TOWN OF
Blacksburg
*a special place*

RESOLUTION 6-K-11

A RESOLUTION APPPROVING A MASTER PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD BLACKSBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL PROPERTY

WHEREAS, Montgomery County owns an approximately twenty acre site in downtown Blacksburg that was formerly occupied by the Blacksburg Middle School (the "Old Blacksburg Middle School Property" or "Property") and determined by the Montgomery County School Board to be surplus in 2010;

WHEREAS, the Town of Blacksburg owns approximately 1.3 acres of the Property;

WHEREAS, the sale and redevelopment of the Property has the potential to provide much needed funding for school construction and long term economic benefits to both the County and the Town;

WHEREAS, the Property is in a key location in downtown Blacksburg and its redevelopment will have a significant impact on the Town;

WHEREAS, the Town's Comprehensive Plan identifies the Property as "Mixed Use Area D" on the Future Land Use Map and describes the key principles for mixed use development;

WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Town Council that future redevelopment of the Old Blacksburg Middle School Property should conform to the adopted Master Plan;

WHEREAS, public necessity and good zoning practice require the creation and adoption of a Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Old Blacksburg Middle School Property in accordance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County have worked together, along with assistance from Arnett Muldrow & Associates, Mahan Rykiel Associates and the Eisen Group to develop a Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the community provided input at numerous public meetings, including a meeting on April 3, 2011, a design workshop on April 4, 2011, an Open House and Town Council meetings on May 10, 2011, and June 28, 2011;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Blacksburg:

1. *Master Plan.* The Old Blacksburg Middle School Property Master Plan dated June 24, 2011, as presented to the Town Council and filed with the Town Clerk, is hereby adopted as the official Master Plan to guide the Planning Commission and Town Council in considering future redevelopment proposals and requests for rezoning or other land use approvals.

2. *Effect of the Plan.* By adopting the Master Plan, the Town Council is not rezoning the Old Blacksburg Middle School Property or amending the Comprehensive Plan. However, the Master Plan reflects the shared vision of the Blacksburg Town Council and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, developed after extensive effort and community input, on the desired redevelopment of the Property. Therefore, all requests for rezoning or other land use approvals required for the redevelopment of the Property shall be evaluated for consistency with the Master Plan and the improvements and facilities shown on the Master Plan.

3. *Updates and Changes.* The Master Plan may require periodic updates and changes. The Master Plan should be revised to reflect approved development and updated as needed to preserve its utility as a guide for the redevelopment of the Property.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

Date of Adoption: June 28, 2011

# Old Blacksburg Middle School Master Plan

# FINAL REPORT

June 24, 2011

Prepared for the
Town of Blacksburg
And the
Montgomery County Board of Supervisors

Prepared by
Arnett Muldrow & Associates, Ltd.
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## *1.0 Introduction and Background*

The Old Blacksburg Middle School (OBMS) is one of the most important redevelopment sites in the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County. The property has been vacant for nearly a decade occupying a twenty-acre site fronting Main Street in Blacksburg at an important entrance to the downtown's commercial district. The site is long and narrow and is bound to the north by Clay Street (the southerly boundary of Blacksburg's original Sixteen Squares), to the south by Eheart Street, to the west by Main Street, and to the east by a series of parcels that adjoin the site that front on Willard Drive.

The school was built in 1952 and served as the community's high school until a new high school facility was built in 1974. The school was then converted to a middle school and served in that capacity until a new middle school was completed in 2002 upon which time the building was used for storage and minor office uses. The Montgomery County School Board surplused its portion of the property to Montgomery County in December 2009. The property conveyance to Montgomery County was accepted in April 2010. Most of the site, approximately 19.9 acres, is owned by Montgomery County with roughly 1.3 acres owned by the Town of Blacksburg. The site is currently zoned for low-density single-family housing development consistent with that of adjoining neighborhoods. The site has been the topic of ongoing discussion in the community for many years.

The 1999 Downtown Master Plan for Blacksburg mentioned the site and its importance to the future of downtown. The site is also referenced in the Town's Comprehensive Plan where it is designated for mixed-use development. In 2008 the Town of Blacksburg hosted two open house input sessions to discuss the future of the site, which were each attended by well over seventy citizens. The Blacksburg Townscape Committee proposed a design competition for the Old Blacksburg Middle School that was to have been held in late 2009. This effort was put on indefinite hold as the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County continued to discuss the future of the site. The Town has long viewed the site as a redevelopment/revitalization area.

In early 2011, Modea Corporation – a homegrown Blacksburg firm – began negotiations with Montgomery County to purchase a portion of the site to build a signature corporate headquarters building on the Main Street frontage of the site. This important investment coupled with the urgent need for Montgomery County to address school investments as the result of a catastrophic roof collapse at the Blacksburg High School in 2010 put redevelopment of the site back on the forefront of community dialogue in early 2011.

Recognizing the need to see a redevelopment of the property that would maximize the short and long term economic return on the site for Montgomery County while satisfying the desire for Blacksburg to have a high-quality development at the gateway to its downtown prompted the Blacksburg Town Council and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to jointly commission a master plan for the site.

After a request for proposals process, the Town and the County hired Arnett Muldrow & Associates, Ltd. of Greenville, South Carolina and Mahan Rykiel Associates of Baltimore, Maryland in late March of 2011 to conduct public input and develop the plan. The Town and the County also hired The Eisen Group of Washington, DC to complete a financial analysis of the plan concepts and serve side-by-side with the other two firms for the duration of the process to ensure that an economically viable and marketable master plan was developed.

## 1.1 Mixed Use Design Principles

Prior to this master plan process, the Town Council had established a set of mixed-use design principles in December of 2010 that were to serve as policy guidance for any future plan or development of the site. These principles correlate directly with objectives of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The goal was for the Town and County to work together to make the rezoning process successful with a thoughtful and detailed rezoning application reflecting a sound master plan. The design team inherited these principals and used them as guidance throughout the completion of the plan.

- Expect a high quality design with strong architectural elements, street presence, downtown streetscape components, and unique sense of place.
- Involve the community.
- Be an urban infill project that makes use of valuable urban land that is served by transit and is walkable to employment and services.
- Add to the economic base of the County and the Town.
- Involve a genuine mixing of use types as opposed to separate components with no integration. Vertical integration is preferred but with a parcel of this size integration could be achieved through other means.
- Be sensitive in the transition to the abutting single-family neighborhoods.
- Include open space and connections to greenways and trails.
- Orient more intense project components toward Main Street and Clay Street.
- Have a residential component and work with the Town, using local and regional affordable housing programs, to see if there is an opportunity to provide affordable housing in the project in addition to market rate housing. Housing, in general, would be best if designed to serve young professionals and/or retirees whose housing needs are currently unmet in the Town. Housing should not be targeted toward the high occupancy student market.
- Have a civic component. This could be achieved in any number of ways.
- Include some ground floor retail space to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Be encouraged to use low impact design principles, including the daylighting of creeks where feasible, and green building techniques.

