



MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

May 12, 2016
6:30 PM
City Council Chambers

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Bill Kawecky, City Council

REVISED STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Small Area Plan – Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update (Comp Plan) identified sixteen (16) “Future Study Areas” as places where the existing zoning does not align with the existing land uses or the existing pattern of development. These areas may also be areas where the existing zoning is not compatible with, or does not fully support the desired future of the area as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan’s Land Management Map.

The Comp Plan provided that the “Future Study Areas” require further land use and development study by the Planning Commission to enable zoning map amendment and/or zoning text amendment recommendations to City Council that will advance the goals, objectives, strategies, and consistency principles of the Comp Plan.

The following graphics are clipped from the Comp Plan [Page 50; emphasis added] identifying specific implementation strategies concerning the “Future Study Areas.”

NH 1.2 Pursue zoning map amendments where appropriate to address potential zoning conflicts in residential areas both to preserve existing residential areas where appropriate or promote infill and redevelopment (See **Areas for Future Study** in Appendix A).

ED 5.7 Pursue zoning map amendments where appropriate to address potential zoning conflicts and promote non-residential infill and redevelopment in appropriate areas (See **Areas for Future Study** in Appendix A).

Appendix A of the Comp Plan provides additional information and mapping of these sixteen (16) “Future Study Areas.” It should be noted that Areas 8 and 9 were removed by the Planning Commission prior to Comp Plan adoption by City Council and the “Future Study Areas” were not renumbered in the final Plan document.

On 14 MAY 2015, the Planning Commission accepted guidelines as a framework so that “Future Study Area” planning can be initiated and presented to the Planning Commission for recommendations to City Council [see attached guidelines].

To provide online access to information and documents relating to each of the “Future Study Areas” and related small area planning projects, the following webpage was created: <http://www.morgantownwv.gov/future-study/>.

**Development Services
Department**

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Director

Planning Division

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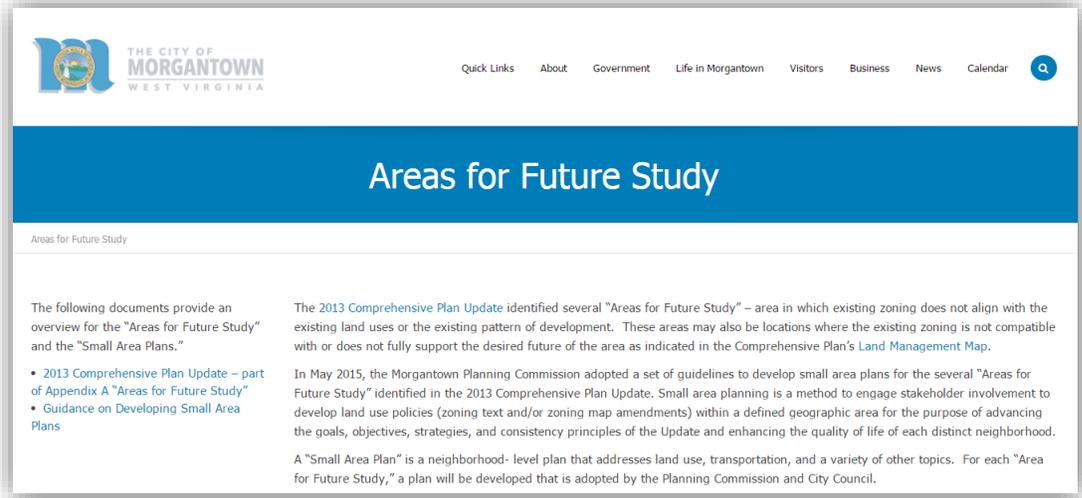
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Future Study Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street is the first small area planning project to be initiated following the adoption of the 2013 Comp Plan. The following graphic is clipped from Appendix A [Page 8].

MAP NUMBER	CURRENT ZONING	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	OBSERVATIONS
17	R-1	Darst Street and Jerome Street	<p><i>The area is vacant, undeveloped land with steep slopes subdivided into smaller, residentially scaled parcels.</i></p> <p>Considerations for future study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate denser single-family development opportunities.

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With the assistance of Chet Parsons, AICP of AECOM and following the accepted small area study guidelines, the Area 17 planning project was initiated on 05 AUG 2015 with a well-attended public neighborhood forum. Approximately 110 invitation letters were sent to property owners within the study area and property owners approximately 500+ feet from the study area.

The purpose of the 05 AUG kickoff forum was to introduce the small area planning process and identify neighborhood concerns and development preferences. Community



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input revealed a number of insightful preferences for how the study area should and should not be developed into the future.

A second public neighborhood forum was held on 28 OCT 2015 where recommendations were presented for future development scenarios based on stakeholder input, best practices, and professional planning experience.

Staff presented a Recommendations Report to the Planning Commission 10 MAR 2016 for acceptance along with an administratively requested zoning map amendment. After hearing several concerns and comments in opposition to the Recommendations Report and the zoning map amendment, Staff requested the Planning Commission table the recommendations report so that a third public neighborhood forum could be scheduled. Staff also withdrew the related administrative zoning map amendment request.

On 13 APR 2016, Staff facilitated a third public neighborhood forum. Most of the forum attendees were present during the Planning Commission's 10 MAR meeting and reiterated their concerns with higher density single-family residential development. In response to input provided by participating residents, the Recommendations Report was revised accordingly. Specifically, the previous recommendation to change the zoning classification of the study area from R-1 to R-1A was discarded.

Attached hereto is the revised "Small Area Plan – Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street – Recommendations Report – April 15, 2016." The following is a brief summary of the recommendations.

- Land Use. The land use recommended for the study area is consistent with the existing patterns of development within the neighborhood. The predominant land use should remain single-family residential.
- Zoning. The zoning classification of the study area should be consistent with the desires of the majority of landowners and with the direction established in the 2013 Comp Plan, to direct new growth into infill situations, where possible, and to increase density within City limits. The R-1 District will allow for the neighborhood to remain single-family residential and retain the patterns of development that currently exist within the study area.
- Housing. The housing type for the neighborhood should remain as it currently exists, which is single-family residential as identified in the zoning ordinance.
- Transportation. As the study area evolves and added density increases homeownership opportunities for single families, the City of Morgantown should work closely with the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization and the West Virginia Division of Highways to develop and implement alternative routing from the Mileground / Willey Street to Hartman Run Road so that pass-through traffic does not continue to negatively impact Hampton Avenue and Darst Street.
- Historic Preservation. A cursory review of existing structures in the study area does not indicate the presence of any historic properties or sites that would

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warrant any special consideration during neighborhood planning. As development occurs, more careful study may be warranted during site review and permitting.

- **Environment.** Steep slopes are a concern with the currently undeveloped properties in the neighborhood. There will be additional development costs associated with making improvements to those parcels. The City of Morgantown and the Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) should work with developers as project plans are assembled to ensure that neighboring parcels are not adversely affected and water and sanitary sewer infrastructure is in place that will accept new growth in the area.
- **Parks.** Due to the smaller size of the study area relative to other neighborhoods in the City of Morgantown, parkland does not appear to be a priority within the study area. As developers work with City staff to implement new projects, pocket parks, streetscaping and green space should be a consideration along with new housing opportunities.
- **Neighborhood Services.** No additional neighborhood services are expected as a result of new R-1 or R-1A scaled development within the study area.
- **Economic Development.** As a strictly residential district, the study area is not recommended for any businesses as a permitted use except for Class 1 daycare facilities. Neighborhood-scaled business uses permitted as a conditional use would provide services to the neighborhood with a majority of patrons from inside the study area rather than attracting new traffic from elsewhere.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully requests the Planning Commission to accept the attached revised "Small Area Plan – Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street – Recommendations Report – April 15, 2016" as a measure to implement related strategies identified in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update and as the basis to support any related Planning Commission recommendations that may be submitted to City Council in the future (e.g., zoning map amendments, zoning text amendments, etc.).

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Atts: "Guidance on Developing Small Area Plans as outlined in Appendix A of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update"; May 2015

Revised "Small Area Plan – Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street – Recommendations Report; 15 APR 2016

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**Areas for Future Study
and Small Area Plans**

**Guidance on developing small area plans as outlined in
Appendix A of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan**

The City of Morgantown

May 2015

What is an Area for Future Study?

Areas for Future Study are places where the existing zoning does not align with the existing land uses or the existing pattern of development. It may also be an area where the existing zoning is not compatible with, or does not fully support the desired future of the area as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan's Land Management Map. These areas require further land use and development study by the Planning Commission to enable zoning map amendment and/or zoning text amendment recommendations to City Council that will advance the goals, objectives, strategies, and consistency principles of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

What is a Small Area Plan?

A Small Area Plan is a neighborhood-level plan that addresses land use, transportation, and a variety of other topics. For each Area for Future Study, a plan is developed that is adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council. Ultimately, a goal of the Small Area Plan is to enhance the quality of life in each distinct neighborhood.

Relationship to the City of Morgantown Comprehensive Plan Update

Small Area Plans assist in implementing the goals and recommendations of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Recognizing the unique character of the City's different neighborhoods, the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update identified sixteen areas for future study and recommended that a separate, more detailed land use plan be completed for each of these areas. The City's Comprehensive Plan and the adopted Land Use Map are policy guides for the Small Area Plans.

Benefits of Small Area Plans

A key benefit of the Small Area Planning process is local stakeholder involvement in the development of each plan's recommendations. Small Area Plans serve as a guide for land use, environmental protection, transportation improvements, open space and other capital improvements, and will identify opportunities for revitalization and, where appropriate, mixed use development.

