Chevy Chase Village
Workshop/Open House Summary

Project Overview

The Maryland legislature has granted municipalities such as Chevy Chase Village significantly expanded zoning and building regulation power. In response to these newly available powers, Chevy Chase Village has embarked on developing a "Neighborhood Conservation Strategy" with its focus on the preservation of the Village's unique community character. As a part of the process, a series of community workshops and open houses will be conducted. The open houses are informal gatherings for residents to voice their specific thoughts and concerns while the community workshops engage participants in hands-on exercises to discuss and record broader issues.

An open house and community workshop was held on April 17th and a second open house was held on April 18th. As noted on the first page of this summary, a second set of meetings has been scheduled. Participants were asked to identify key character defining-features and building issues. This is a summary of preliminary findings gathered from these events. The information is broken down into four categories on the following pages: ***Streetscape Features***, ***Site Features***, ***Building Features*** and ***Issues & Concerns***.

Observations - Character Components

Streetscape Features:

Sidewalks:

- Locations of sidewalks can vary from block to block.
- Types of materials used for sidewalks vary with a mix of brick, brick pavers & concrete.

Tree Canopy:

- The types of trees that dominate the Village are a mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees.
- Larger, mature trees buffer and lessen the scale of larger homes.
- Trees are dispersed throughout the front, side and rear yards.

Roads:

- Roads are well-maintained.

Site Features:

Alleys:

- Within the Village there are few alleys.

Driveways:

- Few homes have removed front yard and replaced with circular driveways.
- Materials for driveways vary from concrete to pavers to grass-pavers to asphalt.

Garages:

- Are generally, attached at side or flush with home or near the front.
- Are generally, set in the back of property with driveway access to rear.

- Are generally, subordinate in scale to front yard.

Below-Grade Garages:

- Descending driveways leading to below-grade garages exist, but scale in newer projects is growing.

Fences and Retaining Walls:

- Few homes have brick or concrete free standing walls serving as "fences".
- Retaining walls are typically located on sloped properties.

Front Yards:

- Front yards are predominantly grass with some informal plantings.

Front Walks:

- The path from the sidewalk edge to the front entrance is important because of the front yard setback that is seen throughout the Village.
- Are formal, direct entryways into homes from sidewalks or streets.
- Are paved in a variety of materials: flagstone, slate, brick or concrete pavers and concrete.

Building Features:

Orientation:

- Building fronts are generally parallel to street, although numerous exceptions exist.

Size:

- On many blocks of the Village, size and styles of houses were comparable when built. However, many (if not most) houses have been renovated and enlarged, creating a more interesting diversity of architecture in the Village.

Defining Entry Features:

- Some defining entry features are awnings, porticos, flanking columns at the doors or raised porches.

Porches:

- Porches, where they exist, break-up a home's front plane.

Materials Types and Architectural Details:

- Sculpted nature of details creates sense of dimension through shadow lines which tend to break up the mass of larger homes.
- A variety of materials are used for the exterior of homes including brick, stone, lap siding, stucco and wood shingles.

Mass and Scale:

- Character Areas 2 and 3 have a greater variety of home sizes then Area 1. (see map)

Building Styles:

- There are few modern-style homes in the Village.
- Generally, Village homes are large scale interpretations of traditional styles.

Noted Issues & Concerns

Quality and Workmanship:

- New additions and new homes increasingly lack the quality seen in previous work.
- Use of vinyl siding is infrequent.

Rules and Regulations:

- What balance of regulations versus individual homeowner property rights is appropriate?
- Should there be different regulations for different character areas, i.e. Historic District versus non-Historic District?
- What are the potential affects of additional restrictions on the Historic District?

Neighbor Consideration:

- Should neighbors be notified automatically of "by-right" additions and renovations, etc. in the non-historic districts?
- Should opportunities be available for neighbors to appeal the issuance of permits for additions and renovations? If, so what sort of neighbor involvement is appropriate?
- What should the standards be for upkeep of mature trees?

Lot Ratio versus House Size:

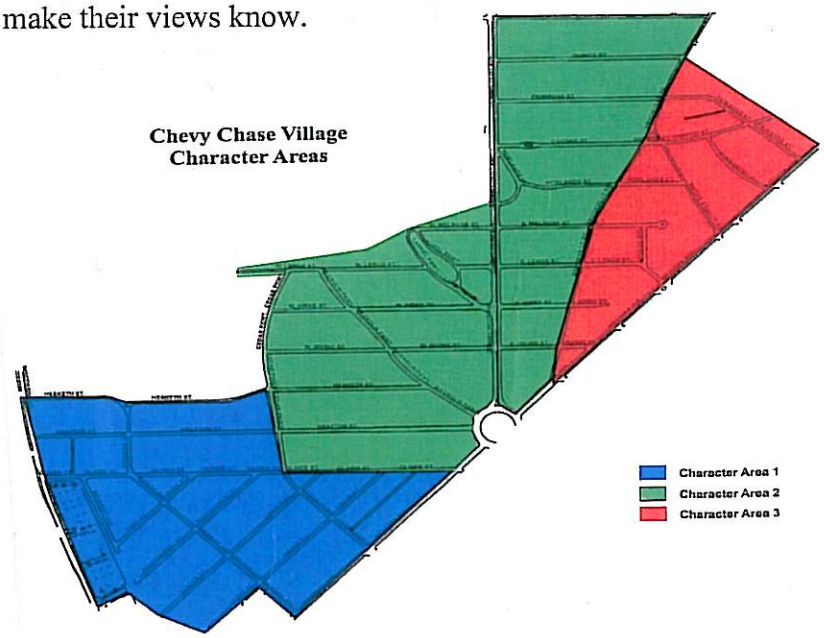
- How should height be measured? (From mid-roof or roof-peak? Existing grade or Final grade?)
- Should house size be dependent on lot size or overall massing?

Below Grade Structures:

- What regulations should apply to below grade structures and garages?

Demolition Restrictions:

- What clarification is needed regarding the current specifications citing a threshold of 50% of exterior features beyond which a special demolition permit is required from the Board?

Next Steps:

The Village and Winter & Company will be conducting two more community workshops on May 9th and May 10th, and an open house on the morning of May 10th. A Survey will also be distributed to all Village residents, to ensure that all residents have a convenient means of expressing their views. The information gathered from these meetings and the Survey will be analyzed in order to develop a Strategy Paper for potential regulatory amendments. We urge all Village residents to attend the workshops and open houses, and to respond to the Village-wide Survey, in order to make their views know.