- Honor the property's historic aspects, including the original African-American school, the history of the high school and the interface with the original Sixteen Squares of Blacksburg.

## 1.2 Plan Process

Recognizing the desires of Modea to quickly begin work on its new headquarters building and the important need for Montgomery County to prepare for the financial implications of building new schools, both the Town and the County agreed to an accelerated master plan schedule that would maximize public input opportunities while ensuring the process moved forward in an efficient manner.

- March 14: The master plan team conducted a kick-off meeting with Town Staff in order to determine the schedule and receive a briefing on the status of the site. The consultants also were introduced to the Town Council and the Board of Supervisors.
- April 3, 4, 5: The master plan team conducted a Design Charrette with drop in public input Sunday afternoon and Monday morning. Well over 100 citizens attended one or both of these meetings. The design team provided an update to the Board of Supervisors on April 4th and presented concepts to a Town Council Work Session at noon on the 5th of June. That evening, town staff presented plan concepts to the Town Planning Commission.
- April 19: The design team presented conceptual designs to a joint work session of Town Council and the Blacksburg Town Planning Commission. Montgomery County staff members and representatives of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors were in attendance.
- May 9, 10: The design team presented conceptual designs to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, held an open house session for the public, and presented the plan to the Blacksburg Town Council.
- May 11: The Town Planning Commission held a work session to discuss updates to the Master Plan.
- May 17: The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors and the Blacksburg Town Council held a joint work session/meeting to review the plan.
- June/July: Anticipated approval of Master Plan documents by Town and County

In addition to these meetings, all plan documents were posted to the Town's web page and the County provided links to that page from its web page. The Town and the County encouraged citizen comment and the design team, staff, and public officials received dozens of email messages. This input was essential to the creation of this plan and the thoughtful contribution of many stakeholders refined the recommendations through the entire process. The plan team is deeply appreciative of the input from start to finish.

All of the public input is available for review at the Town of Blacksburg Planning and Building Department.

## 1.3 How to Use This Plan

This plan is designed to be a guidance document for policymakers, potential purchasers, developers, and citizens as redevelopment of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site occurs. The plan is more than any single drawing, statement, or photograph but a combination of each of these components. When referring to the plan, users should take care to examine not only the plan drawing but also the accompanying text. Furthermore, the example images augment the concepts of the plan to point out details not better described in words or in plan drawings. Ultimately the plan is advisory and does not rezone the site or restrict the use of the site itself. However, the only way the plan can be realized is through a rezoning of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site as the current zoning would not permit the densities, setbacks, and uses illustrated in the plan.

The plan is purposely designed to be flexible in some areas and more rigid in others recognizing that flexibility will encourage creativity and greater potential investment quality while certain guiding principals must be followed to ensure the plan adheres to clearly expressed interests on the part of the community.

- Policy Makers will each have a different use for the plan. Board of Supervisors members will be able to use the document as a recruitment tool to encourage quality investors to examine the property for development.
- The Blacksburg Town Council and Planning Commissioners can refer to the document alongside professional planning staff to see if proposed development adheres to the key goals of the plan when making rezoning decisions. Town Council members can also use the document to explain goals and objectives to constituent groups.
- Developers/Investors can use the document to understand what the objectives of the community are with the redevelopment of the site. Foremost among these objectives is high-quality development that will enhance the community for decades to come. To further that end, the plan encourages a wide variety of mixed-use development options while discouraging certain uses such as student housing developments and suburban style development.
- Citizens can use the document as guidance to understand the goals of the plan, to understand the public and open space amenities that are likely to occur as the plan develops, and to work with policy makers and investors to ensure development is compatible with its surroundings.

# 2.0 MASTER PLAN GRAPHICS

## 2.1 Flexibility Diagram (Exhibit 2.1)

The Flexibility Diagram presents the guiding design elements for the plan and is a valuable reference tool to show how the property will develop over time. The diagram should be used in conjunction with the following descriptions. Section 2.1.1 explains the street and open space framework – the organizing element of the plan itself. Sections 2.1.2 through 2.1.7 describe the development blocks

that are created by the street and open space plan. Each of the seven sections begins with a key objective and proceeds to a set of criteria. The criteria are divided into *Primary* and *Flexible* guidelines for development. *Primary* Criteria are those that are essential to a quality development on the site. *Flexible* Criteria are those that provide additional information, allow for creative development, and offer alternative approaches.

### 2.1.1 Street and Open Space Framework

**Key Objective For Street and Open Space Framework:** Establish a roadway and open space structure that integrates the site into Downtown Blacksburg and surrounding neighborhoods while dividing the site into a walkable gridded series of development parcels.

**Criteria:**

**Streets**

**New Church Street**

*Primary Criteria*

- The primary north-south circulation route (New Church Street) shall provide a direct connection between Clay and Eheart Street.
- New Church Street shall be designed with one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking provided on each side, except at intersections where parallel parking may be replaced with turning lanes, if needed, or wider sidewalks.
- New Church Street shall be a public road.
- The "T" intersections at Penn and Wharton Streets shall be preserved.
- Streetscape treatment utilizing shade trees, curb extensions with accent planting at intersections, ornamental pedestrian lighting and site amenities such as benches, trash/recycle receptacles and accommodations for public art shall be used.

*Flexible Criteria*

- New Church Street will be located just outside the property line of the front six-acre parcel (Parcels A and B) unless the property owner elects to tie into existing Church Street as described below.
- New Church Street may continue the existing Church Street and tie into Clay and Eheart Streets at the existing Church Street intersections, at the option of the property owner for the front six acres.
- The "T" intersection at Church Street shall be preserved *unless* New Church Street ties into existing Church Street. If New Church Street does so, special landscape treatment shall be used to delineate the transition out of the original Sixteen Squares.