Benefits of Small Area Plans:

- Represent the community's vision
- Reflect neighborhood stakeholders' input
- Provide specific recommendations at a neighborhood level
- Offer increased efficiency in provision of public services
- Catalyze revitalization opportunities
- Allow greater predictability in land use and development
- Enable neighborhoods to be proactive in making land use recommendations
- Identify priority neighborhood projects and possible resources for implementation
- Help to guide the investment decisions of local governments

Planning Areas

During the course of preparing the *2013 Comprehensive Plan Update*, it was noted that several areas could benefit from further study. Each of these areas has its own unique character that should be protected and enhanced as new development or redevelopment takes place.

Identified plan locations are listed below in addition to some of the major issues in these areas (please note that two locations, Eight and Nine, were eliminated prior to Comprehensive Plan adoption) as stated in Appendix A of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan:

AREA 1 Brockway Avenue Corridor; adjoins the Greenmont Neighborhood.

CURRENT ZONING B-2

OBSERVATIONS Current low density commercial zoning does not reflect the existing pattern of development, site constraints, and is an obstacle to redevelopment.

Considerations for future study:

- Permitting higher density residential patterns
- Permitting mixed uses
- Incentives to assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment
- Design standards that are appropriate to the location and scale of the corridor
- Increasing supply of on-site parking reducing on-street parking congestion
- Infrastructure improvements supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, public open space, connection to Deckers Creek Trail.

AREA 2 North Willey Street, Snyder Street, and Richwood Avenue; adjoins the Woodburn Neighborhood.

CURRENT ZONING R-1A, R-2, B-1, B-2

OBSERVATIONS Current mix of residential and commercial zoning does not reflect existing uses or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Permitting higher density residential patterns
- Permitting mixed uses
- Incentives to assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment
- Design standards that are appropriate to the location and scale of the corridor

- Transition to lower density residential adjoining the Woodburn Neighborhood.
- Infrastructure improvements supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, street lighting.

AREA 3 Fraternity Hill, Price Street

CURRENT ZONING R-1A

OBSERVATIONS Current single-family residential zoning does not reflect existing uses or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Further a Greek village concept with related design standards.
- Increase density of market-rate housing stock;
- Increase on-site parking supply
- Improvement of infrastructure to support higher densities, sidewalks, public open space, pedestrian connections to the downtown campus, street lighting.

AREA 4 Protzman, Glenn, and Van Gilder Streets; adjoins the Wiles Hill / Highland Park Neighborhoods

CURRENT ZONING R-1A and R-2

OBSERVATIONS Current single-family residential zoning does not reflect existing uses, existing development patterns, or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Permitting of higher densities to match surrounding development.

AREA 5 Stewart Street and Highland Avenue; adjoins the Wiles Hill / Highland Park Neighborhoods

CURRENT ZONING R-1A, R-2 and PUD

OBSERVATIONS Current single-family residential zoning does not reflect existing uses or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Permitting of very modest increases in density of two-family and townhouse market-rate housing.
- Provide incentives to assemble and consolidate realty.
- Discouragement of continued added density of converted single-family dwellings.
- Establish appropriate design standards.
- Improved infrastructure supporting slightly higher densities; and increase supply of on-site parking.

AREA 6 Sunnyside Neighborhood between R-3 District, Eighth Street, and the Evansdale Neighborhood's R-1 District.

CURRENT ZONING R-2

OBSERVATIONS Current single and two-family residential zoning does not reflect existing uses or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Permitting higher density residential patterns

AREA 7 University Avenue, Sixth Street, Dille Street

CURRENT ZONING O-1

OBSERVATIONS Current office and institutional zoning does not reflect existing uses, existing development pattern, or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider zoning reclassifications that allow for higher residential density patterns.
- Provide incentives to assemble and consolidate realty.
- Discourage continued added density of converted single-family dwellings.
- Establish appropriate design standards
- Improve infrastructure supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, streetscape enhancements; public open space; increased supply of on-site parking;
- Consider the expansion of Sunnyside Overlay Districts.

AREA 10 Collins Ferry Road at the edge of the City boundary; Suncrest Neighborhood; National Energy Technology Laboratory

CURRENT ZONING R-1 and B-1

OBSERVATIONS Current single-family residential zoning does not reflect existing uses, existing development pattern, or future potential.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider zoning reclassifications mitigating existing nonconforming use.

AREA 11 Chestnut Ridge Road; Mylan Pharmaceuticals

CURRENT ZONING B-1

OBSERVATIONS Existing zoning classification does not reflect existing well established light industrial use, WVU realty.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider zoning reclassifications mitigating existing nonconforming use.

AREA 12 Van Voorhis Road; Chelsea Square; Suncrest Neighborhood

CURRENT ZONING B-1

OBSERVATIONS Current zoning classification discourages denser mixed-use and commercial redevelopment that reflects commercial development patterns along the Patteson, Van Voorhis, and Chestnut Ridge Road corridors.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider incentives to increase development density and increase mixed-use housing stock.

AREA 13

Oakland Street, Harding Street, Country Club Drive; Evansdale

CURRENT ZONING R-1, R-3, B-1, B-2**OBSERVATIONS** Includes a nonconforming motel.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider zoning reclassification that could provide for the redevelopment of the motel into a more intense hotel or higher density residential uses.

AREA 14

Dorsey Avenue, Mountaineer Elementary School

CURRENT ZONING R-1**OBSERVATIONS** Area includes a mobile home park and existing land platting configurations appear to be more associated with R-1A District permitted density in terms of lot size, setbacks, etc.

Considerations for future study:

- Consider zoning reclassifications to reflect existing single-family residential characteristics and single-family densification opportunities.

AREA 15

North Willey Street

CURRENT ZONING B-2**OBSERVATIONS** Area includes a recently constructed multi-family development.

Considerations for future study:

- Evaluate whether the current zoning classification, which is the same district designated within the community along primary corridors include Earl Core Road, Patteson Drive, Van Voorhis Road, Chestnut Ridge Road, etc., is the most appropriate classification given the recently constructed apartment development.

AREA 16

Powell Avenue

CURRENT ZONING B-2**OBSERVATIONS** The area is vacant, undeveloped land with steep slopes subdivided into smaller, residentially scaled parcels.

Considerations for future study:

- Evaluate appropriate residential densities.

AREA 17

Darst Street and Jerome Street

CURRENT ZONING R-1**OBSERVATIONS** The area is vacant, undeveloped land with steep slopes subdivided into smaller, residentially scaled parcels.

Considerations for future study:

- Evaluate denser single-family development opportunities.

AREA 18

Don Knotts Boulevard

CURRENT ZONING I-1**OBSERVATIONS** The area appears to include uses not permitted in the current zoning district. Industrial-type development prospects appear impractical due to existing aggregate commercial use types and the adjoining single-family neighborhood.

Considerations for future study:

- Evaluate existing nonconforming commercial uses and viability of larger-scaled former industrial buildings.

Small Area Planning Process

Phase One: Inventory and Analysis

- (A) Planning Area Profile - Develop profile of area including demographics, physical conditions, land use and zoning, and other information
- (B) Technical Advisory Group (TAG) - Form Technical Advisory Group composed of representatives from City departments and external agencies
- (C) Confirm Boundaries and Initial Set of Issues - Discuss area issues and review proposed boundaries with Planning Commission and others as needed

Phase Two: Plan Development

- (A) Outreach - Inform residents, property owners, and business owners about the Small Area Planning process using mailings, flyers, press releases, City website, etc.
- (B) Community Forum 1 - Facilitate a planning-area-wide “kickoff meeting” to introduce the Small Area Planning process, conduct a SWOT analysis, and develop a vision for the planning area
- (C) Public Participation - Facilitate participatory workshops on Land Use, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and/or other topics as needed
- (D) Ongoing Review - Provide regular updates to Planning Commission, City Council, and Technical Advisory Group
- (E) Draft Plan Development - Develop draft plan, including alternative land use scenarios, based on public input

Phase Three: Review and Adoption

- (A) Community Forum 2 - Facilitate a community-wide workshop to review the draft plan
- (B) Public Comment Period - Community stakeholders provide comments on the draft plan, through a variety of means (website, mail, etc.)
- (C) Inter-Agency Review - City departments and external agencies review the draft plan and provide cost estimates for action items
- (D) Planning Commission Hearing - Planning Commission conducts a public hearing to review the plan and to make a recommendation to City Council for plan adoption
- (E) City Council Hearing

Phase Four: Plan Implementation (Ongoing)

- (A) Implementation tracking - Monitor completion status of Small Area Plan strategies and action items
- (B) Land Use and Zoning Changes - Based on the Small Area Plan, amend the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, zoning map amendments, and/or zoning text amendments
- (C) Guidance Document – Use the Small Area Plan as a reference document for proposed zoning changes, land use map amendments, transportation decisions, and other planning efforts
- (D) Update Plan - As needed, recommend updates to the Small Area Plan

Note: The diverse nature of each of the future study areas identified in Appendix A of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan will dictate the amount of time and effort necessary to develop small area plans for each location. Some of these areas will require more extensive study and planning analysis than others.

Small Area Plan Outline

Introduction

This Section includes the vision for the planning area, describes the planning process, and summarizes the plan's recommendations and implementation strategy.

Background

This Section describes the history and character of the planning area and provides a summary data profile of its existing conditions.

Recommendations

This Section outlines the plan's recommendations, including Land Use and Zoning, Housing, Transportation, Historic Preservation, Environment, Parks, Neighborhood Services, and Economic Development.

