



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 8, 2003
TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: Michael Ma, Supervisor *Ma*
Joseph R. Davis, Division Chief
Development Review Division
FROM: Mary Beth O'Quinn *wbocq*
Planning Department Staff
(301) 495-1322

REVIEW TYPE: Site Plan Review
CASE #: 8-03020
PROJECT NAME: Tony's Carwash
APPLYING FOR: Approval of 9,329 sf commercial space for automobile washing service
Waiver of setback [59-C-4.367]
REVIEW BASIS: Site Plan Review is required for the C-3 Zone [C-4.36]

ZONE: C-3
LOCATION: Germantown Road (MD118), 600 feet north of Wisteria Drive
MASTER PLAN: Germantown Master Plan, 1989
APPLICANT: CTG OTL, Inc.
FILING DATE: April 23, 2003
HEARING DATE: May 15, 2003



STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of 9,329 square feet for automobile car wash service only, subject to the following conditions:

1. Stormwater Management
Conditions of MCDPS stormwater management concept approval dated January 17, 2003.
2. Transportation
 - a. Limit development use to automobile washing service with five self-service wash bays and one full-service mechanical wash bay;
 - b. Construct the right-turn lane from eastbound Middlebrook Road to southbound MD118 at the MD118/Middlebrook Road intersection, including changing the signal phasing from the current north-south split to concurrent phasing;
 - c. Participate in constructing the following:
 - i. A separate southbound right-turn lane; a second northbound left-turn lane on MD118;
 - ii. A second eastbound left-turn lane on Wisteria Drive;

- and right-turn lane at the MD118/Wisteria Drive intersection;
 - c. Widen Walter Johnson Road by 25 feet from the centerline along the site frontage and provide a five-foot sidewalk and street trees, subject to review and approval by DPWT;
- 3. Environmental
 - a. Mitigate noise generated by the operation of the car wash; noise levels not to exceed the limits established by the Noise Control Ordinance (Section 31B) of the Montgomery County Code;
 - b. Construct a masonry wall 15-feet long and 6-feet high parallel to Germantown Road to provide noise abatement; the wall must be constructed to provide compatibility with the building design and other masonry site elements, provide complementary landscaping for the front of the wall facing Germantown Road if necessary; wall design and landscaping are subject to staff review and approval at signature set;
- 4. Parks

Applicant must provide design drawings for the below listed improvements for Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff review and approval prior to signature set approval. Applicant must provide the following improvements prior to occupancy:

 - a. Construct a masonry noise abatement wall along the north property line on the applicant's property between the car wash facility and the adjacent Germantown Square Urban Park;
 - b. Provide landscaping and at least 6 ornamental trees for screening and buffering for the park property adjacent to the noise wall;
 - c. Construct a sidewalk 5-feet in width connecting the terminus of Walter Johnson Road sidewalk with the sidewalk system within the park;
 - d. Provide SWM controls to ensure that no stormwater runoff falls onto the MNCPPC park.
- 5. Prior to signature set approval provide the following information subject to staff review and approval:
 - a. Site Plan
 - i. Show all easement lines, LODs, Rights-of-Way, bus stops, dimensions and centerlines, transformers, dumpsters, building height, and hours of operation as determined by the zoning reclassification opinion;
 - ii. Provide details for furnishing, fixtures, walls, and fencing;
 - b. Landscape Plan

Provide a sidewalk and street trees every 40-45 feet along Germantown Road; provide a six-foot wide grass panel between the sidewalk and the curb; location of trees and sidewalk to be coordinated with staff; street trees and shade trees must be provided at 2.5- to 3-inch caliper;
 - c. Lighting Plans
 - i. Provide lighting details and specifications, including lamp type, wattage, house shields, and mounted height; include as part of landscape drawing.
 - ii. Lighting distribution levels at the north property line adjoining the park should read 0.01 footcandles and provide an average max/min ratio of 5:1.
- 7. Site Plan Enforcement Agreement

Submit a Site Plan Enforcement Agreement, Development Review Program and Homeowner Association Documents for review and approval prior to approval of the signature set as follows:

 - a. Development Program to include a phasing schedule as follows:
 - i. Landscaping associated with each parking lot and building must be completed as construction of each facility is completed;
 - ii. Clearing and grading to correspond to the construction phasing, to minimize soil erosion;
 - iii. Phasing of dedications, stormwater management, sediment/erosion control, recreation, forestation, community paths, or other features;
 - b. Forest Conservation Plan shall satisfy all conditions of approval prior to recording of plat and DPS issuance of sediment and erosion control permit.

SITE PLAN REVIEW ISSUES:

1. Traffic Study

The application required significant review period by the State Highway Administration. The SHA determined that the plan as proposed meets the requirements for MD188 standards, including the shade trees within the median.

Applicant Position: Applicant proposes Willow Oaks for the MD118 median west of Wisteria Drive.

