



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
Item #
4/12/07

March 28, 2007

MEMORANDUM – MANDATORY REFERRAL

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: John A. Carter, Chief *JAC*
Community-Based Planning Division

Judy Daniel, Team Leader, Bethesda-Cherry Chase/North Bethesda Team
Community-Based Planning Division *JDD*

FROM: Kristin O'Connor, Senior Planner (301.495.2172) *KO*
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral No. 07202-MCPS-1: Ashburton Elementary School –
Eleven Classroom Addition and Drop-Off Loop, 6314 Lone Oak Drive,
R-60 Zone, North Bethesda-Garrett Park Master Plan (1992)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval to transmit the following comments to Montgomery
County Public Schools (MCPS):

1. Relocate the drop-off and pick-up area to a separate location with a separate access point from Pomona Drive. Restrict bus drop-off to the existing bus loop (off Lone Oak Drive).
2. Provide cut-off fixtures in the drop-off loop to minimize the light that trespasses into the side and rear yard of adjacent neighbors. The lights should be turned off during non-school operating periods.
3. Adequately screen and shade the proposed parking spaces within the drop-off loop with evergreen shrubs and two additional shade trees.
4. As part of the Adequate Public Facilities (APF) test for transportation requirements:
 - a. Submit a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study if future capital improvements are proposed to accommodate student enrollment higher than the 660 students.
 - b. Implement the traffic control and operational measures recommended in the submitted traffic study to address access and circulation concerns associated with the proposed on-site drop-off and pick-up loop along Pomona Drive.
 - c. Continue community coordination to review drop-off and pick-up operations and refine the operations as warranted.

THE PROPOSAL

The purpose of this project is to expand the school's capacity from 458 to 659 students, with support spaces, which meets the educational standards for program grade K-5. Per the educational specifications, one kindergarten classroom, six regular classrooms, four specialty classrooms, and one staff development office are proposed. In the addition, a new art room has been provided, replacing the art room in the existing building. This will be displaced by the new addition. All areas in the proposed addition will be designed to meet national and local building codes including fire, safety, and health standards. The addition will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A new drop-off loop is provided, accessed from Pomona Drive. It will provide several parking spaces for short-term parking. This drop-off loop will also provide an ADA accessible pedestrian sidewalk to link the school to the existing sidewalk on Pomona Drive. Eight (8) new parking spaces (including one handicapped space) are proposed in the new drop-off loop. These spaces will serve parents with children of special needs, and will increase the efficiency of the new drop-off loop.

Exterior lighting will be predominately the same as existing conditions with the exception of new lighting in the area of the drop-off loop. The lighting is designed to shield adjacent residences from intrusive glare while maintaining light levels for safety and security purposes. This lighting will be designed to be on separate circuits such that some of the lighting can be turned off during non-school operating periods to the degree practical.

THE SITE

Ashburton Elementary School is located on 8.3 acres and currently has an enrollment of 458 students. The site has seven (7) portables (to be removed), a soccer field, a playground, two basketball courts, and sixty-eight (68) parking spaces. It is located in an R-60 zoned residential area just north of the Capital Beltway, between Old Georgetown Road and Fernwood Road. It is surrounded on all sides by single-family houses. Currently, vehicular access to the site is by a single entrance from Lone Oak Drive. Three sidewalks lead into the school from Lone Oak Drive, Pomona Drive and DePaul Drive. The school parking area is located to the west of the school building. This area is also a bus drop-off area.

MASTER PLAN ANALYSIS

Master Plan

The subject site is located in the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan area. While not specifically addressing the addition or modernization, the Master Plan does acknowledge that, "public schools are an essential component of community life and should be an integral part of community structure" (page 239). An objective of the Plan is to "provide for services and facilities that meet the present and future needs of the community" (page 227).

CONFORMANCE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The proposed school modernization meets the setbacks, the height limits, and the coverage of the R-60 Zone.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR THE R-60 ZONE

	Permitted	Existing	Proposed
Minimum Lot Area	6,000	358,254	358,254
Setbacks			
Minimum Front	30 feet	59 feet	59 feet
Minimum Side	8 feet	130 feet	130 feet
Minimum Rear	25 feet	103 feet	103 feet
Height Limits	35 feet	16 feet	16 feet
Coverage	30% max	48,955/13.7%	64,518/18.0%

TRANSPORTATION

Local Area Transportation Review

The proposed classroom addition to the existing elementary school satisfies the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) test and will have no adverse effect on nearby roadway conditions or pedestrian facilities. A traffic study was required to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review because the school generates 30 or more peak-hour trips within the weekday morning hour.

Vehicular and School Bus Access Circulation and Parking

Currently, the only vehicular access point into the 68-space parking lot is from Lone Oak Drive opposite Sinnott Drive. The parking area is used at different times of the day for:

1. School buses to drop off and pick up students.
2. Teachers and staff parking.
3. Service vehicle access.

A new on-site, two-lane drop-off/pick-up loop on Pomona Drive with eight parking spaces will improve access to the school. Staff recommends that only cars use the drop-off loop and that all buses use the existing driveway off Lone Oak Drive to reduce conflicts on Pomona Drive.

Master-Planned Roadways and Bikeways

According to the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan, the nearby roadways and bikeways are designated as follows:

1. Lone Oak Drive is a two-lane primary residential street, zoned P-4, with a 70-foot right-of-way. Residents have expressed concern about non-local traffic now using Lone Oak Drive between Fernwood Road and Old Georgetown Road.
2. Fernwood Road is a two-lane primary residential street, zoned P-8, with a 70-foot right-of-way.

DePaul Drive, Montauk Avenue, Pomona Drive, and Sinnott Drive function as secondary residential streets with 60-foot rights-of-way and are not listed in the Master Plan.

Policy Area Transportation Review/Staging Ceiling Condition

Ashburton Elementary School is an existing land use with 50 jobs already accounted for in the staging ceiling numbers. Under the current Annual Growth Policy, Policy Area Transportation Review is not considered in the APF review.

ENVIRONMENT

Approval of the submitted Tree Save Plan is recommended. Eight specimen trees are to be removed for this project. There are no streams, wetlands, steep slopes, or erodible soils on the Ashburton Elementary School site. The school is not in a Special Protection Area of Primary Management Area.

Stormwater Management

The Department of Permitting Services has approved a Stormwater Management Concept Plan submitted by MCPS for this classroom addition. Past Mandatory Referrals for this site warranted broader discussions about stormwater management.

In November 1991, the Planning Board reviewed a Mandatory Referral for a proposed modernization of Ashburton Elementary School. At that time, staff noted the excellent design of the project and the provision of good pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. The poor condition of Booze Creek was noted, and MCPS was encouraged with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection to investigate alternatives to the stormwater management concept for the project. Even though a waiver of the stormwater management water quality control requirements was granted, the M-NCPPC wanted more stormwater accommodation on the site.

In 2001, a Mandatory Referral for Ashburton Elementary School was reviewed by the Planning Board for a gymnasium addition. At that time, an infiltration facility was added to the project reflecting the stormwater concerns from the previous Mandatory Referral.

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Plan exemption was issued because this is a modification of an existing developed property with no forest on site.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The MCPS held a series of meetings with the Facility Advisory Committee (see Attachment 9). The kick-off meeting was held on July 11, 2006, and four additional meetings were held through the fall of 2006. Several design alternatives were developed and evaluated. The proposed plans were reviewed and modified by the Advisory Committee. A subcommittee was formed to study the impacts of the selected design. This subcommittee was made up of MCPS staff, residents, school staff, and County representatives.