Implementation Plan

This section enumerates the plan's implementation strategies, identifies responsible entities, establishes timelines and a tracking chart, and identifies investments that should be funded through the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Appendix

This Section contains supplemental information, such as neighborhood survey results, an outline of the planning process, a summary of other plans or studies relevant to the plan area, and a neighborhood data profile.

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Small Area Plan

Area 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street

Recommendations

April 15, 2016

MAP NUMBER	CURRENT ZONING	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	OBSERVATIONS
17	R-1	Darst Street and Jerome Street	<p><i>The area is vacant, undeveloped land with steep slopes subdivided into smaller, residentially scaled parcels.</i></p> <p>Considerations for future study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate denser single-family development opportunities.





Background

What is an Area for Future Study?

Areas for Future Study are places where the existing zoning does not align with the existing land uses or the existing pattern of development. It may also be an area where the existing zoning is not compatible with, or does not fully support the desired future of the area as indicated in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update's Land Management Map. These areas require further land use and development study by the Planning Commission to enable zoning map amendment and/or zoning text amendment recommendations to City Council that will advance the goals, objectives, strategies, and consistency principles of the *2013 Comprehensive Plan Update (2013 Comp Plan)*.

What is a Small Area Plan?

A Small Area Plan is a neighborhood-level plan that addresses land use, transportation, and a variety of other topics. For each Area for Future Study, a plan is developed that is adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council. Ultimately, a goal of the Small Area Plan is to enhance the quality of life in each distinct neighborhood.

Relationship to the City of Morgantown Comprehensive Plan Update

Small Area Plans assist in implementing the goals and recommendations of the *2013 Comp Plan*. Recognizing the unique character of the City's different neighborhoods, the *2013 Comp Plan* identified 16 areas for future study and recommended that a separate, more detailed land use plan be completed for each of these areas. The City's Comprehensive Plan and the adopted Land Use Map are policy guides for the Small Area Plans.

Benefits of Small Area Plans

A key benefit of the Small Area Planning process is local stakeholder involvement in the development of each plan's recommendations. Small Area Plans serve as a guide for land use, environmental protection, transportation improvements, open space and other capital improvements, and will identify opportunities for revitalization and, where appropriate, mixed-use development.

Benefits of Small Area Plans:

- Represent the community's vision
- Reflect neighborhood stakeholders' input
- Provide specific recommendations at a neighborhood level
- Offer increased efficiency in the provision of public services
- Catalyze revitalization opportunities



- Allow greater predictability in land use and development
- Enable neighborhoods to be proactive in making land use recommendations
- Identify priority neighborhood projects and possible resources for implementation
- Help to guide the investment decisions of local governments

Planning Areas

During the course of preparing the *2013 Comp Plan*, it was noted that several areas could benefit from further study. Each of these areas has its own unique character that should be protected and enhanced as new development or redevelopment takes place.

Introduction

The planning area for the Area 17 Plan is identified as those parcels bordering Darst Street and Jerome Street that are currently zoned as R-1, Single-Family Residential District. Figure 1 displays the planning area, as identified in the *2013 Comp Plan*, with the boundary shown in red, and Figure 2 shows the zoning districts located within and adjacent to the study area. Appendix A contains photographs of the study area.

According to the *2013 Comp Plan*, the area is predominantly vacant, undeveloped land with steep slopes subdivided into smaller, residentially scaled parcels. The *2013 Comp Plan* recommends an evaluation of denser single-family development opportunities.

Through further analysis, there are 14 structures situated on the 14 parcels that are either fully- or partially-included in the study area. From those 14 structures, there are six (6) single-family houses within the study area and one (1) additional house situated on a connected parcel just outside the study area (see Figure 3). Three (3) houses have access from Darst Street and three (3) houses have access from Jerome Street.

From these parcels, there are three (3) land use designations identified. Table 1 shows the most recent land use designation, the number of parcels in that designation, and the total land area in acres for each land use type.

Table 1: Land Use Types

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Area (Acres)
Residential - Multi-Family	1	1.2
Residential - Single-Family	6	2.2
Vacant / Open Space	7	6.7



Figures 4 and 5 show US Census population and housing data for the year 2010 for those Census blocks that fall within the study area. Although they are the smallest Census geographic unit available, the blocks are much larger than the affected parcels and do not adequately represent the actual affected population.

For the purposes of this planning study, the estimated population can be calculated based on the average household population in the area reported for the year 2010 by the US Census Bureau and the assumptions made in this report on the number of residences. The US Census reported an average household population of 2.35 persons per household between 2009 and 2013. Using that amount and the count of six (6) single-family residences in the study area, this study can estimate that 14 people reside in the study area and are directly affected by decisions made during this planning process.

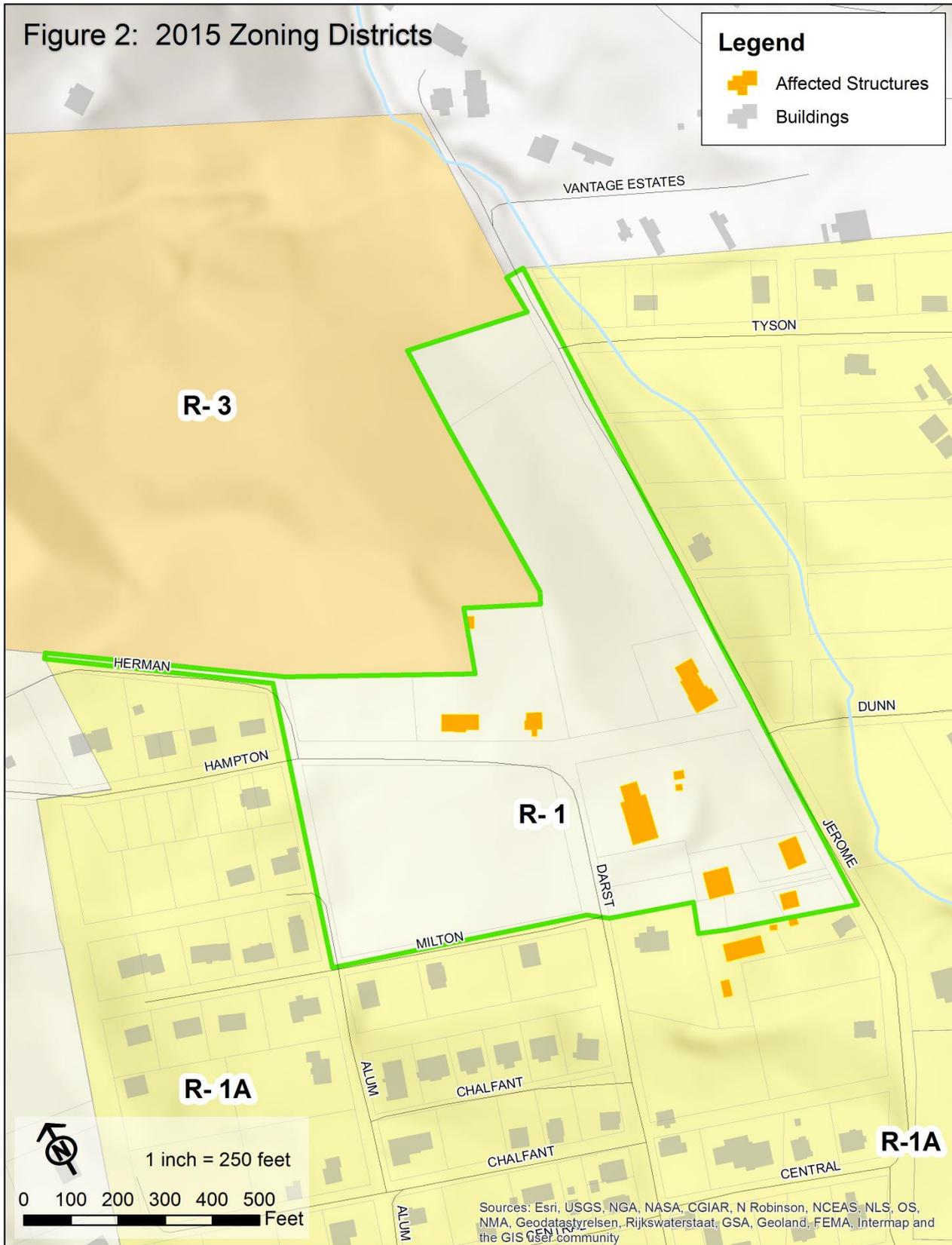
A major component of the planning process and site evaluation for this study area is the topography of the property and how elevation may affect the ability to utilize the land for its highest and best use. As you can see in Figure 6, the steep grades that exist on a number of the major parcels within the study area prevent most types of development without significant investment in site work and engineering. These physical impediments will be of utmost importance in assessing the future conditions possible in this area.

