

Special Session

Agenda Item #	1
Meeting Date	June 1, 2015
Prepared By	Erkin Ozberk Planner
Approved By	Suzanne Ludlow City Manager

Discussion Item	Resolution Opposing Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 Educational Institutions (Private) – Exemptions and Standards
Background	<p>Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 15-04 was initiated by the Washington Adventist University (WAU) to accommodate a proposed Health Professions building on Maplewood Avenue in Takoma Park. Under the provisions of Section 3.4.5 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, WAU is exempt from both site plan approval and a conditional use hearing as a private educational institution.</p> <p>ZTA 15-04 was introduced at the Montgomery County Council on March 3, providing that Private Educational Uses could exceed the height in their base zone, up to 65 feet. The intent was to provide a means for WAU to construct their proposed 51.5 foot building. City Council adopted Resolution 2015-20 in opposition to the proposed ZTA on April 13 based on its broad applicability and incompatibility with neighborhood character.</p> <p>Montgomery County Planning Department staff recommended a modified ZTA 15-04, narrowing its scope to encompass only degree-granting colleges and universities approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. In addition, any building height proposed that is greater than the maximum allowed by the zone would be limited to 55 feet and require site plan approval unless conditional use approval is already required.</p> <p>The City Council discussed modified ZTA 15-04 during a work session on May 26, 2015. General consensus among councilmembers was in disfavor toward the modified ZTA. Discussion of ZTA 15-04 is on the Montgomery County Planning Board agenda for June 4, 2015 and on the Montgomery County Council’s Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee agenda for June 8, 2015.</p>
Policy	<p>Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions to foster and promote comprehensive, environmentally sound development and redevelopment in the community and throughout the region; support higher density retail, commercial, and residential development near transportation routes and hubs, that is environmentally sensitive and of a design and scale appropriate to surrounding neighborhoods and their historic nature.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-- Takoma Park Strategic Plan FY 2010 – FY 2015</i></p>
Fiscal Impact	None at this time

Attachments	Resolution Opposing Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 to Section 3.4.5 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance Dealing with Educational Institution (Private) Uses
Recommendation	Approve the resolution.
Special Consideration	

Introduced by: Councilmember

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2015 – XX

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT 15-04 TO SECTION 3.4.5
OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE DEALING WITH
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION (PRIVATE) USES**

WHEREAS, Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 was introduced at the Montgomery County Council meeting on March 3, 2015 and concerns Section 3.4.5 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance dealing with Educational Institution (Private) uses; and

WHEREAS, the Council understands Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 originated from the Washington Adventist University to accommodate a proposed building for the Health Professions and Wellness Center on Maplewood Avenue in Takoma Park that would be taller than the permitted height of 35 feet in the underlying R-60 single family residential zone; and

WHEREAS, the Council adopted Resolution 2015-20 in opposition to Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 on April 13, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 was proposed to be modified by Montgomery County Planning staff in response to opposition from the City, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the modified text amendment would permit a height of up to 55 feet for Educational Institution (Private) uses, limited to degree-granting colleges and universities approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission, in all applicable zones (unless the height limit of the zone is higher than 55 feet) upon Site Plan approval by the Montgomery County Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, modified Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 would allow properties on the Washington Adventist University campus in Takoma Park to have heights that could cause significant negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Council upholds the importance of neighborhood compatibility with all new buildings, which entails appropriate height and setback, and stepback requirements, in spite of their use or ownership; and

WHEREAS, there is ample opportunity for Washington Adventist University to redevelop its campus within existing zoning; and

WHEREAS, the Council acknowledges the long-standing and positive role of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park and recognizes its ongoing need to redevelop; and

WHEREAS, the Council encourages Washington Adventist University to include members of the community and the City administration in its ongoing redevelopment initiatives at an earlier stage in planning and design.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND is strongly opposed to Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 on the grounds that increasing the height beyond the limit in the existing zone is incompatible with adjacent uses and inconsistent with the neighborhood character, especially where there is ample opportunity for Washington Adventist University to redevelop its campus within existing zoning.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2015

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk