



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item #10
6/27/2002

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 21, 2002
TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: John Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning *JC*
Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, Georgia Avenue Team *KA*

FROM: Jean Kaufman and Nkosi Yearwood, Community-Based Planning *NK*

REVIEW TYPE: Local Map Amendment
APPLYING FOR: Change in zoning from R-90 to RT-15
REVIEW BASIS: Chapter 59, Zoning Ordinance
MASTER PLAN: Kensington-Wheaton (1989) Master Plan

CASE NUMBER: G-798
APPLICANT: Batchellors Forest LLC
LOCATION: SE quadrant of Georgia Avenue and Amherst Avenue, Wheaton

FILING DATE: March 25, 2002
PLANNING BOARD: June 27, 2002
PUBLIC HEARING: July 12, 2002 before the Hearing Examiner

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL of the RT-15 zone with written binding elements including a maximum of 201 dwelling units and the **APPROVAL** of the Schematic Development Plan for the following reasons:

1. The application will be consistent with the recommendations of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan.
2. The illustrative Schematic Development Plan with the written binding elements will comply with the RT-15 development standards, and will be compatible with the surrounding development.
3. Public facilities are sufficient to serve the proposed development.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The applicant has filed the local map amendment to rezone 14.74 acres of land located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Amherst Avenue in Wheaton. The applicant requests rezoning of the R-90 zoned land to the RT-15 zone. The site is currently improved with Our Lady of Good Counsel High School, surface parking areas, and athletic fields. As shown on the submitted development plan, the development would consist of a maximum of 201 dwelling units, including one-family detached and one-family attached dwellings and townhouses. A community green area is proposed at the intersection of the Georgia Avenue and Arcola Avenue. All dwelling units will front onto green spaces or streets with significant green area. Townhouses will have two-car garages and sufficient visitor parking will be provided. The existing Rafferty Center, which is an indoor athletic facility, is likely to be maintained and renovated in the future. A thru street, Dawson Avenue extended, will connect Georgia Avenue to Amherst Avenue.

Description of Property

The subject property, which comprises 14.74 acres, consists of four parcels. These four parcels are currently improved with a private school with 1,035 students, parking lots, and ball fields. To accommodate the proposed development, the school, Our Lady of Good Counsel, will relocate to Olney. The topography is generally flat between Georgia Avenue and the eastern portion of the site, where play fields are located. There is approximately 20 feet grade difference between the athletic fields and the right-of-way along Amherst Avenue. Some wooded areas exist along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Three curb cuts along Georgia Avenue provide access to the site.

Surrounding Area

Definition: In the case of this petition, staff defines the surrounding area as bounded by Henderson Avenue to the north; Nairn Road to the east; University Boulevard to the south; and Galt Avenue to the west.

Uses: The surrounding area contains a mix of uses that is predominantly residential. Single-family detached homes, zoned R-90, dominate the northern boundary of the site with the exception of the public library at Arcola Avenue and Georgia Avenue. Immediately north of the library is Wheaton Community Center, which is between Parker and Hermitage Avenues. Amherst Avenue forms the eastern boundary of the site. Directly across Amherst Avenue are single-family homes; further south are garden apartments. Along the southern boundary of the site, which also forms the CBD boundary, are apartments zoned R-20. Along Georgia Avenue is the vacant WMATA site, zoned R-90/TDR 9. Further south along Blueridge Avenue is an office development. West of the site, across Georgia Avenue, are single-family homes zoned R-60.

Other Potential Developments in the Area

There are other projects currently in the planning stages that may affect the ultimate layout of the Good Counsel site. Although not part of this rezoning petition, they are described here to illustrate the complexity of the development and the planning process for this site.

The Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad is currently located on Grandview Avenue in the Wheaton CBD plans to build a new facility in the Wheaton area. The Rescue Squad owns three lots immediately north of Good Counsel on Arcola Avenue. Local residents near this area have expressed concerns regarding ambulance sirens and traffic. Residents have asked that the Rescue Squad be located on the WMATA site. The Rescue Squad as a non-profit group and is *not* a permitted use in the R-90 zone.

Wheaton Community Center on Georgia Avenue between Hermitage and Parker Avenues is in need of renovation and repairs. Montgomery County has expressed an interest in exploring the possibility of using the current Rafferty Center as a substitute Community Center and using the current Community Center site, which is parkland and owned by M-NCPPC, as a possible rescue squad site. The community is opposed to this scenario.

The relocation of the Rescue Squad and the Community Center are issues that may impact the final layout of the subject site and will be discussed in more detail in the future. Different agencies, including the County, the applicant, Wheaton Rescue Squad, WMATA, and M-NCPPC are developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will attempt to provide a resolution on these projects.

ANALYSIS

Intended Use and Approval Procedures

The applicant requests the RT-15 zone to allow the redevelopment of the subject site, which will consist of a maximum of 201 dwelling units, including one-family detached and one-family attached dwellings and townhouses.

The illustrative schematic development plan illustrates a park, approximately two acres in size, at the intersection of Arcola Avenue and Georgia Avenue, as well as single-family detached dwellings adjacent to Amherst Avenue and a street connecting Georgia Avenue and Amherst Avenue. Townhouses are arranged across the site with all units either fronting onto open spaces or streets. The street system within the site will include an east-west street, Dawson Avenue extended, which will connect Georgia Avenue to Amherst Avenue. A north-south street will provide access to the WMATA property to the south with possible extension north to Arcola Avenue. Generous setbacks are provided along the northern boundary, adjacent to detached dwellings, and attractive streetscape is shown along Georgia Avenue.

Development standards for the rezoning petition are consistent with the zone. The following chart shows the development standards for the rezoning application:

Development Standards	Permitted/Required	Proposed
Minimum tract area	40,000 square feet	642,062 square feet
Maximum density	15 units per acre	13.7 units per acre
Building setback		
-Public Street	20 feet	55 feet ^① and 30 feet ^②
-One side (end unit)	8 feet	>8 feet
-Rear	20 feet	>20 feet
Maximum building height	35 feet	35 feet
Minimum green area	30 percent	45 percent
Maximum building coverage	NA	23 percent
Minimum parking	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit

Note: ① From Georgia Avenue and ② From Amherst Avenue

In addition to the zoning application, other approval procedures will include a preliminary plan of subdivision, site plan, and final plat of subdivision. Site conditions as illustrated by the schematic development will be subject to further refinement and changes during site plan review. Additionally, outstanding issues regarding the maintenance and/or expansion of the Rafferty Center should be determined before preliminary if this petition is approved. Three adjacent lots owned by Wheaton Rescue could become parking for the Rafferty Center. Binding elements for the proposed rezoning petition takes into consideration any future expansion or deletion of the Rafferty Center, if all interested parties could agree to a memorandum of understanding.

Zoning History

Comprehensive:

- SMA G-761: R-90 reconfirmed
- SMA G-674: R-90 reconfirmed
- SMA G-137: R-90 confirmed
- 1954 Regional District Zoning: R-90 enacted and mapped

Local Map Amendment:

NA

Public Facilities

Service Categories:

The property is Water Category W-1 and Sewer Category S-1 (Source: *Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection*).

Water and Sewer Service:

Water and sewer lines abut the property. Local service is deemed adequate and the impact from rezoning is considered negligible (Source: *WSSC Development Services Group*).

Roadways:

Georgia Avenue (MD 79): A regional north-south, six lane major highway with a minimum right-of-way of 120 feet. This road is a major commuter route, which has several bus lines and Metro stations. A traffic light is located at Arcola and Georgia Avenue that provides for north, south, and west traffic. The posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour. The proposed schematic development plan will only have one right turn in/right out from the site; three access points currently service the site from Georgia Avenue.

Arcola Avenue: Arcola Avenue is classified as an arterial (A-54) roadway with 80 feet right-of-way, 48-feet of pavement. It runs from University Boulevard to Georgia Avenue and then Parker Avenue. On-street parking is not allowed between Georgia Avenue and Amherst and a traffic light is located at the intersection of Amherst and Arcola Avenues.

Amherst Avenue: A north-south primary and arterial that runs from Arcola to Plyers Mill Road through the Wheaton CBD. On-street parking is permitted on various sides of the road and there are sidewalks and lawn panels on different segments of the road.

Schools:

The subject property is located within the Kemp Mill Elementary School, Lee Middle School, and Kennedy High School service areas. Based on average yield factors for comparable housing units, the impact of this project is estimated to be approximately 52 elementary, 27 middle, and 37 high school students. Kemp Mill Elementary School is currently operating over capacity and is projected to remain over capacity for the six year forecast period. Both Lee Middle School and Kennedy High School are currently operating within capacity and are projected to remain within capacity for the six year forecast period. The Annual Growth Policy (AGP) is the vehicle that regulates subdivision development approval with regard to facility adequacy. The current AGP indicates that adequate school capacity exists in the Kennedy cluster. (Source: *Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) -See attachment for letter*).

Requirements for the RT-Zone

The intent and purpose of the RT-zone is found in section 59-C.1.721 of the Zoning Ordinance, which states that the purpose of the RT-zone is to provide suitable site for townhouses in areas that are “designated or appropriate for residential development at densities allowed in the RT Zones” and “there is a need for buffer or transitional uses between commercial, industrial, or high-density apartments uses and low-density one-

family uses.” The Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan did not anticipate that Good Counsel would acquire a new site in Olney for its school.

The maximum density for the submitted development is 13.7 dwelling units per acre, and is compatible with the surrounding commercial, residential and multi-family dwellings. As proposed, the mixed residential development would serve as a transition from the commercial uses along Georgia Avenue and multi-family apartments to the immediate south and south-east as well as single-family detached dwellings to the east, north and west.

While the proposed density would favor the use of RT-12.5; however, this application is for RT-15 because of its flexible standards, particularly setbacks and green area. This flexibility is desirable for an infill development, such as the subject proposal. Staff examined the development standards for both the RT-12.5 and RT-15 zone and supports the applicant’s request for the zone because its development standards are more flexible and is compatible with the surrounding residential densities. Further, the proposal meets the County Council intent when the RT-15 zone was implemented in 1997.