The following groups were notified by staff about the April 12, 2007, public hearing: the Marymount Citizens Association, the Georgetown Village Condo Association, Alta Vista Gardens, North Ashburton Citizens Association, Wildwood Manor Citizens Association, North Bethesda Congress of Citizens, and the adjacent residents along Pomona Drive. Pomona Drive residents noted the following safety concerns due to the proposed drop-off loop:

- Increased traffic along their street.
- Constrained traffic movements due to the current paved width of Pomona Drive as vehicles pass each other with parked cars on both sides of the street.
- Bus capacity on their street.
- Road widening may be done to accommodate future vehicle and bus capacity on Pomona Drive.

To address these concerns, staff recommends that only cars use the drop-off loop and that all buses must use the existing driveway off Lone Oak Drive to enter the school site.

In general, residents have stated that they are concerned about the additional educational curricula (PEP, LAD, ESOL) programmed at Ashburton Elementary School. The residents emphasize that the school facility would not require added classrooms, special-sized buses, and a new drop-off area, if the school remained a neighborhood school. In addition, residents along Lone Oak Drive have expressed concern about non-local traffic now using Lone Oak Drive between Fernwood Road and Old Georgetown Road.

CONCLUSION

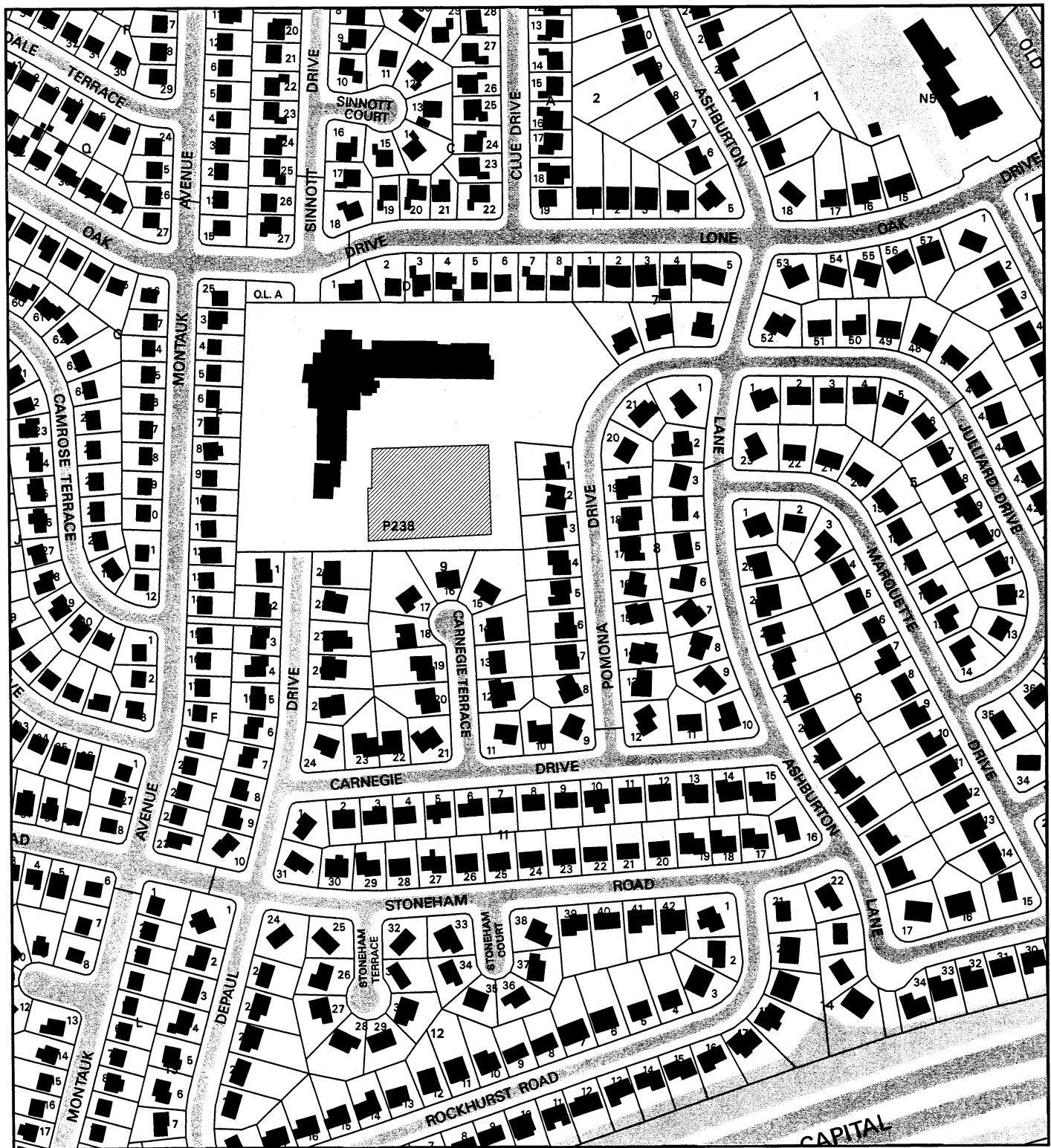
Based on the information provided by the applicant and the analysis in this report, the traffic study, and staff's research, we conclude that the proposed project would provide Ashburton Elementary School with the additional classroom space to accommodate the programmed needs of the school. The separate drop-off loop should provide school children added safety during the morning and afternoon drop-off periods if limited to vehicles only. Staff attended many meetings with MCPS staff, PTA, and residents to work to resolve the environmental, transportation, and community impacts of the proposed project. Approval of this Mandatory Referral is recommended.

KO:ha: j:\2007 staff reports\team 2\ashburton es

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map – Ashburton Elementary School
2. Existing Site Plan
3. Proposed Site Plan
4. Existing Floor Plan
5. Proposed Floor Plan
6. Existing Elevations
7. Proposed Elevations
8. Letter from Residents on Pomona Drive and Ashburton Lane
9. Facility Advisory Committee/Membership Committee
10. Memorandum from Environmental Planning
11. Memorandum from Transportation Planning

ASHBURTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (07202-MCPS-1)



Map compiled on March 22, 2007 at 4:50 PM | Site located on base sheet no - 212NW06

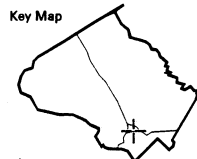
NOTICE

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Key Map



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Research & Technology Center

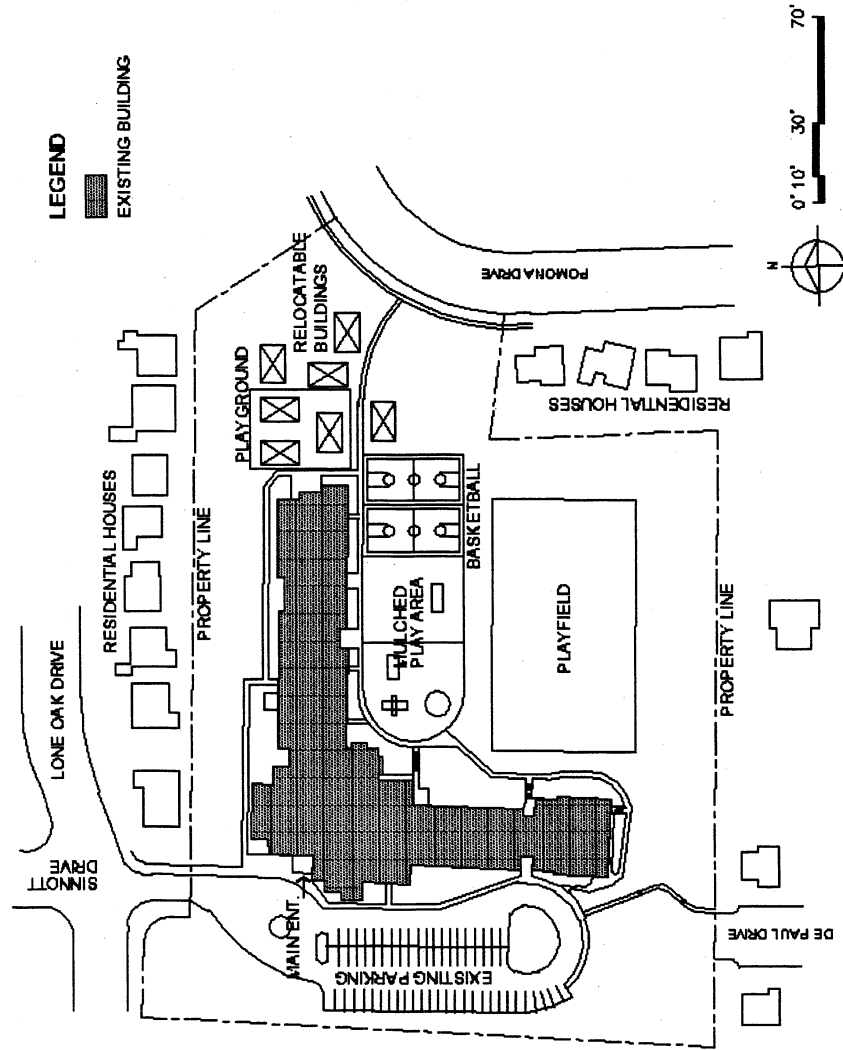


1 inch = 300 feet
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

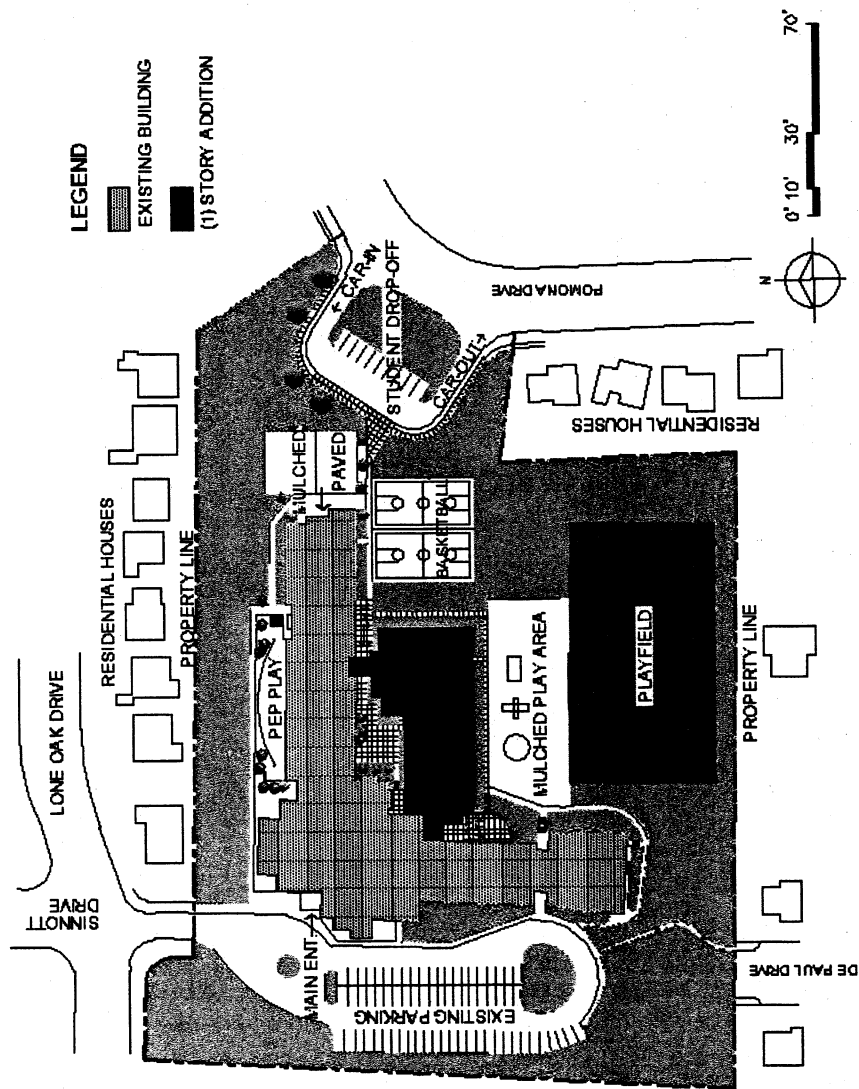
M-NCPPC

Existing Site Plan



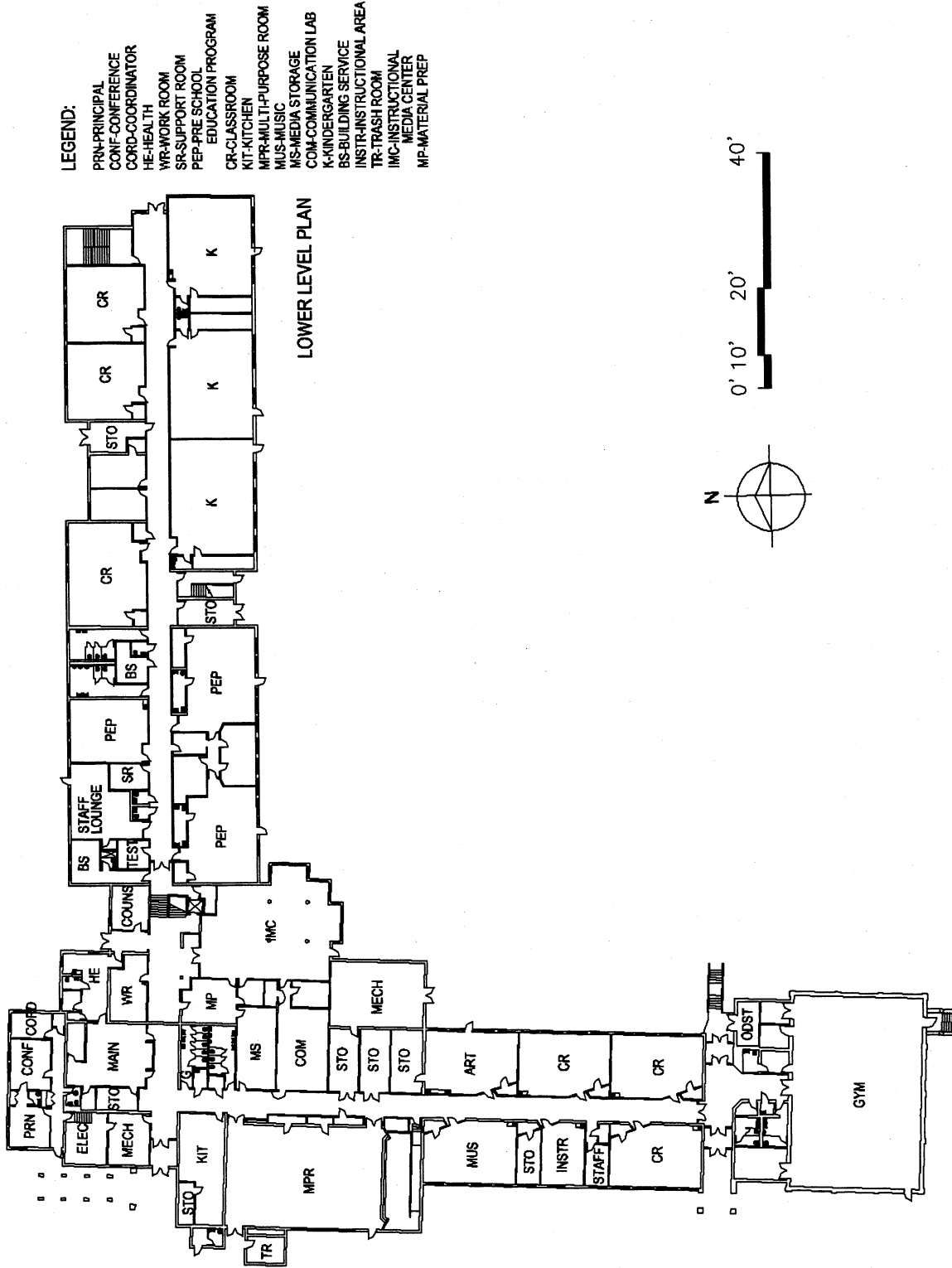
ASHBURTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (EXIST.)