**Miller Avenue**

*Primary Criteria*

- The primary east-west circulation route (Miller Avenue) shall align with the centerline of the existing Miller Street.
- The initial segment of Miller Avenue (Miller Promenade) shall be pedestrian/bicycle-only. This pedestrian/bicycle-only segment shall extend a minimum of 100' and a maximum of 300' from the existing curb line of Main Street to the beginning of the vehicular portion of Miller Avenue as described below. Approximately 300" is shown on the Master Plan Exhibits. See the additional criteria under Open Space, below.
- The balance of Miller Avenue shall connect to New Church Street and on to Clay Street near the eastern end of the site and shall accommodate vehicles. It shall include one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking on each side, except at intersections where parallel parking may be replaced with turning lanes, if needed, or wider sidewalks.
- The building face to building face across Miller Avenue shall be a minimum of 80' as shown in Exhibits 2.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3. The primary requirement is that a consistent "build-to-line" is established along Miller Avenue. The actual distance between buildings shall be established with the first development project and then maintained for future development projects along Miller Avenue. For planning purposes, Miller Avenue, as illustrated on the exhibits in this report, is shown with a 40' width – two, 12' travel lanes with an 8' parallel parking zone on each side. A 15' building setback (from curb) is shown on the north side and a 25' setback on the south side, resulting in a total of 80' building face to building face. Architectural features or some limited portion of the building façade may extend into the 80', provided the extension is integral to the building design and does not compromise the function of the area between the building faces.
- The vehicular portion of Miller Avenue shall be a public road.
- An extension of the Huckleberry Trail shall extend along the south side of Miller Avenue. The south side allows for a larger setback along Miller Avenue and can thus accommodate a 10' multi-purpose trail with appropriate separation from the street edge and adjacent buildings. The development parcel on the north side of Miller Avenue is constrained by a shallow dimension between Miller Avenue and Clay Street. A shallower building setback will, therefore, allow greater flexibility in development while also minimizing crossings between the Town Commons and the trail.
- Streetscape treatment utilizing shade trees, curb extensions with accent planting at intersections, ornamental pedestrian lighting and site amenities such as benches,

trash/recycle receptacles and accommodations for public art shall be provided along Miller Avenue.

- The design of streetscape improvements to the Initial segment of Miller Avenue shall set standards for future segments.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The location where Miller Avenue intersects Clay Street shall ultimately be determined by sight distance and grading.
- A traffic circle may be considered at the eastern end of Miller Avenue prior to connecting with Clay Street.

**Miller Loop**

*Primary Criteria*

- A loop road (Miller Loop) shall extend off of Miller Avenue and connect to New Church Street surrounding Blacksburg Town Common as described below.
- Miller Loop can serve as an extension to Blacksburg Town Common during special events.
- Miller Loop shall be a public road.
- Miller Loop should include special paving to delineate its unique nature as a street that is periodically closed for special events.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Miller Loop should consider one or two-way traffic flow. Consideration should also be given to drop off zones.
- Miller Loop should incorporate some parallel parking. Ideally, Miller Loop would utilize a 40' section with two, 12' travel lanes and an 8' parallel parking zone on each side. The amount and location of the parallel parking should be determined in conjunction with the design of Blacksburg Town Common so that optimal sight lines and pedestrian access into the square can be maintained.

**Street A**

*Primary Criteria*

- This secondary north-south circulation route shall connect Miller Avenue and Eheart Street and shall be generally parallel to New Church Street.
- Street A shall be designed with one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking provided on each side.
- Streetscape treatment shall be provided utilizing shade trees, curb extensions with accent planting at intersections, and ornamental pedestrian lighting. A higher level of site amenities such as benches, trash/recycle receptacles and accommodations for public art may or may not be needed, depending on the design of the development fronting Street A.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Street A may be a public or private street and will be determined during the site planning for Parcels D and E.
- The location of Street A may shift east or west as necessary depending on the development of Parcels D and E, provided the block lengths do not exceed 450', centerline to centerline.

**Street B**

*Primary Criteria*

- Any additional north-south circulation routes shall connect Miller Avenue and Eheart Street and shall also be parallel to New Church Street and Street A.
- Street B shall be designed with one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking provided on each side.
- Streetscape treatment shall be provided utilizing shade trees, curb extensions with accent planting at intersections, and ornamental pedestrian lighting. A higher level of site amenities such as benches, trash/recycle receptacles and accommodations for public art may or may not be needed, depending upon the design of the development fronting Street B.
- For the development scheme that includes an expanded park, large curb extension areas shall be provided on the east side of the street (in place of parallel parking) where significant pedestrian connections to the adjacent park (The Dell) are appropriate.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Street B may or may not have a vehicular connection to Eheart Street, depending upon grading requirements for proposed adjacent development. The termination of the street may occur into an interconnected alley system, cul-de-sac or parking area. If a vehicular connection to Eheart Street is not provided, the street should "appear" to connect through with visual, open space and pedestrian connections through to Eheart Street.
- Street B may be a public or private street and will be determined during the site planning for Parcels E and F.
- The location of Street B may shift east or west as necessary depending on the development of Parcels D, E and F, provided the block lengths do not exceed 450', centerline to centerline.
- Depending on the development of Parcels D, E and F, and the construction of Street C, Street B may not be needed, provided that the block lengths do not exceed 450', centerline to centerline.

**Street C**

*Primary Criteria*

- Any additional north-south circulation routes required (if the expanded park is not pursued for Parcel F) shall connect Miller Avenue and Eheart Street and shall also be parallel to New Church Street and Streets A and B where it joins Eheart Street.
- Street C shall be designed with one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking provided on each side.
- Streetscape treatment shall be provided utilizing shade trees, curb extensions with accent planting at intersections, and ornamental pedestrian lighting. A higher level of site amenities such as benches, trash/recycle receptacles and accommodations for public art may or may not be needed, depending upon the design of the development fronting on Street C.
- For the development scheme that does not pursue the expanded park, significant curb extension areas shall be provided on the east side of the street (in place of parallel parking) where significant pedestrian connections to the adjacent park (The Dell) are appropriate.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Street C may or may not have a vehicular connection to Eheart Street, depending upon grading requirements for proposed adjacent development. The termination of the street may occur into an interconnected alley system, cul-de-sac or parking area. If a vehicular connection to Eheart Street is not provided, the street should "appear" to connect through with visual, open space and pedestrian connections through to Eheart Street.
- Street C may be a public or private street and will be determined during the site planning for Parcel F.
- The location of Street C may shift east or west as necessary depending on the development of Parcels D, E and F, provided the block lengths do not exceed 450', centerline to centerline.
- Depending on the development of Parcels D, E and F, and the construction of Street B, Street C may not be needed, provided that the block lengths do not exceed 450', centerline to centerline.

**Open Space**

**Miller Promenade**

*Primary Criteria*

- Visual access through the Miller Promenade to Miller Avenue shall be maintained to ensure direct visual access into Parcel B and other OBMS parcels from Main Street.

Visual access to Miller Avenue should generally be based along the centerline of the Miller Promenade but can vary provided the sight line is maintained.