The proposed density of 13.7 dwelling units per acre would meet the maximum permitted density for the MPDU option under both the RT-12.5 (15.25 du/acre) and RT-15 (18.3 du/acre). The following table compares the proposed development standards for both RT-12.5/ MPDU and RT-15/MPDU:

Development Standard	RT-12.5 MPDU	RT-15 MPDU	Proposed
Minimum tract area	20,000 square feet	40,000 square feet	642,062 square feet
Maximum density per acre	15.25 du/acre	18.3 du/acre	13.7 du/acre
Building Setback			
a) From detached dwelling lot	30 feet	30 feet	60 feet
b) From public street	25 feet	20 feet	55 and 30 feet
Maximum building height	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet
Maximum building coverage	40 percent	NA	23.8
Minimum green area	45 percent	30 percent	45 percent
Building type			
a) Townhouse	Permitted	Permitted	Proposed
b) One-family detached	Permitted	Permitted	Proposed
c) One-family attached	Permitted	Permitted❶	25 percent of the total number of dwelling units

Note: ❶ No more than 40 percent of one-family attached units are allowed in this zone.

Staff believes that the RT-15 is appropriate. The Council's written opinion "supported the new townhouse RT-15 zone in order to make assemblage and redevelopment viable in transit-station areas and other areas of the County where appropriate." The subject-rezoning request meets the Council's reason for implementing this zone since it is less than four blocks to Wheaton Metro station, which is a major hub of buses that serve the County and Metrorail activity.

Master Plan Recommendation

The proposed rezoning application is located within the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan and is adjacent to the Wheaton Central Business District (CBD) Vicinity Plan. The Approved and Adopted 1989 Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan did not consider the vacant lot at the corner of Arcola Avenue and Georgia Avenue, which is currently a gravel parking area, as suitable for a moderate special exception with access to the site from Arcola. (p.45)

The Good Counsel site was not considered as a critical area in the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan. Critical areas are significant land parcels in the planning area where zoning changes and alternative land uses have been reviewed or considered during the planning process. Although the Good Counsel site is a large parcel, the Master Plan did not recommend any changes or alternative land uses to the site since it was expected that Good Counsel would remain at its current location. The school is presently in the process of relocation to a new site in Olney.

Land use and zoning objectives of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan are the following:

- *To protect and stabilize the extent, location, and character of the existing residential and commercial land use.*
- *To maintain the well established low-to-medium density residential character, which prevails over most of the planning area.*
- *To ensure that zoning and land use recommendation for sites which have a potential for future development are consistent with the goals of land use stabilization and compatibility with nearby existing development.*
- *To preserve the identity of residential areas along major highway corridors, to soften the impact of major highways on adjacent homes and to strengthen the distinction between commercial and residential uses. (p.28)*

The proposed rezoning application would achieve the land use and zoning objectives of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan. A mixture of townhouses and one detached dwellings, one-family attached dwellings with significant green area, including community open space, would maintain a low to medium density with the surrounding multi-family and single-family residential development. The minimum density of the proposed development is approximately 11 units per acre and the maximum density is 14 units per acre, which is less than the surrounding multi-family development, which averages about 30 dwelling units per acre.

Sierra Landing Condo Community, which runs along Amherst Avenue, Elkin Street and Bucknell Drive, is approximately 22 units per acre and Amherst Square Apartment, which is to the immediate south of the subject site and is south of Elkin Street, is approximately 22 dwelling units acre. Also, Pembridge Square, which is south and north of Blueridge Avenue and Elkin Street, is approximately 49 dwelling units per acre. The proposed rezoning density is similar to the TDR zoned Metro site and other residential densities along University Boulevard that ranges from 9 to 22 units per acre.

This proposal would achieve a key component of smart growth development since it is less than 2,300 feet, approximately 4 blocks or 10 minutes of walking from the Wheaton Metro Station, and could take advantage of the existing retail and mix of uses in the adjacent CBD. Furthermore, a consequence of the rezoning petition is the removal of

an existing institutional use with more daily trips and individuals than the proposed development.

The proposed development will strengthen the transition between commercial uses in the CBD with another residential area along a major highway and will be compatible to the existing area. Additionally, the Green Corridor Policy of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan, which aims to ensure that “ the integrity of residential areas along major highway corridors and that commercial areas do not fade from one into the next without a clear sense of place” will occur given the binding element setback from Georgia Avenue and the park at the intersection of Georgia and Arcola Avenues. (p.70)

Wheaton Central Business District (CBD) Vicinity Plan’s northern boundary is immediately south of the Good Counsel site. A major goal of the Wheaton CBD Plan is to:

Provide additional new housing and a range of housing opportunities to serve a broad spectrum of the metropolitan population. A variety of housing types would help to satisfy a demand for housing that may not be available in other parts of the County. A combination of apartments, townhouses, and single-family homes can expand the age and family size mix in Wheaton. An increase in the local population base can generate greater support for retail establishments, entertainment and recreation facilities, restaurants, and the like. New residential development should be encouraged to ensure the viability of the business areas.(p.26)

Although the proposed rezoning is not within the boundaries of the CBD Plan, the petition will accomplish this goal of the Plan, and add a new community amenity in the form of a large park/open space. The proposed development is a transit-oriented allowing residents’ to walk instead of driving to transit and nearby commercial uses.

Based on the submitted statements and schematic development plan, staff concludes that the land use and zoning objective of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan and adjacent Wheaton CBD Plan will be accomplished if the subject site is rezoned. Additionally, the development would remove an institutional use, establish a medium density residential development within close proximity to a transit station, and will be compatible with the surrounding residential development.

Schematic Development Plan

Section 59-H-2.53 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that a schematic development plan be submitted for a local map amendment. A schematic development plan illustrates how and to what extent the applicant will utilize the property including, points of access and location of buildings.

The schematic development is for illustrative purposes *only*, and it is *not* binding.

Staff has worked closely with the applicant to introduce written binding elements. The schematic development for the Good Counsel site illustrates townhouses across the property and all townhouses front onto green spaces or streets. Further, single family dwellings are proposed for Amherst Avenue, which would provide a compatible transition to existing single-family dwellings. A thru street would provide the desirable interconnectivity within the large block. Additionally, the setback from the northern property line serves two purposes: tree can be planted in this area to meet forestation requirements and serves as a buffer to adjacent single-family dwellings.

The written binding elements for the proposed local map amendment include the following:

1. The maximum number of units is limited to 201 dwelling units, including single-family detached dwelling units, townhouse dwelling units, and single-family attached dwelling units.
2. A community open space will be located at the southwest quadrant of Georgia Avenue and Arcola consisting of two acres minimum. The existing Rafferty Center may be retained and included in the community open space. If the Rafferty Center is retained, it must have visibility and clear pedestrian access from Georgia Avenue.
3. The following improvements to be provided along Georgia Avenue frontage: dedication of Georgia Avenue right-of-way to 120 feet minimum; a single access point opposite Dawson Avenue; streetscape consisting of two rows of trees and a wide sidewalk/bikeway, separated from the curb by a tree panel; and appropriate left turns.
4. An east-west through street, Dawson Avenue extended, connecting Georgia Avenue to Amherst Avenue. The street may be private if built to public street standards and must include traffic calming measures.
5. At least one north-south street connecting to the WMATA owned property to the south with a possible connection north to Arcola Avenue.
6. The minimum setback for lot lines along adjacent single-family detached lots at the northern property line will be 50 (fifty) feet.
7. The minimum setback for buildings along Georgia Avenue is 55 (fifty five) feet from the existing curb.
8. No more than 25 percent of the total dwelling units should be one-family attached dwelling units.

Preliminary and Site Plan Issues

If the County Council approves the subject rezoning, this project will require preliminary plan and site plan approval by the Planning Board. The number of dwelling units may be reduced during preliminary and site plan review to meet environmental and other requirements, such as onsite recreation.

Prior to the approval of a preliminary plan, the applicant must resolve all of the following items:

1. Designated the street connection to the WMATA parcel as either private or public.
2. Townhouse dwelling units should be located on the western and northern edges of the property. Any dwelling units along Amherst Avenue should be compatible to the existing single-detached dwellings in the R-90 zone.
3. The required onsite forestation percentage must be met.
4. The maintenance or demolition of the Rafferty Center and increase the green area adjacent to Dawson Avenue extended and Georgia Avenue.
5. The location of Moderate Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) should be determined.
6. Lowest building heights adjacent to Georgia and Amherst Avenues as well as existing single family detached dwelling along Arcola Avenue.
7. Particular attention should be given to Georgia Avenue with street trees, sidewalks and lawn panels.

Transportation Issues

Transportation Planning staff has reviewed the subject rezoning application and recommends its approval. Primary access to the proposed development will be from Amherst Avenue and Georgia Avenue. Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has agreed to a single access from Georgia Avenue as well as wider sidewalks and landscaping along the road. SHA has also requested a signal warrant analysis for the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Dawson Avenue, which will be determined during later reviews. It is anticipated that the proposed rezoning will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding road area network (*See attachment of Transportation Planning Memo*).

Environmental Issues

Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the local map amendment petition and recommends it approval.

Forest Conservation

Currently, there is no forest on the Good Counsel site. The applicant intends to utilize the optional method of development for the property. Section 22A-12(f) of the Montgomery County Code requires single-family residential zones utilizing an optional method of development to meet either the afforestation or the conservation threshold onsite. The applicant is required to meet the afforestation threshold onsite. This requires the applicant to provide 2.2 acres of forest and tree cover within the 14.74-acre site. The applicant has proposed to meet this requirement through a combination of forest planting, tree canopy, and street trees.

