

BALTIMORE COUNTY DESIGN REVIEW PANEL



- RESIDENTIAL - REVIEW PACKAGE

2016

Baltimore County Department of Planning
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Towson, MD 21204
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INTRODUCTION

The Design Review Panel (DRP) is established by Section 32-4-203 of the Baltimore County Code 2003, as amended. The goal of the DRP is to encourage design excellence through the application of design guidelines contained in the Master Plan, the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies, and adopted community plans, as applicable. The DRP's general charge is to assure the overall quality of a project. In residential DRP areas, the panel may increase the setback requirements for the proposed development.

The DRP acts in a technical consulting capacity; its recommendations are binding on the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) and county agencies.



This packet contains information applicable to the review of residential projects in designated areas of East Towson, Middle River, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland, Sudbrook Park, and Towson as well as alternative site design projects.

*Visit the Design Review Panel website at
<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/DRP>*

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GENERAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

FOR FULL REVIEW PROCESS

1. The Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections (PAI) determines that the project must be reviewed by the Design Review Panel (DRP). DRP review is required for areas in East Towson, Midde River, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland, Sudbrook Park, and Towson, as well as alternative site design projects. PAI notifies the applicant of required review by the DRP, and refers the applicant to the Design Review staff (Jenifer Nugent or Krystle Patchak, Department of Planning, 410-887-3480).

It is recommended that Design Review Panel meetings be completed as early as possible after the plan submittal. Final approval of the plan will require inclusion of any changes deemed necessary by the DRP. Should a project require a zoning hearing, the DRP will make a recommendation to the ALJ. The Panel's recommendation is binding on the ALJ. Therefore, if any variances are required for the project, it is recommended that the applicant get DRP approval prior to the zoning hearing (32-4-203(1)).

2. Fee (*for alternative site design projects* and residential projects greater than 3 lots*): a three hundred dollar (\$300.00) non-refundable, one-time fee must be paid prior to scheduling a DRP meeting. Make checks payable to Baltimore County, Maryland. Inquiries may be directed to PAI at 410-887-3335, Room 123, County Office Building.

** Housing types as described in the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies using alternative site designs and setbacks such as z-lots, zipper lots, etc.*

3. At least one week before the packet submittal deadline, the applicant shall meet with Department of Planning (DP) staff. This meeting is required for all new projects and particularly for first-time applicants. This meeting must be scheduled by the applicant.
 - (a) Applicant submits completed application and two copies of the project site plan to DP
 - (b) Applicant and staff discuss appropriate DRP submittals for specific project (see checklist on page 11)
4. DP provides contact list of community/business associations to the applicant.
5. The DRP advises that the applicant meet with the community association in advance of the DRP meeting.
6. DP schedules the DRP meeting when submittals are ready and fee is paid (*if required*). DP must receive the packet submittals 15 business days (or 10 business days for resubmittals) prior to the DRP meeting (see page 1 for meeting and submittal dates). The submittals shall include:
 - (a) Nine copies of the plan and accompanying materials (see checklist on page 11)
 - (b) A certification letter that a meeting notification letter and a site plan has been sent to all community/business associations, adjacent property owners, the County Council representative, and the press (see pages 6 and 7 for sample letters)
 - (c) DRP filing fee receipt (*if required*)
 - (d) Completed application if not previously submitted
7. DP sends copies of the review material to the panel members.
8. For large residential projects greater than 3 lots, DP prepares a staff report that is provided to the applicant and panel members prior to the meeting.

9. At the meeting, applicant presents the project to the DRP (see page 7 for presentation suggestions).
10. DP provides written minutes of the DRP meeting within ten business days of the DRP meeting to the panel members and the applicant, and posts approved minutes on the county website.
(<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/DRPmeetings>)

Projects may be approved, approved with conditions or required to return to the DRP for further review.

11. If a follow-up meeting with DRP is required, applicant sends a meeting notification letter and site plan, if revised, to the following by First Class Mail:

- a) Individuals included in the original mailing
- b) Additional individuals attending the last DRP meeting

12. A project may be approved with conditions, requiring DP approval through an administrative review. For this review, the applicant submits three sets of all revised documents to the DP reflecting the recommendations of the DRP.

13. Once the project is approved, the DP issues a letter recommending approval to either the Director of PAI or the ALJ. For approvals that don't involve a development plan or Administrative Law Judge Hearing, the Director of PAI will act as the designee to consider the recommendations of the Panel and grant final approval.