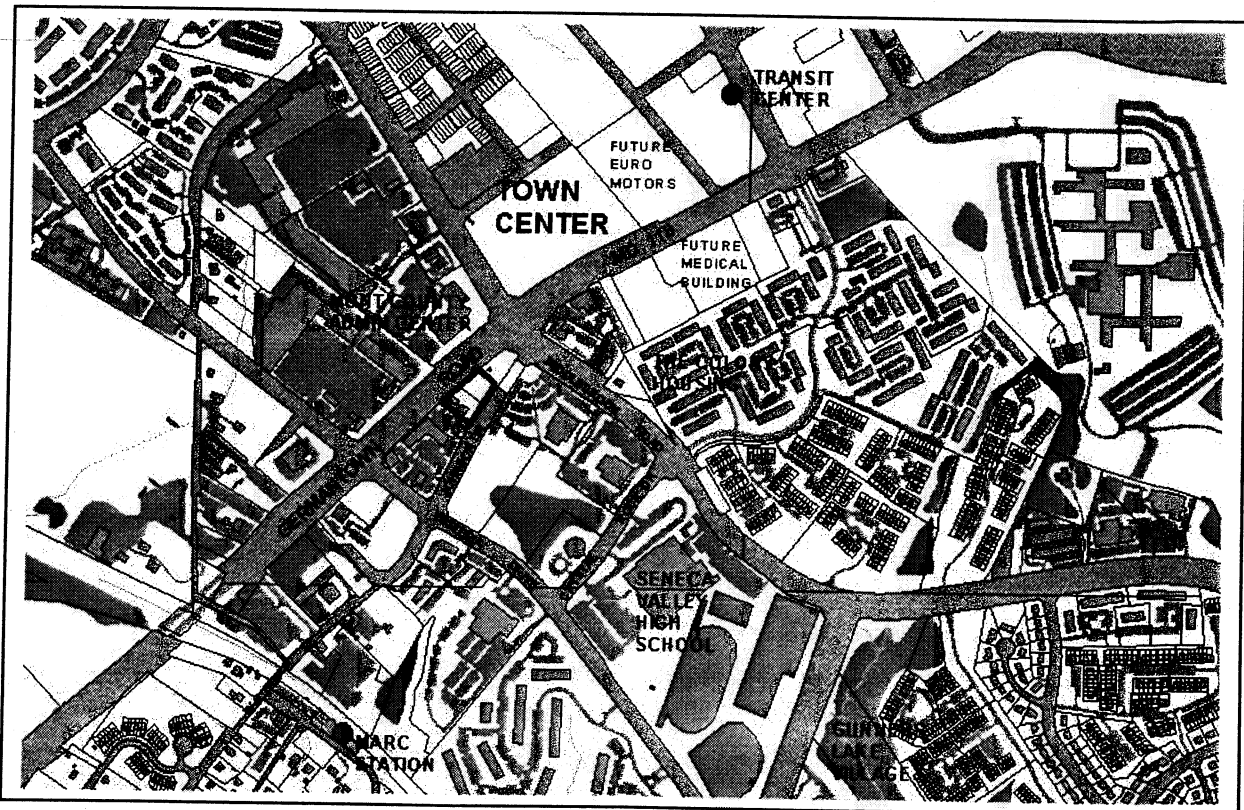
Staff Recommendation: Subdivision and Site Plan staff supports the provision of trees in the median and along the south curb.

