



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

December 9, 2003

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*  
Judy Daniel, Rural Team Leader *JD*  
Community-Based Planning Division  
**FROM:** *MAM* Maria Martin, Community Planner, Rural Team (301/495-4734)  
Community-Based Planning Division  
**CASE NUMBER:** MR-03701-MCPS-1  
**REVIEW TYPE:** Mandatory Referral  
**PROJECT NAME:** Montgomery County Public Schools  
John T. Baker Middle School  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Article 28, Chapter 7-112 of Regional District Act  
**ZONE:** RC (Rural Cluster)  
**LOCATION:** 25400 Oak Drive, Damascus, Maryland  
**MASTER PLAN:** Damascus  
**APPLICANT:** Montgomery County Public Schools

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVAL with conditions

- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) shall submit to Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff an athletic field restoration plan for Athletic Field #6 when the remaining detached classroom building is removed.
- In the future, a coordinated maintenance effort between the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, the Montgomery County Public Schools, and the M-NCPPC Parks Department should be established to maintain the entire new sidewalk connection as efficiently as possible, with one effort of manpower and resources.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Project Description**

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc. (AMT) intend to construct a two-story addition to the existing John T. Baker Middle School at 25400 Oak Drive in Damascus, Maryland. This new 23,500 net square foot addition will house six classrooms, one computer laboratory, two team rooms and other support space to increase building capacity to 694 students for the 2005-06 school year. MCPS staff indicates this addition is necessary to accommodate the existing enrollment level of Baker M.S. The goal is to move students out of all but one of the existing detached classrooms and into the main building, then remove the remaining detached classroom buildings upon completion of the addition. (See Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.)

This project will not affect Baker M.S.'s hours of operation, the on-site flow of traffic, nor does it add any outdoor lighting to the property. This project does not affect the traffic flow on the streets surrounding the school because no new traffic volume will be added to the area, since it is not designed to accommodate increased enrollment at Baker.

### **Community Context**

The John T. Baker Middle School site is made up of two parcels, approximately 22 acres in size, and zoned Rural Cluster (RC). The site is located in an area consisting of public facilities and single-family residential houses.

- To the north of the site, M-NCPPC's Oak Ridge Conservation Park, zoned Rural Density Transfer (RDT) and Damascus Community Center site zoned Residential, one-family, two-acre cluster (RE-2C).
- To the south, a single-family house with farm use zoned RC.
- To the east across Oak Drive, Future Oak Drive Elementary School site zoned Residential one-family, two-hundred-thousand square feet (R-200).
- To the west, farm land, which fronts on Kingstead Road, and County-owned property, both zoned RC.

The Planning Board heard the mandatory referral for the Damascus Community Center on July 18, 2002. Since that time construction has begun on the site and the structure is 10 percent completed. The sidewalks along Oak Drive are part of the final project, but a sidewalk from Oak Drive along the side of the driveway up to the front of the recreation center is not currently part of the final project. Presently, construction is on time and the projected opening date is August 6, 2004.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Transportation**

#### Site Access and Circulation

Oak Drive is classified as a secondary residential roadway. Per the County Code, Oak Drive has a recommended 60-foot right-of-way. Oak Drive connects to Ridge Road at two points about 4,000 feet apart. Ridge Road is classified as an Arterial with an 80-foot right-of-way.

The proposed addition of classrooms and other support spaces will not increase the number of weekday peak-period trips generated by the site. Therefore, no traffic study is required to satisfy the Local Area Transportation Review test. The site is located in the Damascus Policy Area where there is sufficient employment staging ceiling capacity available (833 jobs as of November 30, 2003). Staff finds that there are no transportation issues related to the subject mandatory referral.

### **Environment**

#### Ballfield Coordination

There are currently nine portable classrooms on a portion of the MCPS field labeled by Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) as Athletic Field #6 (Attachment 5) and shown in the application on the southeastern corner of the site. Most of these will be removed as part of this application, however at least one will remain until the school population declines and removal of the remainder is warranted. When the last portable classrooms are removed, Ballfield #6 is to be restored to a condition suitable for permitting by CUPF. At that time, MCPS will submit a plan to Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff that indicates restoration measures. This plan will include, but not be limited to: demolition and removal of all asphalt walkways, removal of all concrete footings and foundations, removal of all unnecessary utilities, specification for topsoiling per Montgomery County Standards and Specifications for Topsoiling, grading of the field to indicate positive drainage conforming to stormwater management required by Department of Permitting Services (DPS), and seeding consistent with existing conditions.

#### Forest Conservation

This application has been issued an exemption from Forest Conservation because it is a modification of an existing developed property and no more than a total of 5,000 square feet of forest will be cleared; no forest clearing within a stream buffer or on property subject to Special Protection Area/Water Quality Plan requirements; and does not require a new subdivision plan. This property is not subject to a Tree Save Plan.

#### Environmental Guidelines

This property is not within a Special Protection Area and is not in the Patuxent Primary Management Area.

### Stormwater Management

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

### **Parks**

In the interest of overall connectivity of sidewalks in this area, Parks will pursue construction of the necessary sidewalk segment on the existing park property, Oak Ridge L.P./H04, located between Baker Middle School and the new Damascus Community Center, which is currently under construction.

The M-NCPPC will include future funding for construction of the necessary sidewalk segment, located on park property, in the M-NCPPC Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for minor construction projects. The proposed sidewalk connection on park property, from the west property line of the Damascus Community Center to the Baker Middle School property, will be aligned parallel to and approximately 8 to 12 feet from the edge of roadway. This sidewalk will connect the new Baker Middle School sidewalk and the new Damascus Community Center sidewalk along Oak Drive. The alignment will vary, as appropriate, to avoid removal of any desirable trees and underbrush will be cleared for visibility and user safety. The sidewalk will be 6' wide, in keeping with the new sidewalks on adjacent properties.

The M-NCPPC also recommends that there be a coordinated maintenance effort in the future by the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, the Montgomery County Public Schools, and the M-NCPPC Parks Department to maintain the entire new sidewalk connection as efficiently as possible, with one effort of manpower and resources.

### **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends APPROVAL for this mandatory referral with the conditions noted in the report.

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#### Attachments:

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| Attachment 1: | Vicinity Map             |
| Attachment 2: | Aerial Map               |
| Attachment 3: | Exiting Conditions Plan  |
| Attachment 4: | Proposed Site Plan       |
| Attachment 5: | Images around Baker M.S. |
| Attachment 6: | Athletic Field #6        |