PROJECTS SUBJECT TO DRP REVIEW

The goal of the DRP is to encourage design excellence through the application of design guidelines contained in the Master Plan, the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies, adopted community plans and/or section 260 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, as applicable.

Design Review is conducted for all development located within designated design review areas and for alternative site design projects. "Development" for purposes of the DRP review, includes a minor subdivision but does not include a Planned Unit Development. In addition, "development" includes both new construction and a substantial addition or change to an existing development plan, as determined by the Department of Planning.

A new dwelling proposed for a residential single lot of record within a designated residential design review area is reviewed by the DRP. An addition to a dwelling that is more than 50% of the gross square footage of the existing dwelling is also to be reviewed. The gross square footage calculation includes an attached garage, storage areas and/or the basement, if present.

PROCEDURES FOR LIMITED REVIEW

Although legislation has been passed to include a limited review procedure for certain residential projects, there are currently no procedures adopted for limited review, with the exception of East Towson. Projects in East Towson may be subject to a limited review, which requires the applicant to present plans to the Department of Planning for review. The staff will advise the applicant of design guidelines and other requirements, as well as Community Association contacts. If the Community Association approves of the proposal, a letter of support must be submitted to the Department of Planning. This letter of support will waive the Design Review Panel meeting requirements.

All other projects will be reviewed under the DRP **full process** until limited review procedures are developed.

PROJECT REVIEW CRITERIA

Projects will be reviewed for compliance with the following guidelines, standards, plans, and other criteria as applicable. *(See maps on pages 8-11)*

All Projects

- Part III: Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies: Applicable Sections
- Section 260.2-260.6 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations
- Section 32-4-203(c) of the Baltimore County Code, Objectives for Assessment

East Towson

- East Towson Design Standards - Adopted 10/2/03

Middle River

- Any single-family detached lot in the area that is part of a development plan and is zoned D.R. 3.5 is subject to the design standards set forth in Section 260 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations.

Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland

- Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland Area Community Plan - Adopted 2/22/11

Sudbrook Park

- Sudbrook Park Community Plan - Adopted 4/5/99
* Note: The DRP will defer review of projects within the Sudbrook Park County Historic District to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Towson

- Towson Community Plan - Adopted 2/3/92

OBJECTIVES FOR ASSESSMENT

- (i) Demonstrates a satisfactory spatial, visual, and functional relationship to the topographic characteristics, the natural features, and the built features of the site as well as the surrounding features of the site;
- (ii) Gives primary design consideration to the visual and functional integration of streetscapes, pedestrian pathways, playgrounds, recreational amenities, and parks;
- (iii) Demonstrates that streets and sidewalks are laid out as safe and convenient linkages and that parking becomes a positive design element that contributes to the overall image of the site;
- (iv) Demonstrates that buildings, parking garages, and other accessory structures are spatially and visually integrated and suitable to their surroundings in proportion, massing and type, materials and colors, signage, and other elements of urban design; and
- (v) Demonstrates that plant materials are selected and sited to define the site, provide a theme or image appropriate to the development, frame views, enhance architecture and street characteristics, develop continuity of adjacent open spaces, improve the micro-climate, provide transition between dissimilar uses, screen the objectionable views and uses, reduce noise level and glare, and provide seasonal colors and other visual amenities.

DESIGN REVIEW ELEMENTS

The Department of Planning and Design Review Panel will evaluate each project to determine how the project elements meet the criteria listed in the Objectives for Assessment, adopted plans and zoning or development regulations.

CIRCULATION

- Road alignment
- Pedestrian access
- Integration of streets and pedestrians
- Parking: mix (garage, grade level, street, deck),
location, access

BUILDING

- Orientation
- Entry (location & design)
- Scale, mass, setback, height, fenestration
- Building materials
- Utilities
- Service areas
- Trash

LANDSCAPING

- Plant materials
- Streetscape and hardscape
- Site furniture
- Relationship to architecture and site
- Screening
- Lighting
- Signage

SITE PLANNING

- Grading
- Retention of existing vegetation
- Building orientation—what faces the street
- Arrangement of buildings—spaces between buildings

OPEN SPACE

- Type
- Accessibility
- Location
- Amenities

**GROUPS TO BE NOTIFIED
FOR FULL REVIEW PROCESS**

The applicant must send a copy of the proposed site plan and a notification letter stating the location, date, and time of the Design Review Panel meeting by **First Class Mail** at least 15 business days prior (or 10 business days for resubmittals) to the Design Review Panel meeting. A sample notification letter is provided on page 6. The applicant must send the mailing to:

1. All adjacent property owners
2. Council representative’s office
3. Community and business associations as provided by the Department of Planning
4. Others as identified by the Department of Planning
5. Newspapers (Listed Below) Note--Notification of the meeting only; no site plan is required to be mailed to newspapers. This provides notification to the newspaper of the meeting, should they desire to attend. The applicant is not required to place an advertisement of the meeting in any newspaper.

