



OBMS MASTER PLAN APPROVAL PAVES WAY FOR DEVELOPMENT

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Montgomery County, Virginia – The approval of the old Blacksburg Middle School (OBMS) Master Plan now paves the way for the marketing and sale of the 20 acre site in Blacksburg to benefit school capital construction.

“County staff and I worked hand in hand with the town, citizens and our consultants to come up a master plan that will help future developers work with the town on zoning and assist economic development officials in marketing and selling the property to help pay for new schools,” said Board Chair Jim Politis. “The master plan sets parameters for development but also offers flexibility.”

Blacksburg Mayor Ron Rordam added: “The four month process was a shining example of what two governing bodies can accomplish when they work together for a common goal. My thanks to the Board of Supervisors, Town Council, and both staffs for a job well done.”

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the master plan at its regular meeting on Monday night. Last night, Blacksburg Town Council joined in supporting the plan, which incorporates mixed use design principles.

Modea, a national advertising agency located in Blacksburg, has agreed to purchase six acres fronting Main Street to build its corporate headquarters. “This continued support by Blacksburg and Montgomery County paves the way for my vision to create a high-level work environment that raises the bar,” said Aaron Herrington, Modea co-founder and partner.

The master planning process began in mid-March when consultants mapped out an ambitious series of stakeholder meetings and a community planning workshop to gather citizen input. Arnett Muldrow and Associates and Mahan Rykiel Associates conducted a two day design charette in early April for citizens, elected officials and town and county staff. The Eisen Group completed a financial analysis of the plan concepts to ensure that the plan is marketable and economically viable. Based on comments from citizens and others, the design team presented plan concepts at a public open house and at several meetings of the Board of Supervisors and Town Council.

The final plan is a guiding document for future decision makers, investors, potential land purchasers, developers and citizens. It includes concepts for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic, landscaping, hardscaping, parking, open space, civic space and an extension of the Huckleberry Trail. Developable parcels will accommodate a mix of office and single and multi-family residential uses, with options such as restaurant, retail and service uses.

The Board of Supervisors took ownership of the property last year when the School Board deeded the property to the County. Asbestos removal has been completed at the 1950s era building. Demolition is currently under way and due to be completed by late September.

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