Proposed Site Plan

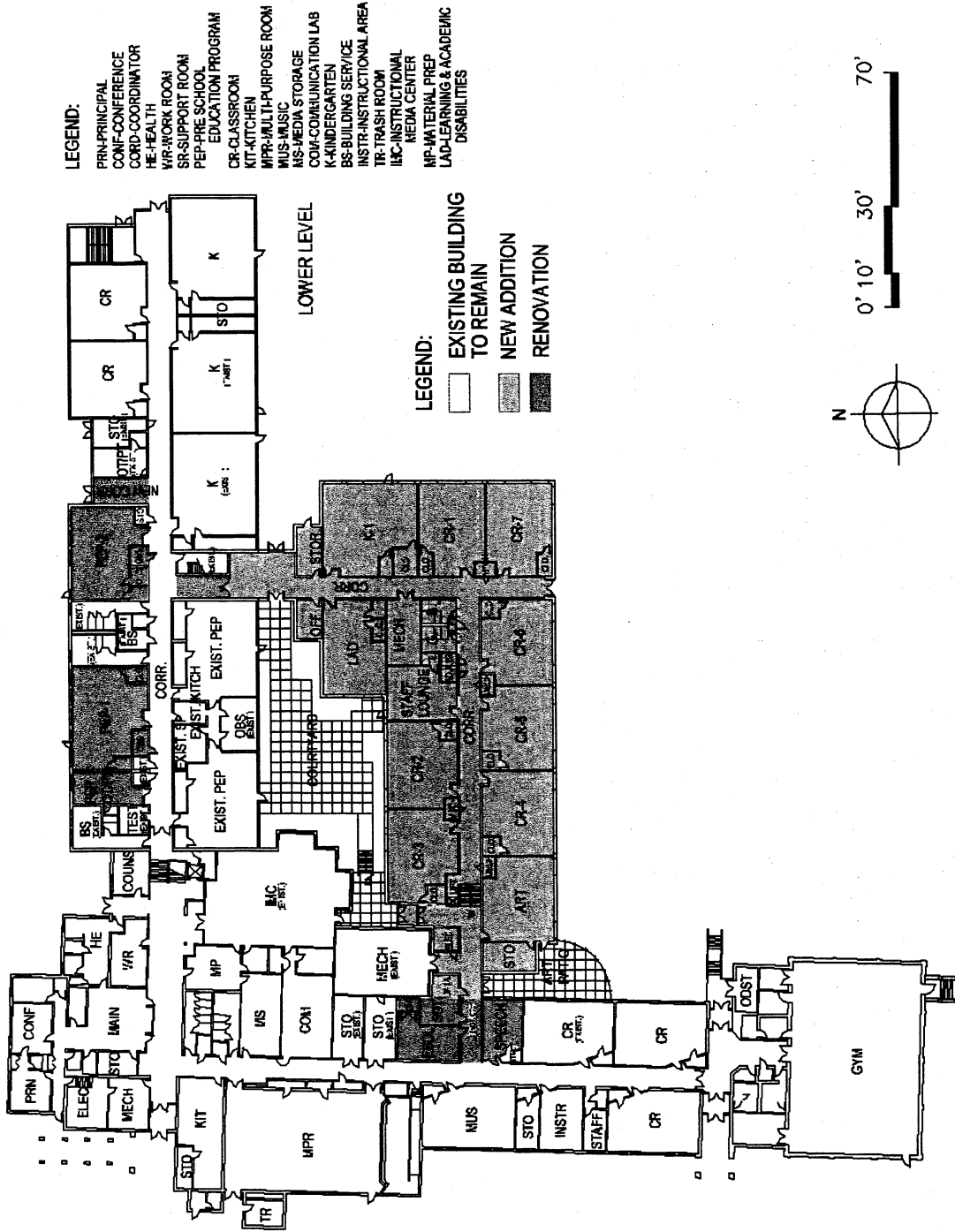


ASHBURTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (PROPOSED)

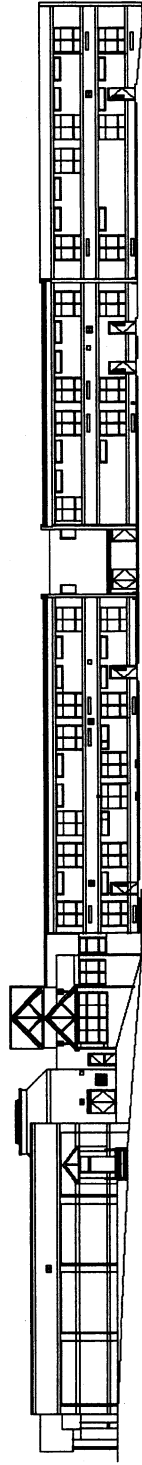
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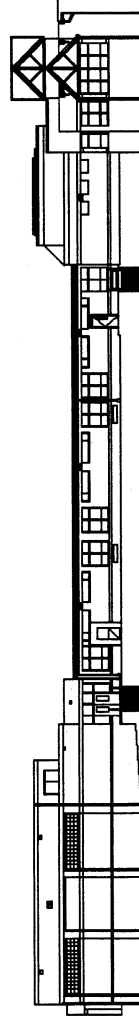
Proposed Floor Plan



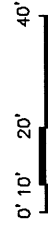
Existing Elevations



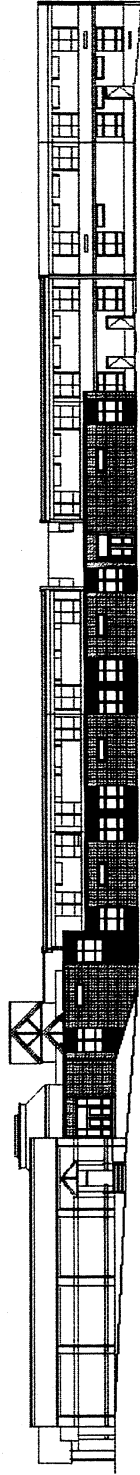
EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION



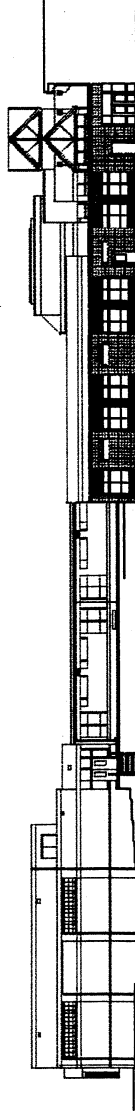
EXISTING EAST ELEVATION



Proposed Elevations



PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION



PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION

0' 10' 30' 70'

ATTACHMENT 8

*Pomona Drive and Ashburton Lane Residents
Bethesda, Maryland 20817*

RECEIVED
1412
AUG 25 2005

August 23, 2005

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Derick P. Berlage
Planning Board Chairman and
the Chairman of the Maryland-National
Capital Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery County Planning Board
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Chairman Berlage:

We, the undersigned, are residents of Pomona Drive and Ashburton Lane, who have met with County employees and the principal of Ashburton Elementary School ("School") to discuss the School's plans to expand and build a parking lot. We thank Montgomery County and the School for informing us of this proposal and for meeting with us to discuss their plans and our concerns. At these meetings, we have discussed our opposition to the School's plan to build a parking lot with access to our street. We remain opposed to this plan for the reasons described below, and request that our concerns and alternative proposal be considered as part of the mandatory referral process.

The proposed parking lot will exacerbate the already dangerous situation caused by the curbside drop-off of students on Pomona Drive by introducing more vehicles, including numerous buses, onto a narrow residential street at the point of a blind curve. While we are emphatically opposed to the current proposal regarding the parking lot, we support a reasonable, substantially less dangerous alternative, discussed in Attachment A and shown in the schematic in Attachment B, which the School, by its own admission, has not fully considered. We assure you that this community has no intention of quietly accepting the threat to our safety, our children's safety, and the quiet enjoyment of our homes that the current proposal represents.

Pomona Drive is a quiet residential street, 26 feet wide at all points.¹ The northernmost quarter of the street takes the form of a blind curve, at the point where the school proposes to construct the parking lot. At 26 feet wide, Pomona Drive is not wide enough to permit two travel lanes and two parking lanes. In fact, when all four lanes are in use, clearance between vehicles is

¹ The schematics that Ashburton Elementary School is currently using show Pomona Drive as having the same width as Lone Oak Drive. Any person just looking at these two streets can see that Lone Oak Drive is much wider than Pomona Drive, and in fact, two of the Pomona Drive residents measured these streets. Lone Oak Drive is 36 feet wide.

mere inches, if there is any clearance at all. Sufficient clearance for two passing cars does not exist at all when one or more vehicles are parked imprecisely, a situation that occurs with frequency on the sharply curved portion of the street. Compounding the problem is that vehicles entering the curve on one side cannot see vehicles entering the curve on the opposite side, especially when, as is always the case on school days, there are vehicles parked along the curve. This combination of tight clearance and poor sightlines makes Pomona Drive an utterly inappropriate setting in which to put substantially more cars, much less buses of any size.


At previous community meetings, brief discussion occurred about the possibility of solving the School's current parking problem by opening the existing parking lot onto DePaul Drive and making all traffic proceed in one direction. While this alternative would permit traffic to flow in straight lines with ample visibility, the School summarily rejected it on the grounds that building a ramp from the existing parking lot to DePaul Drive would create a grade change too steep for vehicles to navigate safely. While we do not concede that such a danger would exist, we believe that the specific proposal described in Attachment A would mitigate the School's particular concern, by calling for the re-grading of the entire existing parking lot, such that a gentle slope of a constant steepness would be created running from Lone Oak Drive to the new exit on DePaul Drive.

We propose that the School actively consider the alternative described in Attachment A. There are several advantages to this proposal. Cars and buses would remain completely separated; no students would have to cross traffic at any point in the parking lot; buses would travel only on Lone Oak Drive, a primary through road, and not through the narrow residential streets of the surrounding neighborhood; and, the car traffic at the southern end of the School would disperse onto several streets (left onto Carnegie Drive toward Old Georgetown Road or right onto Stoneham Drive toward Fernwood Drive) instead of being channeled onto a single residential street (Pomona Drive). With the re-grading of the parking lot, the slope from end to end should not greatly exceed the mild slope of parallel Montauk Avenue.


We urge you to consider our reasonable alternative, especially in light of the damage to our quality of life that would be engendered by the School's current proposal. While we will take any necessary action to enforce our rights, including legal action, we would prefer to work amicably with the School and Montgomery County.

Attached for your convenience is a copy of the three schematics that the School is considering. If you have any questions and/or objections about our proposal, please contact Mike Bloise or Jennifer LaRoche at (301) 564-9160.

Sincerely,



Jennifer J. LaRoche

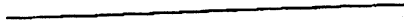

Michael Bloise

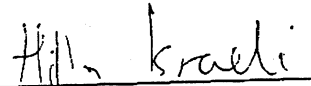

Bela Feketekuty

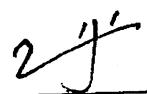

Sarah Diligenti

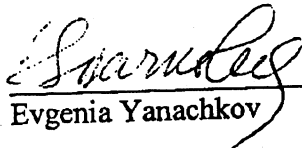

Simon Pickup

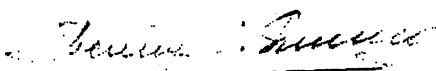

Stephanie Kamaruzzaman

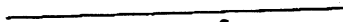

Adi Kamaruzzaman



Hilla Israeli

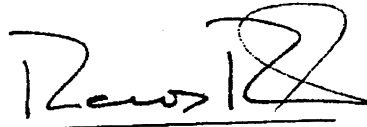

Yaniv Yassour



Evgenia Yanachkov



Peter Yanachkov


Reza Homayounfar


Homa Homayounfar

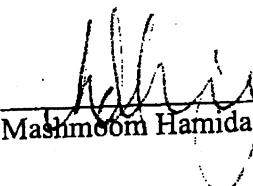

Rebecca de los Rios

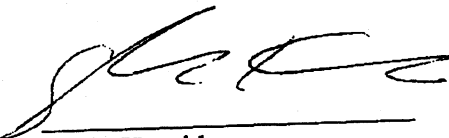

Patrick Josselin


Rose Marie Josselin


Carol Kempner


Ken Kempner


Mashmoom Hamida


Sakib Hamida

Bela Feketekuty

Sarah Diligenti

Simon Pickup

Stephanie Kamaruzzaman

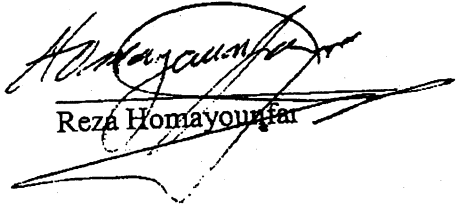
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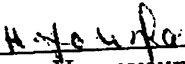
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Yaniv Yassour

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Reza Homayounfar


Homa Homayounfar

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Sarah Diligenti

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Yaniv Yassour

Peter Yanachkov

Homa Homayounfar

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Stephanie Kamaruzzaman

Hilla Israeli

Evgenia Yanachkov

Reza Homayounfar

Rebecca de los Rios

Rose Marie Josselin

Ken Kempner

Sakib Hamida

Marilou Majowicz
Marilou Majowicz

Yves Losco
Yves Losco

Magdalena Losco
Magdalena Losco

Tom Sigler
Tom Sigler

Carl Seils
Carl Seils

Rahman
Rahman

Nur Rahman
Nur Rahman

Feinula Bhanji-Mohamed
Feinula Bhanji-Mohamed

Altah Mohamed
Altah Mohamed

Kostas Fykas (resident of Ashburton Lane)
Kostas Fykas (resident of Ashburton Lane)