See page 7 for required certification of mailing

Jeff Raymond
Daily Record
11 E. Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
PH: (410) 752 - 3849

Ed Gunts
Baltimore Sun
501 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21278
PH: (410) 332 - 6000

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- **Council District 2 – Vicki Almond**
Sudbrook Park Design Review Area
Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland Design Review Area
- **Council District 5 – David Marks**
Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland Design Review Area
East Towson Design Review Area
Towson Design Review Area
- **Council District 6 - Cathy Bevins**
Middle River Design Review Area

Council Office:
400 Washington Ave.
Towson, MD 21204
(410) 887-3196
(410) 887-5791

** Note: For alternative site design projects, staff will advise applicant which Council representative to notify.*

NOTIFICATION LETTER SAMPLE
FOR FULL REVIEW PROCESS

[*COMPANY NAME*]

[*Street Address*]

[*City, State Zip Code*]

[Date]

RE: [Name of Project]

[*Recipient Name*]

[*Address*]

[*City, State Zip Code*]

Dear [Recipient]:

In anticipation of a Design Review Panel meeting on the above referenced project, enclosed is a copy of a site plan which has been developed for [Name of Project]. The Design Review Panel meeting which is scheduled by the Department of Planning will be as follows:

Date: [Date of Meeting]
Time: [Time of Meeting]
Location: The Jefferson Building
Hearing Room 104
105 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Towson, MD 21204

The purpose of this meeting is for the applicant to receive comments regarding design elements of the proposed project. You are invited to attend and participate in this meeting.

Should you have any questions regarding the meeting, please contact Jenifer Nugent or Krystle Patchak, Department of Planning, 410-887-3480. To check for any last minute schedule changes, you may call 410-887-3480 or view the meeting agenda on the county's website at: www.baltimorecountymd.gov/DRPmeetings.

Sincerely,

[*Your name*]

[*Your position*]

[*Typist's initials*]

Enclosure: [Number]

CERTIFICATION OF NOTIFICATION
FOR FULL REVIEW PROCESS

Prior to the DRP meeting, the applicant shall provide a letter of certification to the Department of Planning that notice of the Design Review Panel meeting was mailed, along with a list of who the material was mailed to.

The Certification shall read as follows:

“I certify that on **(DATE sent by First Class Mail)** , I sent a copy of the proposed site plan for **(PROJECT NAME)** located at **(PROJECT ADDRESS)** and notification that the Design Review Panel meeting will be held **(DATE & TIME OF MEETING)** at **(LOCATION OF MEETING)** to the adjacent property owners, community and business associations, County Council representative, newspapers and others as required.”

Signature of Applicant

Date

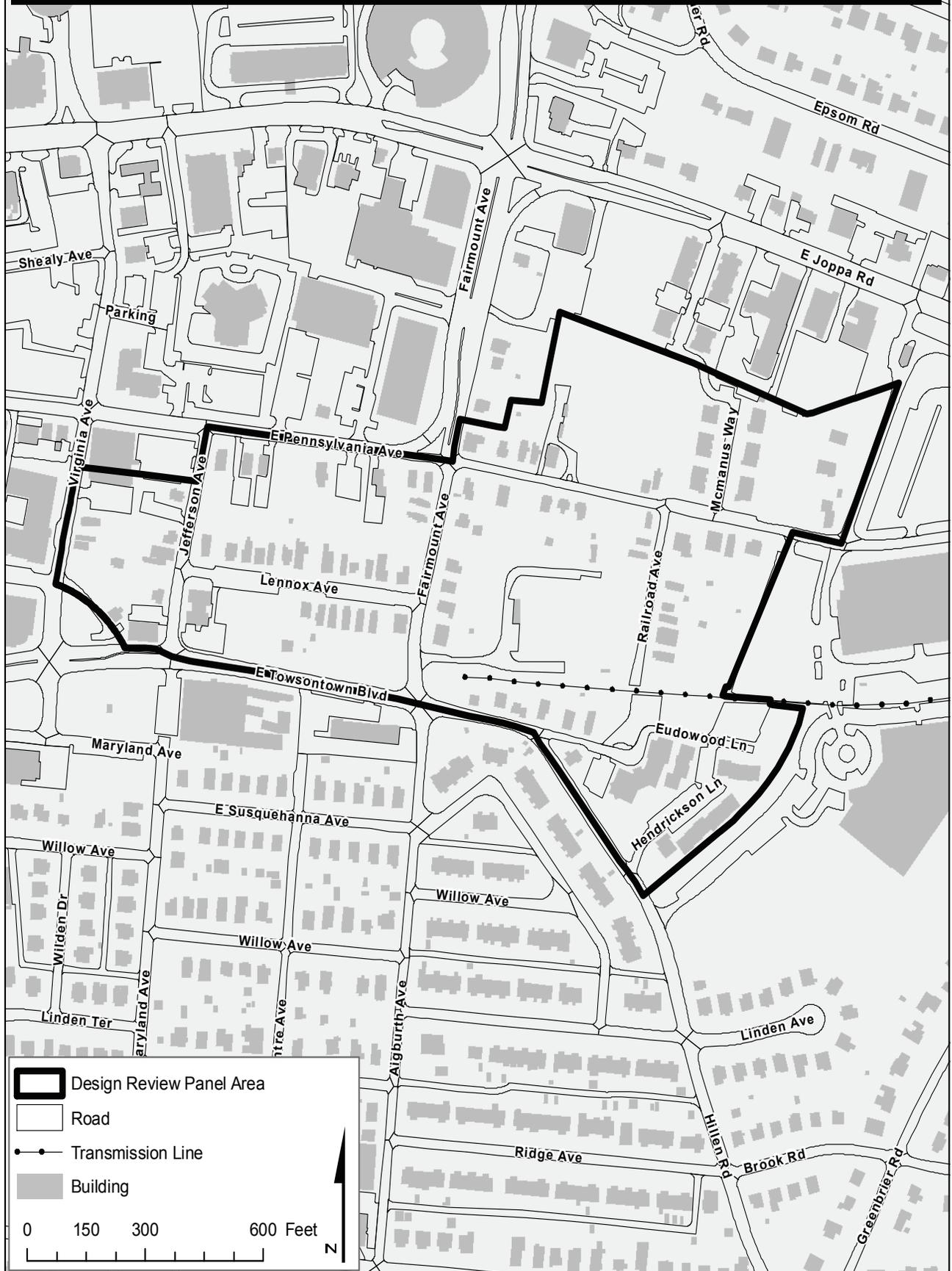
(PRINT NAME)

PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS

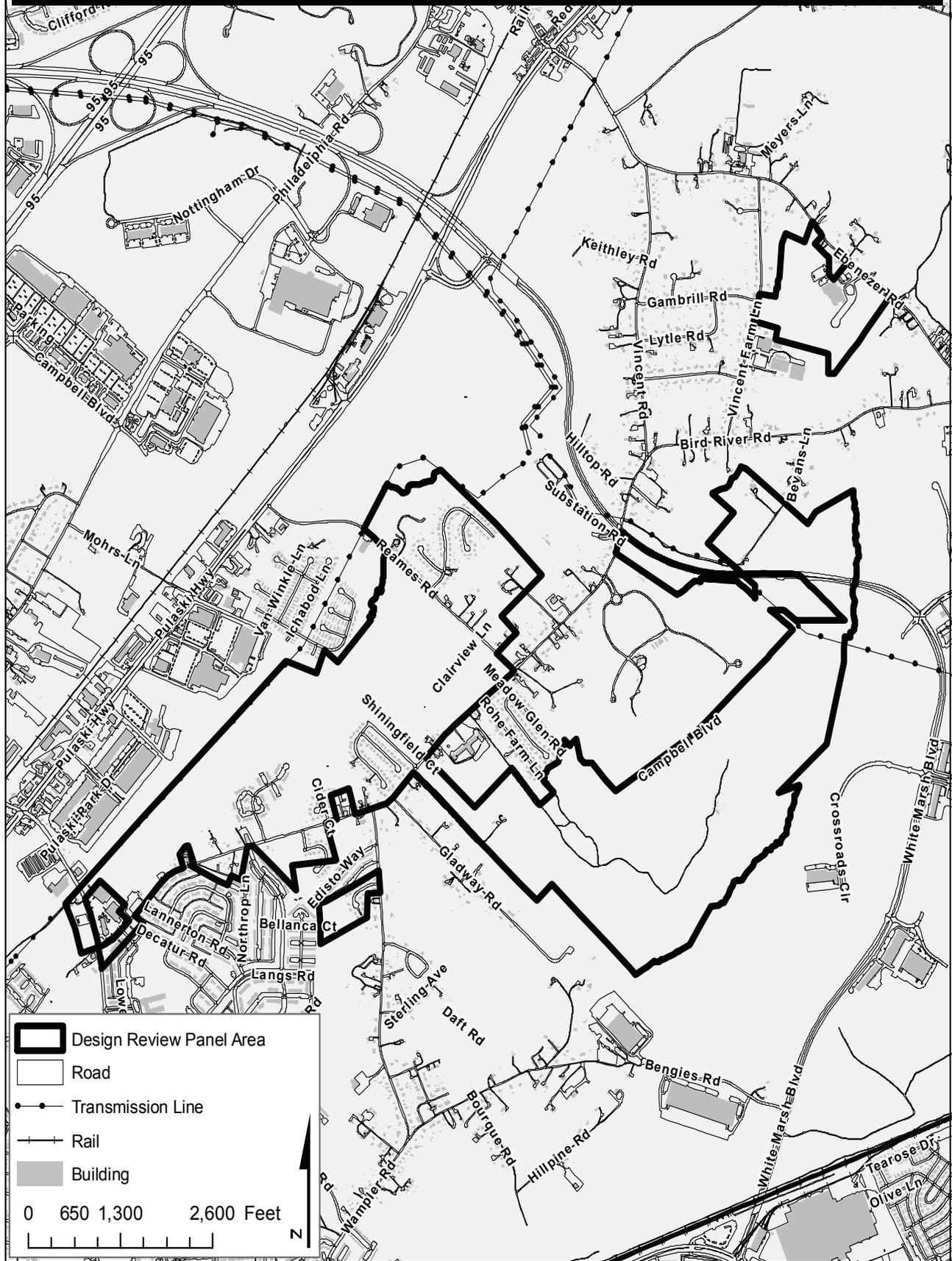
It is advised that individuals giving presentations to the Design Review Panel make every effort to present visual materials, i.e. maps, plans, etc., using a digital format such as Power Point or 8 1/2 x 11 drawings that can be displayed on an overhead projector. It is also recommended that, when possible, the architect/designer of the project give the presentation so that he/she may accurately describe the intricacies of the proposed designs as well as informatively answer the questions of the panel. Please contact Jen Nugent or Krystle Patchak at 410-887-3480 at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to test digital presentations.

It is strongly encouraged, but not required, that a representative knowledgeable of the architectural design of the project be present at the meeting so that they may answer any specific questions for the panel.