The preliminary forest conservation plan indicates that approximately 26 percent of the 2.2 acres of forest and tree cover required, will be met with forest. The binding elements will provide useable rear and side yard spaces consistent with the RT-15 zoning requirements. However, additional forested areas are desirable and opportunities will be further examined during preliminary and site plan review. *(See attachment for Environmental Planning Memo for more information.)*

Stormwater Management

The applicant has submitted a stormwater management concept to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS). A stormwater quality control is proposed for the southwest corner of the property near the intersection of Amherst Avenue and Elkin Street. The applicant needs to provide stormwater management facilities to ensure that runoff is sent to a control structure prior to the release off the property.

Natural Resources

The subject property is located in the Sligo Creek watershed, a Use I tributary of the Anacostia River. The Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)(#4-02334) was submitted on April 29, 2002 and approved on May 28, 2002. There are no wetlands, stream valleys, or environmentally sensitive area on the subject site. Steep slopes (>25%) are on the property and are parallel Amherst Avenue. The site does include serpentine soils, which has the potential to include asbestos. Only a geotechnical analysis of the site will reveal if the soils include asbestos. Environmental Planning strongly encourages the applicant to voluntarily prepare a performance plan to limit fugitive dust emissions during construction.

CITIZEN CONCERNS

Staff has spoken and met with homeowners and civic associations in the surrounding area of the proposed development. Staff met with members of the Wheaton Regional Park Civic Association and their representatives. They expressed opposition to the rezoning petition because of its density and unit types. The Regional Park Civic Association is also concerned about the lack of a planned coordination for a new Wheaton Rescue Squad location, utilization of the vacant WMATA site, the potential relocation of the Rescue Squad at the Wheaton Recreation Center site, which is between Parker Avenue and Hermitage Avenue.

Other neighborhood and civic associations, such as Sierra Landing Condominium Association and Wheaton Hills Civic Association, have no specific objections to the rezoning petition.

Staff attended the Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee on June 19, 2002 when the applicant presented the rezoning proposal. Members of the Steering Committee and residents of the surrounding area expressed both positive and negative views including in general, it supports the smart growth nature of the proposal with more dwelling units to support businesses in the CBD.

Members of the Steering Committee and some residents objected to the "2 over 2" unit concept, the proposed density of the development, and the premature decision to move forward with the application since other issues relating to the Wheaton Rescue Squad and the WMATA site have not yet been determined.

The Steering Committee voted to recommend to the Planning Board that it approve the RT-12.5 zone instead of the proposed RT-15 zone, limit one-family attached dwelling units, increase the amount of green area in addition to the community open space, retain the existing Rafferty Center, and prohibit any buyout of the Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) requirement.

Conclusion

Staff recommends approval of the RT-15 zone with the written binding elements. The binding elements are intended to limit the potential development and address the concerns of the community. Further, the binding elements limit the use of one-family attached units, reduce the overall density, and require a significant amount of open space and afforestation areas. The use of the RT-15 zone will allow greater flexibility in development standards; however, the proposal could also meet the density and housing type requirements of the RT-12.5 zone.

Staff concludes that the land use and zoning objective of the Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan and adjacent Wheaton CBD Plan will be accomplished if the subject site is rezoned. The rezoning would remove an institutional use with more trips than the proposed development, establish a medium density residential development within close

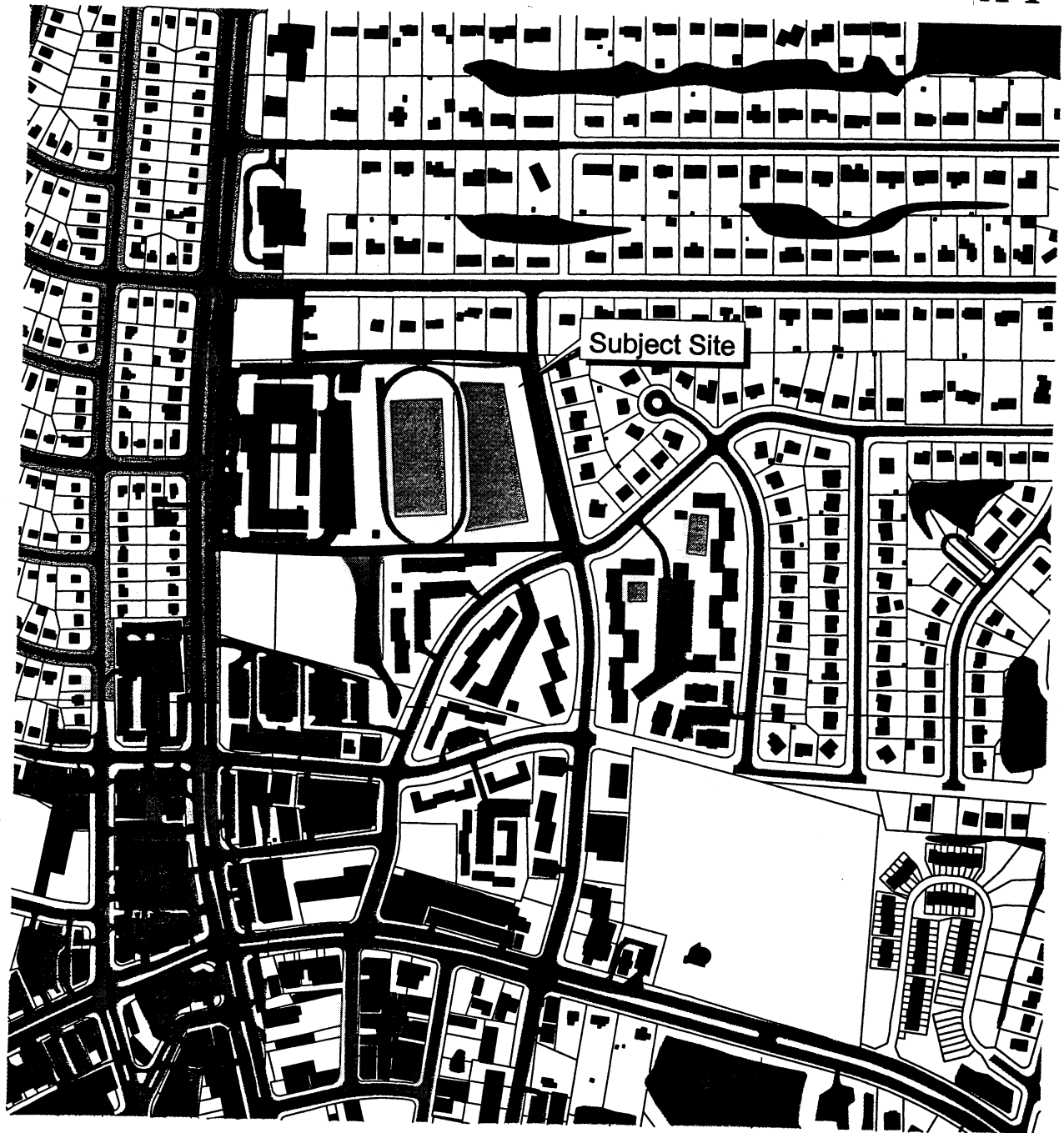
proximity to a transit station, and will be compatible with the surrounding residential development.

Attachments

Vicinity Map	A-1
Zoning Map	A-2
Schematic Development Plan	A-3
Montgomery Public Schools Letter	A-4
Environmental Planning Memo	A-5
Transportation Planning Memo	A-6
Wheaton Redevelopment Program Letter	A-7
Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee Letter	A-8
Citizens Letters	A-9

GOOD COUNSEL REZONING

A-1



Casual User Application

Notes:

The planimetric, property, and topographic information shown on this map is based on copyrighted Map Products from Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and may not be copied or reproduced without permission from M-NCPPC.

Property lines are compiled by adjusting the property lines to topography created from aerial photography and should not be interpreted as actual field surveys. Planimetric features were compiled from 1:14400 scale aerial photography using stereo photogrammetric methods.

This map is created from a variety of data sources, and may not reflect the most current conditions in any one location and may not be completely accurate or up to date. All maps features are approximately within five feet of their true location. This map may not be the same as a map of the same area plotted at an earlier time as the data is continuously updated. Use of this map, other than for general planning purposes is not recommended.

Copyright ©1996

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
1995 Change Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-2200



Legend

- Buildings
- County Boundary
- Parking Lots
- Lane/drives
- Cultural
- field, court
- pool
- Pavement Polygon
- pavement
- Hydrology - Line
- ROW
- Natural Features
- wooded
- Parcel
- Park.slp

Scale: 1" = 496'

A-3

AREOLA AVENUE

AMHERST AVENUE

Public Private Partnership

CAFETERIA CENTER

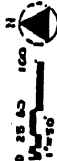
DEONIA AVENUE

DAVISON AVENUE

GRANDVIEW AVENUE

Public Private

1. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.
2. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.
3. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.
4. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.
5. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.
6. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector. The project is a public-private partnership between the City of Raleigh and the private sector.



SCHEMATIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

MEMORANDUM COUNTY: WAKE CO. JOB NO: 080174.01 - JAN 20, 2002

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

ENCLOSURES: 10 SHEETS

THE LESARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP, INC.

ARCHITECTS

1000 WEST GARDEN STREET, SUITE 1000, RALEIGH, NC 27603

TEL: 919.876.1111 FAX: 919.876.1112

WWW.LESARDARCHITECTS.COM

© 2002 THE LESARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP, INC.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

NO PART OF THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL, WITHOUT PERMISSION IN WRITING FROM THE ARCHITECT.