Yolanda Galaz (resident of Ashburton Lane)
Yolanda Galaz (resident of Ashburton Lane)

Jean-Noel Guillosoou
Jean-Noel Guillosoou

9406

Enclosures

cc w/enclosures: Patricia O'Neill
President of the Board of Education

Jerry D. Weast
Superintendent of Schools

Howard A. Denis
District 1 Councilmember

Councilmember Nancy Floreen

Councilmember George L. Leventhal


Councilmember Steve Silverman

Marilou Majowicz

Yves Losco

Magdalena Losco

Tom Sigler



Carl Seils

Rachman

Rachman

Feinula Bhanji-Mohamed

Altaf Mohamed

Kostas Fykas (resident of
Ashburton Lane)

Yolanda Galaz (resident of Ashburton
Lane)

Jean-Noel Guillosoou

Enclosures

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Councilmember Nancy Floreen

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Councilmember Steve Silverman

Councilmember Michael L. Subin

Division Chief Mike Love
Office of the Fire Marshal

Ray Marhamati
Senior Mechanical Engineer and Project Manager
for the Ashburton ES Feasibility Study

James Sung
Director of the Division of Construction
Montgomery County Public Schools

Sarah R. Navid
Permitting Services Specialist
Department of Permitting Services

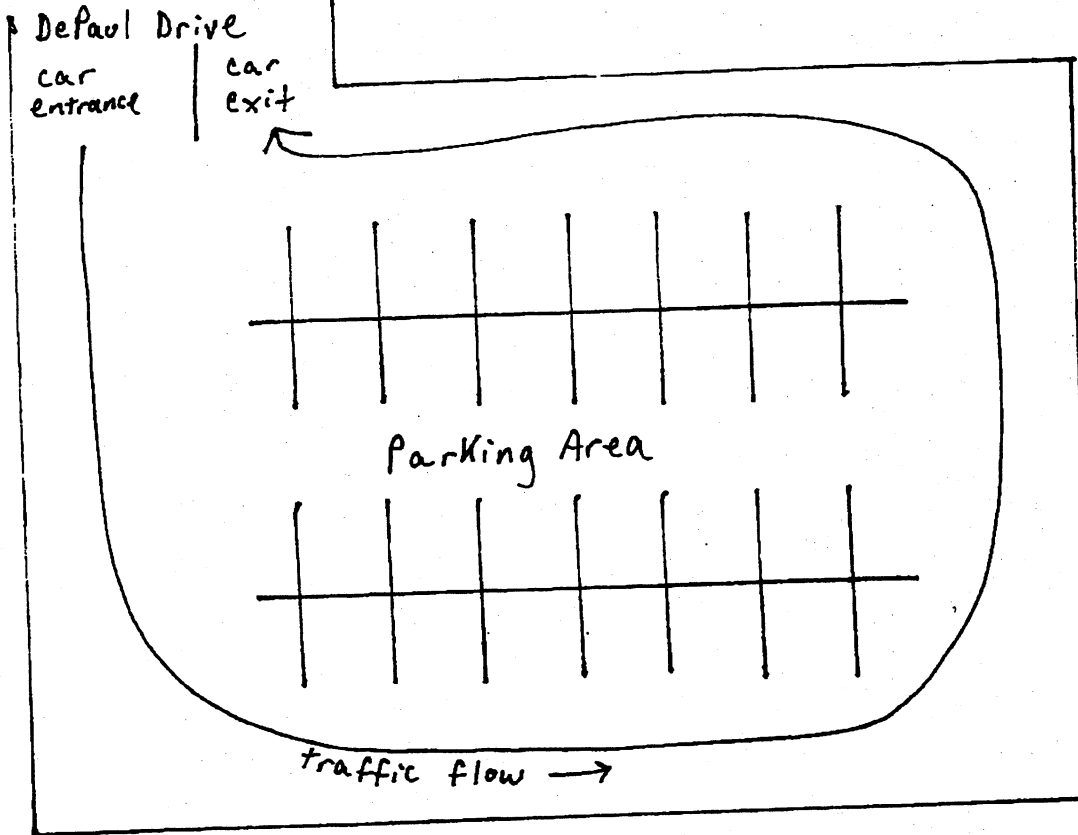
Dr. Barbara Haughey
Principal of Ashburton Elementary School

ATTACHMENT A

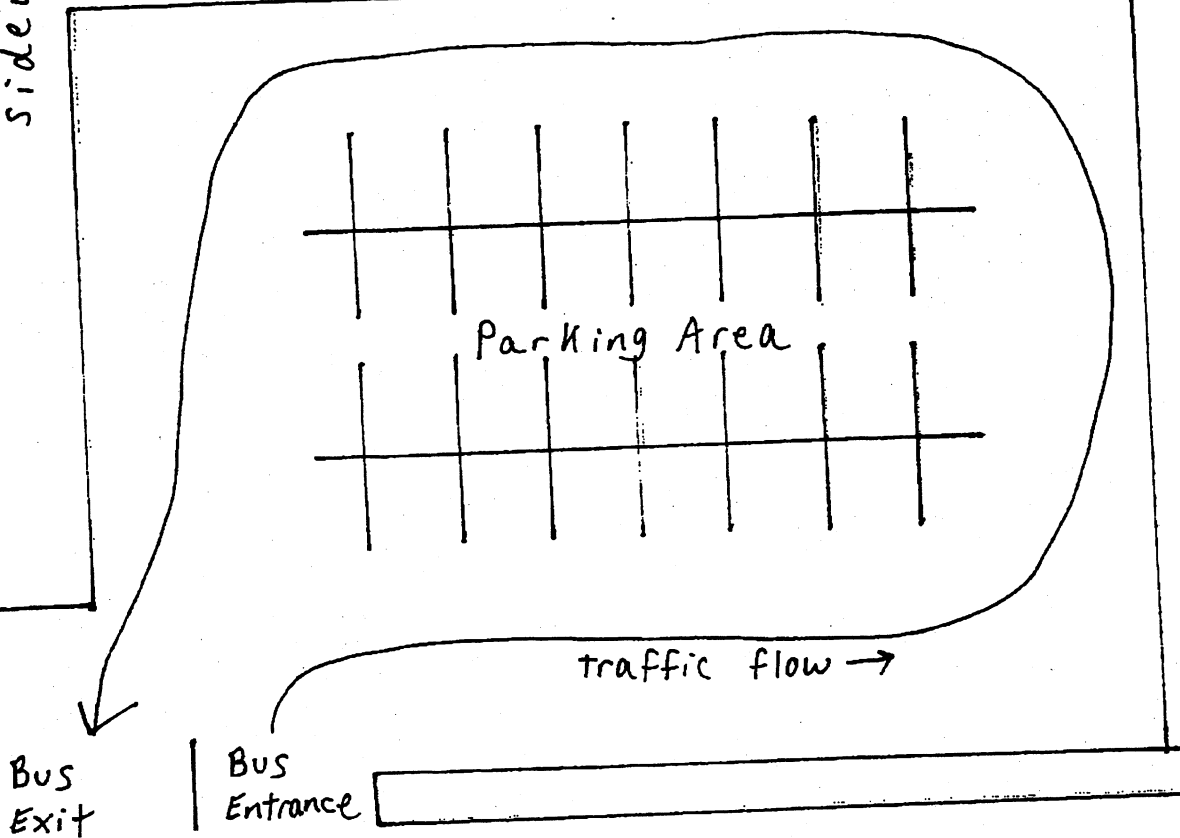
First, the entrance to the existing parking lot on Lone Oak Drive would be widened. The existing parking lot would be re-graded to create a gentle, constant slope from Lone Oak Drive to DePaul Drive, where a new entrance would be added. A pedestrian landing would be constructed across the School's parking lot, perpendicular to the existing sidewalk in front of the School building. The new landing, about 15 feet wide, would extend across the parking lot toward the rear of the houses on Montauk Avenue, bifurcating the parking lot. Only buses would be permitted to enter from Lone Oak Drive during peak hours. The buses would proceed counterclockwise around their portion of the parking lot, dropping students off at the new landing, and continuing out of the circle back to the exit at Lone Oak Drive. Some parking spaces for early arriving cars, such as those belonging to teachers or other School employees, would remain in the center of this portion of the parking lot. The other half of the parking lot, the south end, accessible only from DePaul Drive, would become the main lot for cars only. Cars would enter from DePaul Drive, proceed in a counterclockwise direction, drop passengers off at the new landing, and proceed back to the exit onto DePaul Drive. Parking spaces for cars would remain in the center of this portion of the parking lot.