2. Noise

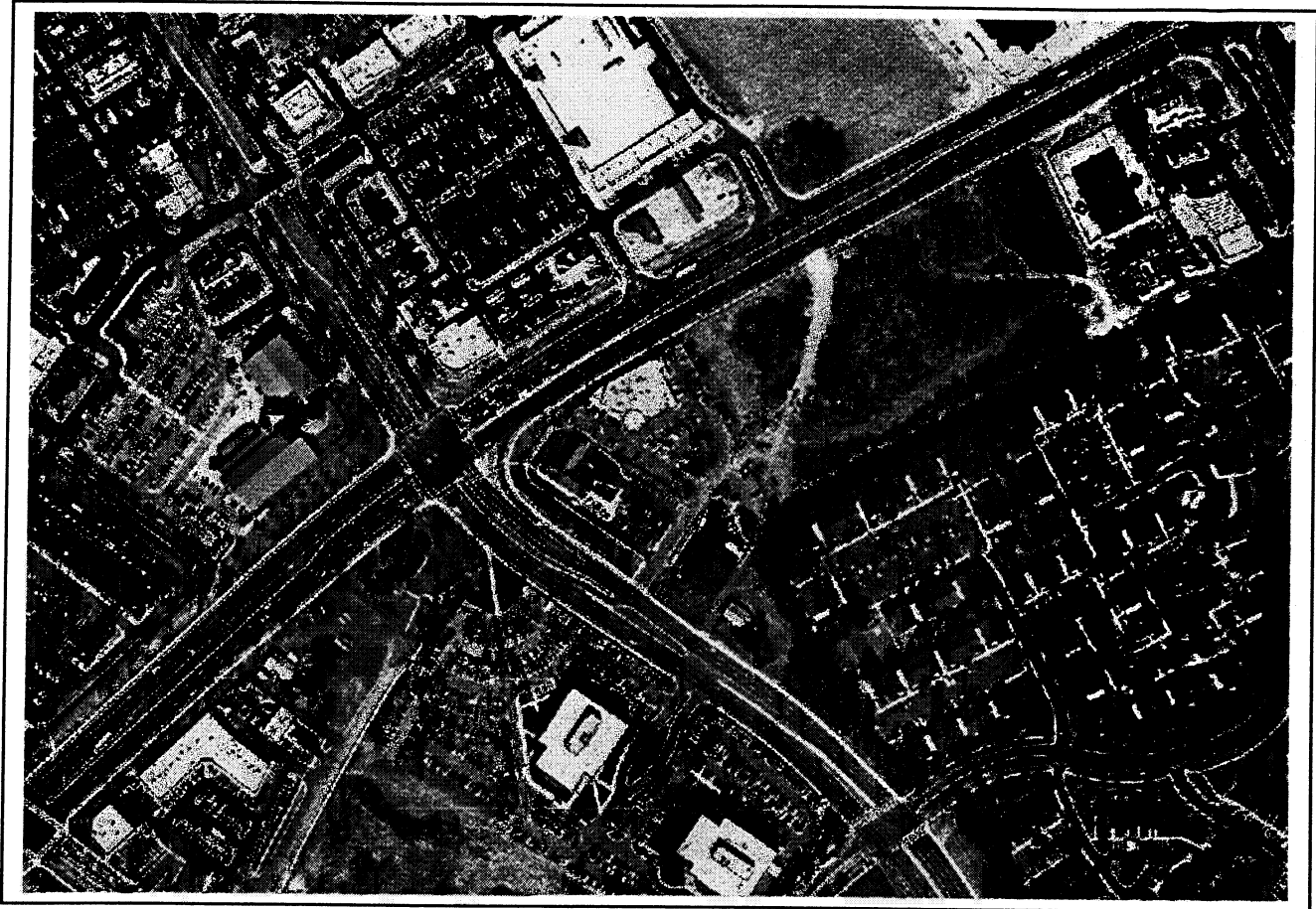
Noise emanating from the car-drying blowers will negatively impact pedestrians walking along the public sidewalk between the subject property and Germantown Road. The existing sidewalk is 30 feet from the proposed location of the car wash tunnel and the noise intensity at this location would be greater than 65dBA. Noise from the adjoining roadway has been measured at peak traffic hours at 70-93dBA at a distance of 10 feet from the roadway pavement. Even though the highway noise reaches higher decibel levels, the duration is typically short. In contrast, pedestrians walking along the car wash frontage would be subject to the blower noise for the entire length of the site, with an increase in decibel levels occurring nearest the car wash exit tunnel.

Applicant Position: Applicant does not propose structural noise mitigation for the street frontage.

Staff Position: The Environmental Planning Staff recommends mitigation of the noise that will impact this primary pedestrian axis within the Germantown Town Center. Staff recommends that the applicant construct an attractive short segment masonry noise wall of compatible materials and style.



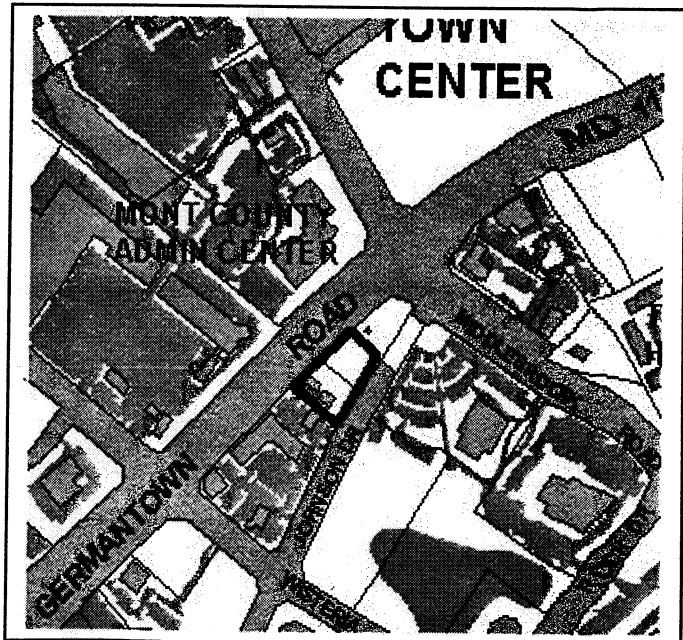
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Surrounding Vicinity



Germantown Town Center Vicinity Map

The subject property is located in Germantown at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Germantown Road (MD118) and Middlebrook Road, just northeast of Wisteria Drive. The County Administration Center is located across MD118 to the north. Seneca Valley High School is located to the southeast along Middlebrook Road.