DATE: 1/20/02

BY: [Signature]

FOR: [Signature]

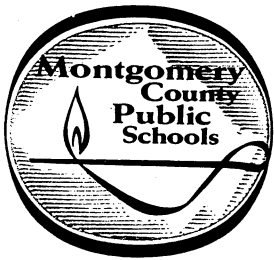
TITLE: SCHEMATIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PROJECT: OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

LOCATION: 1000 WEST GARDEN STREET, SUITE 1000, RALEIGH, NC 27603

SCALE: AS SHOWN

DATE: 1/20/02



850 Hungerford Drive * Rockville, Maryland * 20850-1747
Telephone (301)

279-3333

June 4, 2002

A-4

Ms. Jean Kaufman
Urban Design Division
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Dear Ms. Kaufman:

This letter is sent in response to rezoning application G-798, called "Our Lady of Good Counsel High School, Inc." This property is at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Arcola Avenue, in Wheaton, Maryland. The applicant's requested plan includes up to 9 single family detached homes and 199 townhouses. Based on average yield factors for comparable housing units, the impact of this project is estimated to be approximately 52 elementary, 27 middle, and 37 high school students.

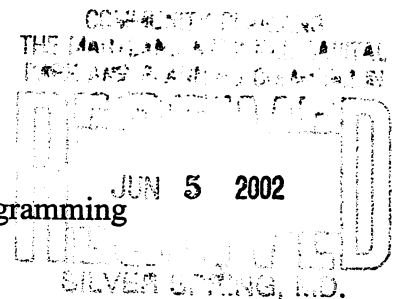
This property is located within the Kemp Mill Elementary School, Lee Middle School, and Kennedy High School service areas. Kemp Mill Elementary School is currently operating over capacity and is projected to remain over capacity for the six year forecast period. Lee Middle School is currently operating within capacity and is projected to remain within capacity for the six year forecast period. Kennedy High School is currently operating within capacity and is projected to remain within capacity for the six year forecast period. Please see the enclosed information from the FY2003 - FY2008 Capital Improvements Program for the enrollment trends and facility use at these schools.

As we have indicated in previous rezoning and development plan amendment requests, the Annual Growth Policy (AGP) is the vehicle that regulates subdivision development approval with regard to facility adequacy. The current AGP indicates that adequate school capacity exists in the Kennedy Cluster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Lavorgna".

Joseph J. Lavorgna, Director
Department of Planning and Capital Programming



JJL:bc

Enclosure

Copy to: Mr. Bowers, Mr. Crispell, Ms. Turpin



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION

A-5

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nkosi Yearwood, Community Based Planning

VIA: Steve Federline, Supervisor, Environmental Planning *SA*

FROM: Mark Pfefferle, Planning Coordinator, Environmental Planning *MP*

DATE: June 19, 2002

SUBJECT: Zoning Map Amendment No. G-798
Bachelors Forest LLC/Centex Home

Recommendation

The Environmental Planning staff has reviewed zoning map amendment No. G-798. Staff recommends approval of the zoning map amendment, and the schematic development plan as restricted by the binding elements.

Natural Resources

The property is located in Sligo Creek watershed, a Use I tributary of the Anacostia River. The site is currently occupied by Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. The Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) (#4-02334) was submitted on April 29, 2002 and approved on May 28, 2002.

The property does not include any wetlands, stream valleys, or environmentally sensitive areas. There are steep slopes (> 25%) on the property (graded as part of the original construction) and they parallel Amherst Avenue on the western property boundary. The steep slopes are not hydraulically connected to Waters of the United States.

The site does include serpentine soils, which has the potential to include asbestos. Only a geotechnical analysis of the site will reveal if the soils include asbestos. In order to build out the site, the applicant will need to remove large amounts of material to prepare the site. Environmental Planning encourages the applicant to voluntarily prepare a performance plan to limit fugitive dust emissions during construction.

Forest Conservation

The applicant submitted a preliminary forest conservation plan, as part of the rezoning application, on June 13, 2002. M-NCPPC staff has requested modifications to the preliminary forest conservation plan. Currently, there is no forest on the 14.74-acre property. The applicant is proposing to utilize an optional method of development for the property. Section 22A-12(f) of the Montgomery County Code requires single-family residential zones utilizing an optional method of development to meet either the afforestation or the conservation threshold onsite. Since there is no forest on the property, the applicant is required to meet the afforestation threshold onsite. This requires the applicant to provide 2.2 acres of forest and tree cover within the 14.74-acre site. The applicant has proposed to meet this requirement through a combination of forest planting, tree canopy, and street trees. It is Forest Conservation law's priority to maximize forest plantings and tree canopy and limit the amount of credit allocated to street trees. The exact amount of forest planting, tree canopy, and street trees will be determined as part of the preliminary plan. The preliminary forest conservation plan indicates that approximately 26 percent of the 2.2 acres of forest and tree cover required, will be met with forest. In addition, the proposed forested area provides side and rear yard setbacks less than the 8 and 20-foot side and rear yard setbacks required in the zoning requirements. The binding elements will provide useable rear and side yard spaces consistent with the RT-15 zoning requirements. However, additional forested areas are desirable and opportunities will be further examined during subsequent review processes.

Noise Impacts

The site is influenced by motor vehicle traffic along Georgia Avenue. A preliminary noise analysis conducted by M-NCPPC staff identified the 65-dBA Ldn noise contour approximately 240 feet from the centerline of Georgia Avenue. M-NCPPC staff has requested the applicant to prepare a thorough noise analysis to determine the location of the 70-dBA and 65-dBA noise contours, and levels at the closest building line.

The *Staff Guidelines for the Consideration of Transportation Noise Impact in Land Use Planning and Development*, developed in 1983, recommends a variety of techniques **in priority order** (or preference) to mitigate adverse noise impacts. In order of highest to lowest preference, these techniques include noise compatible land uses, setbacks, site-design measures, berms, acoustical fences and berms, landscaping and acoustical construction techniques. Section IV of the Guidelines state that *the feasibility of necessary noise attenuation measures will be considered in land use and zoning recommendations*. The site-specific techniques are only applicable when the option of placing a noise compatible land use (such as commercial or industrial uses) in the area of potential impact is not feasible for a particular parcel. In making such land use judgments, both the intensity of the intruding noise and the capacity for exterior mitigation are considered. The subject site is burdened by both very high and pervasive noise levels, and the incapacity for effective exterior noise mitigation near the source.

Noise compatible land uses is the preferred alternative for high noise areas, particularly where effective exterior noise mitigation is infeasible. Reliance upon acoustical treatments is the last method of noise abatement. The adequacy of acoustical treatment relies on proper construction

and installation and relies upon compliance by the residents. In order to maintain the benefit of the acoustical treatments windows exposed to the noise source must be kept closed because the benefits of the acoustical treatments will be negated.

On September 25, 2001, the Montgomery County Council approved the *County Highway Noise Abatement Policy*. One important aspect supported in the Executive's policy was to encourage the Planning Board to observe strict adherence to the staff guidelines as the most effective way to minimize future transportation noise problems. Unwritten but inherent in this statement is that the stakes are now higher for noise compatibility (with the potential for limited county funds being used to exterior noise abatement) and that the Planning Board should be aggressive in its consideration of noise compatibility. The Planning Board has recommended staff to revise the 1983 noise guidelines in light of the Policy. The Planning Board also requested the guidelines be brought to the Planning Board for review and approval after public review.

Since the passage of the Policy, M-NCPPC has been increasingly diligent in reviewing plans where noise may be an issue. M-NCPPC has requested additional setbacks, treatments, and designs to ensure compatibility with noise generating sources. Environmental Planning and Community Based Planning have suggested noise mitigation measures to the applicant including larger setbacks from Georgia Avenue and building orientation. Additional mitigation techniques will be incorporated into the plan during the development review process.

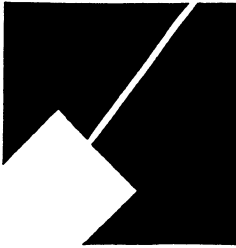
Stormwater Management

The applicant needs to provide stormwater management facilities to ensure that runoff is sent to a control structure prior to release off the property. The Maryland Stormwater Management Design Manual requires "that the annual recharge from post-development mimics the annual recharge from pre-development conditions." Thus, the more intensely a site is developed, the less likely it is for post-development recharge conditions to mimic pre-development conditions.

The applicant has submitted a stormwater management concept plan to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS). A stormwater quality control structure is proposed for the southwest corner of the property near the intersection of Amherst Avenue and Elkin Street. The concept plan requests a waiver for on-site quantity control.

Water and Sewer

Community water and sewer are available to this site (W-1 & S-1).



June 21, 2002

A-6

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nkosi Yearwood, Planner
Community-Based Planning Division

VIA: Ronald C. Welke, Supervisor
Transportation Planning

FROM: Shahriar Etemadi, Coordinator
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Rezoning, G-798, Good Counsel High School, Wheaton

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review of the subject rezoning application

RECOMMENDATION

1. Limit the development to 201 dwelling units.
2. Provide 60 feet of right-of-way from the centerline of Georgia Avenue.
3. Provide 40 feet of right-of-way from the centerline of Arcola Avenue.
4. Provide a six-foot sidewalk and an eight-foot offset landscaping panel on Georgia Avenue.
5. Provide a five-foot sidewalk and a six-foot offset landscaping panel on Arcola Avenue and Amherst Avenue.
6. Provide an east-west through street (Dawson Avenue Extended) connecting Georgia Avenue to Amherst Avenue that is private but built to a public standard with a width between 36 to 40 feet as shown on the plan.
7. Reduce the number of access points on Georgia Avenue from the existing two to one.

8. Coordinate with the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation and Maryland State Highway Administration regarding the change in access on Georgia Avenue and Amherst Avenue.

Local Area Transportation Review (LATR)

The proposed development generates significantly fewer trips than the existing high school and, therefore, a traffic study is not necessary to meet the Local Area Transportation Review requirements. A traffic statement was prepared to compare trip rates for the school with the proposed use of the site as a housing development.

The traffic counts from the driveways indicate that Good Counsel High School generates a total of 889 and 157 trips in the peak hour of the morning and evening weekday peak period, respectively. The 201 dwelling units will generate a maximum of 109 and 141 trips in the peak hour of the morning and evening weekday peak period, respectively. The difference is a reduction of 780 and 16 trips in the morning and evening peak hour, respectively. The analysis shows significant reduction in traffic on adjacent streets and, therefore, the proposed development will have a positive impact on the area roadways.

Access and Circulation

The proposed development will consolidate the current two access points on Georgia Avenue into one access point. This will increase the safety and efficiency of traffic movements along Georgia Avenue. One access point will be retained on Amherst Avenue. The two access points on Georgia Avenue and Amherst Avenue are connected through the site by a private road built to a public road standard with a width ranging from 36 to 40 feet as shown on the latest plan.

Policy Area Review/Staging Ceiling Analysis

The site is located within the Kensington-Wheaton policy area, which has a remaining capacity of 2784 jobs and 2531 housing units as of May 31, 2002.

SE:cmd

G-798 Good Counsel HS.DOC

**WHEATON REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Douglas M. Wrenn
Director

June 21, 2002

A-7

Honorable Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Chairman Holmes:

On behalf of the County Executive, I am writing to express strong support for the rezoning of Good Counsel High School to RT-15. The proposed rezoning would allow for the development of a residential neighborhood consisting of a mix of multi-family units, townhouses and single-family detached homes. It is consistent with the community's vision for Wheaton and fits within the redevelopment strategy that the County has adopted to revitalize the downtown.

The County Executive established the Wheaton Redevelopment Program with the goal of implementing a revitalization strategy based on smart growth principles. Part of the strategy is to attract new residential development within walking distance of the Metro station. This will help support the existing retail and restaurants in downtown Wheaton, increase the use of transit and create an appropriate transition from the business district to the single-family neighborhoods nearby.

The County Executive has a particular interest in the preservation of the Rafferty Center. The Redevelopment Office has been working with the applicant to identify a way to convert the Rafferty Center and surrounding green space into public ownership. Our goal is to create a new residential amenity for the citizens of Wheaton. In this respect, it would be desirable for the preservation of the Rafferty Center to be a binding element of the rezoning action. The development team of Centex Homes and Laing Homes has worked closely with the Wheaton Redevelopment Office during the planning phase of this project. This collaboration will continue throughout the approval and permitting process.

Sincerely,

Douglas M. Wrenn, Director
Wheaton Redevelopment Program

cc: Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive
Councilman Stephen Silverman



WHEATON REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Douglas M. Wrenn
Director

June 21, 2002

A-8

Honorable Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Chairman Holmes:

The Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee supports the proposal to redevelop the Good Counsel High School property. At its meeting on June 19, 2002, the Steering Committee voted to support the proposed reuse because of the belief that high quality residential development is needed to help revitalize and improve the economic stability of Wheaton. In addition, we believe that an urban housing development is a desirable transitional use connecting the downtown envisioned to the existing single-family neighborhoods.

The joint venture group of Centex Homes and Laing Homes met with the Steering Committee and has worked closely with the Wheaton Redevelopment Office. The Steering Committee requests that this coordination continue as the plans are refined through the development approval and permitting process. We expect to meet with the developers on a regular basis as the project moves forward.

Specifically, the Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee has the following five concerns that should be addressed during the review of subsequent development plans:

1. The Steering Committee places a great deal of value on the preservation and expansion of green space. In this respect, the open space shown on the concept plan would be an important amenity for this area of Wheaton. The Steering Committee would like to see more open space added to the plan.

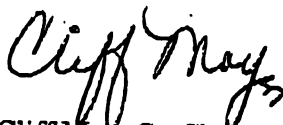
Page 2

2. The Steering Committee also recommends that the Rafferty Center be a binding element in the rezoning approval. This facility offers a special opportunity to expand the recreational resources in Wheaton.
3. The Steering Committee is concerned that adequate parking be provided. The plan should show how parking for the Rafferty Center will be provided so that visitors will not have to park along adjacent neighborhood streets.
4. The Steering Committee is concerned about the density of the project and specifically about the multi-family unit types (one over two; two over two) proposed by the developer. We recommend that this condominium type of residential development be eliminated from the plan and replaced with townhouses or single-family detached houses. This would reduce the overall density of the project.
5. The Steering Committee feels strongly that affordable housing opportunities need to be provided in Wheaton. We recommend that the developer comply with the MPDU requirements of this project.

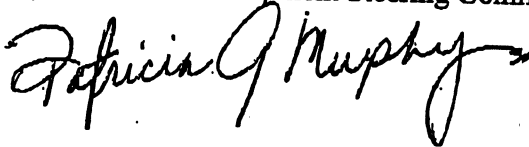
To address these issues, we feel that the zoning category of RT-12.5 would be more appropriate for this property. No matter what the zoning, the issues stated above are of primary importance to the Committee.

In summary, the Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee supports the proposed redevelopment of the Good Counsel property. We look forward to continued collaboration with the developer and County to address the issues outlined above during the plan approval process.

Respectfully,



Cliff Moy, Co-Chair
Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee



Patricia Murphy, Co-Chair
Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee

cc: Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive
Councilman Stephen Silverman

Joy R. Mara Communications

2706 Elnora Street
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

TEL (301) 946-0663

FAX (301) 946-4359

EMAIL joymara@starpower.net

June 20, 2002

A-9

The Montgomery County Planning Board
Attn: Nkosi Yearwood

Subject: Proposed zoning change for Good Counsel site in Wheaton

Sirs:

As 22-year homeowners in Wheaton Hills living three blocks from the current Good Counsel High School, we'd like to express our opposition to the developer's proposal to rezone this property from its current R90 designation to R15. We also object to this parcel's being rezoned before/without consideration of integrally-related adjacent land use issues, namely locations for the Wheaton Recreation Center and Wheaton Rescue Squad.

While the developer refers to creating "transitional" urban housing between the Wheaton CBD and the abutting neighborhoods, the plan actually introduces a very high density housing complex into a group of about 1000 traditional suburban single-family homes that are completely distinct from the CBD in density and feel. Moreover, the R15 designation (and the developer's plan for nearly 200 townhouses and multi-family units disguised as townhouses maximizes density even within townhouse zoning levels. In fact, only two other townhouse developments in Montgomery County – both in East County – have been granted such high-density zoning. While being put forth in the name of "Smart Growth," the plan includes two-car garages and driveways for all units.

Our specific concerns with a zoning change to R15 designation and the developer's current plan include the potential for:

- Increased through traffic in our neighborhood (Wheaton Hills). The plan calls for the main entrance to the complex to be on Georgia Avenue at Dawson Street and for streets within the complex to cut through to the east side of Wheaton. As a result, Dawson Street, which currently is a quiet few blocks with little non-resident traffic, could be used as an east-west alternative to Viers Mill Rd., destroying the peace which Wheaton Hills now enjoys.
- Increased crime. A dense complex introduced into a stable, relatively affluent single-home neighborhood is the recipe that changed a nice neighborhood a little north of our area on Georgia Avenue into a high-crime area (that now has "Hot Spot" designation for special assistance). The density of the Good Counsel developer's plan raises concern that the complex will be of low

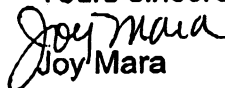
(Mara, 2 of 2 pages)

quality and desirability, attracting an investor market rather than homeowners. High-density rentals, especially the potential for multi-family use of one home, would threaten the safety and quality of life in our established neighborhoods. While the developer says the construction will be at the "luxury" level, no binding element of the plan addresses quality and he has not prepared concepts of what the dwellings would look like or construction materials. I recognize that this is not required for a zoning change, but the high density-low amenity approach raises a red flag even at this stage.

- Loss of Recreation Center facilities. As you are perhaps aware, the County Redevelopment Office, Wheaton Rescue Squad, Park and Planning Department, and Recreation Department are entertaining a host of possibilities for housing an expanded Rescue Squad and attending to Wheaton's recreation needs. Parcels of land adjacent to, within, and nearby the proposed complex figure into the varying options, and the timing of construction for the proposed complex also affects some of the options. We strongly oppose taking any action on rezoning that could create loss of recreation center facilities in our immediate area for any amount of time. Deciding on these issues piecemeal is also bad planning, since they are all integrally related. We believe the Planning Board should take a broad view and plan comprehensively, rather than using the incremental nature of "the process" as an excuse for sub-optimal decision-making.
- Loss of property value and decline of our neighborhoods. Many of our neighbors and we have invested substantially in home improvement and maintenance. We do not believe it is the County's role to enable negative changes that favor development over current, and long-standing, tax payers and residents. Surely a key goal of redevelopment is to improve Wheaton for the people who already live here and to "first, do no harm."

In conclusion, we are not opposed to change, and in fact welcome new development to revitalize Wheaton's downtown. For example, we support the new town home development planned for the Wheaton Lumber site, which appears to be neighborhood-friendly in current concept. We would like the Planning Board to approach the Good Counsel rezoning application not simply as considering a discrete developer's request at one stage of a process but rather as making decisions that will affect our neighborhoods and our lives profoundly. Please plan for our future with all of the above concerns in mind; zone for and insist on less dense development; make a binding prohibition on multi-unit, two-up, one-down-style dwellings on this property; and allow the developer to buy out of at least some of the County's MPDU requirement. **Please include this letter as part of the record for your proceedings on this matter.**

Yours sincerely,


Joy Mara


Gerald Mara

June 20, 2002

Mr. Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Montgomery County Department of Park & Planning
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Holmes -

May I offer a statement for the record of the forthcoming June 27 meeting of the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Yesterday I attended a presentation at a meeting of the Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee, given by the prospective developer of the land currently occupied by Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. I am appalled by the proposal: the development would have a residential density higher than any that has previously been approved in Montgomery County for townhouse development. I write to ask the Montgomery County Planning Board to reject this proposal outright.

For at least the twenty years that I have lived in Wheaton, Good Counsel's land has been zoned R-90 in the master plan, and I can see no sound reason for changing it. That zoning is essentially a compact made by Montgomery County with the surrounding neighborhoods. My own neighborhood, which abuts Good Counsel, contains some 160 single-family residences, most of which sit on half-acre lots, and virtually all of which are owner-occupied. This neighborhood is one of the most stable and cohesive in Wheaton, and makes disproportionate contributions to the tax base (considering property and household income tax). The current grotesque experimental proposal has so galvanized our community that our neighborhood association has raised many thousands of dollars in cash to hire professional legal assistance to stop it, with more pledged if needed - and this comes from people who are accustomed to paying \$5 in annual dues.

Retention of R-90 zoning for Good Counsel would allow some 60 single-family homes to be built there. Surely any capable developer could make a handsome profit from such a complex, and a proposal to develop it would not likely meet much opposition from its neighbors.

There are only two possible reasons for requesting RT-15 zoning: for Good Counsel to realize a higher sale price for its land, and for the purchasers to earn higher profits on their development investment. Neither of these deserves any consideration by the Planning Board, as they contravene the entire purpose of a land use planning process. I respect and sympathize with Good Counsel's educational mission, and am sorry to see it leave the neighborhood. But I see no public purpose served by maximizing the sale price of its property, since Good Counsel is an instrument of a large church with vast financial resources, and its future cannot be dependent on obtaining top price for its land. As for

the developer, it has submitted a proposal that is divisive, destructive of the character of the surrounding community, and inimical to the long term interests of Wheaton, which needs more, not fewer, single family homes. If it cannot make good money by building at the R-90 standard, let it sell to those who can.

You would best serve the interests of our community by rejecting this proposal outright. There is no sound planning reason for approving it, and there is no reason at all for giving it a quick pass through the system.

Yours sincerely -

Charles Clark
2310 Parker Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902-1935
charles.clark@wrpna.org

Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association <http://wrpna.org>

June 21, 2002

Montgomery County Planning Board
Attention: Nkosi Yearwood
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Re: Map Amendment Application G-798. Please include this letter in your public records on this matter.

Mr. Yearwood:

I write to express my concerns regarding G-798, a map amendment application that is currently under review by the planning board. This application proposes to rezone the current site of Our Lady of Good Counsel High School – nearly 15 acres – from R-90 to RT-15. I am opposed to the approval of this application as submitted.

Like most of my neighbors, I am saddened by the fact that we are losing a Good Counsel, which has been a good neighbor. I am also realistic in understanding that what comes after Good Counsel on that site will necessarily represent a big change which will likely come in the form of transitional residential housing, since the site is close to the Wheaton central business district.

However, I am appalled that the developer has chosen RT-15 as the target zoning designation for this site, which implies a residential density and loss of open space that will have a serious negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods in terms of quality of life:

- **Traffic congestion:** 201 dwelling units at the most seriously congested intersection in Wheaton – Arcola and Georgia Avenues. It is pure folly to think that these units, with their two-car garages, will lessen the traffic load in the area. In addition, the traffic indicators in the application only address peak hour traffic. Where do you think that these cars will go on the weekends?
- **Neighborhood compatibility:** the proposed mix of stacked units, townhouses, and detached houses may have a 'diversity' that sounds appealing in the current political climate, but the Good Counsel site is surrounded on three sides by R-90 and R-60 zones. The developer appears to be proposing to plant a miniature King Farm in the middle of stable and modestly spacious single-family properties. Given its prominent position at what is likely the highest point in Wheaton, a more subdued plan is surely called for.
- **Lack of coordinated planning:** the rezoning of this property and the associated site plans that will follow **must** be coordinated with the other changes that are being contemplated for adjacent properties. You are professional planners. You are negligent if you do not apply binding elements that compel accommodating the relocation of the Wheaton Rescue Squad and the future of the WMATA site. These three properties – Good Counsel, the Arcola properties of the Rescue Squad, and WMATA – comprise a contiguous block of land in excess of 18 acres.

There is no excuse for not calling all of the landholders to the table for a real planning exercise. While the developer claims to be 'flexible' and open to considering various options, the very fact that they are going forward on their own fast timeframe is evidence that they will not make the first move to ensure that of their development is compatible with the needs of Wheaton for its Rescue Squad and its Recreation Center.

In sum, Mr. Yearwood, I urge your staff to recommend that this plan be amended to contain binding elements that:

- Lower the residential density
- Eliminate the 'stacked' housing units
- Devote between 25% public park space
- Ensure that Wheaton will retain – without interruption – a public community recreation center
- Finds a suitable location for the new Wheaton Rescue Squad building near the CBD, preferably on or adjacent to the WMATA site

Sincerely,

Deborah Jabon-Clark
2310 Parker Avenue
Wheaton MD 20902
301.942.9475

LAW OFFICES OF

KNOPF & BROWN

401 EAST JEFFERSON STREET

SUITE 206

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

(301) 545-6100

FAX: (301) 545-6103

E-MAIL KNOPF@KNOPF-BROWN.COM

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL

(301) 545-6104

NORMAN G. KNOPF

June 21, 2002

VIA FACSIMILE & MAIL
(301) 495-1304

Chairman Arthur Holmes, Jr.
and Members of the Board
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: CENTEX Homes/Good Council High School Property
Local Map Amendment G-798

Dear Chairman Holmes and Members of the Board:

This letter is on behalf of the Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association, which this firm represents. For the reasons set forth below, we urge the Board to recommend **denial or deferral**.

1. The application presents the opportunity to the Board to act as a planning agency (which is its purpose) rather than an agency that merely reacts under time pressure to an instant application.
2. The application deals solely with the redevelopment of the Good Counsel School Property. The use and development of two large adjacent parcels are not addressed as part of this project (i) 1.3 acres of property owned by Wheaton Rescue Squad along Arcola Avenue to the North, and; (ii) the 4-acre WMATA property located to the South.
3. There are two major issues of concern to the entire Wheaton community which also are not addressed by this application:
 - a. A site for a new Wheaton Rescue Squad facility; and
 - b. An adequate Wheaton Community Recreation Center.

The present Wheaton Rescue Squad facility is grossly inadequate in size and antiquated. The entire Wheaton community recognizes the need for a new site in which the Squad can build a modern facility. The property owned by the Squad along Arcola, adjacent

Chairman Holmes & Members of the Board
Department of Park & Planning
June 21, 2002
Page 2

to the proposed project, is inadequate for its needs. The Squad, nevertheless, may be forced to build there due to the inability to obtain a more appropriate site.

The Wheaton Community Recreation Center is very heavily used. It plays a vital role in providing services to the community, particularly its youth. The location of the Center next to the Wheaton Library permits coordination of programming and uses between the Center and the Library. However, in order to accommodate the needs of the Fire & Rescue Squad, Douglas Wrenn, apparently on behalf of the County Executive Branch of Government, has been urging the destruction of the current Wheaton Recreation Center so that its site may be used by the Rescue Squad. The entire Wheaton community is extremely upset by even consideration of such a proposal due to the important function of the Center and the adverse consequences that would flow from even a temporary closure of the Center while it is relocated.

4. The Good Counsel School site, the adjacent Rescue Squad property and/or the adjacent WMATA property, afford an immediate opportunity for the Planning Board to resolve satisfactorily these pressing community needs:

- a. An appropriate site for the Wheaton Rescue Squad;
- b. Preserving and expanding the Recreation Center facilities; and
- c. Development of the Good Counsel property for residential use.

If the instant application is not deferred for a limited period of time, such as sixty days, to explore fully taking advantage of this opportunity, *it will be lost forever.*

For example, Wheaton Rescue Squad could be located on the corner of Georgia and Arcola, which is part of the Good Counsel site. The property currently owned by the Rescue Squad behind that site could be made part of the Wheaton Rescue Squad facility, or developed for residential use as part of the Good Counsel site. Another alternative is that a portion of the WMATA property could serve as the site for the Wheaton Rescue Squad with one access route through the Good Counsel site. Other portions of the WMATA property might be made part of the residential project of applicant.

We have spoken with representatives of the Rescue Squad and we understand that they are flexible in being willing to sell/swap the property they currently own in order to obtain an appropriate site. The WMATA site is on the surplus property list, and Doug Wrenn has already been in the process of exploring a possible swap of the WMATA property for property or projects elsewhere in the County; i.e., the property is available for another use (with the exception of the south-west corner because it is an emergency exit).

Chairman Holmes & Members of the Board
Department of Park & Planning
June 21, 2002
Page 3

5. If the Rescue Squad were to be located on the WMATA site, the Good Counsel project as presently proposed would need modification, including its binding elements. For example, the park now proposed between Georgia and Arcola should be moved to the opposite end, next to the WMATA site, so as to provide a buffer/screening for the Rescue Squad site. If the Rescue Squad were to be located along Georgia Avenue near Arcola, the presently proposed plans should be modified to incorporate the property presently owned by the Rescue Squad along Arcola for park/buffer purposes or residential housing.

In short, a small amount of time is needed in order to explore the opportunities available and try to resolve the community's needs while at the same time providing the applicant with sufficient land to construct a residential community. This brief respite should not cause any harm to the applicant. The Good Counsel school is not slated to close until 2005. Thus, construction is hardly imminent.

6. We appreciate the staff's recognition of the desirability of expanding the Community Recreation Center facilities by trying to preserve the Rafferty Center as part of the proposed project. However, as we understand the status of the project, the applicant has the option of tearing down the Rafferty Center totally; or it may choose to retain it but the applicant may determine what hours, if any, the general public could use the facilities. The deferral that we have requested would permit community and Planning Board staff and the applicant an opportunity to revise the plan, and its binding elements to assure the preservation of the present Wheaton Recreation Center by providing another site to the Wheaton Rescue Squad and to assure the present Wheaton Recreation Center facilities are supplemented by the meaningful use of the Rafferty Center.

7. Our request for denial or deferral in order to provide sufficient time to plan for and satisfy vital community needs is consistent with the law. §59-H-6.1 expressly provides that:

"The fact that an application [for local map amendment] complies with all of the requirements of the zone applied for shall not be sufficient to require the granting of the application."