- The Miller Promenade shall accommodate the Huckleberry Extension, which shall connect across Main Street at the intersection of Miller and Main Streets.
- Miller Promenade should be a minimum 60' width.
- Miller Promenade shall be publicly owned.
- Miller Promenade should be included as part of the first phase of the development of Parcel B with a collaborative public/private effort on design, phasing and funding.
- Miller Promenade can be used to meet open space requirements for development on Parcels A and B.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The Miller Promenade can include a flexible balance of hardscape (pavers, concrete, brick, etc.) and softscape (lawn, landscape, trees, etc.).

**Blacksburg Town Common**

*Primary Criteria*

- The Blacksburg Town Common shall be a civic space with a minimum of 0.3 acres (excluding adjacent Miller Loop).
- The Blacksburg Town Common should be included as part of the first phase of the development of Parcel B with a collaborative public/private effort on design, phasing and funding.
- The Blacksburg Town Common shall be a publicly owned space encircled by public roads (Miller Avenue and Miller Loop) on all sides.
- The extension of the Huckleberry Trail shall occur along the perimeter of the Blacksburg Town Common.
- Blacksburg Town Common can be used to meet open space requirements for development on Parcels A and B or other Parcels on the OBMS site.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The Blacksburg Town Common can include a flexible balance of hardscape (pavers, concrete, brick, etc.) and softscape (lawn, landscape, trees, etc.).
- The Blacksburg Town Common should include flexibility for a variety of uses and activities.
- The Blacksburg Town Common provides an opportunity for recognition of the prior schools located on the site (Blacksburg Negro School, Blacksburg High School, Blacksburg Middle School).
- Design elements for Blacksburg Town Common may be phased over time.

**Spring Park**

*Primary Criteria*

- Spring Park shall be a park space dedicated to the Town of Blacksburg with a minimum of 0.7 acres.
- Spring Park can be used to meet open space requirements for development.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Development of the park should explore the feasibility of restoring the existing spring.
- If restored, the existing spring could be a feature incorporated into the overall park design.

**The Dell**

*Primary Criteria*

- The Dell shall be a park space dedicated to the Town of Blacksburg with a minimum of 2 acres.
- The Dell shall have road frontage on three sides of park (Miller Avenue, Eheart and any roads associated with the adjacent Development Parcel F, or E with expanded park).
- The Dell shall include a large flexible open area.
- The Dell shall incorporate a pedestrian connection to the adjacent Homeowner's Association parcel at the intersection of Eheart Street and Willard Drive.
- The Dell can be used to meet open space requirements for development.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Road frontage along Development Parcel F or E may be public or private.
- The Dell may be expanded to 3.5 acres incorporating Parcel F as illustrated in Exhibits 2.2.1 and 2.2.2. This is the preferred option of the Town of Blacksburg.
- The Dell may accommodate the Huckleberry Extension in a number of ways, depending upon ultimate alignment of the park between Palmer Street and Miller Avenue.

**Huckleberry Extension**

*Primary Criteria*

- The Huckleberry Extension shall provide a multi-purpose accessible bike/pedestrian trail through the site between Palmer Street (at Eheart Street) and Miller Street at Main Street.
- The Huckleberry Extension shall extend along the south side of Miller Avenue, along Blacksburg Town Common and through Miller Promenade before connecting with Main Street at Miller Street.
- The Huckleberry Extension shall maintain a minimum width of 10'. Along Miller Avenue, the 10' trail shall be set back a minimum of 5' from the curb to accommodate a street tree planting zone. This would allow for a 10' setback between the multi-

purpose trail and the adjacent building development assuming a total setback of 25' from the curb on the south side of Miller Avenue.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The alignment could locate between Palmer Street and Miller Avenue along a roadway associated with Development Parcels E and F or,
- The alignment could extend through The Dell, prior to linking to Miller Avenue.

### 2.1.2 Development Parcel A

**Key Objectives for Development Parcel A:** The most likely scenario is that Development Parcel A will be utilized as a parking resource to support Development Parcel B with the option of wrapping eventual structured parking with mixed-use development per the descriptions below. However, Development Parcel A may also be developed with office or other commercial uses if it is not needed as a parking resource.

**Criteria:**

**Surface Parking Development Parcel A**

*Primary Criteria*

- Any surface parking shall be designed as if the surface parking is the permanent use for this parcel and not a temporary parking resource. Consequently, it shall be designed with full landscape features installed.
- The landscape treatment of Development Parcel A shall create an attractive edge along the Miller Avenue, New Church Street and Clay Street frontages.
- Heavy landscape screening shall be provided between the parking and Clay Court.
- The surface parking lot shall be designed so that a parking structure may be accommodated on this site in the future.
- The surface parking shall include a 15' parking setback area (setback from curb) along the north side of Miller Avenue and west side of New Church Street. This may be reduced on Miller Avenue if architectural screening is included, provided that a reduced setback area does not compromise the pedestrian area or impact the consistency of the streetscape along Miller Avenue.
- The surface parking shall include stormwater management in the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The location of access points should be coordinated with a traffic study.

**Structured Parking Development Parcel A**

*Primary Criteria*

- Any parking structure shall utilize a high level of architectural design on all sides.

- The facade shall be articulated at the "T" intersection with Church Street to signify the end of the original Sixteen Squares.
- The structured parking shall at a minimum accommodate active programmed space along ground level facing Miller Avenue (retail, gallery, restaurant, service businesses).
- The structured parking shall provide a 15' building setback area (setback from curb) along the north side of Miller Avenue and the west side of New Church Street. The structured parking shall provide a 20'-25' setback area from Clay Street. For those facades of the structured parking that are wrapped with other uses, the setback may be reduced but not to less than 10'.
- The structured parking shall integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Public art or significant landscape treatment should be considered at the "T" intersection with Church Street.
- The location of access points should be coordinated with a traffic study.
- Wrapping the structured parking in mixed-use development on one or more sides should be considered.

### 2.1.3 Development Parcel B

**Key Objective for Development Parcel B:** Development Parcel B will accommodate a mix of office uses along with options for supporting restaurant, retail and/or service uses to create a positive image along the surrounding streets and "front door space" to foster a positive image for Blacksburg along its Main Street gateway while creating pedestrian activity along Miller Promenade and the Blacksburg Town Common.

**Criteria:**

**Land Uses Development Parcel B:**

*Primary Criteria*

- The primary use for this parcel shall be office space.
- Portions of the ground level of the space shall include one or more supporting restaurant, retail and service uses.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Development Parcel B could accommodate upper floor residential uses in future phases if market conditions warrant.

