MCPB Item No.

Date: 06-04-15

Preliminary Plan Amendment 11998086B in Response to a Violation - Solomon-Simpson, Lot 11

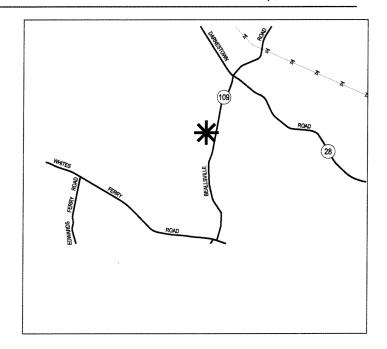


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Completed: 6/1/15

Limited Amendment, Preliminary Plan No. 11998086B, Lot 11

- Request to remove and relocate 3.88 acres of Category I conservation easement on site.
- Request to remove 6.63 acres of Category I conservation easement that was incorrectly shown on the record plat.
- Located 1100 feet south of the intersection of Beallsville Road and Lyndenwood Avenue in Beallsville, MD.
- On 90.3 acres in the AR Zone, Agricultural and Rural Open Space Master Plan.
- Applicants: Mr. Thomas and Ms. Marie Rojas; 19000 Beallsville Road.
- Acceptance Date: January 20, 2012.



Summary

- Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions.
- Proposal to remove and relocate on-site approximately 169,012.8 square feet (3.88 acres) of Category I
 Conservation Easement on Lot 11.
- Proposal to remove an additional approximately 288,208.20 square feet (6.63 acres) of Category I
 Conservation Easement that was incorrectly recorded on Lot 11.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions of the limited amendment to the Preliminary Plan and associated Forest Conservation Plan, subject to the following conditions:

- Within ninety (90) days of the mailing date of the Planning Board Resolution, all new and
 existing Category I Conservation easements must be recorded in the Montgomery County Land
 Records by deed. The Liber/Folio of this new deed must be referenced on the new record plat.
 The Category I Conservation Easement must be approved by the M-NCPPC Office of the General
 Counsel before recordation of the easement.
- 2. Within ninety (90) days of the mailing date of the Planning Board Resolution approving the limited amendment to the Preliminary Plan, Applicants must submit a complete record plat application that delineates the revised conservation easements. The existing easements remain in full force and effect until the new conservation easements are recorded.
- 3. Applicants must install the required permanent forest conservation easement signage markers along both newly created conservation easement and existing conservation easement boundaries by September 30, 2015 or at the time of afforestation planting whichever comes sooner.
- 4. Applicants must install and have accepted by M-NCPPC staff all required afforestation plantings by November 15, 2015. All plantings must be in accordance with current ANSI Standards and M-NCPPC requirements.
- 5. Applicants must submit financial security as specified in Forest Conservation Law 22A-12(i) prior to the acceptance of the required afforestation plantings.
- 6. Applicants must submit a Maintenance and Management Agreement as specified in 22A-12(h) prior to the acceptance of the required afforestation plantings.
- 7. All other conditions of Preliminary Plan No, 119980860 and 11998086A as contained in the Planning Board's Resolutions mailed February 8, 1999 and March 18, 2002 respectively that were not modified herein, remain in full force and effect.

BACKGROUND

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan No. 119980860 "Solomon-Simpson", on January 28, 1999 and issued a written opinion on February 8, 1999. The approval was for eight (8) lots on 327.73-acres of land in the AR (formerly RDT) Zone of which Lot 11 was a part (Figure 1). The Montgomery County Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 11998086A on January 3, 2002 and issued a written opinion dated March 18, 2002. The approval was for three (3) additional lots to the original Preliminary Plan approval. As part of the approval processes for the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision and the Preliminary Plan Amendment, a forest conservation plan (FCP) was required and approved by the Planning Board. The Preliminary Plan of subdivision and the FCP show Category I conservation easements on 7 of the 11 lots including Lot 11, which is the subject of this amendment. The conservation easements for the subject lot are shown on Plat numbered 21924.