[At the hearing before the Board we shall also show that the application does not comply with numerous other requirements, such as compatibility, green space, and so on.]

Chairman Holmes & Members of the Board
Department of Park & Planning
June 21, 2002
Page 4

For the above stated reasons, the Wheaton Regional Neighborhood Association requests that this Board recommend **deferral** or **denial**.

Respectfully submitted,



Norman G. Knopf

cc: Deborah Jabon-Clarke, Pres.
Joan Rubin

To: Planning Board
Attn: Nkosi Yearwood
FAX: 301-495-1304

From: Jacqueline Small
2305 Hermitage Avenue
Silver Spring MD. 20902
Phone: 301-949-7342
FAX: 301-949-7352
Date: June 20, 2002

Dear Planning Board,

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS AS PART OF THE RECORD ON THE ZONING HEARING FOR GOOD COUNSEL.

As a long time resident of Wheaton, I am writing you about the rezoning of Good Counsel scheduled for June 27th.

For the past few years, as a civic activist and concerned citizen, and in my capacity as a committee member, I have been looking at the pieces surrounding the Good Counsel property which the Redevelopment Committee has discussed. Our association has met with the Rescue Squad on three or four occasions to help them identify the best location for the entire Wheaton Community, we have met with Marilyn Praisner to discuss our concerns, we have spoken to Martie Klauber to be sure we considered all the issues and spoke to all the appropriate parties, we have made our concerns known to the Wheaton Citizens Coalition which fully supported our views (see attached letter).

I feel quite strongly that the rezoning should not go forward without taking into account the needs of the Rescue Squad and the continuation of the services of the Recreation Center. Once the rezoning is approved it will be next to impossible to accommodate the needs of the Rescue Squad in an adequate manner. Because of this, we urge you to consider denying rezoning at this point in time and recommend that all the parties concerned sit down and look at how all the parts can be accommodated.

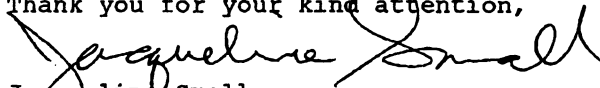
I fully understand the need of the Rescue Squad to find larger quarters. I believe that the WMATA site next to Good Counsel is the appropriate site for them. It is close to the Central Business District and closest to their current service area. It is large enough to accommodate their desire to build a Community Center for revenue generation and allow for associated parking. It would be immediately available for them to build since timing is an important consideration for them. The Rescue Squad has noted one concern which is the need for two driveways which they feel cannot be accommodated on the WMATA site. And this is exactly why I feel that the rezoning and the relocation of the Wheaton Rescue Squad must be considered together. If the parties associated considered how this might work together, before rezoning, then perhaps the developer of Good Counsel would consider giving the Rescue Squad the additional footage to have two entrances and then perhaps part of the back of the WMATA site could serve to fill part of the forest requirements of the rezoning or the Rescue Squad could exchange some of their property on Arcola for that additional Georgia Avenue frontage. Further, with the Rescue Squad on the WMATA site, the developers might prefer to put a stronger buffer of trees alongside the southern boundary next to the WMATA site so that it provides a screen from the Rescue Squad. But all of this can only be done BEFORE rezoning.

As to the provision for Recreation, We must insist that the County maintain the current Recreation Center. It serve many many citizens, not the least of which the Hot Spots program which Kathlyn Kennedy Townsend has so strongly endorsed, plus a Friday Club for after school children. In addition, it is an important overflow for hyper-active children who spend part of their time after school in the library. Cynthia Hicks, the Wheaton Regional librarian, told me that she sends these children to play for a while at the Rec Center. These programs and others for seniors and other citizens cannot and must not be suspended. The Rec Center, while smaller than a regional center, is a place where children can walk to it, thus reducing the horrible traffic that already exists in Wheaton. We need neighborhood recreational centers, as well as regional ones.

If the Rafferty Center were included in the rezoning it should only be done as an addition, not as a substitution because the current Rec Center cannot be closed. Nor, I should note should children be asked to co-exist with a Rescue Squad on that site as has been proposed. It is too dangerous.

So, I would encourage the Planning Board to consider recommending that all the parties involved sit down and consider their mutual needs and interests and come up with the best plan for the community. We are talking about Wheaton for the next 30 or 40 years. What is the rush if the rezoning is delayed for a couple of months, especially when no building is scheduled for 3-4 years? If the WMTA site proves unacceptable for the First Aid Squad, then other properties in the area should be considered and not the Recreational center. The Planning Board has a responsibility to listen to the citizens of Montgomery County and to make decisions in their best interests. Getting rid of the Recreation center is not in our best interests.

Thank you for your kind attention,



Jacqueline Small

Citizen and member, Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association

To: Planning Board
Attn: Nkosi Yearwood
FAX: 301-495-1304

From: Robert O. Small and MarieAnne Small
2301 Hermitage Avenue
Silver Spring MD. 20902
Phone: 301-949-1245
FAX: 301-949-7352
Date: June 20, 2002

Dear Planning Board,

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS AS PART OF THE RECORD ON THE ZONING HEARING FOR GOOD COUNSEL.

As a long time resident of Wheaton, I am writing you about the rezoning of Good Counsel scheduled for June 27th.

For the past two years, as a civic activist and concerned citizen, and in my capacity as a committee member, I have been looking at the pieces surrounding the Good Counsel property which the Redevelopment Committee has discussed. Our association has met with the Rescue Squad on three or four occasions to help them identify the best location for the entire Wheaton Community, we have met with Marilyn Praisner to discuss our concerns, we have spoken to Martie Klauber to be sure we considered all the issues and spoke to all the appropriate parties, we have made our concerns known to the Wheaton Citizens Coalition which fully supported our views (see attached letter).

I feel quite strongly that the rezoning should not go forward without taking into account the needs of the Rescue Squad and the continuation of the services of the Recreation Center. Once the rezoning is approved it will be next to impossible to accommodate the needs of the Rescue Squad in an adequate manner. Because of this, we urge you to consider denying rezoning at this point in time and recommend that all the parties concerned sit down and look at how all the parts can be accommodated.

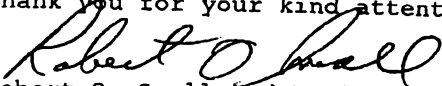
We fully understand the need of the Rescue Squad to find larger quarters. I believe that the WMATA site next to Good Counsel is the appropriate site for them. It is close to the Central Business District and closest to their current service area. It is large enough to accommodate their desire to build a Community Center for revenue generation and allow for associated parking. It would be immediately available for them to build since timing is an important consideration for them. The Rescue Squad has noted one concern which is the need for two driveways which they feel cannot be accommodated on the WMATA site. And this is exactly why I feel that the rezoning and the relocation of the Wheaton Rescue Squad must be considered together. If the parties associated considered how this might work together, before rezoning, then perhaps the developer of Good Counsel would consider giving the Rescue Squad the additional footage to have two entrances and then perhaps part of the back of the WMATA site could serve to fill part of the forest requirements of the rezoning or the Rescue Squad could exchange some of their property on Arcola for that additional Georgia Avenue frontage. Further, with the Rescue Squad on the WMATA site, the developers might prefer to put a stronger buffer of trees alongside the southern boundary next to the WMATA site so that it provides a screen from the Rescue Squad. But all of this can only be done BEFORE rezoning.

As to the provision for Recreation, We must insist that the County maintain the current Recreation Center. It serve many many citizens, not the least of which the Hot Spots program which Kathlyn Kennedy Townsend has so strongly endorsed, plus a Friday Club for after school children. In addition, it is an important overflow for hyper-active children who spend part of their time after school in the library. Cynthia Hicks, the Wheaton Regional librarian, told me that she sends these children to play for a while at the Rec Center. These programs and others for seniors and other citizens cannot and must not be suspended. The Rec Center, while smaller than a regional center, is a place where children can walk to it, thus reducing the horrible traffic that already exists in Wheaton. We need neighborhood recreational centers, as well as regional ones.

If the Rafferty Center were included in the rezoning it should only be done as an addition, not as a substitution because the current Rec Center cannot be closed. Nor, I should note should children be asked to co-exist with a Rescue Squad on that site as has been proposed. It is too dangerous.

So, I would encourage the Planning Board to consider recommending that all the parties involved sit down and consider their mutual needs and interests and come up with the best plan for the community. We are talking about Wheaton for the next 30 or 40 years. What is the rush if the rezoning is delayed for a couple of months, especially when no building is scheduled for 3-4 years? If the WMTA site proves unacceptable for the First Aid Squad, then other properties in the area should be considered and not the Recreational center. It does not take a mental giant to see that sites like Wheaton Lumber or the eye sore on Georgia at the intersection of Randolph would be idea sites, only money and greed seem to get in the way of intelligent alternatives. The Planning Board has a responsibility to listen to the citizens of Montgomery County and to make decisions in their best interests. Getting rid of the Recreation center is not in our best interests.

Thank you for your kind attention,


Robert O. Small and MarieAnne Small



Citizen and member, Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association

To: Planning Board
Attn: Nkosi Yearwood

FAX: 301-495-1304

From: Julia A. Horman
2104 Parker Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902
Member of Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association

Phone: 301-946-8280

Date: June 21, 2002

Pages including cover sheet: 2

Dear Planning Board,

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS AS PART OF THE RECORD ON THE ZONING HEARING FOR GOOD COUNSEL.

I am writing to you about the rezoning of the Good Counsel property scheduled for June 27th. Over the past two years, as a concerned citizen, member and past Treasurer of the Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association, I have been watching, with some alarm, the development activity related to the relocation of the Rescue Squad and rezoning of the Good Counsel property.

The efforts of our association have been directed at identifying balanced solutions that, at a minimum, would preserve quality of life, safety of our children, opportunity for recreation and the property values that we currently enjoy in our community. Representatives of our association have met with the Rescue Squad on three or four occasions to help them identify the best location for the entire Wheaton Community, we have met with Marilyn Praisner to discuss our concerns, we have spoken to Martie Klauber to be sure we considered all the issues and spoke to all the appropriate parties, we have made our concerns known to the Wheaton Citizens Coalition which fully supported our views.