**Buildings Development Parcel B:**

*Primary Criteria*

- The initial building shall be adjacent to Main Street, Miller Promenade and the Blacksburg Town Common. The building facades along these edges shall be articulated with windows,

architectural features, functional entrances and programmed with active uses such as restaurant, support retail and/or service uses. It is not anticipated that all of these frontages or the full length of these frontages will contain the active uses listed above.

- The primary building orientations at full parcel development shall be toward Main Street, Miller Promenade, Blacksburg Town Common and New Church Street. These facades shall be activated and articulated with windows and doorways.
- Buildings shall be set back approximately 70' from the existing curb line of Main Street, however, buildings may not encroach any closer to the existing curb line than 40'.
- Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 30' from the existing curb line of Eheart Street. This setback may be reduced based on the height, mass and articulation of the building as part of a design that is compatible with the adjacent existing single family development and maintains an adequate pedestrian area on Eheart Street.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, buildings will utilize the existing grade change to allow for grade level access from the Main Street side as well as grade level access to an upper floor on the opposite side of the building.

**Main Street Transit Lane/Stop Development Parcel B**

*Primary Criteria*

- A transit pull-off lane shall be provided along the majority of the Main Street frontage Development Parcel B but shall not extend completely to Eheart Street or the Miller Promenade. This will allow for sidewalk extensions at pedestrian crossing areas at each of these intersections.
- A transit shelter/kiosk along the Main Street frontage shall be constructed.
- There shall be direct pedestrian connections between the transit shelter/kiosk and other parts of the OBMS site.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Location of transit shelter/kiosk shall be determined based on site design of front parcel to best integrate all related landscape and architectural elements.

**Surface Parking and Service Development Parcel B**

*Primary Criteria*

- All parking and service areas shall be located internally to the block and shall not front onto Main Street at full parcel development. During early phases of parcel development, the Town's preference is that parking should not be located within 100' of the existing Main Street curb line. This will allow the option of utilizing a future building site for surface parking during early phases of development.
- Any surface parking adjacent to Eheart Street and New Church Street shall be landscaped or screened in a manner that integrates the screening into the overall streetscape design.

- Service areas shall be screened from view, with screening integrated into the overall site plan, architectural and landscape design.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, surface parking will not directly face onto any portion of the Miller Promenade, the Blacksburg Town Common or New Church Street. However, minor segments of surface parking may front onto these spaces provided the majority of frontage is defined by architecture.

**Terraces on Main Development Parcel B**

*Primary Criteria*

- The Terraces on Main shall provide for outdoor gathering/seating areas along the Main Street, Miller Promenade and Blacksburg Town Common with active uses on the ground floor of the initial building to create pedestrian activity in these spaces.

*Flexible Criteria*

- The Terraces on Main can include a variety of design elements coordinated with the architectural design of the building(s) on the site.

**Main Street Frontage Development Parcel B**

*Primary Criteria*

- Buildings shall be set back approximately 70' from the existing curb line of Main Street, however, buildings may not encroach any closer to the existing curb line than 40'.
- Main Street Frontage should be designed to appear as public or semi-public space, integrated into the overall streetscape design of Main Street.
- The Main Street Frontage shall not be designed as a "suburban-style" corporate front lawn.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, the Main Street Frontage should be designed to accommodate additional outdoor dining and gathering areas in association with future building phases and ground floor uses.

**Other Development Parcel B**

*Primary Criteria*

- Integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

### 2.1.4 Development Parcel C

**Key Objective for Development Parcel C:** Development Parcel C will provide for a mix of uses that define and activate Miller Avenue and Spring Park.

**Criteria:**

**Land Uses Development Parcel C**

*Primary Criteria*

- The development of the site shall be non-student oriented multi-family residential uses. This can be accomplished by using a variety of techniques including age restricted development, public private partnership development, pricing and marketing strategies, development agreements, and zoning techniques.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Development Parcel C may allow for ground level support retail, service and office uses, particularly near the intersection of New Church Street and Miller Avenue.

**Buildings Development Parcel C**

*Primary Criteria*

- All buildings shall be oriented toward New Church Street, Miller Avenue and Spring Park.
- The facades fronting New Church Street, Miller Avenue, Spring Park and Clay Street shall be articulated with windows, doorways, canopies, etc.
- Buildings shall be set back 15' from Miller Avenue and New Church Streets.

*Flexible Criteria*

- If market conditions allow for higher densities with structured parking, the building facades should be oriented along Clay Street in addition to New Church Street, Miller Avenue and Spring Park.
- Development Parcel C should consider utilizing the existing slope along Clay Street to accommodate "park-under" building designs.
- For buildings that fall within the axis of Penn or Wharton Streets, the facades should be designed to create a positive visual terminus from these streets.

**Parking and Service Development Parcel C**

*Primary Criteria*

- The parking shall be located internal to the block with minimal to no frontage on New Church Street, Miller Avenue or Spring Park.
- Parking facing Clay Street shall be screened and landscaped in a manner that integrates the landscape design with the overall Clay Street streetscape design.
- Development of the site shall include landscape islands and pedestrian connections at Penn and Wharton Streets and coordinate design of these as logical termini to the historic Sixteen Squares.

- Service areas shall be screened from view, with screening integrated into the overall site plan, architectural and landscape design.
- Development shall provide a 20-25' setback from the edge of the Clay Street curb to accommodate sidewalks, landscaping and grading.

**Open Spaces Development Parcel C**

*Flexible Criteria*

- Integrate any open spaces associated with buildings or internal to the block with the broader open space/pedestrian system throughout the OBMS site.

**Other Development Parcel C**

*Primary Criteria*

- Integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

### 2.1.5 Development Parcel D

**Key Objective for Development Parcel D:** Development Parcel D shall provide for residential housing and a potential mix of uses that defines and activates Miller Avenue and reinforces the development block structure.

**Criteria:**

**Blocks Development Parcel D**

*Primary Criteria*

- Maximum block width (centerline of New Church Street to centerline of Street A) shall be 450'.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Development Parcel D may be combined with Parcel E provided overall site is divided into at least 2 blocks meeting block length parameters.

**Land Uses Development Parcel D**

*Primary Criteria*

- Provide for non-student oriented multi-family residential uses.
- Provide for mixed-use development that might accommodate a variety of stacked uses including ground floor retail and service uses, upper floor non-student residential and office uses, and potential "amenity spaces" such as museums, galleries, or public gathering places.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ground level support retail, service and office uses should be emphasized near the intersection of New Church Street and Miller Avenue.

- While the plan depicts market rate multi-family residential development not oriented to students, additional office space can be considered if market conditions allow.
- The plan allows for market-rate, workforce and senior housing.
- The plan allows for small lot single family/single family attached housing as an additional option for development.