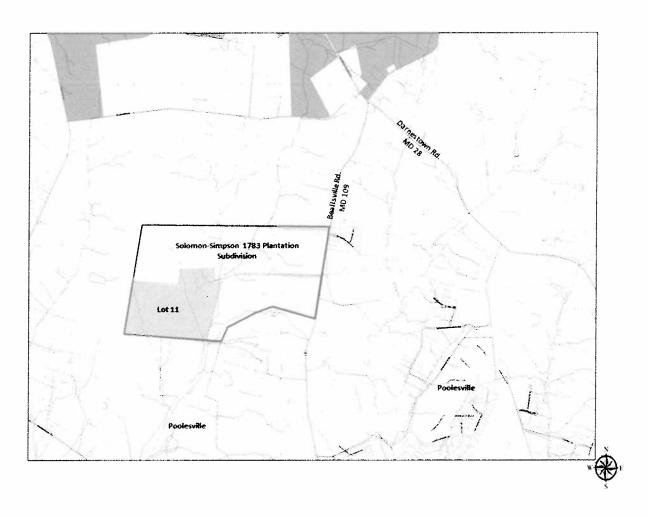


Figure 1: Solomon-Simpson 1783 Plantation Subdivision

An onsite easement inspection was conducted during the winter of 2010. It was discovered that Lot 11 was not in compliance with the terms of the conservation easements. The Applicant was issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) (Attachment 1) on February 23, 2010, for the encroachments and violations of the terms of the easement agreement. These violations consist of mowing and conducting agricultural activities within the easement. The agricultural activities consisted of farming and the pasturing of horses. The issuance of an NOV carries no financial penalty, but does outline the violation and requests particular remedial actions. In this case, the NOV requested that the Applicants meet with M-NCPPC Staff to determine the appropriate corrective actions to be performed. This meeting was held on February 2, 2011. At the end of this meeting, the property owners, Mr. and Mrs. Rojas, concluded that they wanted to amend the Forest Conservation Plan to remove and relocate specific portions of the Category I Conservation Easements on their property.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The lot subject to this Preliminary Plan Amendment is located at 19000 Beallsville Road (Figure 2). Lot 11 is 90.30 acres in size with currently 44.26 acres in active agriculture. The lot includes the W. T. Jones House and Historical Setting which is 33.57 acres in size and is specified in the Locational Atlas 17/021-

011A. The existing farm house, which was built around 1890, is on the site of the original farm house built by Mr. Simpson around the late 1700's. There are existing forest and streams on the property. Lot 11 is drained to the south-southeast by three tributaries of the Upper Broad Run stream. One tributary is located on the western portion of the site, one is located approximately midway on the property and the third is along the eastern property line of Lot 11. The Upper Broad Run stream then drains to the Broad Run stream and eventually flows into the Potomac River. The Forest Conservation Plan required the protection of all forested areas and all stream/environmental buffers on the property. As result, there is 34.7 acres of Category I Conservation Easements on the property. The conservation easements are composed of contiguous forest and both forested and unforested stream valley buffers (SVB). All conservation easements are shown on record plat 21924, which was signed by the current Applicants. The current violations occur within all of the conservation easements on the Property.

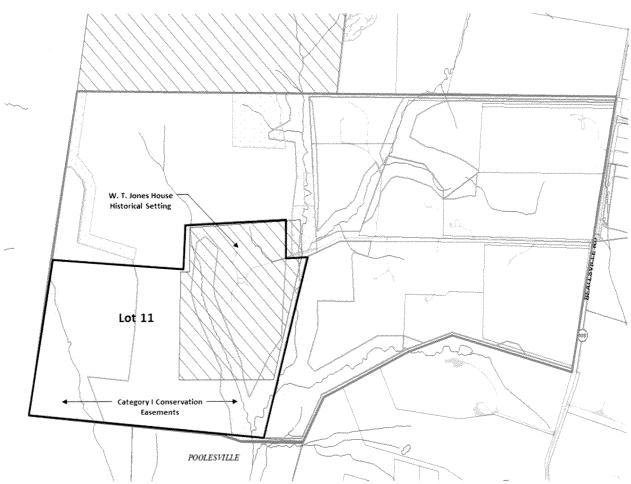


Figure 2: Lot 11 (19000 Beallsville Road) of Solomon-Simpson Subdivision

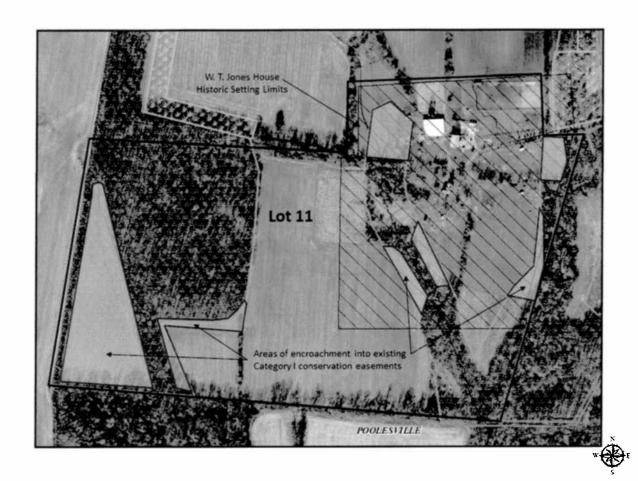


Figure 3: Lot 11, Conservation Easement Encroachments

PROPOSAL

On January 20, 2012, the Applicant submitted Preliminary Plan Amendment 11998086B to modify the Category I Conservation Easements on the Lot 11. The Applicant proposes to remove a total of 3.88 acres of unforested Category I Conservation Easement and replace this with 3.88 acres of new conservation easements on the lot. The request to remove these 3.88 acres of conservation easement is done so in order to allow the Applicants to continue the farming and pasturing of horses within these areas. 3.72 acres of this easement removal are located within the H. T. Jones House Historic Setting Limits (Figure 4) with the balance of 0.16 acres located at the southeast corner of a large section of existing forest on the western portion of the site (Figure 5). This 0.16 acres is requested to be removed and relocated in order to facilitate farm equipment access into the agricultural field just to the east of the existing stream valley buffer/conservation easement

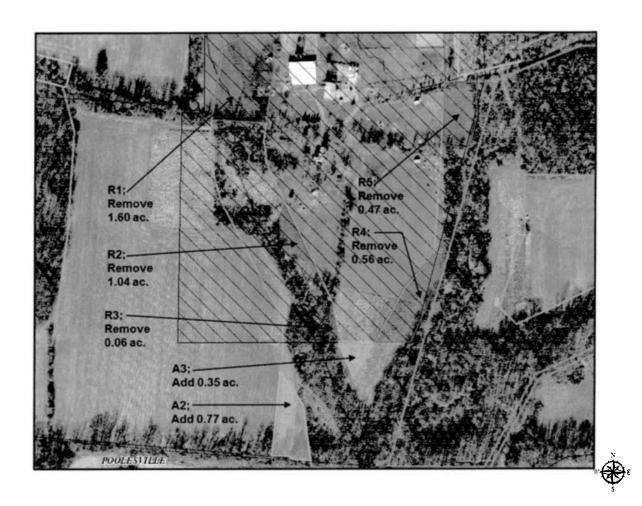


Figure 4: Lot 11 showing portions of requested easement removal and replacement

The Applicant also requests the permanent removal of 6.63 acres of Category I Conservation Easement located in the lower southwest corner of Lot 11 (Figure 5) without penalty because the Applicants state that this area was placed into a conservation easement by error on record plat 21924.

The Applicants also proposes to add 2.77 acres of conservation easement (Figure 5) to the area recorded in error in order to meet the on-site requirement for replacement of portions of the 3.88 acres of conservation easement requested to be removed.

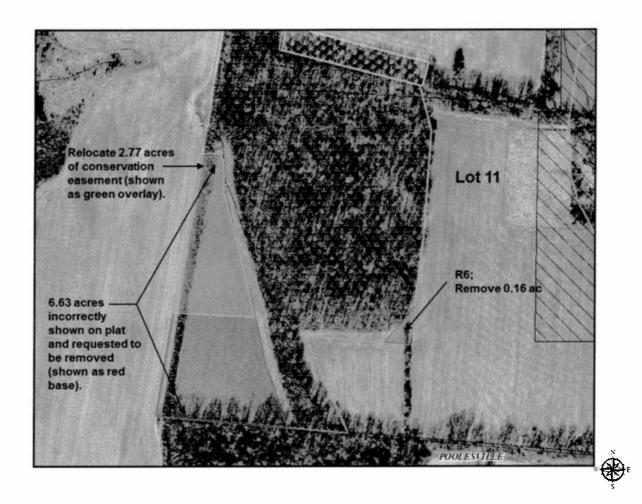


Figure 5: Southwest corner of Lot 11 showing easement area removed and added

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW AUTHORITY

The Forest Conservation Regulations require Planning Board action on certain types of modifications to an approved FCP. COMCOR 22A.00.01.13 A(2), the Forest Conservation Regulations, state:

Major amendments which entail more than a total of 5000 square feet of additional forest clearing must be approved by the Planning Board or the Planning Director (depending on who approved the original plan).