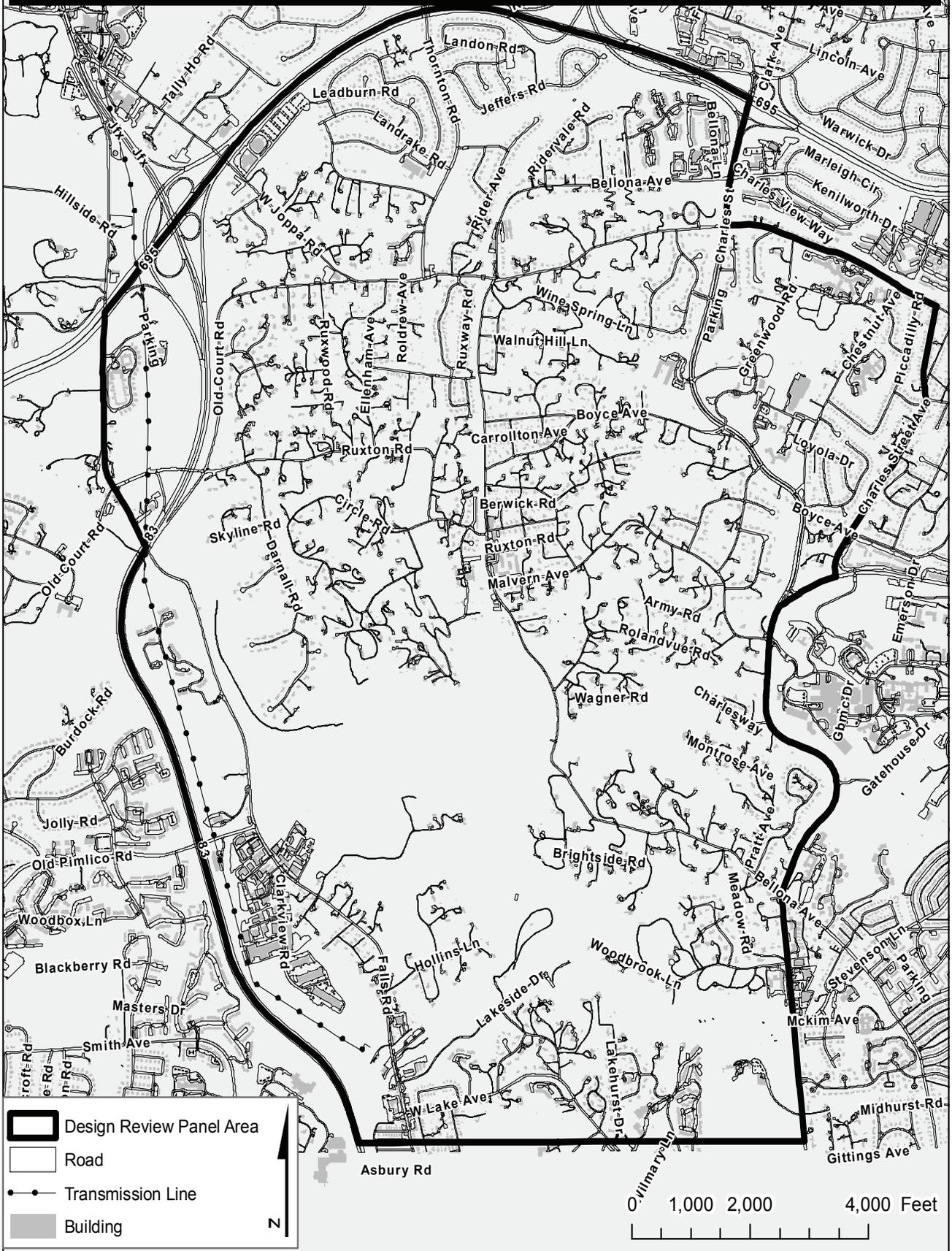
DESIGN REVIEW PANEL AREA - EAST TOWSON



DESIGN REVIEW PANEL AREA - MIDDLE RIVER



DESIGN REVIEW PANEL AREA - RUXTON-RIDERWOOD-LAKE ROLAND



DESIGN REVIEW PANEL AREA - SADBROOK PARK



SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Note: Plans and building elevations may be at a reduced, readable scale. Electronic formats may be submitted in addition to the hard copy information.

First Review - Any submittal requirements checked as NO will result in the submittal being returned to the applicant as incomplete.

YES NO

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. A short paragraph describing the proposed project. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Zoning map and aerial photo showing outline of proposed site and surrounding neighborhood. (DP staff will provide) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Photographs/slides to document existing conditions of site, street character, and surrounding context. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Site plan, drawn to scale, with existing and proposed grading, and adjacent buildings showing the neighborhood context. A legible site plan prepared by a registered engineer or landscape architect is strongly recommended. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Schematic landscape plan, showing existing & proposed vegetation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Photomontage, perspective sketches, or model (where necessary, DP staff will advise) to illustrate massing and scale of the proposed building in relationship to its surroundings. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Elevations of all building facades at a scale sufficient to understand the building fenestration, entrances, roof designs, materials and colors. (The proposed building height dimensions and building materials must be labeled on all building elevations). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Cross sections, where necessary (DP staff will advise), to understand the relationship of building to site especially in areas of extensive grading. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Floor plans. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Samples of all proposed building materials and the potential color schemes as well as cut sheets of all proposed lighting fixtures for the external site lighting MUST be brought to the DRP meeting. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Verbal confirmation of a scheduled community meeting prior to DRP meeting that includes all adjacent property owners as well as the respective Community Association. |

Subsequent Review - Frequently the Design Review Panel will require a subsequent review requiring additional information to be submitted (DP staff will advise).

YES NO

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Final versions of the above material |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Additional specifications, materials, and design of any required improvements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Elevations of building and site plan |

APPLICATION FORM FOR RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS
BALTIMORE COUNTY DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Applicant Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Property Owner Information (if Different)

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Project Information

Design Review Area: *(Check One)*

Alternative Site Design _____

Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland _____ Sudbrook Park _____

East Towson _____ Middle River _____ Towson _____

TYPE OF REVIEW: Full Review _____ Limited Review _____

Planning Staff Comments (For staff use only)

Fee Receipt: _____ *(For alternative site design only & residential projects greater than 3 lots)*

Checklist Complete: _____

Accepted for Scheduling by: _____ Date of Initial DRP Meeting _____

Incomplete: _____ *(State Reasons)*