**Buildings Development Parcel D**

*Primary Criteria*

- Buildings shall be oriented to New Church Street, Miller Avenue and Eheart Street.
- Buildings shall be set back 25' from Miller Avenue curb line (to accommodate streetscape treatment and Huckleberry Extension).
- The facades fronting streets shall be articulated with windows, doorways, canopies, etc.
- Buildings shall be set back 15' from New Church Street and Street A curb line.
- Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 30' from Eheart Street.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, orient buildings to Street A in addition to the streets described above.

**Parking and Service Development Parcel D**

*Primary Criteria*

- Parking shall be located internal to the block with minimal to no frontage along New Church Street, Miller Avenue and Eheart Street. (If developed as single family/single family attached uses parking shall be provided to the rear of the lot or in garages accessed by alleys.)
- Any parking entrances facing perimeter streets shall be screened and landscaped in a manner that integrates the landscape design with the overall streetscape designs.
- Service areas shall be screened from view, with screening integrated into the overall site plan, architectural and landscape design.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, parking along Street A should be minimized.
- Parking may be surface or structured maintaining the primary criteria above, depending upon market conditions and development proposals.

**Open Spaces Development Parcel D**

*Flexible Criteria*

- Integrate any open spaces associated with buildings or internal to the block with the broader open space/pedestrian system throughout the OBMS site.

**Other Development Parcel D**

*Primary Criteria*

- Integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

### 2.1.6 Development Parcel E

**Key Objectives for Development Parcel E:** Development Parcel E provides for single family attached or small-lot single family detached housing that defines and activates Miller Avenue and reinforces the development block structure.

**Criteria:**

**Blocks Development Parcel E**

*Primary Criteria*

- Maximum block width (centerline of Street A to centerline of Street B) shall be 450'.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Development Parcel E may be combined with Parcels D or F provided overall site is divided into at least 2 blocks.

**Land Uses Development Parcel E**

*Primary Criteria*

- Provide for small-lot single family detached or single family attached housing.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Provide for non-student multi-family housing.
- Allow for ground level support retail, service and office uses, particularly along Miller Avenue if development of Parcel E is combined with development of Parcel D in a multi-family housing project.
- Allow for market-rate, workforce and senior housing.

**Buildings Development Parcel E**

*Primary Criteria*

- Orient buildings to Miller Avenue and Eheart Street.
- Orient buildings to Street B if Parcel F is developed as part of an expanded park (The Dell).
- Buildings shall be set back 25' from Miller Avenue curb line (to accommodate streetscape treatment and Huckleberry Extension).
- Buildings shall be set back 15' from Street A and Street B curb lines.
- Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 30' from Eheart Street. A lesser setback may be appropriate for small-lot single family detached or single family detached housing, provided the design is compatible with the existing single family residential development on Eheart Street and an adequate pedestrian area is maintained on Eheart Street.
- The facades fronting streets shall be articulated with windows, doorways, canopies, etc.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, orient buildings to Street A and Street B (if Parcel F is developed with uses) in addition to the streets described above.

**Parking and Service Development Parcel E**

*Primary Criteria*

- Locate parking internal to block with minimal to no frontage along Miller Avenue, Eheart Street and Street B (if Parcel F is developed as part of an expanded park). Parking for single family detached/single family attached uses shall be provided to the rear of the lot or in garages accessed by alleys.
- Screen and landscape any parking facing perimeter streets in a manner that integrates the landscape design with the overall streetscape designs.
- Service areas shall be screened from view, with screening integrated into the overall site plan, architectural and landscape design.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, minimize frontage of parking along Street A and Street B.
- Parking may be surface or, if parcel is developed in conjunction with Parcel D, structured, depending upon market conditions and development proposals.

**Open Spaces Development Parcel E**

*Flexible Criteria*

- Integrate any open spaces associated with buildings or internal to the block with the broader open space/pedestrian system throughout the OBMS site.
- If Street B does not connect through to Eheart Street because of grade challenges, terminate street with clear open space/pedestrian connection to Eheart Street.

**Other Development Parcel E**

*Primary Criteria*

- Integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

### 2.1.7 Development Parcel F

**Key Objectives for Development Parcel F:** Development Parcel F provides for single family attached or small-lot single family detached housing that defines and activates Miller Avenue, Spring Park and The Dell. Alternatively, provide for an expanded park (The Dell).

**Criteria:**

**Blocks Development Parcel F**

*Primary Criteria*

- Maximum block width (centerline of Street B to Street C) is 450' if parcel is developed with uses other than expanded park.

**Land Uses Development Parcel F**

*Primary Criteria*

- Provide for single family attached or small-lot single family_detached housing or expanded park (The Dell).

*Flexible Criteria*

- The emphasis for developing parcel F shall be residential development or an expanded park.
- Allow for market-rate, workforce and senior housing.

**Buildings Development Parcel F**

*Primary Criteria*

- Orient buildings to Miller Avenue, Eheart Street and Street C (if parcel is developed with uses other than expanded park).
- Buildings shall be set back 25' from Miller Avenue curb line (to accommodate streetscape treatment and Huckleberry Extension).
- Buildings shall be set back 15' from Street B and Street C curb line.
- Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 30' from Eheart Street. A lesser setback may be appropriate for small-lot single family detached housing or attached single family housing, provided the design is compatible with the existing single family residential development on Eheart Street and an adequate pedestrian area is maintained on Eheart Street.
- Building facades fronting streets shall be articulated with windows and functioning doorways.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, orient buildings to Street B in addition to the streets described above (if Parcel is developed with uses other than expanded park).

**Parking and Service Development Parcel F**

*Primary Criteria*

- Locate parking internal to block with minimal to no frontage along Miller Avenue, Eheart Street and Street C (if parcel developed with uses other than expanded park). Parking for single-family/single-family attached uses shall be provided to the rear of the lot or in garages accessed by alleys.
- Screen and landscape any parking facing perimeter streets in a manner that integrates the landscape design with the overall streetscape designs.
- Service areas shall be screened from view, with screening integrated into the overall site plan, architectural and landscape design.

*Flexible Criteria*

- Ideally, minimize frontage of parking along Street B (if Parcel is developed with uses other than expanded park).
- Parking may be surface or, if parcel is developed in conjunction with Parcel E, structured, depending upon market conditions and development proposals.

**Open Spaces Development Parcel F**

*Flexible Criteria*

- Integrate any open spaces associated with buildings or internal to the block with the broader open space/pedestrian system throughout the OBMS site.
- If Streets B and C do not connect through to Eheart Street because of grade challenges, terminate streets with clear open space/pedestrian connections to Eheart Street.