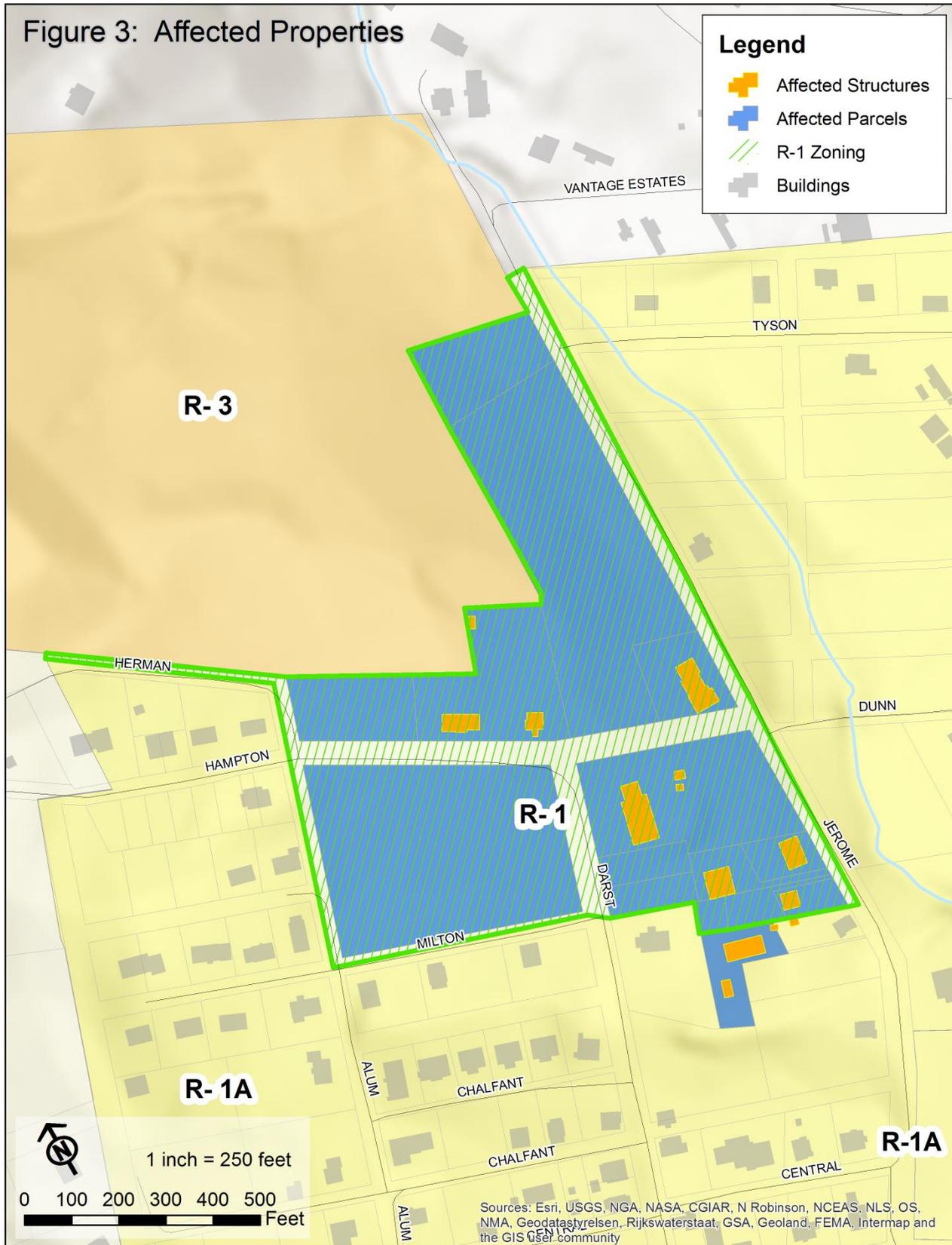
The transportation system serving Area 17 is made up of local, highly travelled streets and transit stops along neighboring corridors. Hampton Avenue and Darst Street, although technically collector streets by WVDOT standards, carry disproportionate amounts of traffic between Suncrest and Sabraton every day in terms of their design capacity and safety conditions. Traffic volume is a major issue, not only for system integrity, but for quality of life and connectivity within the neighborhood.

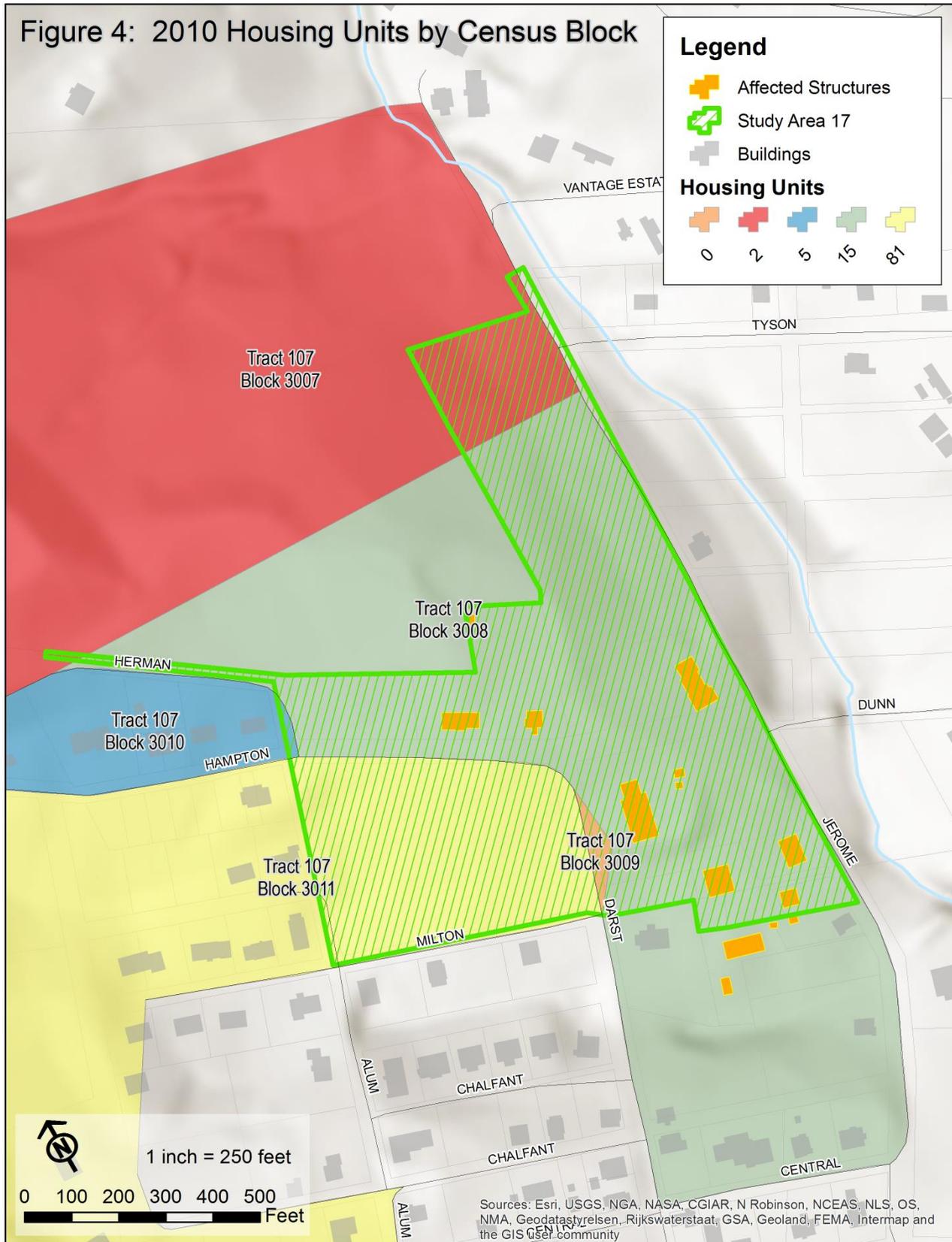


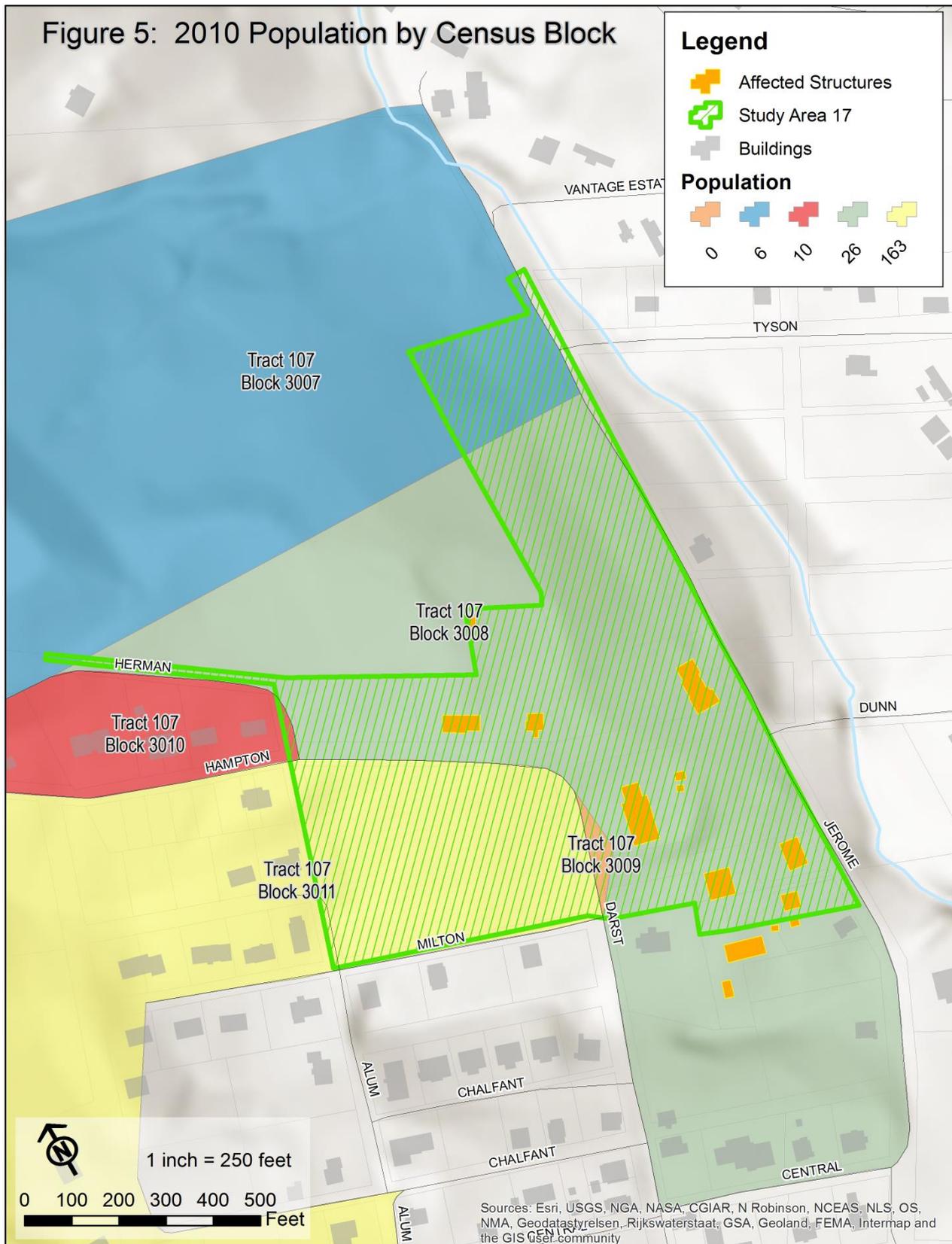
Figure 1: Small Area Plan 17 - Study Area