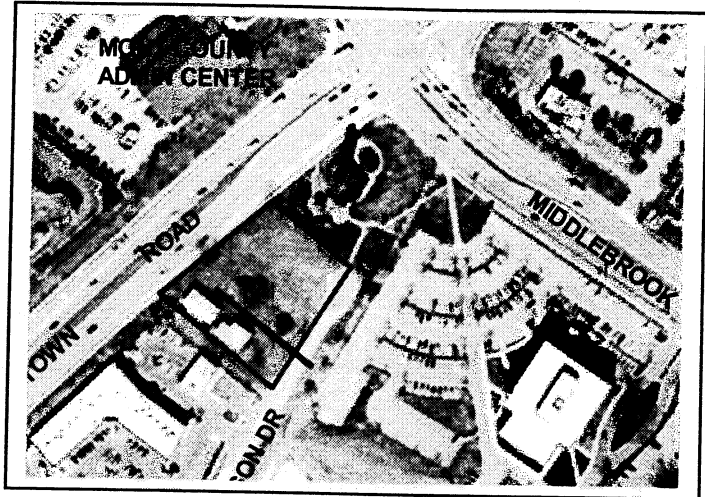
Immediately adjacent to the property to the northeast is MNCPPC ½ -acre Germantown Square Park, which features an attractive landscaping with stone detailing and a gazebo. To the southwest is a Jiffy Lube service facility. The small retail center adjoining the Jiffy Lube contains a bank, restaurant, liquor store and additional retail uses, with vehicular access from Walter Johnson Drive.



Site Description

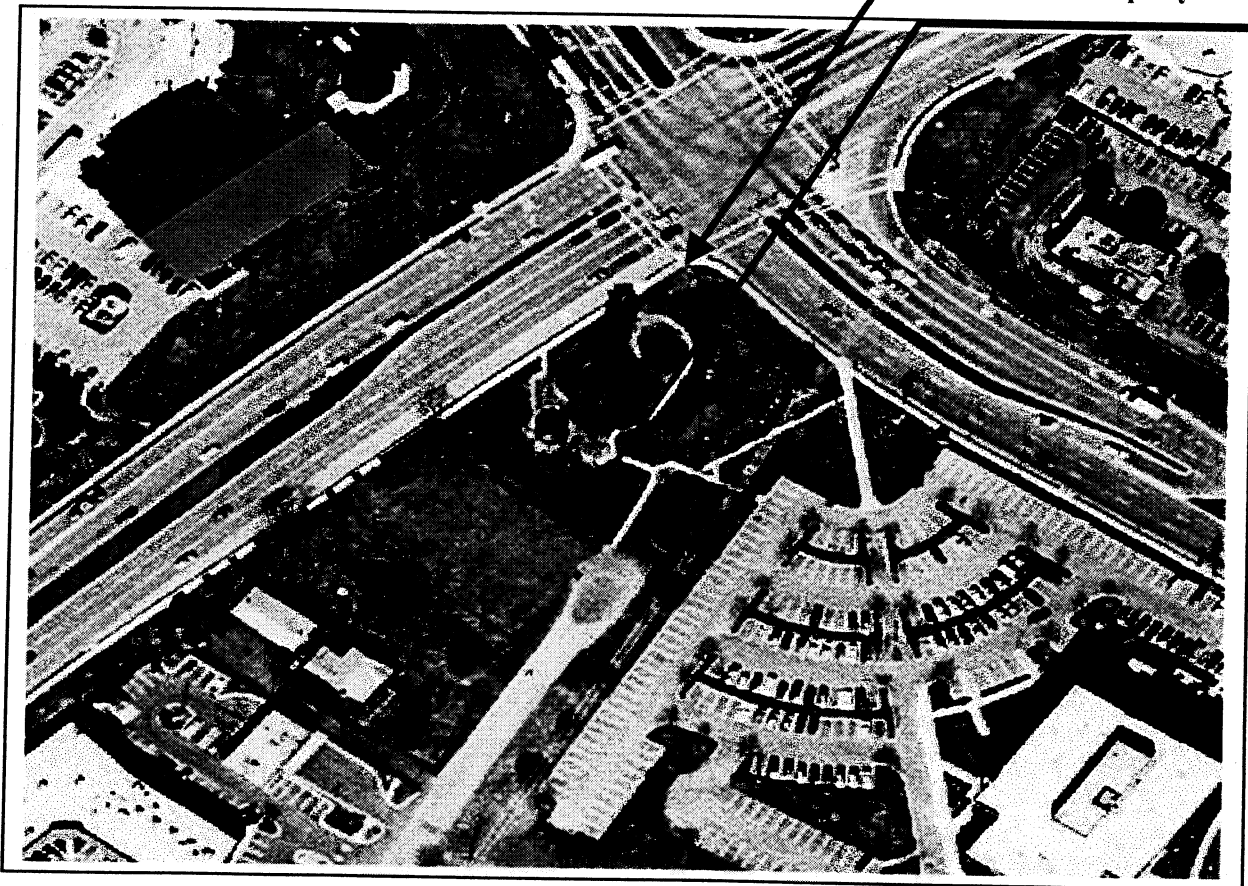
The property for the site plan proposed is currently composed of two parcels of land. The northern piece, (0.43 acres) was zoned C-T prior to its rezoning to C-3 in October 2002. This lot is undeveloped and covered with grassy vegetation. Occasionally, the property is used for the display of used automobiles.

The southern lot, (0.51 acres), previously C-5 is currently developed with a 1/5 story frame house and a two-story detached garage/office. In general, the existing topography for both lots slopes away from MD118 at a slight grade, providing generally flat terrain across the two sites.

