and approval.

Status Update

On March 3, 2016 Staff met with representatives from WMATA, Renard Development, and Woodlawn Development Group to discuss the proposed WMATA Trail. While the meeting was a productive discussion, there is little good news to report.

WMATA representatives have clearly stated that they would not approve the proposed trail until after the FBI site selection is made. The issues at hand are that:

- Placement of the proposed WMATA garage and the proposed trail alignment overlap. Construction of a hiker/biker trail will directly conflict with placement and construction phasing of proposed development in the North Core.
- No alternative trail alignments are feasible given existing conditions of topography and environmental features.
- If Greenbelt is selected as the FBI site, construction of the WMATA garage would necessitate closing of the trail and surrounding area during this period of time. In no scenario would full implementation and opening of a trail be possible prior than three (3) years from the date of this memo.
- If Greenbelt is selected for the FBI, the current trail alignment would be significantly altered by development of the North Core. In addition, development of the North Core will incorporate new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Greenbelt Station Parkway and a new parallel running shared-use path. These features would make the current proposed WMATA trail alignment redundant and unnecessary.

Issues of Timing

There are two scenarios for implementation of a hiker/biker trail from the South Core to Greenbelt Metro Station. In one scenario, Greenbelt is selected as the FBI site and in the other it is not.

We will likely know by September 2016 if Greenbelt has been selected as the FBI Headquarters consolidation site. The selection should be finalized in March 2017 and North Core construction could begin as early as June 2017. Construction of the WMATA garage and Greenbelt Station Parkway extension is estimated to require 18 months. Pedestrian and bicycle path connections from the South Core would be completed concurrently with construction of the WMATA Garage and this phase of North Core development.

If Greenbelt is not selected as the FBI site, the current WMATA Trail alignment could potentially be submitted to review agencies in spring 2017. WMATA review and approval, as well as necessary environmental agency review and permitting of the trail, will require 6 to 9 months from the submission date. The review and approval process would be followed by a 6 month construction period. From the final decision on the FBI site, the earliest possible opening of the trail would likely be January 2018.

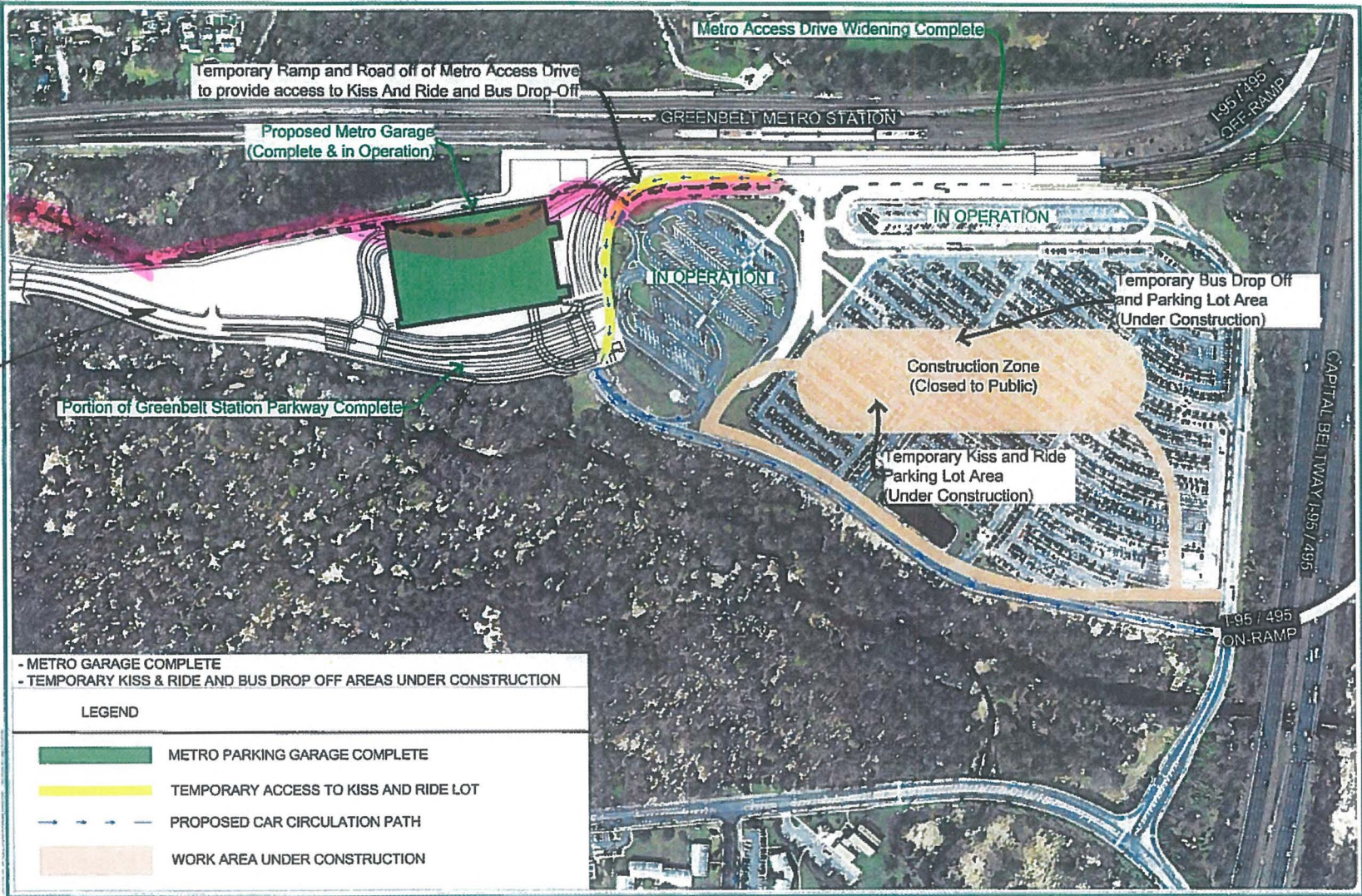
Staff Comment and Recommendation

There are no viable options for developing a direct path connection between the South Core and Greenbelt Metro Station prior to a decision on the FBI Headquarters site selection.