The Applicants propose to modify segments of the existing Category I Conservation Easement on the Subject Site, which total 457,815.6 square feet (10.51 acre), therefore; the plan must be reviewed by the Planning Board. Additionally, the Planning Board has requested to review all plans that remove or significantly change any conservation easement.

STAFF REVIEW

	Area	Easement	Easement	Area
		Acreage Removed	Acreage Replaced	
	R1	1.5956 ac.	2.7670 ac.	A1
	R2	1.0384 ac.	0.7671 ac.	A2
	R3	0.0550 ac.	0.3491 ac.	А3
	R4	0.5612 ac.		
	R5	0.4692 ac		
	R6	0.1638		
TOTALS		3.8832 ac.	3.8832 ac.	

Table 1: Showing areas of conservation easement removed and replaced. This does not include the 6.63 acres of conservation easement being asked to be removed without penalty.

This limited amendment to the Preliminary Plan (Attachment C) is in response to a forest conservation violation. As previously stated, a Notice of Violation (NOV) was issued to the Applicants. One outcome of this NOV was a meeting between the Applicants and the Planning Department in which Mr. and Mrs. Rojas decided to amend the existing Preliminary and Forest Conservation Plans to request modification to the existing Category I Conservation Easements.

Lot 11 does have environmentally sensitive areas within the conservation easements; the easement areas were recorded over SVB and existing forest to meet the developer's forest conservation requirements and to protect forest within the Upper Broad Run watershed.

Staff supports the removal of 169,012.8 square feet (3.88 acres) of Category I Conservation Easement (Table 1) that lie within the H. T. Jones Historical Setting. The removal of these portions of conservation easement supports the overall goals of the historic setting of the property by allowing these areas to remain in active agriculture and allows farm equipment access to agricultural fields without having to encroach into a conservation easement. The proposal to remove portions of the conservation easement along the middle SVB will still leave a forest stand that is 125 feet wide at its narrowest point. This 125-foot width meets the minimum standard of 50-feet wide as required by the Forest Conservation Law. The amended FCP is enclosed (Attachment D).

Staff also supports the removal of 288,802.8 square feet (6.63 acres) of Category I Conservation Easement located in the southwest corner of Lot 11 (Figure 5). Staff agrees that an easement was recorded over this area in error and that there should be no penalty associated with the release of this portion of the conservation easement. The error was not apparent to Staff until researching the conservation easements in relation to this violation. The approved Preliminary Plan and Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan from September 27, 1999 (Figure 7) were somewhat graphically confusing. The easement should only have been recorded over the existing forest and the SVB associated with the stream and not over the existing open farm field to the southwest of the stream. The area that should have been recorded as conservation easement is shown as a thick dashed line in Figure 8. As a result of the confusion, when the plat was submitted for review the easement line was extended to the property line and Staff did not catch the unintentional error.

As part of the remediation for the removal and relocation of the Category I Conservation Easement within a SVB, the Applicants will afforest 3.88 acres of newly created conservation easement and erect permanent easement signage to delineate both newly created and existing conservation easement boundaries adjacent to the actively farmed fields.

Staff believes that the proposed 1:1 mitigation on-site along with the afforestation of newly created easement is appropriate mitigation for the amount of SVB/conservation easement requested to be removed and complies with the Planning Board's policy to mitigate for the removal of conservation easements.