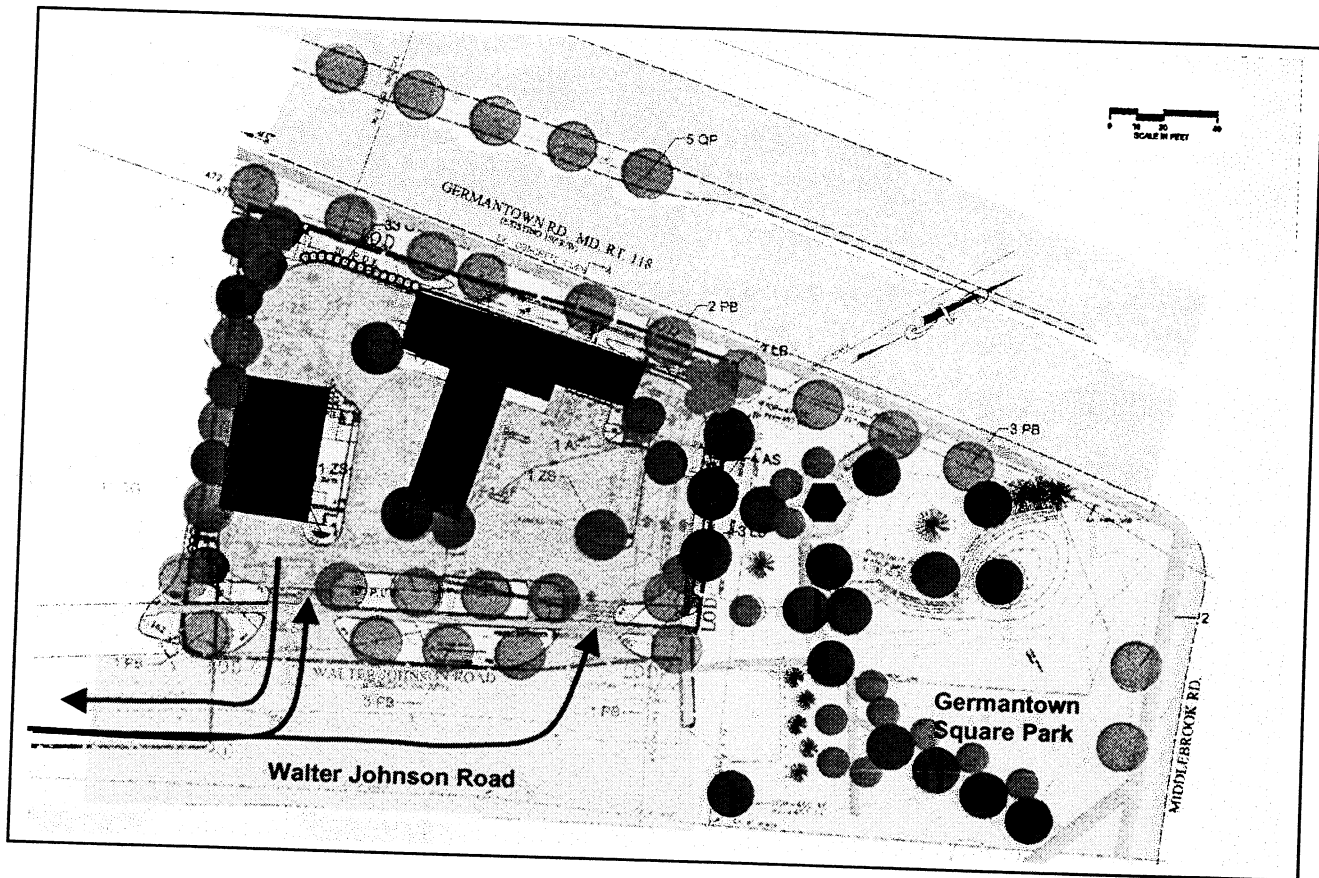


Germantown Square Park

Tony's Carwash
North Property Line



PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal



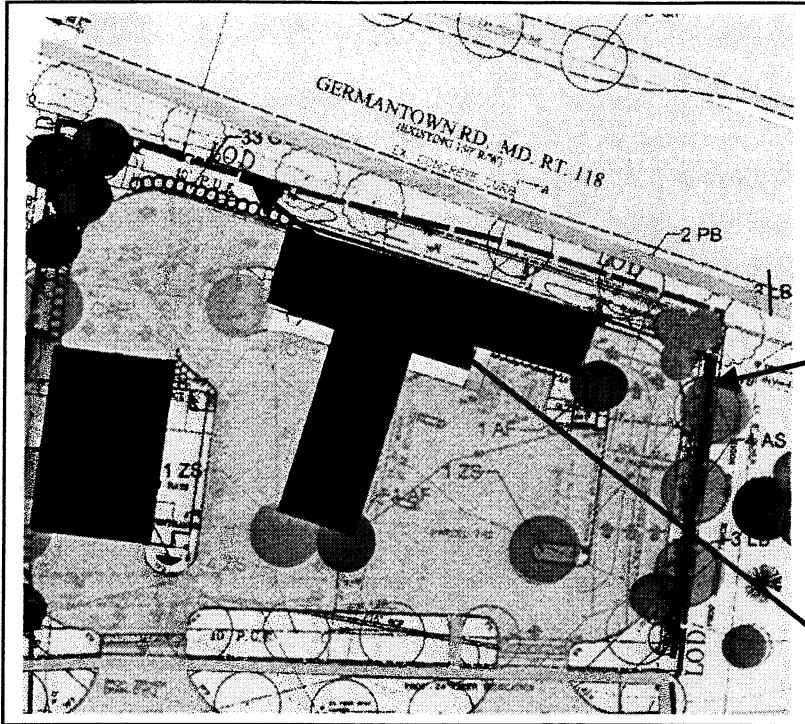
Proposal for Tony's Carwash showing vehicular ingress and egress from Walter Johnson Road