**Other Development Parcel F**

*Primary Criteria*

- Integrate stormwater management into the overall site design emphasizing creative solutions appropriate to urban conditions.

## 2.2 Illustrative Plan Alternatives and Additional Exhibits

The following Exhibits illustrate potential development scenarios based on the Flexibility Diagram described above. While the plans illustrate realistic land uses based on current market conditions, flexibility remains to accommodate changes in the amount of each land use or increased densities (with additional structured parking) should market conditions change. The scenarios highlight two primary differences as they relate to build-out intensity of the front six acre portion of the property and the size of the park area in the rear portion of the property. The illustrative plans from Exhibit 2.2.1 are supplemented with three-dimensional model views in Exhibits 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 and precedent photographs illustrating potential character of different aspects of the plan in Exhibits 2.2.6 through 2.2.12.

### 2.2.1 Illustrative Master Plan With Deck/With Expanded Park (Exhibit 2.2.1)

This exhibit illustrates a longer-term build out scenario with greater intensity on Parcel B, a parking deck on Parcel A, and the larger Dell park area. In this exhibit, Miller Avenue and New Church Street are the primary organizing elements of the plan, off of which civic and park spaces and development parcels are located. Miller Avenue continues the alignment of Miller Street and provides a connection to Clay Street to the northeast at a natural location with respect to the topography. The majority of Miller Avenue is envisioned as a pedestrian-friendly urban street with on-street parallel parking and streetscape enhancements, including sidewalks, ornamental lighting, street trees, accent planting at intersections, well-defined crosswalks, street furniture and paving accents that will build upon the character established along Main Street (Exhibit 2.2.6). A broader setback area of 25' will be provided along the south side of Miller Avenue to accommodate the Huckleberry Extension as it traverses the site, creating a link between Palmer and Miller Streets. Miller Promenade, the western

segment of Miller Avenue where it connects with Main Street, will be pedestrian/bicycle-only and will include a combination of paving, landscape and pedestrian amenities that will support gatherings and outdoor seating for potential adjacent restaurants and create a vibrant link to Main Street and Downtown (Exhibit 2.2.7).

New Church Street will intersect Miller Avenue and will connect Eheart and Clay Streets. Like Miller Avenue, New Church Street will be designed as a pedestrian-friendly urban street with parallel parking and the same degree of streetscape enhancements. Additional streets will then extend off of this grid established by Miller Avenue and New Church Street to define a series of development blocks and create additional connections to the adjacent streets.

Blacksburg Town Common is envisioned as a vibrant civic space, approximately .3 acre in size, located at the intersection of Miller Avenue and New Church Street and further defined by Miller Loop. It may include paved and landscaped areas, ornamental lighting, public art, potential water features, interpretive displays referencing the former Schools on the site, areas for vendors and places for outdoor events and performances (Exhibit 2.2.8). Miller Loop will be designed so that it could be closed to traffic and become a natural extension of the Town Commons space and connect to Miller Promenade for special events.

The opposite end of Miller Avenue would terminate in a more passive series of park spaces, Spring Park and The Dell (Exhibit 2.2.9). Spring Park, a minimum 2/3 acre in size, will provide open lawn and gathering areas to complement adjacent uses and allow for pedestrian connections down the slope to the former spring, which could be restored as a feature of the park. The Dell is a larger park space, approximately 3.5 acres in size in this expanded park scenario of the master plan. It is characterized by a large central lawn, defined by the slopes that extend upward along the eastern boundary of the site and along Eheart Street. The sloped areas can be manipulated with additional fill from excavation on the site to form a natural amphitheater that offers space for performances; larger community events than those that can be accommodated in Blacksburg Town Common; and would also offer panoramic views of the mountains in the distance. Naturalistic groupings of shade trees, a hierarchy of paths and potential stair connections to Eheart Street and areas that can accommodate a variety of activities such as tot lots, play courts, gardens, pubic art, or memorials will characterize the Dell. The Dell could also accommodate a portion of the Huckleberry Extension as it transitions the slopes from Palmer Street to Miller Avenue.

The park spaces, civic spaces and street network described above establish a strong framework around which mixed-use development can occur. The front 6 acres of the property is envisioned as commercial mixed-use, primarily office with support retail, restaurant and service uses on the lower levels. The buildings shown represent the long-term potential of the site as supported by an adjacent parking structure located on Clay Street at New Church Street. The buildings are organized in a way to establish a positive image along and activate Main Street, Miller Promenade, Blacksburg Town Common and New Church Street (Exhibit 2.2.10). The balance of the site is divided into development blocks which could be developed with a variety of mixed-use development including additional office, ground floor office and service uses, moderate to high density housing including senior, live-work, workforce, market-rate multi-family, small-lot single-family detached and small-lot single-family

attached (Exhibit 2.2.11). Housing closer to New Church Street and the intersection of New Church Street and Miller Avenue are the likely buildings where ground-floor office or service related uses could be located. The buildings are envisioned to define and activate the park and civic spaces and street network, particularly Miller Avenue and New Church Street.

The mixed-use commercial portion of the site toward Main Street is envisioned to ultimately be served by structured parking while the balance of the development parcels would likely be supported by surface parking as shown (Exhibit 2.2.12). Structured parking would exhibit a high-level of design and would be integrated into the topography along Clay Street to minimize its impact. Surface parking areas are envisioned to be primarily located internal to the development blocks with limited frontage on adjacent and perimeter streets, with the exception of Clay Street where a narrow block depth prohibits wrapping the parking with development on all sides, unless structured parking is incorporated into the design which is not economically feasible with the current market conditions. Because this is an urban site, parking ratios shown are lower than what the uses for traditional suburban development would require. Parking for the commercial mixed-use portion is shown at a ratio of 3 spaces/1000 SF of development and parking for the residential portion is shown ranging from 1 space/unit for senior housing and 1.5-1.7 spaces/unit for other multi-family. Single family is illustrated with alley-loaded garages. On street parking throughout the site supplements the off-street parking.

### 2.2.2 Illustrative Master Plan Without Deck/With Expanded Park (Exhibit 2.2.2)

This scenario is the same master plan as described under Exhibit 2.2.1 but illustrates less intensive development in the front of the parcel supported by surface parking only. This illustrates early phases of development before expanding to the full build-out as shown in Exhibit 2.2.1 but also illustrates how the site could appear if market conditions do not allow for the development densities illustrated in Exhibit 2.2.1. While the plan shows approximately 60,000 SF of commercial mixed-use development, the site could likely accommodate approximately 90,000 SF (or possibly more) of development with surface parking only while still allowing for the development of Blacksburg Town Common. The design of a larger square footage of development area would also need to continue to include the other Master Plan design elements.