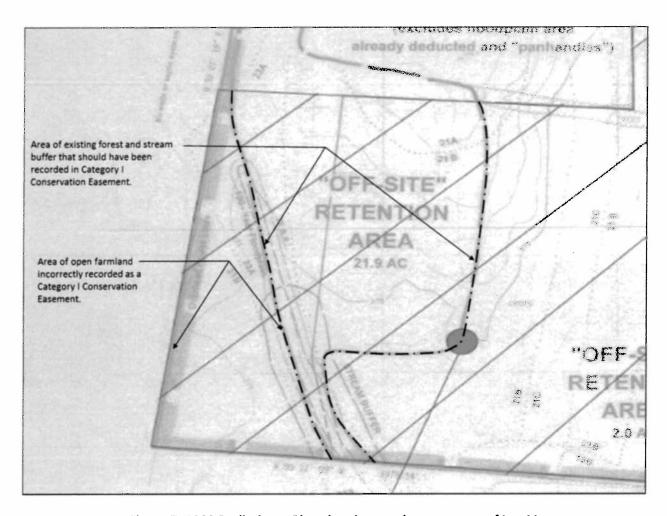


Figure 7: 1999 Preliminary Plan showing southwest corner of Lot 11

NOTIFICATION and OUTREACH

The Subject Property was properly signed with notification of the upcoming Preliminary Plan amendment prior to the October 1, 2012 submission. All adjoining and confronting property owners, civic associations, and other registered interested parties will be notified of the upcoming public hearing on the proposed amendment. As of the date of this report, Staff has received no inquiries. Any comments received hereafter will be forwarded to the Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Board approve this limited Preliminary Plan of subdivision to revise the Forest Conservation Plan with the conditions specified above.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Notice of Violation; Lot 11, 19000 Beallsville Rd.
- B. Approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision
- C. Amended Preliminary Plan of Subdivision
- D. Amended Final Forest Conservation Plan

ATTACHMENT A
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Environmental Planning Division 301.495.4540 Fax: 301.495.1303

www.MontgomeryPlanning.Org

NOTICE OF VIOLATION

EDPNOV 0001

FOR	MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND, the undersigned issuer, being duly authorized, states that:
On.	02/23/2010 the recipient of this NOTICE. Thomas F Rojas
who	represents the property owner, Thomas F Rojas & Marie A Schettino-Rojas
	Property Owner's Name
is not follov	tified that a violation of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law (Chapter 22-A) exists at the wing location: 10111, 19000 Bealisville Road Bealisville MO 20734
Plan N	No. 119980860 Explanation: Agricultural activities and mowing with a protected conservation easement
	VIOLATION:
	Failure to hold a required pre-construction meeting.
	Failure to have tree protection measures inspected prior to starting work.
	Failure to install or maintain tree protection measures per the approved Forest Conservation or Tree Save plan.
	Failure to comply with terms, conditions and/or specifications of an approved Forest Conservation plan or Tree Save plan, or as directed by Forest Conservation Inspector
	Failure to obtain an approved Forest Conservation plan or Tree Save plan prior to cutting, clearing, or grading 5,000 square feet on a property of 40,000 square feet or greater.
	Failure to comply with reforestation or afforestation requirements of a Forest Conservation Plan.
	Failure to obtain written approval for a fence permit prior to installing a fence that passes through or around a concervation easement.
×	Other: Villation of a category I conservation easement agreement
Order Action	re to comply with this NOV by $\underline{C3}\underline{3}\underline{10}$ may result in i) issuance of a citation, ii) issuance of a Stop Work r, and/or iii) issuance of a Notice of Hearing to appear before the Planning Board for appropriate Administrative n. Recipient is to call the inspector at $\underline{30}\underline{100}\underline{100}$ when the corrective action is complete. The following citive action(s) must be performed as directed and within any time frames specified below:
	Stake out limits of disturbance (LOD) and contact Forest Conservation Inspector for a pre-construction meeting:
	Install tree protection measures and/or tree care as directed by Forest Conservation Inspector.
	Submit required application for compliance with Chapter 22A of the County Code. Contact Environmental Planning at 301-45-4540.
	Cease all cutting, clearing, or grading and/or land distributing activity. Approval from Forest Conservation Inspector is required to resume work.
	Schedule a pre-planting meeting with the Forest Conservation Inspector prior to the reforestation of afforestation planting.
X	Schedule and attend a meeting with staff to determine appropriate corrective action to be performed by a date certain. Failure to complete the corrective action by the date assigned may result in i) issuance of a citation, ii issuance of a Stop Work Order, and/or iii) issuance of a Notice of Hearing to appear before the Planning Board for appropriate Administrative Action.
	Other:
MNCP Inspect	~~ tobbook 10 × t
RECEI	
BY:	Printed Name Signature Date