The proposed full-service car wash offers an enclosed automatic car-wash tunnel situated parallel to Germantown Road, a separate building at the south end of the site for interior vehicle cleaning, and four self-service car wash bays in the center of the site. The automatic wash tunnel is capable of processing 100 to 150 cars per hour. The proposed hours of operation are 7 am to 7 pm on weekdays and 9 am to 5 pm on weekends. The applicant anticipates that he would need no more than five to seven employees to operate the facility even during peak hours.

The layout and building design were specifically developed to be compatible with the Germantown Town Center development. The Germantown Road frontage has the appearance of multiple store fronts with large windows that face directly on the street, setback 10 feet from the property line (subject to approval of the waiver for building setback). This building setback, if approved, would continue the building line established by the adjacent retail stores.

This placement is intended to reinforce the identity of the Town Center as a pedestrian friendly neighborhood. The building façade is extended along the street frontage by a screening wall that will wrap the site's north boundary and simultaneously provide noise mitigation for the public park on the corner.

PROPOSAL: SITE DETAILS

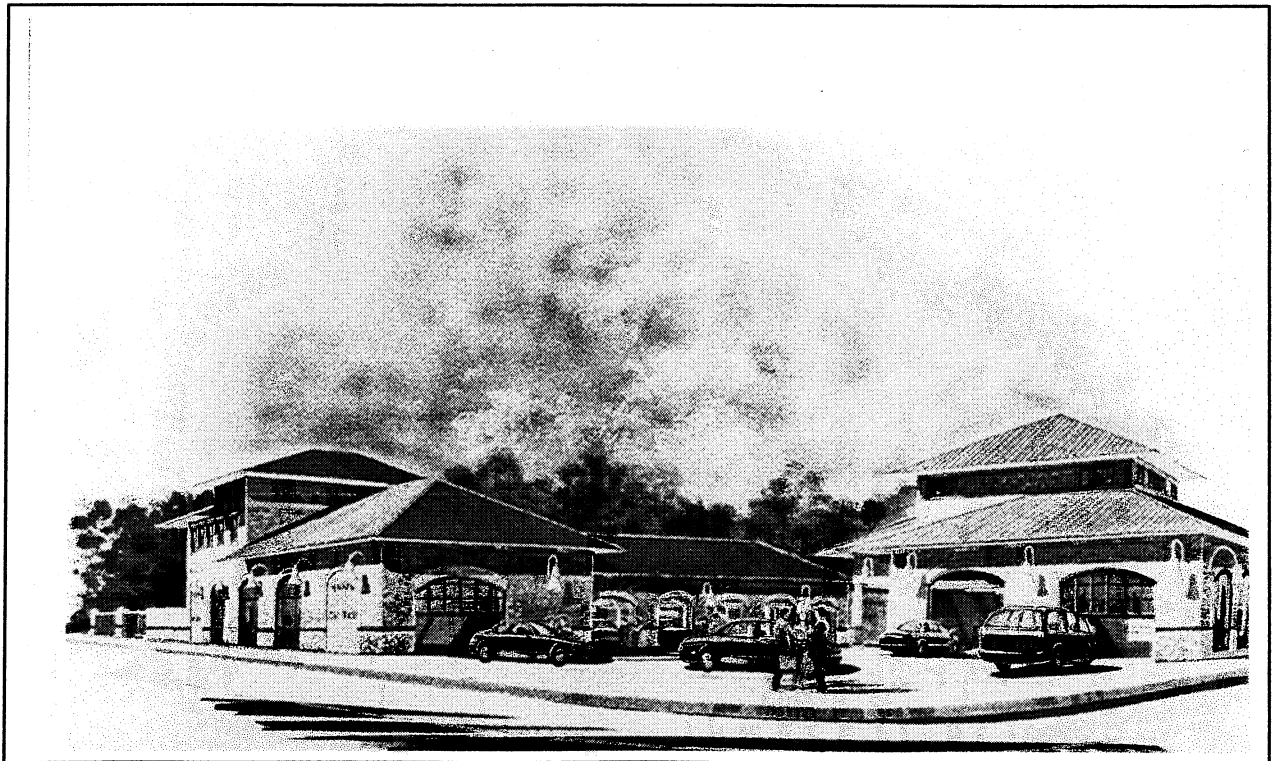


**Location of noise wall for
Germantown Square Park**

**Location of noise wall for pedestrian
sidewalk along Germantown Road**

Detail showing locations of the noise wall for the park and the noise wall recommended by staff for the sidewalk on Germantown Road

Perspective from Germantown Road



Prior Approvals

The property was rezoned by Local Map Amendment G-799, adopted by the District Council October 22, 2002. [See Opinion attached]. Binding elements of the Schematic Development Plan defined the use, building coverage and height, setbacks, signage, and landscaping. The Schematic Development Plan identified a masonry wall for sound attenuation along the north property line adjoining the park and landscaping as elements to be determined by the M-NCPPC at time of site plan approval.