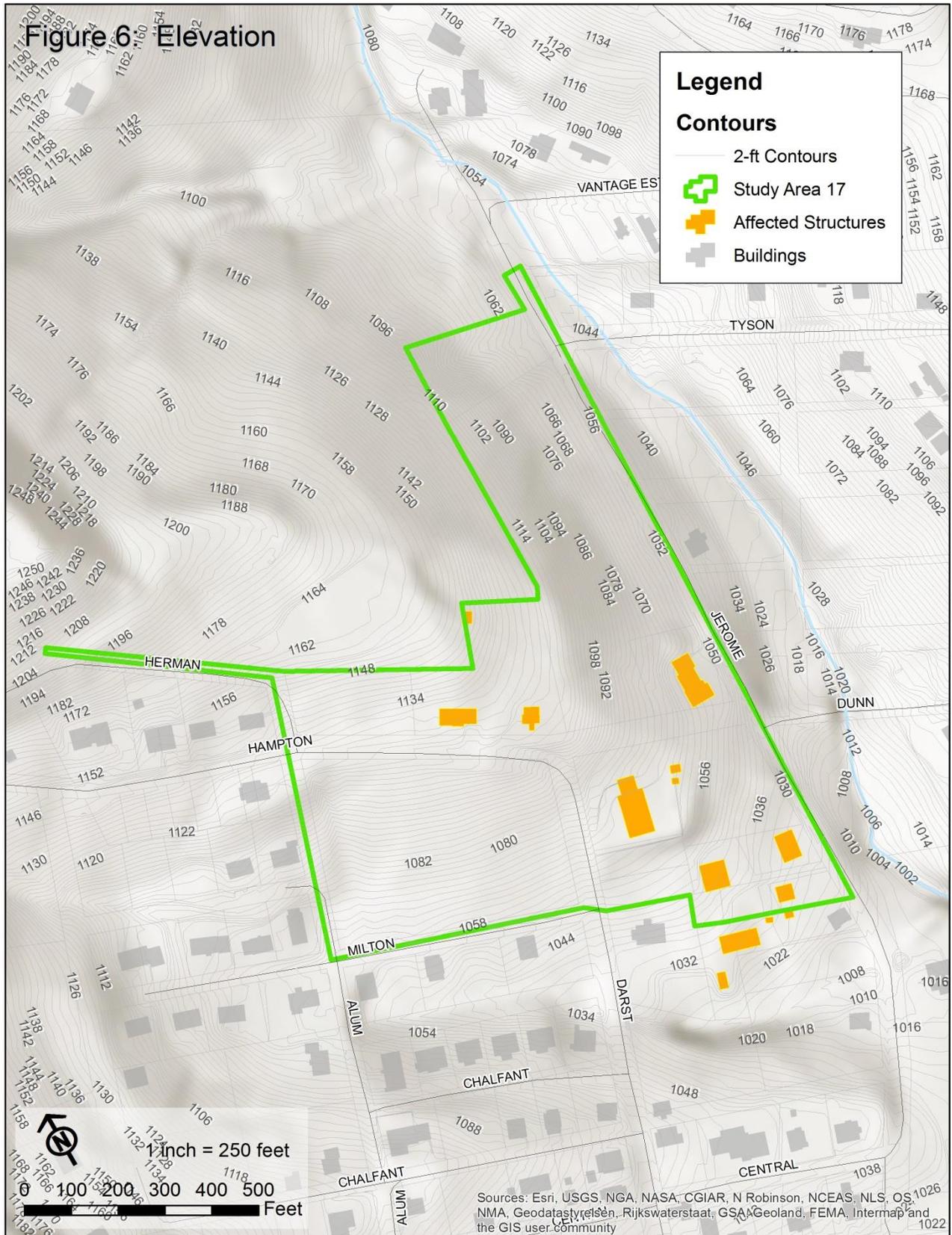














Community Preferences

The local community input process revealed a number of insightful preferences for how the study area should develop into the future. While not all opinions were in total agreement, consensus was reached on many aspects of the desired future condition of the Hampton / Darst area. Local input from property owners and interested neighbors ranged from history on the neighborhood to feedback on original and future development intentions. Through a series of three community meetings and a hearing before the Planning Commission, participating residents overwhelmingly supported retaining the existing R-1 zoning district for the study area.

Attendees at the first neighborhood public forum (August 5, 2015) shared concern for future development patterns that reflected the residential nature of the neighborhood but were also aware of the current nature of the Hampton/Darst corridor as a shortcut to Sabraton. There was an interest in assessing alternatives that improved transportation, stormwater runoff, and infrastructure and also in neighborhood impacts from development patterns that may increase density and walkability given the close proximity to downtown Morgantown. Specifically, participating residents requested an illustration of what an R-1A build-out scenario would look like under R-1A permitted single-family density. There was no interest from residents to pursue any directions that allowed commercial/mixed-use or multi-family development.

The second neighborhood meeting was held on October 28, 2015 and focused primarily on sharing updates based on questions and issues raised by residents at the first public meeting. Research into planned infrastructure improvements revealed that there were none planned or programmed for the immediate future. A development scenario for an R-1A buildout was presented, illustrating what the potential number of lots could be if all the developable land was used. An alternative connection to Sabraton was investigated that would route existing traffic away from the neighborhood and fulfill earlier planning studies recommending connections from Rt. 705 to Hartman Run Road.

At the March 10, 2016 Planning Commission meeting, a draft recommended plan came up for review and approval, based largely on the feedback received through the two residential meetings held with landowners. There was a very strong outpouring of public support that evening for the zoning district to remain R-1, which was not presented at the two stakeholder meetings. The Planning Commission tabled any decisions and asked for clarification from the Planning Department.

On April 13, 2016 a third neighborhood meeting was held to seek clarification on resident preferences for the underlying zoning ordinance. At that meeting, which was attended by many of the same property owners that were present for one or both of the



meetings in 2015, there was overwhelming support for retaining the current R-1 zoning district.

A sample of the comments received throughout the planning process includes:

Property: *The older parcels on Des Moines Avenue were originally one (1) acre lots. We cannot talk about increased residential density before talking about improvements to infrastructure. There is a need to construct patio-type homes. There may be a slight interest in two-family and/or townhouse residential development, but more information would be needed. Attendees did not want to see multi-family residential development within the study area nor did they want to see mixed-use or commercial development.*

Transportation: *There is a need to construct streets shown in the paper rights-of-ways to improve access to larger properties within the study area. There is a need to fix roads and widen them, even just the shoulders. The State should have finished State Route 705 and connected it to Hartman Run Road over the hill. Traffic volume and speed of traffic on Hampton Avenue and Darst Street is a serious concern. New driveways to serve increased development should not connect directly to Hampton Avenue or Darst Street based on a concern with safety.*

Environment: *There will be a serious concern with steep slopes and stormwater runoff if some of the larger vacant parcels are developed. There is a creek along Jerome Street that is a hindrance to additional development in the area. It will need particular attention when developing alternatives.*

The analysis and recommendations contained in the following pages strongly considers landowner preferences and balances public opinion with sound planning practice and overall City development needs.



Development context

As future development is considered in Area 17, the existing context of the neighborhood needs to be weighed against the surrounding areas. Following the goals set forth in the *2013 Comp Plan*, the best fit for new growth in the City of Morgantown should be a development type that can accept new growth but will also blend into its surroundings and be harmonious with adjacent land uses. With that concept in mind, the neighborhood would be best suited to continue in an R-1 District or to shift to an R-1A District.

In the analysis of both zoning classifications, there are some distinctions to note that influence the future conditions for Area 17. The R-1 District is described as “not generally desiring to live in close proximity to other types of uses” while the R-1A district is “within convenient walking distance of other uses.”

Permitted uses for both zoning district are identical aside from the R-1 District allowing agricultural activity. There are many more conditional uses allowed in the R-1A District, with most falling under what may be considered “neighborhood business” types of activity such as art galleries, bakeries, florists, and instructional studios.

Lot provisions will be discussed further in the recommendations, but the basic distinction is that R-1A Districts allow for smaller lots and reduced setbacks, providing the framework for a more walkable neighborhood.