School Building

sidewalk



Sidewalk extension - Dropoff Zone



Rear of homes on Montauk Ave.

This diagram is for illustrative purposes on

Facility Advisory Committee

Staff and Committee Involvement

The preliminary plans presentation for the Ashburton Elementary School classroom addition was developed based on the education specifications prepared by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The proposed plans went through a series of design reviews with members of the Facility Advisory Committee and community. As a result of those meetings, the proposed plans presented herein were modified and evaluated in accordance with the suggestions and recommendations of the committee.

Membership of Committee

Dr. Barbara Hughey	Chair/ Principal	Ashburton Elementary School
Ms. Robin Adler	Facilities Planner	MCPS Division of Construction
Ms. Marelou Amy	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Leslie Barr	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Michael Blose	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Wendy Calhoun	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Marrisla Chun	Parent	Community Representative
Mr. Michael Chun	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Ms. Barbara Cino	Assistant Principal	Ashburton Elementary School
Ms. Aurah Diligenti	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Stacey Dyer	Staff	Department of Permitting Services
Mr. Chris Fain	Staff	MCPS Transportation
Ms. Sally Fasman	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Bela Feketekuty	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Rochelle Follender	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Edie Goldberg	Parent	Community Representative
Ms. Rengin Gorener	PTA President	Ashburton Elementary School
Ms. Gravitis	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Alex Hammer	Parent	Community Representative
Ms. Stacey Hammer	Parent	Community Representative
Mr. Andrew Hess	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Ms. Penny Hess	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Mr. William Hess	Boy Scout	Community Representative

Ashburton Elementary School Addition
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Facility Advisory Committee (continued)

Membership Committee (continued)

Ms. Debbie Hill	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Dick Holcomb	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Drew Holcomb	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Mr. Nick Holcomb	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Mr. Ross Holcomb	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Ms. Hilla Israeli	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Marney Jacobs	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Ron Johnson	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Patrick Josselin	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Rose Marie Josselin	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Jennifer Laroche	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Magdalena Losco	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Bob MacDonald	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Marilou Majowicz	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Ray Marhamati	Project Manager	Division of Construction
Ms. Wanda Means-Harris	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Altaf Mohamed	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Feinula Mohamed	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Sarah Navid	Staff	Department of Permitting Services
Mr. Peter Park	Staff	MCPS
Mr. James Parker	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Michael Pokorny	Engineer	Department of Permitting Services
Ms. Maria Prawinodihardjo	Staff	MSDE
Mr. Ben Pyle	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Mr. Daniel Pyle	Boy Scout	Community Representative
Mr. Henry Rivera	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Holli Rivera	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Jonathan Roth	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Dennis Runyon	Staff	MCPS
Ms. Harriet Saidman	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Josef Saidman	Neighbor	Community Representative

Ashburton Elementary School Addition
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Facility Advisory Committee (continued)

Membership Committee (continued)

Mr. Raymond Schmidt	North Ashburton Citizens Association	Community Representative
Mr. Carl Seils	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Mike Shpur	Architect	Division of Construction
Ms. Mary Sigler	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Thomas Sigler	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. James C. Song	Director	Division of Construction
Ms. Sabrina Weger	PTA	Ashburton Elementary School
Mr. Stephen Welby	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Michelle Winter	Neighbor	Community Representative
Ms. Eugenia Yanachkov	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Peter Yanachkov	Neighbor	Community Representative
Mr. Michael Young	Staff	Ashburton Elementary School

ATTACHMENT 10



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/08/07

To: Kristen O'Connor

Via: Mary Dolan, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental 

From: Marion Clark, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental 

Subject: Mandatory Referral No. 07202-MCPS-1
Ashburton Elementary School

Recommendation: Approval

Discussion

A Tree Save plan must be approved prior to issuance of sediment and erosion control permits. Staff recommends approval of the Tree Save Plan. Eight specimen trees are to be removed.

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Plan exemption was issued because this is a modification of an existing developed property with no forest on site.

Storm Water Management

The Department of Permitting Services has approved a Stormwater Management Concept Plan.

Environmental Guidelines

There are no streams, wetlands, steep slopes, or erodible soils on site. The site is not in a Special Protection Area or Primary Management Area.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

March 23, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kristin O'Connor, Planner
Community-Based Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*
Transportation Planning

FROM: Ed Axler, Planner/Coordinator *EA*
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral No. 05507-MCPS-1
Ashburton Elementary School Addition
North Bethesda Policy Area

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review of the subject mandatory referral case to add 10 permanent classrooms and an office. These additions would increase the school's capacity from 458 to 660 students.

FINDINGS

Transportation Planning staff has the following findings as part of the APF test for transportation requirements related to the subject mandatory referral case:

1. Submit a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study if future capital improvements are proposed to accommodate student enrollment higher than the 660 students analyzed in the submitted traffic study.
2. Implement the traffic control and operational measures recommended in the submitted traffic study to address access and circulation concerns associated with the proposed on-site parents drop-off and pick-up loop along Pomona Drive. Continue community coordination to review drop-off and pick-up operations and refine the operations as warranted.

The Transportation Planning staff finds that the proposed classroom addition to the existing elementary school satisfies the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) test and will have no adverse effect on nearby roadway conditions or pedestrian facilities.

DISCUSSION

Site Location

This existing elementary school fronts along the south side of Lone Oak Drive, the west side of Pomona Drive, and the north side of De Paul Drive's terminus. Lone Oak Drive provides a direct connection between Fernwood Road and Old Georgetown Road (MD 187).

Vehicular and School Bus Access Circulation and Parking

Currently, the only vehicular access point into the 68-space parking lot is from Lone Oak Drive opposite Sinnott Drive. The parking area is used at different times of the day for:

1. School buses to drop off and pick up students.
2. Teachers/staff parking.
3. Service vehicle access.

A new on-site parent drop-off/pick-up loop with eight parking spaces is proposed from Pomona Drive.