The binding elements of the approved map amendment are:

- Automobile car wash is the proposed use
- The maximum building coverage is 23 percent with 9,629 sf proposed;
- The amount of green area is 28 percent;
- The maximum building height is 42 feet;
- The applicant binds himself to provide the traffic improvements that may be required to reduce CLV (critical lane volume) below the level of CLV associated with background traffic.
- The applicant binds himself to construct a masonry wall and landscaping adjacent to the common boundary with the M-NCPPC park as determined at time of site plan.
- No storage of waste material, auto parts, refuse, and/or motor vehicles will be allowed within any required setback.

The applicant has informally agreed to add an additional binding element limiting the number of employees to seven; Proposed signage must comply with section 59-F of the Montgomery County Code.

The Preliminary Plan 1-03000 is under review concurrently with the Site Plan.

ANALYSIS: Conformance to Development Standards

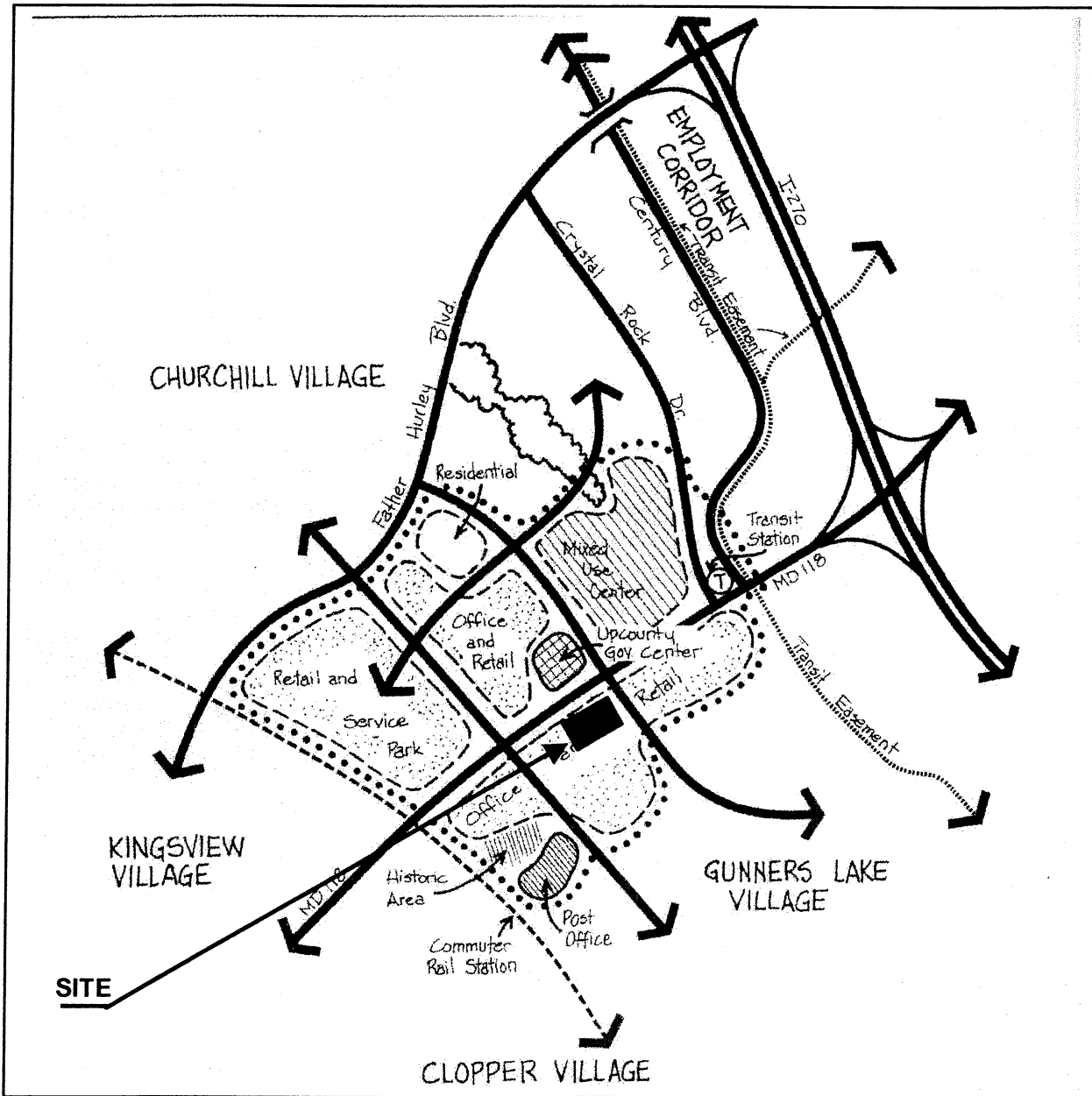
PROJECT DATA TABLE

Tony's Carwash - Site Plan 8-03020 - Development Standard - Commercial Retail Optional Method 59-H-2.5	G-799 Amendment Binding Elements or C-3 Zone Stds	I-3 Zone Proposed
Gross Site Area	0.9369 acres	0.94 acres (40,811 sf)
Net Site Area	0.9369 acres	0.9369 acres
Dedication to Public Use [No Dedication Required]	0	0
Green Area	28% (11,261sf)	28% (11,261sf)
Impervious Area - pavement	49.5% (20,221 sf)	72% (29,550 sf)
Building Coverage	23%	22.8% (9,329 sf)
Setbacks - Auto Related Use 59-C 4.367		
Building setback from street ROW *	10 feet	41 feet
Parking and loading	20 feet	37 feet
Buildings from street >120 foot ROW	50 feet	10 feet *
Buildings from adjoining residential zone (T-S Zone: MNCPPC Park)	50 feet	50 feet
Buildings from adjoining commercial/industrial	10 feet	10 feet
Building height 59-C-5.31	42 feet	42 feet
Parking Tabulation 2.9 spaces/1,000 sf		
Employee parking	7 spaces	7 spaces (incl 1 H/C)
Stacking	N/A	38 spaces
Other Zoning Requirements		
* Applicant request a waiver of the 50-foot Building Setback required by 59-C-4.367(a)(4). See discussion under Site Plan Issues and Findings: Building Locations.		

ANALYSIS: Master Plan Conformance

The proposed site plan conforms to the Germantown Master Plan with its enhanced image as viewed from MD 118. The brick façade, windows and roofline reference new construction in the Germantown Town Center. A sidewalk and landscaping along Walter Johnson Road will encourage safe pedestrian access to the property and the adjoining park. Access to the property from Walter Johnson Road establishes a safe and efficient circulation system for cars queuing for car wash services during peak periods.

Compatibility of the proposed car wash to the surrounding uses is most challenged next to the urban park. The principle issue is noise emanating to the property boundary from the car wash mechanical operations. Landscaping of the common boundary.



Germantown Town Center Concept Diagram

FINDINGS for Site Plan Review:

1. *The site plan is consistent with an approved development plan or a project plan for the optional method of development, if required.*
2. *The site plan meets all of the requirements of the zone in which it is located. See Project Data Table above.*
3. *The locations of the buildings and structures, the open spaces, the landscaping, recreation facilities, and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe and efficient.*

a. Location of Buildings