I feel quite strongly that the rezoning should not go forward without taking into account both the needs of the Rescue Squad and the continuation of the services of the Recreation Center. Once the rezoning is approved it will be next to impossible to accommodate the needs of the Rescue Squad in an adequate manner. Because of this, we urge you to consider denying rezoning at this point in time and recommend that all the parties concerned sit down and look at how all the parts can be accommodated.

I acknowledge that the Rescue Squad needs to find larger quarters, however, I firmly believe that the WMATA site next to Good Counsel is the appropriate site for them. It is close to the Central

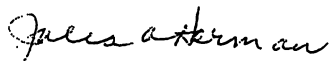
Business District and closest to the Rescue Squads's current service area. It is large enough to accommodate their desire to build a Community Center for revenue generation and allow for associated parking. It would help to ensure the safety of the many citizens, especially children, who regularly walk to and from the library. It would be immediately available for development and timing has been identified as an important consideration. The Rescue Squad has noted one concern - the need for two driveways, which they feel cannot be accommodated on the WMATA site. However, with cooperation from the Planning Board and the developer of the Good Counsel site, it is easy to see that this condition could be remedied. If the rezoning and the relocation of the Wheaton Rescue Squad were considered together, the developer of Good Counsel could consider giving the Rescue Squad the additional footage to have two entrances in exchange for part of the back of the WMATA site which could serve to satisfy part of the forest requirements of the rezoning or the Rescue Squad could exchange some of their property on Arcola for that additional Georgia Avenue frontage. Further, with the Rescue Squad on the WMATA site, the developers might prefer to put a stronger buffer of trees alongside the southern boundary next to the WMATA site so that it provides a screen from the Rescue Squad. But all of this can only be done BEFORE rezoning.

As to the provision for Recreation, I must insist that the County maintain the current Recreation Center. It serves many, many citizens, not the least of whom are those participating in the Hot Spots program which Kathlyn Kennedy Townsend has so strongly endorsed, plus a Friday Club for after school children. In addition, it is an important overflow for hyper-active children who spend part of their time after school in the library. Cynthia Hicks, the Wheaton Regional librarian, has confirmed that she regularly sends these children to play for a while at the Rec Center. These programs and those for seniors and other citizens cannot and must not be suspended. The Rec Center, while smaller than a regional center, is a unique place that children can actually walk to; it provides the dual benefit of an important developmental opportunity for the kids without adding to the horrible traffic that already exists in Wheaton. We need to preserve neighborhood recreational centers especially in areas with high population density such as exists here.

If the Rafferty Center were included in the rezoning it should only be done as an addition, not as a substitution - the current Rec Center cannot be closed. The proposed combined Rescue Squad/Rec Center is not a viable option; it would be too dangerous for our children and seniors.

I encourage the Planning Board to consider recommending that all involved parties convene to consider their mutual needs and interests and come up with the best plan for the community. The rhetoric surrounding the redevelopment activity in Wheaton seems to be focused on revitalization and improvements aimed at making Wheaton a more desirable, livable community now and for years to come. Please delay the rezoning so that a balanced solution that meets the needs of our community can be achieved.

Thank you for your kind attention,



Julia A. Horman
Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association

FAX

**To: Planning Board
Attn: Nkosi Yearwood**

FAX: 301-495-1304

**From: Joan Rubin, Vice President
Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association**

Phone 301-933-6931

Date: June 20, 2002

Pages including cover sheet: 4/4

Dear Planning Board,

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS AS PART OF THE RECORD ON THE ZONING HEARING FOR GOOD COUNSEL.

As a long time resident of Wheaton, member of the Redevelopment Committee, member of the Wheaton Citizens Coalition and Vice President and past President of the Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association, I am writing you about the rezoning of Good Counsel scheduled for June 27th.

For the past two years, as a civic activist and concerned citizen, and in my capacity as officer and committee member, I have been looking at the pieces surrounding the Good Counsel property which the Redevelopment Committee has discussed. Our association has met with the Rescue Squad on three or four occasions to help them identify the best location for the entire Wheaton Community, we have met with Marilyn Praisner to discuss our concerns, we have spoken to Martie Klauber to be sure we considered all the issues and spoke to all the appropriate parties, we have made our concerns known to the Wheaton Citizens Coalition which fully supported our views (see attached letter).

I feel quite strongly that the rezoning should not go forward without taking into account the needs of the Rescue Squad and the continuation of the services of the Recreation Center. Once the rezoning is approved it will be next to impossible to accommodate the needs of the Rescue Squad in an adequate manner. Because of this, we urge you to consider denying rezoning at this point in time and recommend that all the parties concerned sit down and look at how all the parts can be accommodated.

Here is my thinking on this. I fully understand the need of the Rescue Squad to find larger quarters. I believe that the WMATA site next to Good Counsel is the appropriate site for them. It is close to the Central Business District and closest to their current service area. It is large

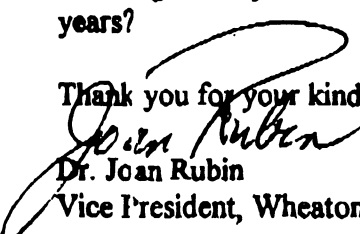
enough to accommodate their desire to build a Community Center for revenue generation and allow for associated parking. It would be immediately available for them to build since timing is an important consideration for them. The Rescue Squad has noted one concern which is the need for two driveways which they feel cannot be accommodated on the WMATA site. And this is exactly why I feel that the rezoning and the relocation of the Wheaton Rescue Squad must be considered together. If the parties associated considered how this might work together, before rezoning, then perhaps the developer of Good Counsel would consider giving the Rescue Squad the additional footage to have two entrances and then perhaps part of the back of the WMATA site could serve to fill part of the forest requirements of the rezoning or the Rescue Squad could exchange some of their property on Arcola for that additional Georgia Avenue frontage. Further, with the Rescue Squad on the WMATA site, the developers might prefer to put a stronger buffer of trees alongside the southern boundary next to the WMATA site so that it provides a screen from the Rescue Squad. But all of this can only be done BEFORE rezoning.

As to the provision for Recreation, I must insist that the County maintain the current Recreation Center. It serve many many citizens, not the least of which the Hot Spots program which Kathlyn Kennedy Townsend has so strongly endorsed, plus a Friday Club for after school children. In addition, it is an important overflow for hyper-active children who spend part of their time after school in the library. Cynthia Hicks, the Wheaton Regional librarian, told me that she sends these children to play for a while at the Rec Center. These programs and others for seniors and other citizens cannot and must not be suspended. The Rec Center, while smaller than a regional center, is a place where children can walk to it, thus reducing the horrible traffic that already exists in Wheaton. We need neighborhood recreational centers, as well as regional ones.

If the Rafferty Center were included in the rezoning it should only be done as an addition, not as a substitution because the current Rec Center cannot be closed. Nor, I should note should children be asked to co-exist with a Rescue Squad on that site as has been proposed. It is too dangerous.

So, I would encourage the Planning Board to consider recommending that all the parties involved sit down and consider their mutual needs and interests and come up with the best plan for the community. We are talking about Wheaton for the next 30 or 40 years. What is the rush if the rezoning is delayed for a couple of months, especially when no building is scheduled for 3-4 years?

Thank you for your kind attention,


Dr. Joan Rubin

Vice President, Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association

WHEATON CITIZENS COALITION

**11221 Rose Lane
Wheaton, MD 20902
301-942-7663**

²⁰⁰¹
February 1, 2000

**The Honorable Douglas Duncan
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850**

Dear Mr. Duncan:

At the community meeting to update citizens on Wheaton Redevelopment, held at Crossway Community on December 4th, the Wheaton Rescue Squad presented its need to acquire a larger site for the ever-increasing demand it has been facing for the past decade. Among the potential sites mentioned were the Wheaton Community Recreation Center (adjacent to the library) and the property that the Rescue Squad owns on Arcola Avenue, both of which have major drawbacks.

We believe the WMATA site south of Good Counsel is the best location for the Rescue Squad for the following reasons:

1. The WMATA site keeps the Rescue Squad closer to the Central Business District and allows it to better serve all Wheaton area citizens from a more central location, closer to its current service area.
2. It is large enough for the Squad needs for now and in the future. Further, at the WMATA site, its frequent calls will have less impact on the considerable pedestrian traffic that the library draws. Many of these pedestrians are children who would be at considerable risk when going to and from the library.

We also believe the current Community Recreation Center should be maintained. Even though the Recreation Center could use some upgrading, eliminating it would impose considerable hardship for many youth groups as well as the community at large. Indeed, a tremendous void would occur if the community were left without a community center for five or more years while Good Counsel moves and the Rafferty Center is made usable. It is our understanding that the Recreation Center not only hosts classes and considerable drop-in traffic, which use the gym, it also serves several youth groups on a weekly basis including the WIC Program and the Hot Spots Programs. Further, according to the Wheaton Librarian, eliminating the Recreation Center would put considerable burden on the library itself.

Some drawbacks also apply to the Arcola site given its proximity to the heavy pedestrian traffic to and from the library and the fact that the Georgia and Arcola intersections are already beyond

Capacity. ("F" level) In addition, the Rescue Squad wants to generate revenue through a 250 seat multi-purpose meeting room, which could not be accommodated on this Arcola site.

The Wheaton Citizens Coalition support the recommendations presented by the community and we hope that we can count on your endorsement of the following recommendations:

1. That the county makes every effort to make the WMATA site available to the Rescue Squad; and
2. That the Community Recreation Center be maintained and upgraded to continue its important service to our youth and the entire community.

Sincerely,

Marian M. Fryer, President
Wheaton Citizens Coalition

Cc: Natalie Cantor, Director, Mid-County Center
Doug Wrenn, Director, Wheaton Redevelopment Office
Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association