Appendix B contains the full text of the R-1 and R-1A Districts from the City of Morgantown Zoning Ordinance and also contains a table comparing the two zoning classifications for quick reference.



Planned Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure improvement planning and coordination will play a major role in providing future services to Area 17. Additional development will depend on quality infrastructure services to be successful. The following organizations plan for infrastructure improvements in Monongalia County that may affect the study area.

Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization

As part of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), there are two long-term projects which may impact the study area. The two projects are shown below with references to the 2040 LRTP. Each project is shown as a Tier 4 priority in the LRTP, which indicates the lowest priority for funding.

Project 25 illustrates multi-modal improvements to Willey Street. Those improvements include:

- Add capacity through key turn lane additions and intersection improvements
- Add key connections to complete the sidewalks
- Widen lanes to 15 feet on inclines for adequate bicycle overtaking width
- Improve geometry (sight distance, curvature, lane widths, shoulders, etc.)
- Provide bus stops and shelters at key locations.



Figure 7: MMMPO Project 25

Project 36 illustrates a new roadway connection from the Mileground to Hartman Run Road. Those improvements include:

- New 2 - lane roadway with turn lanes at appropriate locations
- Sidewalk on one side
- Multiuse trail on one side
- Bus stops and shelters at key locations



Figure 8: MMMPO Project 36

Morgantown Utility Board

At this time, there are no known short-term improvements planned within Area 17 or immediate vicinity.



Development Recommendations

Based upon best practices, professional planning experience, and feedback from residents, the following recommendations are made for Area 17 and future development scenarios.

Land Use

The land use recommended for Area 17 is consistent with the existing patterns of development in the neighborhood. The predominant land use should remain single-family residential, with the only potential derivation of that pattern being neighborhood-scale businesses allowed with conditional use approval through the City of Morgantown's established zoning process.

Zoning

The zoning of Area 17 should be consistent with the desires of the majority of landowners and with the direction established in the *2013 Comp Plan*, to direct new growth into infill situations, where possible, and to increase density within City limits. While increased density is a continued overall goal of the City, the overwhelming feedback received from participating residents is to retain the existing density and scale of development. R-3 zoning was a topic of discussion at the first public forum but was discarded as an option due to lack of interest by any landowners and a poor fit for the current development fabric of the neighborhood.

The R-1 District will allow for the neighborhood to remain single-family residential and retain the patterns of development that currently exist. The allowable lot sizes will remain at 7,200 sf for the R-1 District. In addition, the minimum front setbacks for the R-1 District are 25 feet.

Housing

The housing type for the neighborhood should remain as it currently exists, which is single-family residential, as identified in the zoning ordinance. The height of allowable housing structures remains the same, with the maximum height being 2.5 stories or 35 feet.

As the planning process developed, part of the analysis pertained to the potential changes in density and buildable lots between the existing R-1 and R-1A districts. The effect of a change in zoning from R-1 to R-1A can be somewhat observed in Figure 9 and Figure 10 below. Figure 9 provides a rendering that displays how an R-1A arrangement might appear if built out in the neighborhood. Figure 10 shows a potential lot arrangement from an overhead view and the accompanying lot sizes. Note that new



lots are accessed via a central cul-de-sac to the north and an additional street to the south, from an extended Hampton Avenue south to Chalfant Street. These figures are illustrative and precise lot sizes and locations would be clarified during the development review process if R-1A District type development were pursued.

The Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority owns property within the study area and has repeatedly expressed the desire to establish a new development of single-family housing that would complement the neighborhood and encourage similar infill in the area. They attended the small area plan meetings and shared those desires with others in attendance. While retaining the R-1 zoning will not allow for the density that would keep their development efforts at a lower price point to support new, market rate, affordable workforce homes, there are options such as Planned Unit Development available to the Housing Authority that would give them flexibility they might desire and a development strategy that could be more acceptable to neighboring residents..





Figure 10: R-1A Future scenario lot sizes

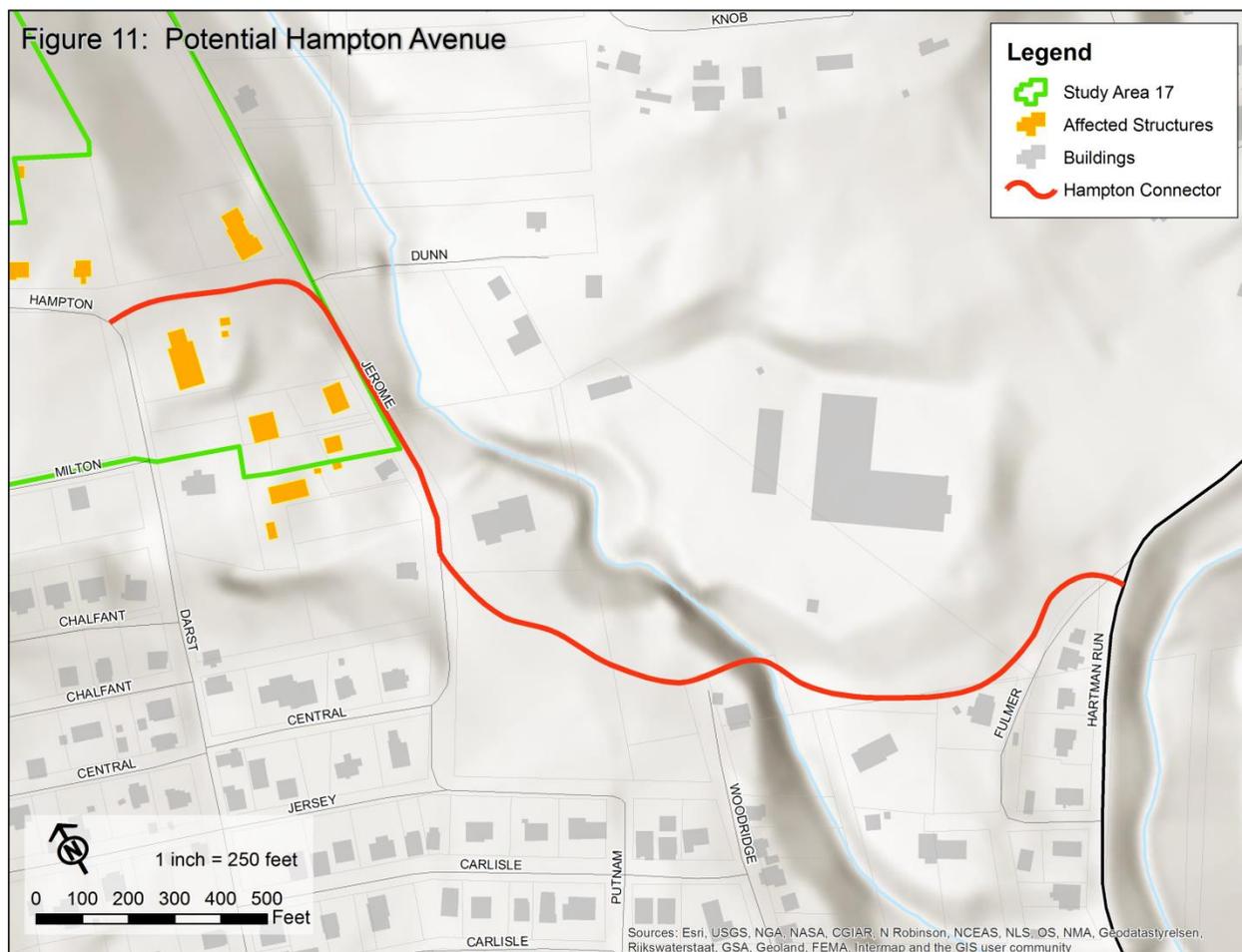


Transportation

Mountain Line Transit services areas nearby with the closest route being the Pink Line servicing Willey Street and the Blue Line servicing Richwood Avenue. With additional density in the study area, there could be an opportunity to develop transit services along Hampton and Darst Streets, with special attention given to safe boarding conditions due to steep grades and sight distances. With the existing sidewalk infrastructure and steep elevation difference between the study area and existing transit services, it is highly unlikely that use of Mountain Line is realistic for residents in the study area. While significant upgrades to sidewalks and pedestrian ways are not currently planned, future investment in these facilities may make use of mass transit more realistic.

Additional sidewalks would be constructed by developers under the direction of the City of Morgantown to serve new growth and to provide connections to adjacent neighborhoods and adjoining transportation network.

An additional route to Sabraton has long been suggested through transportation long range plans and community discussions. As part of this small area plan, a connection to Hampton Avenue was investigated that would travel across Jerome Street and down





the hill to Hartman Run Road. Through GIS analysis, the route displayed in Figure 11 was rendered as the least disruptive to current development considering the topography between Willey Street and Hartman Run Road. As development in the study area is considered (and larger regional development patterns are investigated), this route may be worthy to reserve until transportation funds are available. This connection would fulfill the goals set forth in Project 36 of the MMPPO LRTP (shown on page 13).

As transportation decisions are considered for this area and the surrounding street network, the additional traffic that has been utilizing Hampton Avenue and Darst Street for decades needs to be addressed and reduced. The future of this area as a viable single-family city neighborhood depends on traffic being reduced and diverted to Sabraton via a more direct and unobtrusive route. In addition, the neighborhood quality of life for homeowners should be further preserved by allowing on-street parking in as many applications as possible while preserving safety.

As Area 17 evolves and added density increases homeownership opportunities for single families, the City of Morgantown should work closely with the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization and the West Virginia Division of Highways to develop and implement alternative routing from the Mileground / Willey Street to Hartman Run Road so that pass-through traffic does not continue to negatively impact Hampton Avenue and Darst Street.