The location of the buildings and the form of the open spaces are adequate, safe, and efficient. The placement of the buildings in relation to each other, to the street and to the surrounding uses is thoughtfully considered. Along with the disposition of the functional program elements these features optimize the use of the site and the creation of a humane, urban streetscape for this "Main Street" in Germantown. Staff supports applicant's request for a waiver for building setback as applied to the proposed building at Germantown Road because placement of the main building at the street frontage strengthens the character of the Town Center as recommended in the Master Plan.

The attractive masonry walls for noise attenuation are placed efficiently to mask the queuing line of cars that would otherwise be visible from Germantown Road.

b. Open Space

The open space is adequate and attractive for this compact, infill auto service use. The enhancement of the street frontage and the buffers proposed for the park edge will create, essentially, a green envelope for the site that will provide a visually, attractive appearance, and encourage the continued use of the park by workers, students, and retail customers.

c. Landscaping and Lighting

The landscaping and lighting will provide the site with generous visual amenities that will create an urban streetscape, complement and screen the noise walls, provide a moderation in scale, color and texture for the various green spaces on the site. The applicant proposes to provide Willow Oaks for the street trees in the median, which will enhance the urban character of this rapidly maturing Town Center.

d. Recreation

The proposal is exempt from recreation requirements.

e. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The vehicular and pedestrian circulation is adequate, safe and efficient. Vehicular and pedestrian access is accommodated entirely from Walter Johnson Road. Two vehicular entry points and one vehicular egress point provide efficient distribution of traffic flow within the site. The east entry drive accommodates feeds three stacking lanes for cars waiting for the drive-through wash tunnel. Vehicular exit ways from the auto

wash tunnel are accommodated within the west portion of the site around the special service building for interior detailing. Pedestrian access, via lead sidewalk from Walter Johnson Drive, is provided for employees, visitors, and customers, who may visit the public park and/or surrounding retail establishments.

4. *Each structure and use is compatible with other uses and other site plans and with existing and proposed adjacent development.*

The subject design achieves a remarkable degree of compatibility for the use proposed by concealing the majority of visible automobiles and containing most of the automobile maneuvering space behind the building mass. The building and landscape design clearly provide significant elements of the Master Plan's intention for Germantown's "Main Street." The design treatment of massing and materials, combined with attractive and generous landscaping, offers a level of visual compatibility for the adjacent urban park that will allow the continued enjoyable use of this rare urban amenity. The continuation of the Willow Oak street tree on the road frontage and in the median will provide useful shade for the sidewalks and create the attractive boulevard character for the Town Center.

5. *The site plan meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 22A regarding forest conservation.*

The proposal is exempt from forest conservation because the site is less than one acre.