### 2.2.3 Illustrative Master Plan With Deck/Without Expanded Park (Exhibit 2.2.3)

This scenario is the same master plan as described under Exhibit 2.2.1 but illustrates the potential to increase the residential development toward the eastern end of the property and accommodating a smaller park (The Dell). The Dell as shown in this scenario represents a park space approximately 2 acres in size. While the open lawn area is smaller, the overall characteristics remain the same with informal passive open spaces and the potential for an outdoor amphitheater area.

# 3.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, NEXT STEPS, IMPLEMENTATION

## 3.1 Other Considerations

A plan of this nature cannot address every potential issue but it can serve as a guide for future decision-making. The following points are designed to address other comments heard through the Master Plan process and through the creation of the Master Plan. The points are not intended to be exhaustive but rather to point out additional considerations that need to be taken into account during the implementation of the plan:

### 3.1.1 Architecture and Design

As a Master Plan document and not a design guidelines document, the specific architecture of buildings is not addressed in detail in deference to the relationship between buildings, streets, and open spaces. However, good design and quality materials are very important for both the appeal of the site and its long-term value. A design guidelines document or design criteria would also help guide quality development of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site. The site represents a significant opportunity for Blacksburg to pursue innovative design coupled with ongoing green and LEED certified building techniques while remaining sensitive to the context within which the site sits.

### 3.1.2 Funding and Financing

The Eisen Group was retained with the design team to develop financial scenarios to test the feasibility of the development of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site. Nearly every example of major urban development and redevelopment in communities of comparable size to Blacksburg has involved significant partnerships between the public and private sector to realize implementation. This is even truer as larger and higher quality open spaces and streets are programmed into the development scenarios. Public/private partnerships will be needed to implement the improvements shown in this Master Plan. The public sector should stand ready to play an active role in seeing this plan to fruition from a financial standpoint in order to maximize long term return on investment on the site. All parties, public and private, will benefit from the investment in infrastructure and site amenities.

### 3.1.3 Density and Intensity of Land Use

Levels of density and intensity of use are shown on the exhibits for the master plan and these same levels were used in the financial analysis. The numbers and types of dwelling units shown are reflective of the level of development anticipated by both the County and the Town. Actual densities or intensities of land use type will be shown at the time of rezoning and are not required to meet the exact figures given but should approximate that shown on the master plan. The master plan is intended to be flexible to allow more or less intensity of any particular land use type (e.g., senior housing units) if the market demand exists. As noted on the exhibits, the building and parking layouts illustrate site development based on the parameters contained in the Master Plan. Actual layout will be shown at the time of rezoning when detailed site designs have been prepared. Final layouts must be consistent with the parameters contained in the Master Plan.

### 3.1.4 Site Context

While this is a master plan for the Old Blacksburg Middle School property, the design team has taken special care to ensure that it is placed within context of the surrounding properties. Where possible, the plan connects to surrounding development and anticipates future investment in those areas. Where this can't happen, the plan strives to create attractive buffers between areas. Areas like the Dell, while at the edge of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site itself, may end up becoming the center of much larger neighborhoods that will enjoy the benefits of the amenities.

### 3.1.5 Traffic

This is an urban redevelopment site that has been dormant for nearly a decade. While the traffic generated by the middle school was strong at certain times of the day, new traffic patterns will emerge as the site develops into different uses. It is normal to expect increased trip generation as a consequence of redevelopment of a mixed-use urban infill project. A traffic study should be commissioned to examine the impact of additional traffic on surrounding areas. The study should determine any appropriate or needed traffic calming strategies for adjacent residential streets.

### 3.1.6 Parking

Traffic should be placed in the context of an overall strategy to encourage less parking and dependence on the automobile with increased reliance on multi-modal transportation options throughout Blacksburg. To further that end, the illustrative plans for the Old Blacksburg Middle School site show a reduced parking ratio throughout the property in an effort to reduce the number of parking spaces on site while acknowledging that too much of a reduction would adversely affect surrounding neighborhoods. In addition to considering the number of parking spaces, the parking provided could also include measures to reduce the environmental impacts of parking. Consideration could be given to such measures as the use of porous paving, slope retention materials, gravel retention tools, water retention mats, native landscaping and xeriscaping.

### 3.1.7 Stormwater

The Town and County have worked together to establish a baseline for application of current stormwater management regulations through the demolition process. Current stormwater management regulations will have to be satisfied for all new development and will need to address both quantity and quality. In order to maintain urban development patterns, creative solutions are encouraged and may include regional stormwater facilities, underground facilities (below surface parking), use of permeable pavement, flow-through planters, bio-swales and rain gardens.

## 3.2 Implementation Steps

As mentioned before, this plan is a guiding document for future decision makers, investors, potential land purchasers, developers and citizens. As the Old Blacksburg Middle Schools site develops, the plan should be an ongoing reference point for all of these groups. There are two important steps to trigger interest in the property. First, a request for proposals process may be one way for the County and Town to work together to market the property and recruit developers to prepare development proposals consistent with the Master Plan.

As development proposals are put forth, the next step in the process will be to rezone the Old Blacksburg Middle School site. This may occur in phases or through multiple rezoning as the larger parcel is marketed to developers who each might develop only a part of the overall Master Plan. One purpose of the Master Plan is to ensure that all of the development parcels that may be rezoned and developed separately ultimately function together as a cohesive whole. Through the rezoning process with the Town of Blacksburg many more details of the individual site development will be submitted.

The Town's rezoning process requires plans showing the site layout, access, parking, stormwater management, landscaping, building location, building design and materials. The rezoning process should include commitments to these elements through proffered conditions from the applicant. The rezoning process must ensure that the development as proposed is what is developed on the site.

To facilitate the rezoning process, the Town should review potential implementing Zoning Districts to see if any changes are needed to meet the goals of the Master Plan. For example, the Planned Residential district may be a good implementing zoning district for the residential components of the Master Plan provided flexibility in parking standards is incorporated into the district to reduce the number of parking spaces required.

Implementation will also include subsequent steps regarding the preparation of a traffic study and establishing standards to ensure both quality site and building design. To further implement and facilitate the rezoning of development parcels, local government and prospective developers should work collaboratively to complete these next implementation steps.

The ultimate success in meeting the County and Town goals is creating a lasting investment in the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County. The redevelopment of the Old Blacksburg Middle School site with quality development involving a mix of residential and non-residential uses will enhance the value of the property and provide both short and long term revenue. The success of this redevelopment depends on the continued commitment to implement the Master Plan.