Historic Preservation

A cursory review of existing structures in the study area does not indicate the presence of any historic properties or sites that would warrant any special consideration during neighborhood planning. As development occurs, more careful study may be warranted during site review and permitting.

Environment

As noted in stakeholder comments, steep slopes are a concern with the currently undeveloped properties in the neighborhood. There will be additional development costs associated with making improvements to those parcels.

The large parcels of undeveloped land within Area 17 have steep slopes, as noted in Figure 6. Stormwater runoff from the land to the southeast of Hampton Avenue and Darst Street runs directly to Milton Street and negatively impacts adjacent properties. The larger parcels of undeveloped land directly north of Darst Street deposit stormwater across Jerome Street and into the tributary to Hartman Run. Stormwater runoff across the street and into that waterway will need to be addressed as new development occurs. The City of Morgantown and the Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) should work with developers as project plans are assembled to ensure that neighboring parcels are



not adversely affected and water and sanitary sewer infrastructure is in place that will accept new growth in the area.

Parks

Due to the smaller size of the study area relative to other neighborhoods in the City of Morgantown, parkland does not appear to be a priority within Area 17. As developers work with City staff to implement new projects, pocket parks, streetscaping and green space should be a consideration along with new housing opportunities.

Neighborhood Services

No additional neighborhood services are expected as a result of new R-1 or R-1A scaled development within Area 17.

Economic Development

As a strictly residential district, Area 17 is not recommended for any businesses as a permitted use except for Class 1 daycare facilities. Neighborhood-scaled uses are permitted as a conditional use (see Appendix B), which would provide services to the neighborhood with a majority of patrons from inside the study area rather than attracting new traffic from elsewhere.



Implementation

Task	Category	Capital Cost	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
Investigate potential transit stop along Darst Street	Transportation	N/A	<1 yr	Mountain Line Transit
Install sidewalks	Transportation	Site-dependent	1-5 yrs	Developer
Develop new arterial from WV 705 to Hartman Run Road	Transportation	\$17 million*	20-30 yrs	MMMPO
System-wide stormwater planning	Environment	N/A	5-10 yrs	MUB, City of Morgantown

* 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan - Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization



Appendix A: Area 17 Photographic Inventory



Alcova with creek



Alum St north



Alum St south



Bartlow and Alum St



Central Ave west



Darst 01 south



Darst speed limit



Hampton 01 west



Hampton 02 east



Hampton 03 sidewalk 01



Hampton 04 sidewalk 02



Hampton 05 hillside north



Hampton 05 south



Hampton 07 sidewalk 03



Hampton 08 sidewalk 04



Herman Ave 01 south



Housing east of Darst



Jerome 01 ditch



Jerome 02



Jerome 03



Jerome 04 west



Jerome 05 south



Milton 01



Milton 02



Milton 03 east



Milton 04 west



Milton and Darst



Tyson with creek



Utilities and guardrail



Utilities on Darst



Appendix B: R-1 vs R-1A – A Comparison for Area 17 Small Area Plan

R-1

1333.01 PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Single Family Residential (R-1) District is to:

- (A) Provide for attractive single family neighborhoods for residents who prefer larger lot sizes and do not generally desire to live in close proximity to other types of uses, and
- (B) Preserve the desirable character of existing single family neighborhoods, and
- (C) Protect the single family residential areas from change and intrusion that may cause deterioration, and provide for adequate light, ventilation, quiet, and privacy for neighborhood residents.

1333.02 PERMITTED PRINCIPAL AND CONDITIONAL USES. See the Permitted Land Use Table 1331.05.01.

1333.03 LOT PROVISIONS.

- (A) The minimum lot size shall be 7,200 square feet.
- (B) The minimum lot frontage shall be 70 feet. The frontage requirement may be waived for a parcel not fronting on an existing road if the parcel is served by a proper right-of-way.
- (C) Maximum lot coverage shall be 40 percent.

1333.04 SETBACKS.

- (A) The following setbacks shall be required for all principal structures, except as otherwise provided in Section 1363.02(B), Yard, Building Setbacks and Open Space Exceptions:
 - 1. Minimum Front setback:..... 25 feet
 - 2. Maximum Front setback:..... 30 feet
 - 3. Minimum Side setback:..... 10 feet
 - 4. Minimum Rear setback: 25 feet

1333.05 ENCROACHMENTS INTO SETBACKS.

- (A) Architectural features may project into a required setback as provided below:
 - 1. Fire escapes, chimneys, cornices, awnings, canopies, eaves, sills, pilasters, lintels, gutters or other similar features may extend into a setback a distance not exceeding three (3) feet, except that such features shall not extend closer than three (3) feet from the property line.
 - 2. Uncovered stairs, landings and porches shall not extend closer than three (3) feet from the property line.
 - 3. Open and covered, but un-enclosed front porches attached to single family dwellings may extend into the required front setback a distance equal to fifty (50) percent of the setback depth. Such porches may not subsequently be enclosed unless the normal setback requirements for the district are met.



- (B) No permitted encroachment noted above shall extend to within three (3) feet of an accessory structure.
- (C) Fences, walls, terraces, steps or other similar features may encroach into a required setback, except as provided in Section 1363.03, Safety and Vision. Such appurtenances shall not be located within access, drainage, or utility easements.
- (D) HVAC mechanical units may be located no closer than five (5) feet to a side lot line.
- (E) Parking shall be permitted in the front setback only on approved driveways constructed to the standards of the City Engineering Department and arranged so that no part of any vehicle parked on the driveway encroaches into the right-of-way of any street.

1333.06 BUILDING HEIGHT.

- (A) The maximum height of a principal structure shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is less, except as provided in Section 1363.02(A), Height Exceptions.
- (B) The maximum height of an accessory structure shall not exceed eighteen (18) feet. (Ord. 06-40. Passed 11-21-06.)

1333.07 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

- (A) All residential construction shall substantially conform in street orientation to adjacent interior lot homes.
- (B) On a corner lot, the front lot line shall be the lot line having the shortest dimension along the street right-of-way line. The required side yard setback on the side facing a street shall be one and one-half (1.5) times the normal side setback requirement.
- (C) Civic buildings such as private schools and churches should be built so that they terminate street vistas whenever possible, and shall be of sufficient design to create visual anchors for the community.
- (D) Materials:
 - 1. Residential buildings should be clad in wood siding, vinyl siding, composite siding (cement board), stone, or brick.
 - 2. Civic building walls shall be clad in stone, wood, brick, marble, or cast concrete.
 - 3. Garden walls should not be made from cinderblocks unless of the ornamental variety designed for use in landscaping projects.
 - 4. Civic building roofs shall be clad in slate, sheet metal, corrugated metal, and/or diamond tab asphalt shingles.
 - 5. Principal building roofs should have a pitch that substantially conforms to the roof pitches of adjacent homes.
- (E) Homes should have substantial front porches oriented toward primary street frontage. Covered, but unenclosed front porches shall not count toward the permitted maximum lot coverage.
- (F) Garages, if attached to the home, should be recessed a minimum of seven (7) feet from the primary building line of the front façade, unless located directly underneath the first floor of the house. Detached garages shall not be located in the front half of a lot.
- (G) Sidewalks shall be constructed along the frontage of a lot upon which a use is to be constructed unless waived by the City Engineer for single and two family infill development on practicability merits. New sidewalks shall be at least five (5) feet wide.



The City Engineer shall have the discretion to reduce this minimum standard to four (4) feet based on site constraints, or to conform to an existing but incomplete sidewalk along the same side of the street.

R-1A

1335.01 PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Single Family Residential (R-1A) District is to:

- (A) Provide for single family neighborhoods on smaller lots, located within convenient walking distance of other uses, and
- (B) Preserve the desirable character of existing single family neighborhoods, and
- (C) Protect the single family residential areas from change and intrusion that may cause deterioration, and
- (D) Provide for adequate light, ventilation, quiet, and privacy for neighborhood residents.

1335.02 PERMITTED PRINCIPAL AND CONDITIONAL USES. See the Permitted Land Use Table 1331.05.01.

1335.03 LOT PROVISIONS.

- (A) The minimum lot size shall be 3,500 square feet.
- (B) The minimum lot frontage shall be thirty (30) feet. The frontage requirement may be waived for a parcel not fronting on an existing road if the parcel is served by a proper right-of-way.
- (C) Maximum lot coverage shall be fifty (50) percent.

1335.04 SETBACKS.

- (A) The following setbacks shall be required for all principal structures, except as otherwise provided in Section 1363.02(B) Yard, Building Setbacks and Open Space Exceptions:
 - 1. Minimum Front setback:.....8 feet
 - 2. Maximum Front setback:20 feet
 - 3. Minimum Side setback:.....5 feet
 - 4. Minimum Rear setback:20 feet.
- (B) On a corner lot, the front lot line shall be the lot line having the shortest dimension along the street right-of-way line. The required side yard setback on the side facing a street shall be one and one-half (1.5) times the normal side setback requirement.

1335.05 ENCROACHMENTS INTO SETBACKS.

- (A) Architectural features may project into a required setback as provided below:
 - 1. Fire escapes, chimneys, cornices, awnings, canopies, eaves, sills, pilasters, lintels, gutters or other similar features may extend into a setback a distance not exceeding three (3) feet, except that such features shall not extend closer than three (3) feet from the property line.
 - 2. Uncovered stairs, landings and porches shall not extend closer than three (3) feet from the property line.