Pedestrians and Bicycle Facilities

The pedestrian facilities are adequate and would not be adversely impacted by this proposed classroom addition. Currently, sidewalks exist along and leading in from Lone Oak Drive, Pomona Drive, and De Paul Drive. The nearby intersections have handicapped ramps and crosswalks. A crossing guard is stationed at the intersection of Lone Oak Drive and Sinnott Drive (school driveway). Three sets of bike racks are on the site at convenient locations.

Available Transit Service

Bus service is available along the two nearby north-south roadways below:

1. Ride-On bus route 47 operates along Fernwood Road.
2. Metrobus routes J-1, J-2, and J-3 operates along Old Georgetown Road.

Master-Planned Roadways and Bikeways

According to the *North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan*, the nearby roadways and bikeways are designated as follows:

1. Lone Oak Drive is a two-lane primary residential street, zoned P-4, with a 70-foot right-of-way. Residents have expressed concern about non-local traffic now using Lone Oak Drive between Fernwood Road and Old Georgetown Road.
2. Fernwood Road is a two-lane primary residential street, zoned P-8, with a 70-foot right-of-way.

3. Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) is a six-lane divided major highway, zoned M-4, with a 120-foot right-of-way.
4. The Capital Beltway (I-495) is a freeway, zoned F-8, with a 300-foot right-of-way.

De Paul Drive, Montauk Avenue, Pomona Drive, and Sinnott Drive function as secondary residential streets with 60-foot rights-of-way and are not listed in the Master Plan.

Local Area Transportation Review

The elementary school classes start at 8:50 a.m., within the weekday morning peak period, (6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.), and end at 3:30 p.m., before the start of the weekday evening peak period, (4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Thus, the school's traffic analysis analyzed the weekday morning peak hour.

To determine the number of peak hour trips generated by the school at its capacity of 660 students, the trips generated by the current 562 students were projected by the increased trips generated by 98 more students. The traffic study considered the following elements and included recommendations:

1. Staff:

Currently, the school has 72 full-time and 10 part-time persons. During the weekday morning, 61 peak hour vehicular trips were observed entering the parking lot. Twenty-six of those peak hour vehicular trips were observed leaving the school access point from Lone Oak Drive.

An increase of 98 more students would require four to five additional teachers/staff. That would add four more peak hour trips entering, and three more peak hour trips leaving, the school's parking lot during the weekday morning.

2. Fixed bus routes:

Currently, the school has eight buses carrying between 40 and 50 students, each arriving between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

An increase of 98 more students would require two to three additional buses/bus routes.

3. Buses used to transport students with special needs:

Currently, the school has nine buses arriving dropping off students in the morning and seven buses more arriving after 12:00 p.m. dropping more students off. Each bus carries between 3 and 12 students.

Even though the overall increase is 98 more students, students with special needs would only increase by 5%.

4. Parent drop-off/pick-up:

Currently, parents must drop off and pick up students along the adjoining local streets, because only school buses are allowed in the school's parking lot at the time of the students' arrival and departure. The three existing adjoining locations and number of observed parent trips dropping off students in the morning, and picking them up in the afternoon, are as the follows:

- In front of the school along Lone Oak Drive and Sinnott Drive: 40 morning and 25 afternoon vehicles were observed.
- On the east side of the school on Pomona Drive: 30 morning and 15 afternoon vehicles were observed.
- On the south side of the school at the end of De Paul Drive: 10 morning and approximately five afternoon vehicles were observed.

Fewer afternoon pick-up trips were observed than morning drop-off trips because many working parents enroll their children in the school's on-site after-school daycare program. An increase of 98 more students is projected to generate 15 more drop-off trips in the morning.

Unique characteristics of parent trips dropping off and picking up students are as follows:

- Many parents were observed stopping their vehicles along the adjoining streets to walk with their children to the school. This increased standing time duration results in longer queues of parked vehicles.
- Many trips by parents are typically not all new trips between home and this school, but are pass-by or diverted trips to another destination or from another origin such as their workplace.

An on-site drop-off/pick-up loop is proposed from Pomona Drive to remove the vehicular queue off Pomona Drive and reduce the queue length along Lone Oak Drive. Staff supports the traffic study recommendations designed to assure effective traffic circulation:

1. Parents' use will be restricted to dropping off their children between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and picking them up between 3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. on weekdays. The smaller-sized school buses carrying special-needs students would use this proposed loop at other times of the school day.
2. To prevent standing vehicles from blocking the path of other vehicles within the loop, standing/parking on the loop will be prohibited during school days.
3. Turning right out from the proposed loop should be prohibited to reduce additional traffic traveling through the neighborhood. Parents turning left onto Pomona Drive would then turn left again onto Ashburton Lane for a short segment in order to reach the primary residential street, Lone Oak Drive.

4. Parking should be restricted by the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) on the weekday mornings and afternoons along the north (school side) of Pomona Drive, nearest to the proposed loop's access point. Restricting parking would improve sight distance at the loop's access point.

The safety of students walking between their vehicles and the school would be improved, and the need for parents to make U-turns on Lone Oak Drive would be eliminated.

Although this on-site drop-off/pick-up loop would increase school traffic on Pomona Drive, and the connecting local streets, it would eliminate the impedance now caused by parents parking their vehicles at the curb to drop off and pick up their children. The number of weekday morning peak hour arrivals is summarized in attached Table 1.

A traffic study was required to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review (LATR), because the school generates 30 or more peak hour trips within the weekday morning hour. Based on the results of the traffic study, Table 2 (attached) shows the critical lane volumes (CLV) values for the existing, background, and total traffic conditions. The background traffic condition includes the existing traffic plus traffic from approved but unbuilt developments. Given the location of the background developments, they generate traffic only through the first two intersections. Thus, the existing CLV values at the other seven intersections equal the background CLV values. The CLV values at each intersection within the weekday morning peak hour for each traffic condition are below the congestion standard of 1,550 for the North Bethesda Policy Area.

Policy Area Transportation Review/Staging Ceiling Condition

Ashburton Elementary School is an existing land use with 50 jobs already accounted for in the staging ceiling numbers. Under the current Annual Growth Policy, Policy Area Transportation Review is not considered in the APF review.

EA:mj
Attachment

cc: Barbara Kearney
Fiona Thomas

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Attachment

Table 1 – Weekday Morning Peak Hour Vehicular Arrivals

	Student Enrollment	Weekday Morning Peak-Hour Arrivals			
		Parking Lot		Parent Drop-Off	Total
		Teachers & Staff	School Buses		
Total With Addition	660	94	20	95	209
Existing	562	87	17	80	234
Increase	98	7	3	15	25

Table 2 – Critical Lane Volumes (CLV) Values for Existing, Background and Total Traffic Conditions

Intersection	Weekday Morning Traffic Condition		
	Existing	Background*	Total
Democracy Boulevard & Rockledge Drive	982	1,084	1,084
Democracy Boulevard & Mayfield Drive	504	507	507
Old Georgetown Road & Lone Oak Drive/ Manor Oak Drive	1,220	1,220	1,229
Lone Oak Drive & Ashburton Lane	344	344	380
Lone Oak Drive & Sinnott Drive/School Driveway	217	217	224
Lone Oak Drive & Mayfield Drive	157	157	164
Lone Oak Drive & Fernwood Road	851	851	862
Fernwood Road & Stoneham Road	896	896	896
DePaul Drive & Stoneham Road	15	15	15

* The background traffic condition includes the existing traffic plus traffic from approved but unbuilt developments. Given the location of the background developments, they generate traffic only through the first two intersections. Thus, the existing CLV values at the other seven intersections equal the background CLV values.