Should Greenbelt not be selected as the FBI Headquarters site, Woodlawn and the City could immediately submit the prepared trail alignment to WMATA for review and approval. WMATA has indicated that in this scenario, they would welcome the trail and work towards its implementation.

Staff recommends the following:

- The City will work diligently with Renard Development as concept plans for the North Core development evolve.
- The planned hiker/biker trail connection between the South Core and Cherrywood Lane, known as the Stream Valley Trail, should be made a priority as they will provide alternative access for residents. These trail plans are currently under review by the Maryland Department of the Environment and Maryland State offices.
- Staff recommends the Council communicate to our State delegates the need to prioritize the Stream Valley Trail and ask for their assistance in keeping the state review process moving forward.



GREENBELT SITE
 PHASE 2 WORK AREA PLAN - *CONFIDENTIAL AND DRAFT*

Estimated WMATA TRAIL ALIGNMENT



Greenbelt Station Parkway



PATH TO ACCESS CHERRYWOOD LANE

Exhibit 2: Stream Valley Trail
Connecting Greenbelt Station South Core to Cherrywood Lane and Branchville Road

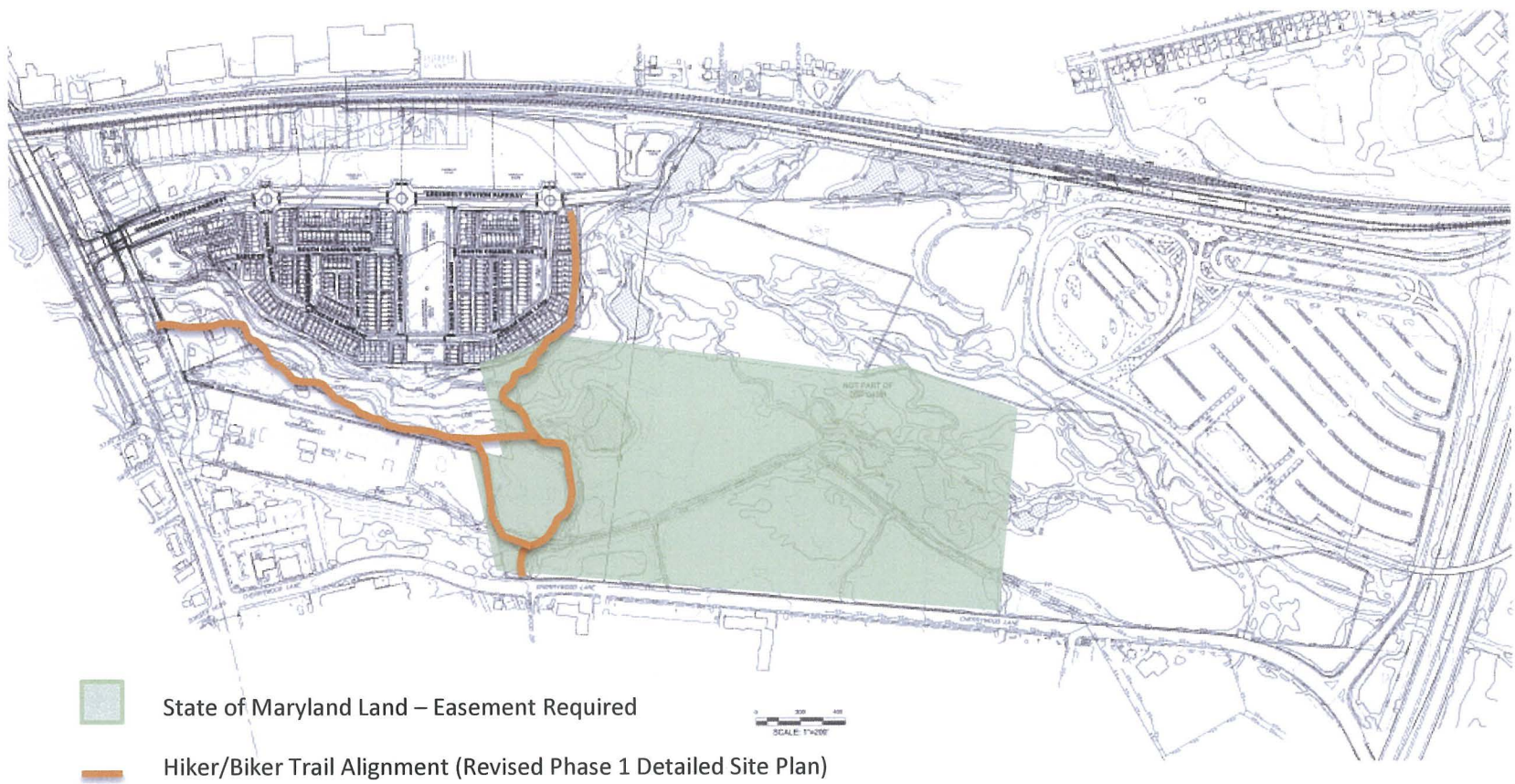


Exhibit 1: Local Planning Objective

Figure 13: Vision Concept