3. Open and covered, but un-enclosed front porches attached to single family dwellings may extend into the required front setback a distance equal to fifty (50) percent of the setback depth. Such porches may not subsequently be enclosed unless the normal setback requirements for the district are met.
- (B) No permitted encroachment noted above shall extend to within three (3) feet of an accessory structure.
- (C) Fences, walls, terraces, steps or other similar features may encroach into a required setback, except as provided in Section 1363.03, Safety and Vision. Such appurtenances shall not be located within access, drainage, or utility easements.
- (D) HVAC mechanical units may be located no closer than five (5) feet to a side lot line.
- (E) Parking shall be permitted in the front setback only on approved driveways constructed to the standards of the City Engineering Department and arranged so that no part of any vehicle parked on the driveway encroaches into the right-of-way of any street.

1335.06 BUILDING HEIGHT.

- (A) The maximum height of a principal structure shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is less, except as provided in Section 1363.02(A), Height Exceptions.
- (B) The maximum height of an accessory structure shall not exceed eighteen (18) feet. (Ord. 06-40. Passed 11-21-06.)

1335.07 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

- (A) All residential construction shall substantially conform in street orientation to adjacent homes.
- (B) Civic buildings such as private schools, churches, should be built so that they terminate street vistas whenever possible, and shall be of sufficient design to create visual anchors for the community.
- (C) Materials:
 1. Residential building should be clad in wood siding, vinyl siding, composite siding (cement board), stone, or brick.
 2. Civic building walls shall be clad in stone, brick, wood, marble, or cast concrete.
 3. Garden walls should not be made from cinderblocks unless of the ornamental variety designed for use in landscaping projects.
 4. Civic building roofs shall be clad in slate, sheet metal, corrugated metal, and/or diamond tab asphalt shingles.
 5. Principal building roofs should have a pitch that conforms substantially to the roof pitches of adjacent homes.
- (D) Homes should have substantial front porches oriented toward the primary street frontage. Covered, but unenclosed, front porches shall not count toward the permitted maximum lot coverage.
- (E) Garages, if attached to the home, should be recessed a minimum of seven (7) feet from the primary building line of the front façade, unless located directly underneath the first floor of the house. Detached garages shall not be located in the front half of any lot.
- (F) Sidewalks shall be constructed along the frontage of a lot upon which a use is to be constructed unless waived by the City Engineer for single and two family infill



development on practicability merits. New sidewalks shall be at least five (5) feet wide. The City Engineer shall have the discretion to reduce this minimum standard to four (4) feet based on site constraints, or to conform to an existing but incomplete sidewalk along the same side of the street.



R-1 vs R-1A Zoning
City of Morgantown
Small Area 17 Plan

		R-1 Zone	R-1A Zone
Purpose		single family neighborhoods Preference for larger lot sizes Do not generally desire to live in close proximity to other types of uses Preserve existing single-family neighborhoods Protect existing single family residential areas from change and intrusion that may cause deterioration	single family neighborhoods Located on smaller lots within convenient walking distance of other uses Preserve existing single-family neighborhoods Protect existing single family residential areas from change and intrusion that may cause deterioration
Permitted Uses		Agricultural activity Cemetary Community gardens Day Car Facility, Class 1 Dwelling, Single-family Essential Services & Equipment Government Facility Group Residential Facility Group Residential Home Manufactured Homes Telecommunication Class 1 Greenhouse, non-commercial (Accessory) Home Occupation, Class 1 (Accessory)	Cemetary Community Gardens Day Care Facility, Class 1 Dwelling, Single-family Essential Services & Equipment Government Facility Group Residential Facility Group Residential Home Manufactured Homes Telecommunication Class 1 Greenhouse, non-commercial (Accessory) Home Occupation, Class 1 (Accessory)
Conditional use		Athletic Field Caretaker's Residence Churches, Places of Worship Communications Equipment Building Community Center Day Care Facility, Class 2 Golf Course Home Occupation, Class 2 Hospital Park and Recreation Services Re-use of closed/vacant School or Church School (k12), Private	Animal Grooming Service Appliance Repair Establishment Art Gallery Artist Studio Athletic Field Bakery, retail Barber Shop / Beauty Salon Caretaker's Residence Churches, Places of Worship Communications Equipment Building Community Center Convenience Store, neighborhood Day Care Facility, Class 2 Drug Store Florist Shop Golf Course Home Occupation, Class 2 Hospital Instructional Studio Newsstand Park and Recreation Services Re-use of closed/vacant School or Church School (k12), Private
Lot Provisions	Minimum lot size (sf)	7,200	3,500
	Minimum lot frontage (ft)	70	30
	Maximum lot coverage (%)	40	50
Setbacks	Minimum front (ft)	25	8
	Maximum front (ft)	30	20
	Minimum side (ft)	10	5
	Minimum rear (ft)	25	20
Building Height	Maximum height - Principal structure	2.5 stories or 35 ft	2.5 stories or 35 ft
	Maximum height - Accessory structure (ft)	18	18

Stacy Hollar

From: John Martys <jmartys@fmhousing.com>
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2016 10:17 AM
To: Stacy Hollar
Subject: Study Area No. 17 Recommendations Report

May 2, 2016

Stacy Hollar
City of Morgantown
Development Services Department
311 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV 26505

Dear Ms. Hollar,

On April 15, 2016 the City of Morgantown Development Services Department issued their recommendation regarding Study Area 17 in Jerome Park to retain the R-1 zoning designation in favor of R1A. This was a reversal of the initial recommendation to re-zone to R1A based solely on the opinion of several residents of the area. The Housing Authority appreciates the need for public comment in that all of our policies as well as the Annual Plan undergo a public comment period. Much of the public opposition centered on misinformation and unsubstantiated fear of the use of the parcel owned by the Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority. This included comments of racial bias, fear of increased crime, use of eminent domain, and the fear of the Housing Authority developing a "Marjory Gardens" type facility. The Development Services Department's decision lacked the objective analysis of the full benefit of re-zoning to the city, the efforts of the Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority in providing affordable homeownership opportunities and focused on the unsubstantiated fears and opinions that had no basis in fact.

As owner of a substantial portion of the Study Area 17, (the corner lot on Darst and Hampton) we wish to express our support for the rezoning of the Study Area 17 to R1A for the following reasons;

- The Housing Authority's mission is to provide affordable housing to low and moderate income persons. FMHA's Morgantown Homecoming Program provides single family homes to moderate income families at an affordable cost. The program also protects the community against excessive rentals to stabilize our neighborhoods. FMHA purchased the 2.5 acres on the corner of Darst and Hampton Streets with the desire to provide homeownership opportunities to our moderate income workforce population. The current R1 zoning requires large 7200 sq. ft. lot sizes. The cost of the property, slope issues, and the associated development costs to meet city and infrastructure requirements would allow approximately 10-11 home sites to be developed. This would bring the cost per home site to around \$60,000, an unaffordable site/development cost to serve our moderate income workforce housing market. R1A would enable the FMHA to create 4500 square foot lot sizes which increase the number of lots to approximately 16 and reduce per lot costs to \$37,500; a far more affordable cost. The lower lot costs will enable FMHA to develop single family homes in the \$180,000 to \$225,000 value range. A market level that is greatly needed in Morgantown to serve our working families. The higher R1 lot costs would force housing costs to \$250,000 to nearly \$300,000, out of reach of most Morgantown middle income residents.
- The Development Services Department's report recognized the Housing Authority's desire to develop affordable housing on the site and stated, "*there are options such as Planned Unit Development, there are options such as Planned Unit Development that would give them the flexibility they might desire and a development strategy that would be more acceptable to neighboring residents.*" Although the PUD would permit flexibility the lengthy time factor and cost of such planning (especially with the desire to reduce costs to maintain affordability) would be very high. The same result could be accomplished through re-zoning to R1A.

- Comments regarding the quality and type of housing were expressed that impacted the decision to remain R1. Some residents expressed the houses that maybe developed by FMHA will be low-quality “HUD” housing that would bring lower property values and increased crime, while other felt higher quality housing would increase their taxes. FMHA builds housing at the highest affordable quality. Two homes currently under construction on Grove Street are in the \$225,000 market and feature modern design, very high energy efficiency, smart technology, hardy board siding, wood/ceramic/laminate flooring, solid surface kitchen/bath, outdoor living space and other amenities. This reflects typical housing quality for new construction by FMHA.
- Several of the public comments centered on water run-off and increased traffic. These issues will exist and will be adequately addressed according to city and MUB requirements if the property is developed under the R1 zoning. Storm water retention is required of all developers by MUB which will be designed to mitigate run-off issues. The increased traffic for the development will be directed on to Milton Street. As per community recommendations entry and egress to the development site will be only through the developments main entrance off of Alum Street and will not have direct access to either Milton or Darst Streets. This will reduce traffic congestion on Milton.
- FMHA sees the R1A area is consistent with the City or Morgantown’s objective of creating affordable housing in Morgantown, to increase homeownership opportunities to our working residents and is consistent with the land use of the surrounding area. The study area is essentially surrounded by R1A areas and the vast majority of city respondents are residents of the R1A properties.

The Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority has been a solid and contributing partner with the City of Morgantown in the provision of quality affordable housing over the years. We understand the importance of public comment and always desire to be sensitive to each neighborhood we work in. We encourage the Planning Commission to weigh and evaluate the unfounded fears and opinions of several area residents and **consider the greater good for the City of Morgantown** by approving the rezoning of Study Area 17 to R1A to further affordable and quality housing development for moderate income workforce housing in Morgantown.

I hope you take these comments under your most sincere consideration. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 304-363-2977 or jmartys@fmhousng.com.

Sincerely,
John Martys
Executive Director
Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority