



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 30, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

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

FROM: Khalid Afzal, Georgia Avenue Team Leader (301/495-4650)  
Community-Based Planning Division *KA*  
Mary Dolan, Supervisor, Environmental Planning  
Countywide Planning Division *MD*

SUBJECT: Olney Master Plan Public Hearing Draft Worksession No. 4:  
Housing Recommendations and Continuation of Southeast Quadrant and  
Zoning Discussion

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of Public Hearing Draft Recommendations for housing and the specific properties as follows.

1. **Rezone the Golden Bear Triangle area in the Southeast Quadrant from the existing RE-2 Zone to RE-2/TDR-2;**
2. **Retain current zoning for the Tower Company property near the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road;**
3. **Retain the Draft Plan's recommendations for the 32-acre County-owned property, including up to 20% of the units as affordable housing, if it is not needed for educational purposes. Add language for an open space on this property.**
4. **Retain the Draft Plan's recommendation to rezone the Mess property from its current RE-2 to RNC with a maximum density of 0.33 units per acre on sewer.**

Recommendations for housing in the Town Center will be discussed in more detail at a later worksession on the Town Center.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the fourth worksession for the proposed Olney Master Plan amendment. In response to the request from the Planning Board, this report focuses on the housing recommendations. It discusses specific properties that are a critical part of the housing recommendations of the proposed Plan.

This report also provides the analysis of the four new options for the SEQ as required by the Planning Board at the last worksession on January 15, 2004.

## **EXISTING HOUSING**

Olney today (Census 2000) has approximately 12,000 housing units with another 1,500 in the pipeline (approved, but not built). The remaining developable land, under existing zoning and the 1980 Master Plan, has the potential to add another 900 units for a total build-out of approximately 14,400 units.

Olney's current development pattern has a diverse mix of housing types: the single-family detached house is the predominant unit type at 72 percent of the entire housing stock followed by townhouses at 23 percent and multi-family units at 5 percent. Most of this housing stock is located in Southern Olney and was developed over a long period of time in various zoning districts (RE-1, RE-2, RC, R-200, R-60, R-90, R-20, R-30, PD-7, PD-9, RT-8, RT-12.5) resulting in a variety of housing styles, lot sizes and site layouts.

Most of the townhouses and apartments are located around the Town Center in higher density zones such as PD-7, PD-9, R-30, and RT-12.5. Townhouses are also located in other locations in the Northeast and Southwest Quadrants, mostly as a result of the transfer of development rights from the Agricultural Reserve in Northern Olney.

### **Affordable Housing**

The Montgomery County Housing Policy defines affordable housing as any general housing, or elderly housing, offered for sale or rent at a price equal to or less than that affordable to a household with an annual income of less than 65 percent of the County's median income. The County's median household income in 2002 was \$78,647.

As of 1999, there are approximately 421 affordable housing units in Olney. Of these, 191 are price-controlled privately owned MPDUs, 129 are owned by the County's Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and other non-profit entities, and the remaining units were built with some other form of public subsidy either as regular family units or elderly housing. Two areas around the Town Center with affordable units are the Town Center Place on Morningwood Drive and Tamarron Apartments on Appomattox Avenue. Other units are scattered around in Southern Olney as part of large subdivisions that have a mix of single-family and multi-family units. Two affordable elderly housing projects are: Marian Assisted Living on Georgia Avenue south of Gold Mine Road and Andrew Kim House on MD 108 near the Olney Theater.

The share of affordable housing for different planning areas in the County varies. It also fluctuates over time as new affordable units are created and older units age and move out of the programs that made them affordable. Goshen and the rural area with 0.4 percent each have the lowest amount of affordable housing as part of their overall housing stock whereas Germantown with 8.1 percent has the highest. Olney is in the lower half of this range, 3.8 percent.

### Senior Housing

Olney currently has approximately 153 units of elderly housing within the Master Plan area. A senior housing development of approximately 100, affordable units is proposed on the Finneyrock property in the Town Center (Olney Manor). In addition, there are large developments of senior housing just outside of the Olney Planning Area. Leisure World, an active adult community of 4,750 units is located nearby in the Aspen Hill planning area. Friends House on Quaker Lane off Norwood Road in Sandy Spring has approximately 100 units. Brooke Grove, another elderly housing complex of 665 units is located in both the Olney and Sandy Spring planning areas.

**Table 1: Senior Housing Facilities in the Olney Area**

Project	Address	Type	Unit Type			
			Ind.	Assisted	Nursing	Total
Marian Assisted Living	19209 Georgia Avenue	Mixed income	0	44	0	44
Town Center Place	3500 Morningwood Drive		8	0	0	8
Ammahl Home for the Elderly	16700 Batchellors Forest Road	Group home, Market rate	11			11
Winter Growth, Inc.	18110 Prince Philip Drive	Group home, Market rate	14			14
Andrew Kim House	Olney-Sandy Spring Road	Mixed income	76			76
<b>TOTAL</b>			109	44	0	153
Brooke Grove*	Brooke Road	Mixed income	402**	105	158	665
<b>Grand Total</b>			511	149	158	818

\*Brooke Grove Campus is located in both the Olney and Sandy Spring planning areas. 158 nursing units include 48 units in Sharon Nursing Home on the campus. The campus currently has only nursing and assisted living units.

\*\*402 units listed as independent in this table are proposed for future construction.

## PROPOSED HOUSING PLAN

The housing goal of the proposed Plan is to continue to provide a mix of housing types in Olney and increase opportunities for affordable housing and housing for the elderly in Southern Olney. The Draft Plan has identified certain properties and potential clusters of properties that would be suitable for different types of affordable housing.

1. The 32-acre County owned property on Bowie Mill Road would be suitable for housing to include MPDUs under the existing R-200 Zone;
2. The Golden Bear Triangle area, bounded by Georgia Avenue, Norbeck Road and the Intercounty Connector (ICC) right-of-way, recommended in the Draft Plan for rezoning from the current density of less than 0.5 units per acre to two units per acre;
3. The Olney Town Center where the Plan's proposal to encourage mixed-use developments with housing could produce MPDUs in the future.
4. The Tower Company's 10.5-acre property in the northwest corner of Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road intersection would be suitable for a special exception for an elderly housing project and may include 100% affordable elderly housing units;
5. The Silo-Inn property on the west side of Georgia Avenue north of Emory Church Road would be suitable for a special exception for elderly housing.

In addition, the MCPS's 18.5-acre school site on Cashell Road, currently reserved for Oakdale Junior High School, would be suitable for affordable housing if it is not needed for a school use. The Plan supports the proposed elderly housing project of approximately 100 affordable housing units on the Finneyfrock property, located on the east side of Georgia Avenue and north of MD 108. Future special exceptions on some of the vacant and redevelopable sites in and around the planning area would also add to the inventory of elderly housing in Olney.

Table 2 below summarizes the various sites and their potential for producing affordable housing in the Olney Planning Area.

**Table 2: Properties with the Potential to Produce Affordable Housing**

Property	Acres	Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Maximum Base Yield	Maximum Yield w/22% Bonus	MPDUs Units (%)
Golden Bear Triangle	85.0	RE-2	RE-2/TDR-2	170	207	32 (15%)
Bowie Mill Site	32.0	R-200	R-200	64	78	16 (20%)
Tower Co. Site	10.5	RE-1/R-200	RE-1/R-200	Sp. Ex.	70	35* (50%)
Town Center		Commercial	Mixed-use		300	45 (15%)
Finneyfrock (Elderly housing)	4.85	PD-9	Mixed-use			100 (100%)
<b>Total</b>						228

## **SPECIFIC PROPERTIES**

The following properties have been recommended for rezoning in the draft Master Plan and have received testimony from the community or the property owners.

### **Golden Bear Triangle Area**

The area bounded by Georgia Avenue, Norbeck Road, and the ICC right-of-way is approximately 85 acres and comprises some 40 properties, including the Golden Bear Golf Range. It is currently zoned RE-2, and some of the properties have sewer service. Most of the properties are older lots of less than two acres and would require assemblage for redevelopment to occur. East Norbeck Local Park marks the eastern edge of the area and some of the properties along the northern edge are in the right-of-way of the master plan alignment of the proposed ICC.

The separation of these properties from the rest of the Southeast Quadrant by the proposed ICC right-of-way, the feasibility of sewer service, the absence of any significant environmental or historic resources, easy access to transit service on Georgia Avenue, and the likelihood of assemblage of some of the properties suggest that a higher density development in this area is appropriate. A mix of single-family detached houses and some townhouses with a maximum density equal to the R-200 Zone, would be an appropriate development pattern at this location. The additional density should be achieved through the purchase of agricultural Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).

Redevelopment of this area through assemblage of smaller properties should be designed to create a small neighborhood of single-family attached and detached houses with significant open space for residents as well as an appropriate green buffer from the ICC right-of-way and the MD28/MD97 interchange. Safe and attractive pedestrian access to Georgia Avenue for transit access should be provided.

The representatives of the some of the properties comprising a total assemblage of approximately 32 acres have requested that their property be rezoned to a higher density of seven units per acre to yield a total of 224 units on their property assemblage.

Staff believes that the Draft Plan density of up to two units per acre under RE-2/TDR-2 is the appropriate density for this area. The property owners' recommended density of seven units per acre would be more appropriate to be located in and around the Town Center, which includes such zones as PD-7, PD-9, R-20, RT-12.5. The southern edge of the Olney Planning Area near Norbeck Road has RE-2 and R-200 zones.

The property owners have argued that the site's location near the proposed Georgia Avenue Busway makes it more desirable to have the seven units per acre density based on the assumption that the site's proximity to the Busway route would reduce the traffic impact of higher density at this location. Traffic generated by the suggested seven units per acre would be approximately three and a half times higher than that recommended by the Draft Plan. In addition, the Georgia Avenue Busway is a long-term plan, and it is not in the facilities planning stage while the proposed development on the

assembled 30-acres is likely to take place in the near future. Staff recommends that the Draft Plan's recommendations of RE-2/TDR-2 be retained for this area.

The Golden Bear properties are located in three different subwatersheds, one in the North Branch of Rock Creek and two in the Northwest Branch. The proposed zoning would increase the imperviousness only slightly in the Manor Run tributary of North Branch Rock Creek and in Bell Pre Creek in Northwest Branch, both of which have very high imperviousness already (over 18%). The greater impact is in the Batchellors Forest Tributary that is currently less than 8% imperviousness.

### **32-Acre Bowie Mill Road Site**

This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was recommended for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes, and transferred it to the County in 1996. It is zoned R-200 and contains a stream but no significant forest.

The Draft Plan recommended that the public ownership, its location on a major road, and the size of the property make it suitable for a housing development with a significant portion as affordable housing. The Plan recommended that if the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.

The residential community around this site has presented extensive testimony opposing the Plan's recommendation of affordable housing use for this site. The community is requesting that uses other than housing would be more appropriate for this site. Some of the recommended uses are: preservation of the entire site under the Legacy Open Space program; trails and recreational uses; and an elementary school. They have indicated that housing on the site would adversely impact traffic congestion and safety on Bowie Mill Road and degrade environmental resources on the site.

Staff has analyzed the testimony, related material and analysis presented by the community, and concludes that, consistent with the current R-200 zoning of the site, a number of other uses as permitted in the R-200 Zone would be appropriate for this site. Staff disagrees with the community that housing is not an appropriate use for this site. Specific environmental resources on the site would be analyzed in more detail at the time of subdivision and preserved as appropriate like any other R-200 zoned property.

The community is also concerned that the property would be used for other than R-200 type of development with all of the projected units as affordable thereby creating a concentration of affordable units at this location. The Draft Plan recommends that the property be developed under the current R-200 Zone and that the public ownership of the property be leveraged to create up to 20 percent of the units as affordable housing.

After discussing the open space needs with the adjoining community, staff has also concluded that an open space with an active recreational component should be included as part of any future development of the site. The open space should be connected to the adjoining residential community and the proposed network of trails and bikeways in the area.

The imperviousness in the Upper Williamsburg tributary of North Branch Rock Creek is already very high at 17%. The development of this property at R-200 will increase the imperviousness only slightly, to about 17.8%.

**Tower Company’s Site**

This 10.5-acre property is an outlot of the Small’s Nursery subdivision. A large portion of the property is zoned RE-1 while a small part of it is zoned R-200. At the time of subdivision of the adjoining Small’s Nursery, the property was removed from the rest of the subdivision with the Planning Board recommendation that it is suitable for a special exception use. The Planning Board also required the developer to dedicate approximately 5.4 acres as parkland for the expansion of the existing Norbeck-Muncaster Mill Neighborhood Park.

The State Highway Administration (SHA) is currently studying a possible interchange at the nearby intersection of Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road; some of the alternatives consume a portion of the southern part of the property. Given its location near a small shopping center and the proposed Georgia Avenue Busway, a special exception use such as elderly housing would be appropriate on this site. The existing zoning of R-200 and RE-1 should be retained on the property. The precise location of the proposed parkland will be determined in conjunction with the SHA study.

**Properties Currently Not Subject To MPDU Law**

Three properties in the planning area are currently not required to have MPDUs since they are not subject to the MPDU law. If the MPDU law is amended to apply to large-lot zones, these three properties recommended for rezoning in the proposed Plan would be able to produce MPDUs as summarized in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Properties in Large-Lot Zones with Potential to Produce MPDUs**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Current Zoning</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning/ Density</b>	<b>Maximum Base Yield</b>	<b>Maximum Yield w/22% Bonus</b>	<b>MPDUs Units (%)</b>
<b>Mess</b>	198.3	RE-2	RNC/0.33	65	79	12
<b>Norbeck CC</b>	198.6	RE-1	RNC/0.33	65	79	12
<b>Polinger</b>	176	RE-2	RNC/0.33	58	70	11
<b>Total</b>						35

**Mess Property**

The 198-acre Mess property is located in the Hawlings River watershed in the northeast quadrant of Olney. It is currently zoned RE-2 on community water and septic in the 1980 Master Plan. The property has a sewer line running through it, which serves the Dellabrooke subdivision to the northeast of this property.

The eastern portion of the Mess property is proposed to be on the Legacy Open Space list of water supply protection and natural resource properties because of its high quality forest resources. The Draft Plan recommends that the Mess property be rezoned to RNC with 0.33 units per acre on community sewer. The property can absorb all of its potential development on its unforested portion if clustered on community water and sewer. The forested portion of the property is recommended to be preserved through land dedication during the subdivision process as parkland, which will also help provide needed trail linkages in the larger Northwest Corridor Greenway.

The property owners have requested a proposed density of no less than 0.43 units per acre based on the assumption that the property would perc at that rate under the existing RE-2 zoning. Staff has analyzed this property at a maximum of 0.45 units per acre which would yield a maximum of 89 units. If the MPDU law is applicable to this property in the future, it would yield 108 units including 16 MPDUs.

This property lies in the Lower James Creek tributary in the Hawlings River watershed. The current imperviousness of this subwatershed is about 10%. Development under existing zoning would increase it to 12% (including the adjoining 10.6 acre Simms property). The proposed change to RNC would result in approximately 11.1% imperviousness under the optional method, approximately 11.2% if MPDUs are included. If the density were increased to 0.45, the subwatershed imperviousness would be 11.3% under the optional method and 11.5% if MPDUs are included.

Staff recommends a density of 0.33 units per acre similar to the approximate yield on this property on public water and septic under the current RE-2 zoning of the property. Consistent with the goal of the proposed Plan to maintain the level of growth in the planning area, staff believes that any additional density on this property would add to the area's traffic congestion and add imperviousness in the Hawlings River watershed.

### **Norbeck Country Club Property**

This approximately 198-acre Norbeck Country Club property is located on Cashell Road near the North Branch Stream Valley Park. It is currently zoned RE-1 with sewer service restricted to the existing use, and it is improved with the Norbeck Country Club Golf Course. The club has indicated that it has no plans or interest in vacating or redeveloping this property in the foreseeable future.

The continued use of this property as a country club is consistent with the Land Use Plan of the area. If the property is redeveloped to another use, the environmental goals of protecting the water quality of the North Branch suggest that clustering any development away from the stream valley would be the most appropriate pattern with land along the stream valley dedicated as parkland. Since the property has possible access to sewer, it should be rezoned to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre, which is consistent with recommendations for rezoning of some of the properties in this watershed in the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan.



This property lies in two subwatersheds of the North Branch Rock Creek. The proposed zoning change will reduce the potential imperviousness on the property. The existing zoning would result in about 10% on septic systems and 18.4% on sewer with a cluster option. RNC zoning would result in approximately 6.4% imperviousness on site. Its location in the watershed very close to the mainstem of North Branch makes it difficult to determine the impact on specific subwatersheds. The reduction in imperviousness will complement efforts in the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan to preserve the stream.

The proposed rezoning of the Silo-Inn property from C-1 to R-200 will be discussed as part of the Town Center worksession.

### **Polinger Property**

The 176-acre Polinger property was discussed as part of the Southeast Quadrant land use and zoning issues in the last two worksessions and is included in the analysis of the four additional options of the SEQ below. This is the only property in the SEQ that could produce MPDUs under the Draft Plan's recommended rezoning if the MPDU law is applied to large-lot zones in the future. Option 2B in the following analysis shows that the property can produce up to 14 MPDUs if rezoned to 0.45 units per acre density subject to a revised MPDU law.

### **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR THE SEQ (Continued From 1/15/04 Worksession)**

During the last worksession on the Southeast Quadrant on January 15, 2004, the Planning Board asked the staff to analyze the following four options for the SEQ. All of these options are variations of the Public Hearing Draft recommendations analyzed as Option 2 in the last two worksessions.

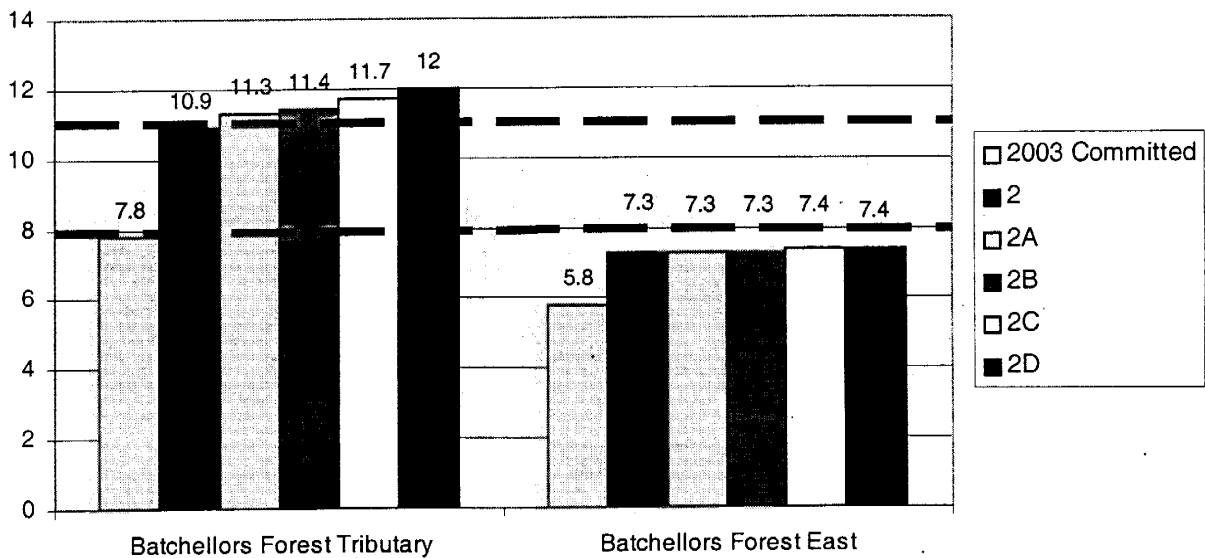
- Option 2A    Public Hearing Draft recommended densities with Gandel as the proposed location for the Washington Christian Academy School;
- Option 2B    Public Hearing Draft recommended densities with only the Northwest Investment property assumed at 0.45 units per acre and Gandel as the proposed location for the Washington Christian Academy School;
- Option 2C    Public Hearing Draft recommended densities with all the four major sewerred properties assumed at 0.45 units per acre and Gandel as the proposed location for the Washington Christian Academy School;
- Option 2D    Option 2C with the assumption that the MPDU law is applicable to large-lot zones.

**Table 3: Summary of Additional Development Options in the SEQ**

	Option	Proposed Densities	Estimated Maximum Units	Estimated Imperviousness	
				BF Tributary	BF East Tributary
<b>2003 Imperviousness*</b>				7.8	5.8
<b>PH Draft (No WCA)</b>	Option 2	0.33, 0.2	214	10.9	7.3
<b>PH Draft w/WCA</b>	Option 2A	0.33, 0.2	202	11.3	7.3
<b>PH Draft w/WCA and only NWI at 0.45</b>	Option 2B	0.33, 0.45, 0.2	215	11.4	7.3
<b>Major properties at 0.45, w/WCA</b>	Option 2C	0.45, 0.2	254	11.7	7.4
<b>MPDU law applicable to Major properties at 0.45, w/WCA</b>	Option 2D	0.55, 0.45, 0.2	290	12.0	7.4

\*The estimated imperviousness for 2003 includes the Good Counsel High School. Estimates for other options include the road improvements recommended by the Draft Master Plan, including the six-lane ICC in the master plan alignment.

**Hard Surface Imperviousness in the Batchellors Forest Subwatersheds**



## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND STAFF RESPONSE

The following table summarizes the specific recommendations in the Public Hearing Draft, public hearing testimony and comments on these recommendations or issues; and the proposed staff response to each.

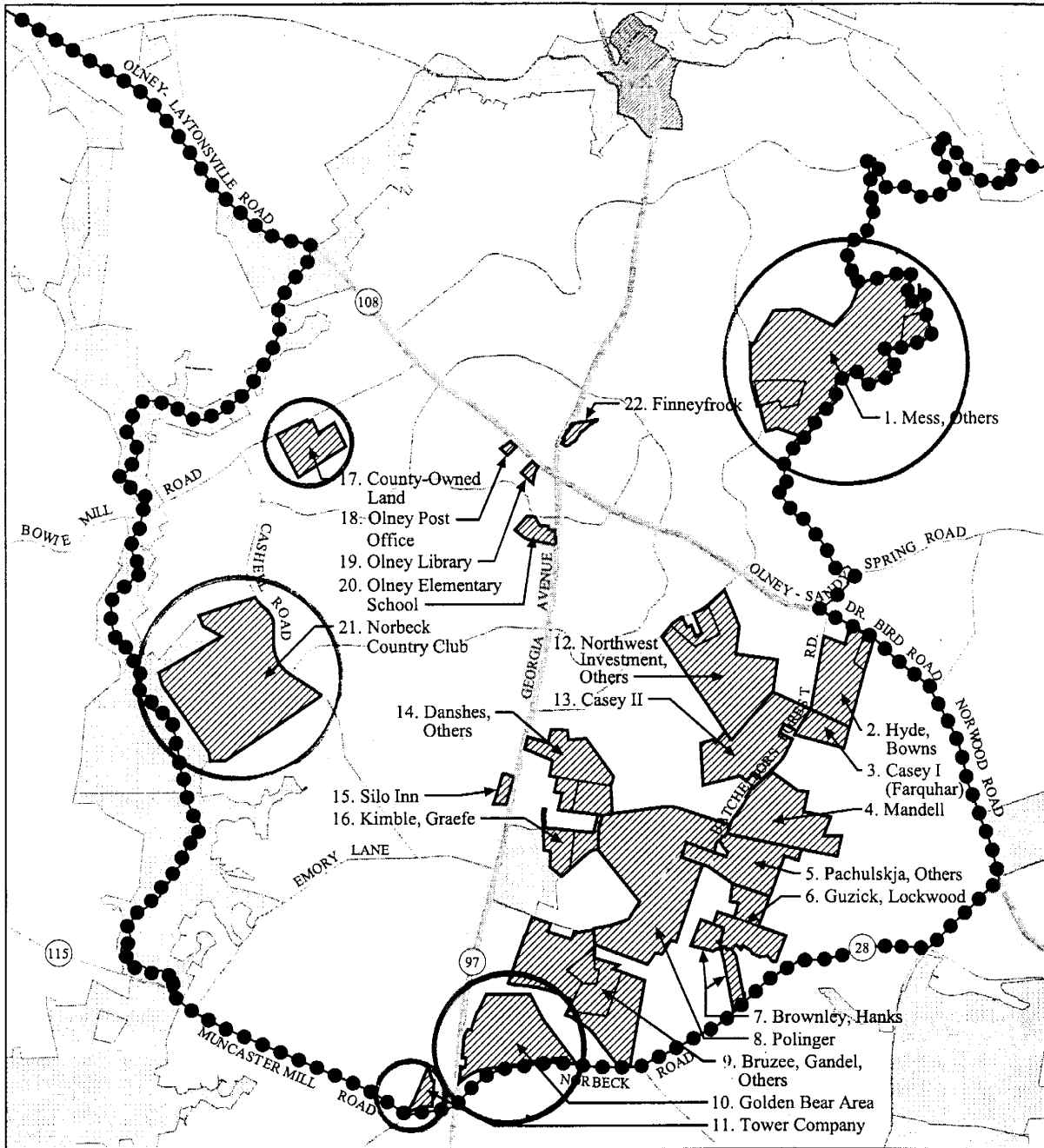
#	Recommendation/Issue	Public Comment	Staff Response
1	<p><b>32-acre Bowie Mill Road site:</b></p> <p>If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.</p> <p>(p.36 Public Hearing Draft)</p>	<p><b>GOCA:</b></p> <p>Do not consider this site for affordable housing unless other sites cannot be found, leave as green space.</p> <p><b>Olney Coalition and Others:</b></p> <p>Inadequate analysis of school needs and other uses; community compatibility issue.</p> <p><b>Olney Square Citizens Association, Olney Oaks Single Family Homeowners Association:</b></p> <p>Environmental issues, compatibility with surrounding neighborhood, recommend an easement of 100'-150' around the perimeter.</p>	<p>Retain the current Draft Plan recommendation for housing on this property. Up to 20 percent of the units should be affordable. Maximum density should be in accordance with the R-200 Zone. An open space with an active recreational component as part of any future development of the site should also be provided. The open space should be connected to the adjoining residential community and the proposed network of trails and bikeways in the area.</p>





#	Recommendation/Issue	Public Comment	Staff Response
		<p><b>Norbeck Meadows Civic Association and Others:</b></p> <p>Balance all interests, describe constraints associated with this property, document community land use preferences, specify design guidelines to protect existing neighborhoods, establish an interested parties list for this property, change the recommendation to read, delete all other references to the property for housing or affordable housing.</p> <p><b>Norbeck Grove Community Association:</b></p> <p>The general vicinity has had 117 MPDUs added to it in the last 5 years.</p> <p><b>Montgomery County Civic Federation, Oatland Farms Homeowners Association:</b></p> <p>Environmental impacts, infrastructure impact needs to be studied, inadequate citizen input due to short notice.</p>	

#	Recommendation/Issue	Public Comment	Staff Response
		<p><b>Others:</b></p> <p>Property was slated to be a school, County maps were not updated properly to indicate the transfer of the property, impacts on Bowie Mill Road, increase in the area population would decrease the quality of life, surrounding neighborhoods already contain affordable housing, proposed density incompatible with site limitations, site inappropriate for affordable housing because of its location, proposal was developed very quickly and without adequate public notice, Olney Elementary should have additional funding if this property is developed for housing, staff should review impacts on the crime level, infrastructure needs to be in place prior to development, other sites are available for public housing, property should be used for other public uses like library or post office.</p>	

#	Recommendation/Issue	Public Comment	Staff Response
2.	<p><b>Golden Bear Triangle Area:</b></p> <p>Rezone the area bounded by Georgia Avenue, Norbeck Road, and the ICC right-of-way from RE-2 to RE-2/TDR-2 on community water and sewer.</p> <p>(p. 32 Public Hearing Draft)</p>	<p><b>Winchester Homes:</b></p> <p>Assemblage in the Golden Bear Triangle area is appropriate for transit-oriented development; rezone the property to allow seven units per acre.</p>	<p>Retain the Public Hearing Recommendation of RE-2/TDR-2 for this area. (See discussion on specific properties in this report).</p>
3.	<p><b>Tower Company Property:</b></p> <p>Maintain the current RE-1/R-200 Zone with community water and sewer for this property. Support a special exception use subject to all applicable requirements and findings.</p> <p>(p. 32, Public Hearing Draft)</p>	<p><b>Lerch, Early, and Brewer:</b></p> <p>Rezone the property to RT-12.5.</p>	<p>Retain the current zoning and recommendation for this property as suitable for a special exception development. (See discussion on specific properties in this report).</p>
4.	<p><b>Mess Property:</b></p> <p>Rezone the Mess property to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre;</p> <p>Acquire as parkland the forested area and stream buffer on the property and confine houses to the open field area.</p> <p>(P. 26, Public Hearing Draft)</p>	<p><b>Jody Kline, Attorney:</b></p>	<p>Retain the Public Hearing Draft recommendation of RNC with 0.33 units per acre for this property. (See discussion on specific properties in this report).</p>

# Specific Properties



-  Specific Properties With Land Use Recommendations
-  Parks
-  Incorporated Areas
-  Master Plan Area Boundary



**Table 4**

**MPDUs by Planning Area  
Total and Currently Price Controlled  
1999**

Planning Area	Current Price Controlled MPDUs						
	Total MPDUs (A)	Percent Distribution of All MPDUs Within the County (B)	Price Controlled Privately Owned MPDUs* (C)	HOC & Nonprofit Owned MPDUs (D)	Total Price Controlled (E=C+D)	Percent Distribution of Price Controlled MPDUs (F)	Percent Price Controlled MPDUs of All Area Housing (G)
Aspen Hill	558	5.3%	114	116	230	6.0%	0.9%
Bethesda-Chevy Chase	230	2.2%	38	12	50	1.3%	0.1%
Clarksburg	20	0.2%	20	0	20	0.5%	2.9%
Cloverly	277	2.6%	6	57	63	1.7%	1.2%
Damascus	238	2.3%	14	25	39	1.0%	1.4%
Darnestown	255	2.4%	36	44	80	2.1%	1.9%
Fairland	972	9.2%	57	74	131	3.4%	0.9%
Four Corners	50	0.5%	15	0	15	0.4%	0.1%
Gaithersburg	2,239	21.2%	486	343	829	21.8%	1.9%
Germantown	2,800	26.5%	866	294	1,160	30.5%	4.7%
Goshen	47	0.4%	13	11	24	0.6%	0.7%
Kensington-Wheaton	235	2.2%	8	26	34	0.9%	0.1%
North Bethesda	641	6.1%	236	51	287	7.5%	1.7%
Olney	752	7.1%	191	129	320	8.4%	2.9%
Potomac	395	3.7%	98	106	204	5.4%	1.3%
Rock Creek	23	0.2%	16	7	23	0.6%	0.6%
Seneca	12	0.1%	12	0	12	0.3%	1.7%
Silver Spring/Takoma Park	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Travilah	638	6.0%	124	118	242	6.4%	3.5%
White Oak	190	1.8%	14	28	42	1.1%	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,572</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,364</b>	<b>1,441</b>	<b>3,805</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

\*Total price controlled less HOC and nonprofit

Note: HOC owns other units that meet the MPDU requirement but were rented through other programs, such as low cost bond financing.

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, Research and Technology Center  
Department of Housing and Community Development, May 2000.



**Table 9**

Distribution of Montgomery County Affordable Housing  
By Planning Area  
1999

	Total Subsidized Housing and Private, Price Controlled MPDUs	Percent Below Market Including Private Price Controlled MPDUs
Aspen Hill	1,576	6.5%
Bethesda-Chevy Chase	995	2.7%
Clarksburg	20	2.9%
Cloverly	317	5.8%
Colesville/White Oak	415	3.2%
Damascus	167	6.0%
Darnestown	36	0.9%
Fairland	933	6.7%
Four Corners	420	3.0%
Gaithersburg and Vicinity	2,328	5.3%
Germantown	2,008	8.1%
Goshen	13	0.4%
Kensington-Wheaton	1,033	3.6%
North Bethesda	907	5.5%
Olney	421	3.8%
Potomac	555	3.4%
Rockville	1,079	6.4%
Rural	23	0.4%
Travilah	210	3.1%
Seneca	12	1.7%
Silver Spring/Takoma Park	2,013	7.4%
Upper Rock Creek	160	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,641</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

Note: This chart includes MPDUs owned by HOC and nonprofits that are permanently price controlled and privately owned, price controlled MPDUs. It does not include low cost unsubsidized market rate rental housing.

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, Research and Technology Center  
Department of Housing and Community Development, HOC, September 2000.

**Table 10**

**Comparison of Montgomery County Affordable Housing  
By Planning Area  
1994 and 1999**

	1994 Total Subsidized Housing and Private, Price Controlled MPDUs	1994 Percent Below Market Including Controlled MPDUs	1999 Total Subsidized Housing and Private, Price Controlled MPDUs	1999 Percent Below Market Including Controlled MPDUs
Aspen Hill	1,899	8.3%	1,576	6.5%
Bethesda-Chevy Chase	602	1.7%	995	2.7%
Clarksburg	0		20	2.9%
Cloverly	384	7.5%	317	5.8%
Colesville/White Oak	552	4.3%	415	3.2%
Damascus	236	9.1%	167	6.0%
Darnestown	148	4.3%	36	0.9%
Fairland	1,738	13.1%	933	6.7%
Four Corners	632	4.6%	420	3.0%
Gaithersburg and Vicinity	3,287	8.3%	2,328	5.3%
Germantown	2,298	11.8%	2,008	8.1%
Goshen	47	1.6%	13	0.4%
Kensington-Wheaton	888	3.1%	1,033	3.6%
North Bethesda	776	4.9%	907	5.5%
Olney	390	4.2%	421	3.8%
Potomac	637	4.2%	555	3.4%
Rockville	832	5.1%	1,079	6.4%
Rural	0		23	0.4%
Travilah	338	6.1%	210	3.1%
Seneca	0		12	1.7%
Silver Spring/Takoma Park	1,984	7.6%	2,013	7.4%
Upper Rock Creek	144	4.4%	160	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,812</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>15,641</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

Note: This chart includes MPDUs owned by HOC and nonprofits that are permanently price controlled and privately owned, price controlled MPDUs. It does not include low cost unsubsidized market rate rental housing.

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, Research and Technology Center  
Department of Housing and Community Development, HOC, August 2000.

SEQ Additional Options post 1-15-04 w-MPDUs  
 Draft January 26, 2004

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
	Property	Acreege	Option 2	2A	2B	2C	2D (2C w/MPDUs)		
			0.33 & 0.2	0.33 & 0.2	0.33, 0.45, 0.2	0.45 & 0.2	122%	15%	
<b>Sewered properties of more than 10 acres</b>									
1	Casey	92.60	30	30	30	41	50	7	
2	Hyde East	49.70	25	25	25	31	31		9 units from GCHS
3	NWI	104.60	34	34	47	47	57	8	
4	Pachulskja	10.20	3	3	3	4	4		
5	Polinger	176.00	58	58	58	79	96	14	
6	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>433.10</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>29</b>	
<b>Sewered properties of less than 10 acres</b>									
8	Applegate	6.63	1	1	1	1	1		
9	Brownley	9.67	1	1	1	1	1		
10	Campbell	7.50	1	1	1	1	1		
11	Koenig	7.20	1	1	1	1	1		
12	Kozorski	6.98	1	1	1	1	1		
13	Little	6.89	1	1	1	1	1		
14	Mckeever	5.60	1	1	1	1	1		
15	Miller	7.25	1	1	1	1	1		
16	Weidner	7.20	1	1	1	1	1		
17	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>64.92</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>		
18	Barnes	8.00	1	1	1	1	1		
19	Bowns	6.00	1	1	1	1	1		
20	Bruzee	24.00	4	4	4	4	4		
21	Cronin	16.00	3	3	3	3	3		
22	Danshes	38.60	7	7	7	7	7		
23	Dodge	26.14	5	5	5	5	5		
24	Doherty	15.00	3	3	3	3	3		
25	Flannery	5.70	1	1	1	1	1		
26	Gandel	60.00	12	WCA	WCA	WCA	WCA		
27	Graefe	10.36	2	2	2	2	2		
28	Hanks	10.70	2	2	2	2	2		
29	Johnson	6.17	1	1	1	1	1		
30	Kimble	16.48	3	3	3	3	3		
31	Kuperschmid	45.11	9	9	9	9	9		
32	Lyons	8.94	1	1	1	1	1		
33	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>297.20</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>		
34									
35	<b>Total SEQ</b>	<b>795.22</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>29</b>	

Note: Assumes GCHS on Hyde west, master plan alignment of ICC,  
 parts of Georgia Avenue Busway, and MD 28 widening

# 24

**Comments On The Public Hearing Draft  
Of the Olney Master Plan**

**By The Olney Oaks Single Family  
Homeowners Association**

**September 25, 2003**

**Jay Feinberg, Vice President  
18125 Darnell Drive**

20

## **1. Introduction**

Chairman Berlage and members of the Planning Board, I am Jay Feinberg, Vice President of the Olney Oaks Single Family Homeowners Association. I am here to comment on the proposal to develop the 32-acre field along Bowie Mill Road that is identified in the Plan as property #17.

Olney Oaks consists of 424 households in an area west of Georgia Avenue and south of MD 108. Forty-two houses on the lower section of Darnell Drive, which borders the 32-acre field, are included in the Association. I am a resident of Darnell Drive.

While overall, the Olney Master Plan Draft is very well done, Olney Oaks homeowners are concerned about the last-minute and dramatic change in plans for the 32-acre site due to the impact it would have on existing properties, potential environmental damage, and further worsening of traffic congestion. In general, major problems with traffic congestion in the Olney area are not sufficiently expressed in the Plan.

## **2. Impact on Existing Properties**

Running through or alongside Olney Oaks are Williams Company interstate high-pressure gas transmission lines, Columbia Gas transmission lines, Pepco high-tension power lines, and multiple creeks and associated wetlands that feed into the Upper Rock Creek. All of us in Olney Oaks knew and accepted that these features were here when we moved into the development. We also understood, according to the 1980 Master Plan and County land records, that the 32-acre site was owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education and was reserved for a future school building. The decision to move into this area, the amount we paid for our homes, and the current market values are based on this information. General awareness of the transfer of the site from the School Board to the County only came about late this past summer as a result of the release of the Olney Master Plan draft.

Dramatically changing the planned use for this land from a school to potential high-density affordable housing could have a major negative impact on Olney Oaks homeowners due to the development itself and impacts on traffic congestion and the environment as discussed the following sections. This is inconsistent with intent of the Master Plan, which states on page 36, "Protecting the existing communities from potential negative impacts of future growth is a significant objective of the Olney Master Plan." If additional units of affordable housing are needed in the Olney area, they should be built closer to the Town Center, so residents can walk to the area's businesses.

## **3. Environmental Concerns**

As more information was gathered by members of Olney Oaks and neighboring associations, it has also become very apparent that any significant development on the site would not be practical due to the presence of high-tension power lines, a gas transmission line, and most importantly, environmental concerns.

As the Olney Oaks Board knows very well through years of working with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection and the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) that the creeks in this area feed into the Upper Rock Creek and along with the surrounding wetlands are protected by Maryland's Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act. "The stated goal [of the Act] is no overall net loss of nontidal wetland acreage and function." Just getting a permit to install riprap (rocks) to protect a footbridge and path from erosion took almost one year and required approval from MDE and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These wetlands provide multiple benefits including wildlife habitat, erosion control, water quality improvement, and stormwater/flood control. The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection is currently looking for ways to make better use of the wetlands in this area to reduce water flow from the Olney area during storms as a means of mitigating flooding and erosion problems downstream.

The 32-acre site contains a creek, a large wetlands area, and an underground spring. These areas must be protected from development. Any significant development on the remaining areas would create more impervious surfaces and increase the runoff into the waterways because less land would be available to absorb the water. Any form of high-density housing with large parking lots would be the most detrimental to the area.

#### **4. Traffic Congestion**

Traffic congestion is a major problem in the Olney area. Georgia Avenue, MD 108, and Bowie Mill Road are gridlocked during the morning and evening rush hours and are heavily traveled at other times of day. In addition to the tremendous growth in households in this Master Plan area, the existing households have more drivers and cars per household. Also, large numbers of houses being built in the surrounding areas, particularly north and east of Olney, are channeling even more cars through the area. With the huge growth in households and businesses to the east in the Columbia area and to the west along the I-270 corridor, the roads through Olney have become the major east-west route. The planned addition of Good Counsel High School on MD 108 in Olney Town Center and the potential growth in Olney, according to the Master Plan, of 14,780 housing units without increasing the number of lanes on existing roads will create even more extensive gridlock throughout the entire day.

In regards to the 32-acre site, Bowie Mill could not handle the additional traffic from any extensive development. In the morning and evening rush hours, traffic is often backed up on Bowie Mill all the way from Cashell Road to Darnell Drive. Even turning right out of Darnell Drive is often a challenge due to the heavy volume of traffic heading towards MD 108. If we want to maintain Bowie Mill as a semi-rural two-lane road, then we cannot keep adding more houses along the road.

## 5. Recommendation

Olney Oaks supports the analysis and recommendation concerning the 32-acre site scheduled to be presented here tonight by Nancy Wendt on behalf of the Olney Square Civic Association. This is consistent with the proposed changes in wording to the Plan that is supported by the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) and presented below.

The proposed new language for the first descriptive paragraph is as follows.

This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was being considered for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan, however, the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes. It was also considered inappropriate as a public use area, and proceeds from the sale of the site were to have been used to contribute to development of assisted housing in the Olney Town Center. This property is zoned R-200, contains a stream, an underground spring, aquifers, and some forest. It also contains a natural gas pipeline and high-tension power lines. It is situated in the eco-sensitive headwaters of the North Branch of the Rock Creek, is part of the Upper Rock Creek wetlands area, is in a special level protection area, and therefore should not be extensively developed and should remain undisturbed to the greatest extent possible. To protect the stream quality of the North Creek watershed, and to offset the stress that establishment of the neighboring Norbeck Grove development has placed on watershed biodiversity in this area, as well as resulting higher traffic density and noise on Bowie Mill Road, this land should be preserved as much as possible as open green space and evaluated environmentally for inclusion in the Legacy Open Space Program, with the balance of useable land, retaining the R-200 zoning\*. The existing stream, spring, aquifers and tree line should be retained under any proposed new development.

\*The proposal presented to GOCA called for rezoning to RE-2 (residential, one-family with a minimum lot area of 2 acres for each dwelling), but the R-200 (about 2 houses per acre) zoning would be satisfactory since it is consistent with all the surrounding communities. It is estimated that 10 acres on the site could be developed with a total of 20 single-family houses.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> existing paragraph, as shown below, should be deleted in its entirety.

~~The public ownership, its location on a major road, and the size of the property make it suitable for a housing development with a significant portion as affordable housing.~~

The Recommendation should be changed to the following.

**Recommendation:** Since the property is not needed for educational purposes, is located in eco-sensitive wetlands and contains building constraints that severely restrict what can reasonably be developed, it should be preserved as much as possible as open green space and evaluated environmentally for inclusion in the Legacy Open Space Program, with the balance of useable land, if any, retaining the R-200 zoning to maintain needed low density in the area. The existing stream, underground spring and aquifers, and tree line should remain undisturbed with any proposed low-density development, and significant portions of developed land should contain open green space. An easement of 100-150 feet should be provided around the perimeter of the property to further decrease the impact of any development and to provide adequate storm water management.

Montgomery County Planning Board  
For inclusion in Public Hearing Record  
Re: Olney Master Plan  
Date of Hearing: 9-23-03  
Date Rec'd: 9/22/03  
Corres. No.:



The Management Group  
Associates, Inc.

A FULL SERVICE PROFESSIONAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY

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SEP 22 2003

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

Norbeck Grove Community Association  
Olney, MD 20743

September 11, 2003

Mr. Derick Berlage  
Chairman, M-NCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
SEP 22 2003

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

Dear Mr. Berlage:

In the Olney Master Plan Public Hearing Draft, item #17 recommends that a 32-acre site on Bowie Mill Road be used for affordable housing.

Until June of this year, the site was publicly documented as an elementary school site. In July, the neighboring communities became aware that it (a) had been declared excess by the Montgomery County Public Schools and (b) was now being identified as the only site outside the town center specifically recommended for affordable housing.

We see two problems with the recommendation:

First, this area has seen 117 new Moderately Priced Dwelling Units go into the Norbeck Grove and Oatlands communities within the past five years. To single out this site for affordable housing would add more units to an area already heavily represented in the affordable housing inventory.

Second, there are environmental issues that, on their face, seem to argue against R-200 zoning and dense development. These include a stream, an underground spring, a gas line, and high-tension electric lines. The case against the Master Plan recommendation should have proper time to be developed and forwarded through the plan process. The two months used to date is certainly not sufficient time to properly address this issue.

We believe the current recommendation is not environmentally consistent with other recommendations in the Master Plan, nor with the recently completed Rock Creek Master Plan. Prudence would dictate that the recommended use of the site be changed to accommodate its environmental peculiarities, and that adequate time be allowed for reasonable evaluation prior to any decision. We believe that the resulting evaluation will suggest that the land be left undeveloped or be developed at a very low density.

Sincerely,

Larry Solomon  
President, Norbeck Grove Community Association

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# 19

**COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT OLNEY MASTER PLAN  
BY THE OATLAND FARMS HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

September 25, 2003

**Overview.**

Good evening. My name is Robert Bell. I am an Olney homeowner representing the Oatland Farms Homeowners Association. We share the concerns of other speakers on the Commission's draft proposal to develop the 32-acre field across Bowie Mill Road from our neighborhood. It is not that we are opposed to any further development, nor that we do not recognize the laudatory goals of the MPDU Program—despite its uneven successes and known implementation flaws. Rather, we are disturbed by the insufficient time that has been devoted for planning and meaningful public input, and the fact that there are serious defects in the recommended usage that have yet to be recognized.

At this point, we are not really blaming anyone. The proposed usage of this property represented a last-minute switch, and neither the planners nor the citizens have had sufficient time to play their roles. As an aside, when I was an undergraduate I thought seriously about seeking a masters degree in planning. Seeing sketches of futuristic cities and other planning endeavors made the field seem be a highly creative, fulfilling career. Little did I know about the reality of political pressures, hard lobbying developers, and irate citizens. I strongly empathize with what planners want to achieve, and I do not want to come across as an irate citizen. Nevertheless, I and my HOA feel that both you and we were cheated by the shortness of the process in this case, and our testimony will elaborate on this issue.

**Public Review Time Has Been Inadequate.**

Because of an error several years ago, this land's transfer from MCPS to the County was not recorded. Although some of us recently became aware of the possibility that it could become the site of a new Olney Elementary School, it was not until the release of the Public Hearing Draft on July 24, 2003, that even a handful of people heard about county ownership and the new proposed usage. It was not until the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) called an unusual summer session on August 12 that more people became aware of this development. In the little over six weeks from then until this hearing, word has spread slowly because most people in this short period were involved with vacations, back-to-school activities, and then hurricane Isabel. Consequently, meaningful public review time has been woefully inadequate.

**M-NPPPC Planning Time Has Been Unusually Short.**

We recognize that the complicated, multi-issue master planning process involves serious time pressures. And with the late-breaking deletion of the Olney ES

option sometime in June or July, during the rush from Staff Draft to the Public Hearing Draft, we can understand how the lack of sufficient time and corresponding lack of meaningful community input resulted in a hastily prepared, ill-advised, new use recommendation.

Perhaps that is why the actual wording of the recommendation had loose linkages. The draft states: "The public ownership, its location on a major road, and the size of the property make it suitable for a housing development with a significant portion as affordable housing." The actual recommendation in the very next sentence states: "**If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.**" The abrupt transition from "significant portion" to "used for affordable housing," and the mystery as to what the latter terminology really signifies in terms of project size and nature, seem to provide further evidence of how quickly this recommendation was formulated.

Thus, there is all the more reason why adequate public review time is necessary: so that we and the planners can better ensure that all relevant factors are considered. It is in our mutual interest that this recommendation not reach the County Council in a defective condition.

#### **The Current Recommendation Lacks Needed Specificity.**

We realize that master plans indicate intentions about land utilization, and that it would be prohibitively expensive to work out all related details. Nevertheless, for us to comment in a meaningful way even at the master plan level, we need more information than a designation of the site as being for affordable housing. We do not know if this means 12 ½ percent townhouses in a single family unit development or 100 percent affordable units in four-story buildings that would conflict drastically with nearby neighborhoods. Even a master plan, it seems to us, should give a clearer indication of the nature of the intended development.

Then there are the issues of the existing streams and wetlands on this property, and the dangers of flooding. The latter are not fully reflected in the extremely outdated (1975) flood maps that show only a fraction today's development surrounding the property. Some of those residences bordering the site have experienced minor flooding. We do not know what would happen if another large residential development were to further increase impervious surfaces.

In addition, we stress that the wording of the recommendation should at least acknowledge that there may be potential traffic conditions that must be addressed before any final determination is made, especially in view of Bowie Mill Road's rush-hour overcrowding, the impact of the potential larger development just north of us of the 332-acre Freeman property along Norbeck Grove, and the possible development just west of us on the 336-acre property between Sequoyah Elementary School and Casey House.

As I said previously, we know that these and other such issues cannot be dealt with in great detail at this stage. Still, we believe that the recommended usage should (1) be explained with more precision to give real substance on which to comment, and (2) include more evidence that factors particular to this site will be considered in depth. A close-up look raises critical questions about its suitability for large-scale development. Quite possibly, such a close examination by MCPS of all factors, including the high tension wires, weighed heavily on their decision to surplus the property. Whatever their view was, however, the final draft plan should at least include references to potential impacts on the streams, wetlands, and road capacities, and also mention the possibility that the vaguely defined housing project might not prove to be the ultimate determination.

### **Our Preferences for the Bowie Mill Road Property.**

Since we do not know precisely what the Commission has in mind for this land, we would like to put forth our preferences. Unfortunately, without adequate time and the ability to quickly obtain outside expertise on these matters, a definitive, documented statement of our own preferences is impossible.

Nevertheless, having walked the property; seen the two streams, the wetlands, and the placement of the sewer and gas lines; and dealt daily with today's traffic on Bowie Mill Road, I and others can say that that an extensive residential development would not be the best use of this property. Transfer of this land to Legacy Open Space would be our number one choice—at least of the flood plain, wetlands, and stream needed to protect the North Branch of Upper Rock Creek. A park with a pervious gravel parking lot would be an alternative. If development needs eventually override community preferences, we would at least like to see single-family houses that are in character with the community, placed only on portions that would not adversely affect the streams and wetlands, and built with a density that would not contribute to further potential for flooding or Bowie Mill Road congestion.

With regard to any housing development, we note that the Oatland Farms and Norbeck Grove communities that face this property have at least 117 affordable units (which may not be in the four-year-old data on such Olney units). And this is in an automobile dependent location, out of walking distance from the center of Olney, and relatively far from major employment areas. Under such circumstances we fail to understand why another substantial MPDU effort in the immediate area would be envisioned. This expensive program, in which developers pay a third or less of the true impact costs, should seek to maximize the value per dollar. In that respect, there are much more appropriate locations.

In view of this and the environmental, traffic, and other concerns, the Oatland Farms HOA has a primary preference and a secondary preference.

- Our Primary Preference is to have a Real 60-Day Review Period To Provide Informed Public Input.

We have had a very inappropriate time for an exceptionally abbreviated review period. We are not planners or highly experienced civic activists—although we may need to become the latter if we are to protect the Olney we want to live in. We require more extensive discussions with our neighboring communities most affected by the usage of this property. We need adequate time to research relevant material. And we require outside expertise that was not readily available and we could not even seek until we had done some preliminary research. For this we respectfully request a sixty-day extension of time from today before we submit our final testimony on this subject.

There may have been the required bare minimum of public notifications to conform to the regulatory requirements, but with the sudden nature of the new proposed usage and the unfortunately timed end-of-summer news release, certainly the spirit and utility of public involvement have not been achieved. We know that we can beneficially use more time, and that the final product can be improved substantially if we are allowed to play our role in the democratic process in Montgomery County.

- Our Secondary Preference Is To Support the GOCA and Olney Square Civic Association Recommendations on the 32-Acre Property.

We have participated in GOCA sessions and, though the Olney Coalition, we have been involved with the development of the Olney Square Civic Association (OSCA) recommendations. Although there was a regrettable lack of time to do this, we believe that these similar positions represent the best statements of the issues and conclusions that could be made. If we are denied our request for a 60-day extension, the Oatland Farms HOA would like to express our general concurrence with the GOCA and OSCA positions. This is not, however, to indicate that the drafters of these statements would not also desire more time. Given more time, these two positions could have better prepared and more fully integrated—with the GOCA proposal being further refined in light of the most recent OSCA findings on environmental and other issues. Unfortunately, our support for these statements does not indicate that we feel that the public review process could be considered as being truly adequate without our requested extension.

We hope we can work together on this important issue, and that you carefully consider our concerns and those in the more detailed OSCA testimony.

# COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE SERVICES

Richard D. Klein, President  
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Web Page: [www.ceds.org](http://www.ceds.org)

November 24, 2003

Khalid Afzal  
Community Based Planning  
Maryland-National Capital Park &  
Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Afzal:

We are assisting the Olney Coalition with questions regarding the draft Olney Master Plan.

In the first paragraph on page 82 of the Plan it is stated:

*Currently, the Olney Master Plan Area has approximately 12,000 households with another 1,515 in the pipeline, and 7,500 jobs. Most of the current and future jobs are located in either the Olney Town Center or on the Montgomery General Hospital campus. The proposed land use and zoning recommendations of this Plan anticipate a build-out capacity of approximately 14,800 households.*

This text indicates that another 2,800 households will be developed within the Master Plan Area.

I have the following questions regarding this estimate.

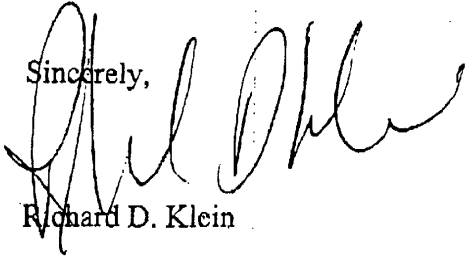
1. How would the 2,800 additional household be distributed over the master plan area? For example, if the estimate was based upon traffic analysis zones I would like to obtain a breakdown by TAZ.

*We've saved more than 15,000 acres of farm and forestland,  
hundreds of neighborhoods and waterways, and one of America's oldest historic sites."*

2. Is it possible to estimate the percentage of these households which would be single-family detached, townhomes, apartments, etc?

I can be reached at 410-654-3021.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Klein

cc: Ms. Nancy Wendt, Olney Coalition

# COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE SERVICES

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October 17, 2003

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

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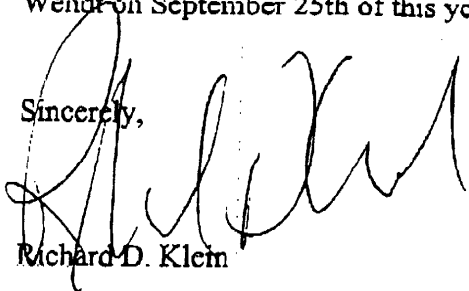
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Chairman Berlage:

Accompanying this letter are comments we prepared on the July 2003 Public Hearing Draft of the Olney Master Plan.

These comments were prepared on behalf of our clients, the Olney Coalition. The enclosed serves as an addendum to comments presented by Olney Coalition president Nancy Wendt on September 25th of this year.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Klein

cc: Ms. Nancy Wendy, President - The Olney Coalition

*We've saved more than 15,000 acres of farm and forestland,  
hundreds of neighborhoods and waterways, and one of America's oldest historic sites."*

31

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COMMENTS ON THE  
JULY 2003 PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT  
**OLNEY MASTER PLAN**

---

**AN ADDENDUM TO SEPTEMBER 25, 2003 COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY MS. NANCY WENDT,  
REPRESENTING THE OLNEY COALITION**

Prepared By Richard D. Klein  
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October 17, 2003



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32-ACRE BOWIE MILL ROAD PARCEL ..... 7

## INTRODUCTION

Community & Environmental Defense Services (CEDS) was retained by the Olney Coalition to assist in a review of the Public Hearing Draft of the Olney Master Plan, dated July 2003. Those represented by the Coalition view the Olney Master Plan as *THE* most important document for preserving and enhancing quality of life. This one document should make it possible for current residents, and those thinking of moving to the area, to understand how Olney ranks with other areas with respect to various quality of life criteria and how conditions may change with growth envisioned in the plan.

The draft 2003 Olney Master Plan does touch on all the key quality of life elements: land use, transportation, housing, natural environment, open space, traffic, transit, bike facilities, parks, recreation, historic resources, schools, libraries, public safety and others. The draft plan also contains much useful information and many good recommendations, but it fails to provide Olney residents with a clear understanding of:

- A. How existing conditions affect quality of life;
- B. What conditions or criteria must be met to preserve and enhance quality of life;
- C. How various land uses and growth scenarios may affect quality of life in the future;  
and
- D. Why the recommended growth scenario will provide the best quality of life for both current and future Olney residents as well as all other Montgomery County citizens.

Following are two specific examples of this shortcoming.

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Traffic congestion and safety are among the top growth-related concerns of Coalition members. While the Transportation element of the draft master plan contains a lot of traffic information, it does not clearly show how existing and recommended growth will affect congestion and safety on roads and intersections within the Olney master plan area.

On page 81 of the 2003 draft plan the following statement appears: *Although projected local growth is not significant....* But on the next page it is stated that the land use proposed in the draft master plan will cause the number of households in the Olney area to go from the current 12,000 to 14,800 for an increase of 23%. At eight- to ten-trips/household per day this could mean another 20,000 vehicle trips per day on Olney area roads. This does not seem insignificant as implied on page 81. Unfortunately, the plan fails to provide Olney residents with a context for assessing how such an increase in traffic will affect congestion and safety on their neighborhood streets and other roads. In fact, there appear to be only two places in the draft 2003 Transportation Plan chapter where "criteria" or an "acceptable degree of traffic congestion" is discussed.

On page 81 reference is made to an informal survey in which "a majority of the respondents indicated that they are willing to live with some level of congestion to maintain their suburban, semi-rural quality of life."

On page 82 the reader learns that the County's *Annual Growth Policy* (AGP) assigns an *Average Congestion Index* (ACI) of 0.55 to the Olney area. But no context is provided. In other words, the reader does not learn if an ACI of 0.55 is good or bad. The plan goes on to say that ACI will remain at 0.55 until year 2025. But, again, no context is provided. While subsequent portions of the *Transportation Plan* address specific roads and intersections, existing and anticipated ACI is not provided for any of these.

The lack of context continues in subsequent portions of the draft *Transportation Plan* which address the *Intercounty Connector* (ICC) and other roads. For example, the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road is discussed on page 84. The draft plan states that this intersection will become severely congested and implies that a grade-separated interchange will correct the problem. While the plan states the interchange should be built no mention is made of how much improvement will result or how various Olney area growth options might affect the degree of improvement.

The *Transportation Plan* contains a similar analysis for several other Olney area roads: Norbeck Road, Brookeville Bypass, and Cashell Road. Again, mention is made of various improvements but no analysis is provided of how possible growth scenarios will affect quality of life criteria such as Level Of Service, pedestrian safety, air quality, noise levels on most residential streets', and so forth.

A paragraph appears on page 86 under the heading of *Two-Lane Road Policy*. This section recommends that:

*"All roadways in the rural area should be limited to a maximum of two through travel lanes, as indicated in the tabulation of street and highway classifications."*

Presumably, the "tabulation" is the table appearing on pages 97 - 100. The word "rural" does not appear in this table. So it is not clear which roads are rural and, therefore, limited to two lanes. While the table does show number of travel lanes, this includes roads which are not clearly rural, including several major highways.

Only one of the many residential streets in the Olney area are addressed in the draft *Transportation plan* - Cherry Valley Drive Extended.

<sup>1</sup> Figure 14, in the *Olney & Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory* does show noise impact areas for MD 97, MD 108, MD 650, Norwood Road and Layhill Road.

The remainder of the Transportation plan does address town center and southeast quadrant roads but, again, the discussion lacks the supporting data Olney residents need to understand current congestion-safety issues, how future growth options will affect congestion and safety, and why recommended option is the most desirable.

Table 2, in the 2001 Potomac Subregion Master Plan provides an example of how traffic congestion data could be presented so area residents can better understand the implications of land use changes. This table appears on the next page of these comments.

Table 2 shows existing traffic volume expressed as Critical Lane Volume (CLV). Table 2 also shows what an acceptable CLV is, although it would be even better if CLV were translated into terms directly relating to quality of life, such as increased delay during peak commuting hours. Table 2 also shows how CLV would change under two scenarios of the land use changes recommended by the Potomac master plan: with and without proposed roadway improvements.

At a minimum, the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan should include a similar table for major intersections in the area. Intersections of particular concern to Coalition members include:

MD 108 and..

- Muncaster Road
- Olney Mill Road
- Bowie Mill Road
- Georgia Avenue (MD 97)
- Dr. Bird Road/Layhill Road/Ednor Road

Muncaster Mill Road (MD 115) and...

- Shady Grove Road
- Redland Road
- Muncaster Road
- Bowie Mill Road
- Needwood Road
- Avery Road
- MD 28

While some of these intersections are outside the Olney master plan area, they are certainly affected by growth within the area. More importantly, congestion at these intersections affects many Olney area residents during their daily commute to work.

Additionally, the 2003 draft master plan should be amended to examine how realistic growth scenarios would affect traffic volume on residential streets. While a Critical Lane Volume of 1,525 vehicles at peak-hour might be an acceptable criteria for congestion at major intersections, such a volume is far beyond what most Olney residents would view as acceptable.

**Table 2**

**Summary of Potomac Subregion Intersection Review**

Intersection congestion determined by Critical Lane Volume (CLV)

	Existing		Master Plan land use Without Improvements		Master Plan land use With Improvements	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Seven Locks Road at River Road	1559	1207	1837	1345	1368	1304
Seven Locks Road at Democracy Boulevard	1509	1173	1515	1178	1315	1121
Bradley Boulevard at River Road	1419	1479	1879	1941	1879	1941
Falls Road at River Road	1479	1461	1848	1972	1848	1972
Falls Road at Democracy Boulevard	1108	1115	1150	1186	1150	1186
Seven Locks Road at Tuckerman Lane	1695	1526	1744	1656	1284	1151
Shady Grove Road at Darnestown Road	1398	852	2831	2810	N/A - Interchange	
Great Seneca Highway at Darnestown Road	1172	881	1775	1559	1652	1559
Quince Orchard Road at Darnestown Road	1318	1280	1977	1704	1380	1440
Muddy Branch Road at Darnestown Road	1371	1268	1700	1975	1376	1665
Seneca Road at Darnestown Road	680	868	974	1849	974	1849
Duffel Mill Road at Travilah Road	652	731	836	954	836	954
Pincy Meetinghouse Road at River Road	1415	1005	1868	1461	1228	1461

Notes:

1. CLV of 1600 or greater translates to Level of Service (LOS) F.
2. CLV standard for Potomac, North Potomac and R&D Village Policy Areas is a CLV of 1525 or lower.

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on a residential street. A CLV of 1,525 would be roughly equivalent to more than 15,000 trips per day. Montgomery County's impressive Traffic Calming Program suggests efforts to manage traffic on residential streets at 1,000 vehicles per day.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, CLV alone is inadequate to assess the impact of increased traffic on residential streets.

The 2003 draft plan should examine each residential street within the Olney area and analyze how quality of life is affected by existing traffic volume with respect to speed, pedestrian safety, noise, property value, air quality and other quality of life factors. The plan should then set forth reasonable growth scenarios and examine how each scenario may affect quality of life for those living along the street. The plan should then conclude with an explanation as to why the recommended growth scenario is most conducive to quality of life for current and future residents.

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES PLAN

Like all the other elements of the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan, the Environmental Resources Plan contains much useful information and a number of good recommendations. However, this portion of the plan fails to provide Olney area residents with a clear depiction of how various land use scenarios might affect the environmental elements which make up overall quality of life. For example, pages 70 through 77 address impacts to water resources. Many Coalition members live within the watershed of the Williamsburg Run stream system, which is part of the North Branch Rock Creek stream system. Yet Williamsburg Run is mentioned once in the draft master plan (on page 76) and is treated in a bit more detail in Chapter 1 of the *Olney & Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory*.

Beginning with a 1979 study published by Olney Coalition consultant Richard Klein, scientists have established that stream quality degradation begins when 10% of a watershed is covered by impervious surfaces, which includes buildings, streets, sidewalks, parking lots, etc.<sup>3</sup> Stream quality degradation becomes severe at a watershed imperviousness of 25%. The 10% and 25% thresholds were confirmed in the 158-page Center for Watershed Protection publication *Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic Systems*, which was released earlier this year.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 17, on page 10 of the *Olney & Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory*, shows that Williamsburg Run had a watershed which was 19% impervious in 1996. In other words, as of 1996 Williamsburg Run had passed the point where degradation begins and was headed towards the point where stream quality degradation becomes severe.

<sup>2</sup> For further detail on Traffic Calming visit: <http://www.dpwt.com/TraffPkgDiv/triage.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Klein, R.D., 1979. Urbanization and stream quality impairment. *Water Resources Bulletin* 15(4):948-963.

<sup>4</sup> *Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic Systems*, March 2003, The Center for Watershed Protection, 8391 Main Street, Ellicott City, Maryland 21043, [www.cwp.org](http://www.cwp.org)

On page 72 of the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan, Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD) and Low Impact Development (LID) techniques were advocated as a way of blunting the impact of impervious surfaces added to a watershed. While both ESD and LID provide many benefits, there is an upper limit to their effectiveness. In *Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic Systems*, the Center for Watershed Protection suggests that this limit occurs at a watershed imperviousness of 25% for Environmentally Sensitive Design approaches.

The most comprehensive evaluation to date of the effectiveness of LID and other improved Best Management Practices (BMPs) was conducted on behalf of Montgomery County. The results of this evaluation were contained in a report entitled *Stream Condition Cumulative Impact Models for the Potomac Subregion*, published March 2000.<sup>5</sup> The evaluation showed that BMPs could slightly reduce the effects of watershed imperviousness upon aquatic communities. Specifically, BMPs might allow a stream draining a watershed which is 19% impervious to have an aquatic community equivalent to an imperviousness level of 16%, which is a significant but slight decrease in impact. Watershed managers hope that new BMPs might provide greater benefits, but this is just a hope at this point. It will probably be 20 years before a sufficient number of watersheds are "built-out" with the new, improved BMPs to allow scientists to gage their effectiveness.

As previously stated, the *Olney & Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory* shows that in 1996 the Williamsburg Run watershed was 19% impervious. Over the past seven years an undetermined amount of impervious surfaces have been added to the watershed. The Williamsburg Run watershed may be at the 25% imperviousness threshold where ESD, LID and highly-effective BMPs cannot prevent severe stream quality degradation.

Unfortunately, the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan is silent on the current level of imperviousness in the Williamsburg Run watershed. Thus, Olney residents are not provided with the key fact essential to understanding how growth recommended in the plan will affect Williamsburg Run. For example, the plan recommends that a 32-acre, County-owned meadow and forest on Bowie Mill Road be developed at a density of nearly 2.5 units per acre.

Could preservation of this 32-acre meadow-forest keep Williamsburg Run below the 25% threshold?

We do not know because this information was not provided in the draft master plan.

In some respects, stream systems such as Williamsburg Run are among the most important in the Olney area. No, they are not the cleanest. Nor do they support trout, endangered species, or other highly regarded resources. What they do provide is the nearest stream to many of the homes within the Olney area. In other words, these streams are the waters Olney area children most frequently come in contact with. This makes Williamsburg Run among the most important

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<sup>5</sup> See page 20 in *Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic Systems*.

to safeguard. The same could be said for the North Branch of Rock Creek, into which Williamsburg Run flows.

Does the draft master plan set forth the best strategy for gaining the benefits of continued growth while providing adequate protection for the waters in which our children play?

We do not know because this analysis and the supporting information does not appear in the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan.

### OTHER MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The shortcomings described above for the 2003 draft Transportation Plan and the Environmental Resources Plan also apply to all other Olney Master Plan elements, including housing, parks, recreation, public safety, and so forth. In other words, the draft plan fails to clearly show how existing conditions for each element relate to quality of life, how various growth scenarios affect each element, and why the recommended scenario provides the best quality of life for that element. In the next section of these comments the shortcomings of the School Plan are described in the context of a possible school site which the draft master plan recommends for conversion to other uses.

### 32-ACRE BOWIE MILL ROAD PARCEL

On page 36 of the draft 2003 Olney Master Plan a brief discussion appears of a 32-acre property identified as #17 *County-owned Land on Bowie Mill Road*. In 1967, this property was purchased by the Montgomery County Board of Education. The *1980 Olney Master Plan* stated that the property was reserved as a possible site for Olney High School. The current deed for this property shows that in 1996 it was transferred from the Board of Education to the Montgomery County government.

In four sentences the draft master plan arrives at the following recommendation for the 32-acre property:

*If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.*

The analysis of the need for this school site was limited to that presented on page 121 of the Community Facilities Plan, which stated:

*The 1980 Master Plan analyzed five unused school sites in the Master plan area:...*

*...the Olney Senior High School site on Bowie Mill Road near the PEPCO lines was surplus and transferred to the County.*

There is no explanation as to why the school site was surplus. The text above implies that surplus the site was recommended in the *1980 Olney Master Plan*. In fact, on page 83 the 1980 plan states that if the downward trend in high school enrollment continued then Sherwood



and Magruder high schools could accommodate Olney area students and the 32-acre school site would no longer be needed.

Table 9, on page 82, of the 1980 plan shows a projected 1983 enrollment at Magruder and Sherwood high schools of 1,127 and 286 students, respectively. The 2001-2002 enrollment at Magruder high school was 2,136 students and Sherwood high school had an enrollment of 1,976 students. Clearly, enrollment did not continue to decline, which was the condition set forth in the 1980 plan for surplussing the 32-acre site. Instead, enrollment at the two high schools increased by a factor of 1.9- to 6.9-times.

The third paragraph on page 123 of the Schools section of the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan begins with the following two sentences:

*School facility needs are influenced also by changes in school programs and other educational initiatives (smaller class size, for example). It is possible that additional school facilities would be needed even if there is no significant increase in the area population.*

But it appears that there will be a significant increase in area population. On page 82, the 2003 draft master plan states that there are 12,000 households within the Olney area now. If Olney builds out as recommended in the draft master plan then the total number of households will increase to 14,800. Based upon pupil yield factors provided by the Montgomery County Public Schools Planning Department, a household in the Magruder and Sherwood cluster generates about 0.55 students (Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade) assuming most of the new households are single family and townhomes. In other words, the growth recommended by the 2003 draft master plan would add another 1,540 students, more than 300 of which would be high school students.

The third paragraph on page 123 of the Schools section of the 2003 draft Olney Master Plan goes on to address the school sites on Cashell Road and that on Wickham Drive, which is outside the Olney master plan area. But the text on page 123 is silent on the 32-acre site. Given the trend toward smaller class size and along with increasing enrollment, it is unclear why the 2003 plan recommends holding onto other possible school sites, but not the Bowie Mill Road property.

The draft master plan recommends allowing the 32-acre meadow to be developed as affordable housing. While the Coalition strongly supports more affordable housing in the Olney area, we are dismayed at the lack of analysis of the need to continue reserving the 32-acre Bowie Mill Road property as a possible school site. With the growth proposed in the draft 2003 plan it will become much more difficult to find a site in the Olney area, should another school be needed.

The Coalition is also troubled by the lack an analysis of community compatibility accompanying the master plan affordable housing recommendation. Coalition members include most of those who own homes next to the 32-acre property. Many of these people purchased their homes from

the mid-1980s to the present. Most researched the 32-acre property to learn what uses might be made of this land and have plats which show that their parcels adjoin Board of Education property. After learning it was slated to be a school they concluded this was compatible with the quality of life they were seeking and decided to buy a home next to the site.

We believe the 1980 *Olney Master Plan* embodied a covenant between the Montgomery County government and homeowners adjoining the 32-acre school site. The covenant took the form of the 1980 master plan text which stated that the site would become Olney High School if student enrollment increased. The prospective home buyers saw that enrollment was increasing and, therefore, concluded that the site probably would become a high school. If the County now intends to break this covenant then it owes Olney area residents a thorough evaluation of all other reasonable uses of the 32-acre County-owned property.

At a minimum the evaluation should include utilizing the property to meet park, open space, water quality and recreation needs. The 32-acre site is situated along a corridor of green space which extends from Rock Creek Regional Park through Norbeck County Club up to Cashell Park then along the PEPCO powerlines, which pass next to the property, onto the North Branch Stream Valley Park along MD 108 which then connects to the Reddy Branch Stream Valley Park.

No mention was made in the 2003 draft master plan of the possibility of utilizing this site in total, or part, for open space and recreation. On page 107 of the 2003 draft *Olney Parks & Recreation Plan* an analysis of needs is mentioned, but no details are given other than that three more ballfields are needed by the year 2010.

It has been more than 20 years since the 1980 *Olney* master plan was updated. Presumably, the next update will not take place for another 20 years. Therefore the analysis of needs should extend out at least to 2023; not end at 2010. If uncertainty exists as to what the recreation needs might be come 2023, then all the more reason to retain the 32-acre Bowie Mill Road property in County-ownership. In other words, with a shrinking supply of vacant, affordable land the 32-acres would serve as insurance against future school, open space, water quality and recreation needs.

If the 32-acre property is considered for affordable housing then the 2003 draft master plan must include a thorough analysis of all realistic affordable housing scenarios. Each scenario should then be assessed not only for ability to satisfy affordable housing needs but also compatibility with adjoining residential neighborhoods. Possible recommendations resulting from such an analysis might include:

- A. Affordable housing units adjoining existing single family homes must be of comparable size, style, height, and appearance.
- B. The density of units must not exceed the 2.44 units per acre allowed in the Montgomery County Zoning Regulations for MPDUs in the R-200 zone.

- C. Green buffers at least 150-feet in depth must be provided.
- D. The units must not exceed two stories.
- E. The sensitive environmental features on the site must be preserved.
- F. Site design must not conflict with a possible hiker/biker trail along/adjoining the PEPCO right-of-way.
- G. New roads, surface parking areas, and illuminated public areas must be designed so they do not run along the property lines of an existing development.

**Language change requested:** Make most of the site Legacy Open Space. Re-zone to RE-2 for low-density development where developable (estimated at only about 50% due to geographical and man-made constraints). Keep all existing land features, and provide a 100-150 foot easement around site perimeter.

## REASONS .

- Preservation of sensitive headwaters wetlands and stream quality needed. Rock Creek Master Plan supports conservation efforts in the area. Legacy Open Space is another County Executive initiative.
- The site is not suitable for high-density housing due to its natural and man-made limitations: it has an underground spring, aquifers, a high water table, bedrock (20-50% overburden), a stream, natural gas line and high-power lines.
- Site is situated on Bowie Mill Road, already under stress because of recent Norbeck Grove development and not mitigated for that density, let alone additional traffic. Bowie Mill Road is NOT a major road.
- Norbeck Grove and Oatlands already produce 70 and 47 MPDUs respectively (total now of 117 units) and more are planned. The quadrant seems to have done its part in producing affordable housing.
- Survey of Darnell Drive residents indicates that **absolutely no one** wants high-density development of the site. Highly unusual to achieve such consensus. Residents are determined not to see more high density in this neighborhood.
- The 1980 Master Plan shows this area as RE-2 equivalent, i.e., 1 unit per 2 acres. The 2003 draft Plan states there is no significant growth or change from the 1980 Master Plan. Re-zoning the site to RE-2 is consistent with these statements. 1980 Master Plan has references to MPDU stricken from draft Plan text. Residents want what they bought into, and what was in the old Master Plan.
- Requested changes are consistent with disposition of other properties in the 2003 draft plan: significant portions retained as open space and low-density development (RNC) for the same environmental reasons we cite. Do not single out this site, or else, mention affordable housing everywhere there are over 10 acres of developable land as the preamble to the housing plan suggests.

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DRAFT OLNEY MASTER PLAN (RELEASED July 24, 2003)**

Reference	Language in Draft Plan was...	Proposed Language/Amendments to Draft	Comments
<p>Land Use Plan, page 36, #17</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was recommended for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes, surplused it, and transferred it to the County. It is zone R-200<sup>1</sup> and contains a stream but no significant forest.</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was being considered for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan, however, the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes. It was also considered inappropriate as a public use area, and proceeds from the sale of the site were to have been used to contribute to development of assisted housing in the Olney Town Center. This property is zoned R-200, contains a stream, an underground spring, aquifers, a stream, and some forest. It also contains a natural gas pipeline and high-tension power lines. It is situated in the eco-sensitive headwaters of the North Branch of the Rock Creek, is part of the Upper Rock Creek wetlands area, is in a special level protection area, and therefore should not be extensively developed and should remain undisturbed to the greatest extent possible. To protect the stream quality of the North Creek watershed, and to offset the stress that establishment of the neighboring Norbeck Grove development has placed on watershed biodiversity in this area, as well as resulting higher traffic density and noise on Bowie Mill Road, this land should be preserved as Legacy Open Space as much as possible, with the balance of useable land, if any, to be re-zoned RE-2<sup>2</sup>. The existing stream, spring, aquifers and tree line should be retained under any proposed new development.</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: Proposed land use in the 1980 Master Plan shows RE-2 in the area around this site (see 1980 Master Plan, page 25). Many of us bought property around the site under this assumption. Moreover, the land is not an ideal building site because of natural and man-made constraints. Page 113 of the 1980 plan shows this area as 20-50 feet overburden (shallow bedrock), generally suited for low-density subdivision.</p>
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: The public ownership, its location on a major road, and the size of the property make it suitable for a housing development with a significant portion as affordable housing.</p>	<p>Recommendation: If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.</p>	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: Strike in its entirety.</p>	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: Bowie Mill Road is not a major road. Public ownership has nothing to do with implementing the MPDU policy. Many other sites have more land area.</p>
	<p>Recommendation: Since the property is not needed for educational purposes, is located in eco-sensitive wetlands and contains building constraints that severely restrict what can reasonably be developed, it should be preserved as much as possible as Legacy Open Space, with the balance of useable land, if any, re-zoned to RE-2 to maintain needed low density in the area. The existing stream, underground spring and aquifers, and tree line should remain undisturbed with any proposed low-density development, and significant portions of developed land should contain open green space. An easement of 100-150 feet should be provided around the perimeter of the property to further decrease the impact of any development and to provide adequate storm water management.</p>	<p>Recommendation: Since the property is not needed for educational purposes, is located in eco-sensitive wetlands and contains building constraints that severely restrict what can reasonably be developed, it should be preserved as much as possible as Legacy Open Space, with the balance of useable land, if any, re-zoned to RE-2 to maintain needed low density in the area. The existing stream, underground spring and aquifers, and tree line should remain undisturbed with any proposed low-density development, and significant portions of developed land should contain open green space. An easement of 100-150 feet should be provided around the perimeter of the property to further decrease the impact of any development and to provide adequate storm water management.</p>	<p>This is consistent with the disposition of most of the properties in the 2003 Draft Master Plan. Some properties on Darnell Drive experience chronic water problems due to the high water table in the area. Also, Radon levels are present due to bedrock formation on the site.</p>

<sup>1</sup> R-200 is Residential, One Family, Minimum Lot Area of 20,000 square feet for each dwelling (MNCPPC Zoning Directory)  
<sup>2</sup> RE-2 is Residential, One Family, Minimum Lot Area of 2 acres for each dwelling (MNCPPC Zoning Directory)

Reference	Language in Draft Plan was...	Proposed Language/Amendments to Draft	Comments												
Housing Plan, page 58, 3 <sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 5 <sup>th</sup> sentence, lines 10, 11	The County-owned property on Bowie Mill Road is also suitable for affordable housing.	Strike this text altogether	Most of the land is NOT suitable for housing, and not high-density affordable housing where it is developable.												
Housing Plan, page 59, Recommendation #4	Use the 32-acre County-owned site on Bowie Mill Road for housing.	Strike this text altogether.	This is consistent with the 1980 Master Plan (pages 32, 146). Proceeds from the sale of this property were to have supported affordable housing in the <i>Town Center</i> , not the property itself.												
Implementatio n Plan, pages 127, 128	No mention of zoning change for 32-acre site.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Properties</th> <th>Acres</th> <th>Current Zoning</th> <th>Proposed Zoning</th> <th>Sewer Service</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>32-acre County Owned land on Bowie Mill Road</td> <td>32</td> <td>R-200</td> <td>RE-2*</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>*For space not designated Legacy Open Space</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Properties	Acres	Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Sewer Service	Comments	32-acre County Owned land on Bowie Mill Road	32	R-200	RE-2*	Yes	*For space not designated Legacy Open Space	Add to Southwest Quadrant, page 128, and apply RE-2 to developable portions of land remaining after Legacy Open Space
Properties	Acres	Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Sewer Service	Comments										
32-acre County Owned land on Bowie Mill Road	32	R-200	RE-2*	Yes	*For space not designated Legacy Open Space										
Implementatio n Plan, Illustration page 129	Retain R-200	Rezone to RE-2	Consistent with 1980 Master Plan. Need to show re-zoning.												
q	No mention of Legacy Open Space recommendation for Bowie Mill site.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site Number &amp; Name</th> <th>Comments</th> <th>Legacy Category Recommendation</th> <th>Protection Technique Recommendation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8. 32-acre County-owned land on Bowie Mill Road</td> <td>North Branch tributary of the Upper Rock Creek. Is in the Rock Creek watershed, and headwaters of the Reddy Branch; contains sensitive wetlands ecosystem. Enhances stream quality in the watershed.</td> <td>Keep in water supply target area (Class II)</td> <td>Protect undeveloped land through dedication or transfer.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site Number & Name	Comments	Legacy Category Recommendation	Protection Technique Recommendation	8. 32-acre County-owned land on Bowie Mill Road	North Branch tributary of the Upper Rock Creek. Is in the Rock Creek watershed, and headwaters of the Reddy Branch; contains sensitive wetlands ecosystem. Enhances stream quality in the watershed.	Keep in water supply target area (Class II)	Protect undeveloped land through dedication or transfer.	Add as #8 to page 140. Applies to areas not developable on this site if RE-2 (low-density) development proceeds.				
Site Number & Name	Comments	Legacy Category Recommendation	Protection Technique Recommendation												
8. 32-acre County-owned land on Bowie Mill Road	North Branch tributary of the Upper Rock Creek. Is in the Rock Creek watershed, and headwaters of the Reddy Branch; contains sensitive wetlands ecosystem. Enhances stream quality in the watershed.	Keep in water supply target area (Class II)	Protect undeveloped land through dedication or transfer.												

**Preller, Barbara**

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**From:** Nmcaprexy@aol.com

**Sent:** Thursday, October 16, 2003 1:18 PM

**To:** MCP-Chairman

**Subject:** Addendum to Testimony of Sept.23;Olney Draft Master Plan re Propty 17 Bowie Mill

We offer the attached additional material as an addendum to the testimony I presented both orally and in writing on September 23,2003. thank you for your attention to this matter.

Arnold B. Gordon

President Norbeck Meadows Civic association

301-570-0481

[nmcaprexy@aol.com](mailto:nmcaprexy@aol.com)

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THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

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10/17/2003

October 15, 2003

**Addendum to Testimony of Arnold Gordon, President, Norbeck Meadows Civic Association of September 23, 2003 on the Greater Olney Master Plan Land Use Recommendations, and in support of previous testimony (oral and written) by the Olney Square Civic Association.  
Before the M-NCPPC Planning Board Public Hearing**

Chairman Berlage and Members of the Planning Board:

The Norbeck Meadows Civic Association (NMCA) is pleased to offer the following additional material relative to property #17; the 32-acre parcel of County owned land on Bowie Mill Road and in support of the testimony of the Olney Square Civic Association (OSCA) previously submitted in this regard.

**2. BALANCING MULTIPLE INTERESTS**

We recognize how challenging it is for the Planning Board to balance the many competing interests involved in developing a Master Plan Amendment. We appreciate the hard work of the Planning Board staff members who prepared the Public Hearing Draft of the Olney Master Plan. We see the results of their hard work in:

- ◆ Additions to Legacy Open Space to protect environmentally sensitive areas and watershed in Northern Olney
- ◆ Redirecting retail and commercial growth to the Town Center
- ◆ Addition of Kimble / Graefe properties to Olney Manor Park

We also applaud the expressed goal of increasing the stock of affordable housing. We believe this goal is best achieved in job rich locations within walking distance of transportation nodes that have adequate infrastructure capacity to handle the production volumes needed to make such development financially viable and effective in terms of the number of units added to the inventory of affordable housing. While the yield is significantly lower, we also support the inclusion of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU's) in in-fill developments provided that the design of these units is fully compatible with the existing neighborhood.

NMCA and Oscar's goal is to work with the MNCPPC to determine the best use of this precious land. We are sympathetic to the planning team's dilemma when their original idea to relocate Olney Elementary School to this site was eliminated at the end of June and they needed to come up with another recommendation in less than three weeks. However, this last minute change meant that none of us (not the Planning Team, not the community, not any other interested party) had enough time to consider alternatives or to adequately research the environmental constraints of this site. Preliminary observations about what the site can actually support and what it will cost to work around site constraints lead us to believe there are better alternatives than the recommendation in the current draft.

**3. SUMMARY OF OSCA REQUESTS**

Therefore, like OSCA, the NMCA wants three things.

- A) Specific wording changes to the Olney Master Plan to:
- ◆ Describe the environmental and utility corridor constraints associated with this site
  - ◆ Document community preferences regarding land uses appropriate to this site
  - ◆ Specify design guidelines to protect existing neighborhoods from possible negative impacts of development for whatever portion of the land proves suitable for housing.

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Specific recommendations for each of these wording changes are contained in Appendix C.

B) An "interested parties list" established for this property (if Park and Planning has not already done so) and we want to be added to that list. We want to be notified when any development plans are submitted for this site and we want to participate in the design review working sessions related to those plans.

C) More time (either another hearing date or an extended cutoff date for submitting written testimony) to allow a consultant, Richard Kline, to complete his environmental assessment and report back to us regarding what if any type of development this site can support and what measures are needed to protect the headwaters streams, natural spring, perennial wetlands, and floodplain that are contained within its boundaries.

#### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

In order to understand the sensitivity of this site, OSCA invited several environmental experts to walk the land, including Jim Fary (The Sierra Club), John Parrish (MD Native Plants Society) and Bob Tworkowski (a professional hydro-geologist). Each of them confirmed what Montgomery County and Park and Planning have previously said about this land i.e. the springhead, streams, wetlands, and riparian forest buffer that surrounds them need to be preserved in order to protect water quality, safeguard habitat, and provide a natural mechanism for absorbing and filtering storm water runoff from the increasingly impervious developed areas upstream.

These observations made us aware of how much more we need to know in order to provide informed input to Park and Planning. This awareness led us to engage Richard Kline to perform a baseline environmental assessment and evaluate what if any portion of this land is suitable for development. Mr. Kline will not be able to begin his assessment until after this hearing and he estimates it will take him several weeks to complete his evaluation and report.

In a letter to Chairman Berlage dated September 9, 2003 OSCA requested additional time for the submission of written recommendations or another hearing date to allow Mr. Kline the time he needs to complete his work and submit it as part of the record. GOCA, The Sierra Club, and The Montgomery County Civic Federation endorsed their request as do we in the NMCA.

Despite the fact that we do not have the benefit of Mr. Kline's input, we share with you what we have learned about this land since August 12 when we were told it was no longer the future site of the "Olney Elementary School". We trust that you will keep an open mind and give us the opportunity to complete the work we have just begun.

#### **5. LAND DESCRIPTION**

This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was recommended for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes, surplussed it, and transferred it to the County. It is zoned R-200 as are the single family detached homes that have been built on all adjacent land.

Natural hydrological features of this site include a free flowing spring, three streams, perennial wetlands, and floodplain. These features are part of the sensitive wetlands and headwaters of the North Branch of Upper Rock Creek. A natural riparian forest that diagonally bisects the 32 acres surrounds all of these features except one of the three streams. Three utility corridors (PEPCO power lines, WSSC sewer lines, and Washington Gas Company's pipeline) bisect the land in different directions. The diagram submitted with the OSCA testimony (Appendix B to their testimony is commended to your attention.)

In the Environmental Resources Inventory for the Upper Rock Creek Watershed Park and Planning describes the land this way.

“One particularly interesting wetland complex occurs along the power line corridor south of Morningwood Drive. A scrub-shrub wetland exists in the power line corridor, with alders and arrowwood growing over various sedges, rushes, jewelweed, and goldenrods. West of the power line is a young forested wetland dominated by red maple in the canopy with skunk cabbage growing underneath. An emergent wetland occurs in the northwest corner of the intersection of the power line corridor with a gas line corridor, with dead pin oaks and live black willows growing amid a large area of sedges, grasses, and rushes, with considerable amounts of standing water. Adjacent to the southeast of the two utility corridors is a mature wooded wetland featuring pin oaks, red maples, sycamores and tulip poplars growing above spicebush, arrowwood, skunk cabbage and jewelweed.”

This document also notes “A number of shingle oaks occur in the wetland south of Bowie Mill Road and north of Darnell Drive adjacent to the power line.” Shingle oak is a Maryland Watchlist species.

Another Park and Planning publication, the Olney and Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory, uses the following descriptors: forested, scrub/shrub, wetlands, sensitive headwaters of the North Branch of Rock Creek watershed. Sensitive areas are defined by the 1992 State Planning Act as streams and their buffers; the 100-year floodplain; steep slopes; and habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species.

Finally, the Montgomery County Countywide Stream Protection Strategy and the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan recently approved by this Planning Board, use similar language to describe this environmentally sensitive land.

## **6. WETLAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

In the Olney and Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory Park and Planning recommends the following strategies for managing sensitive wetland areas:

- ◆ “Identify and protect wetlands and other sensitive parts of watersheds.”
- ◆ “Maintain the natural character of drainage areas in the immediate vicinity of streams, rivers, and lakes.”
- ◆ “Minimize the impacts from construction and operation of public and private facilities located in stream valleys, buffers, and floodplains; first priority should be given to preserving natural areas (avoidance), second priority to mitigation, and third priority to replacement with functional equivalents.”
- ◆ “Develop programs to rehabilitate damaged streams and then to maintain them.”
- ◆ “Mandate “no net loss” of wetlands.”

We applaud each and every one of these strategies. We want them applied to this land with no exceptions.

## **7. COMMUNITY PREFERENCES AND REQUESTS**

A survey of Olney Square residents showed a unanimous preference for transferring this land to Legacy Open Space or natural Parkland with no development other than low impact walking trails. We recognize such actions are usually associated with large, pristine forests or public watershed areas like Tridelphia Reservoir. However, neighborhood parks, especially those that provide fitness trails within walking distance of home have extremely high value to any community especially one that is experiencing traffic grid-lock.

If Mr. Kline finds that a portion of the land is suitable for housing, then the community wants the spring, streams, wetlands, and riparian forest around them preserved as Open Space or Parkland and the remaining land developed in a manner that is consistent with the existing R200 zoning and the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

This land is not in a Town Center. It is in an automobile dependent residential area that is currently under a moratorium because transportation infrastructure and school capacity has been exceeded. For this reason whatever portion of the land proves suitable for housing, we strongly believe that the maximum number of dwelling units should not exceed the standard R200 zoning limit of 64 dwellings for 32 acres. This would yield a maximum of 56 market priced units and 8 MPDU's.

With respect to protecting the character of existing neighborhoods, we understand that design issues are usually addressed during the development proposal review process. However, we are deeply concerned that the scenario Mr. Afzal described at the August 12 GOCA meeting ("78 dwelling units with about 12 MPDU's") significantly understates what an enterprising developer would be anxious to propose.

In order to understand the developer point of view, we shared the draft recommendation with several builders. They all saw the current wording as an invitation to propose alternative building types and multiple bonus densities. Their scenarios involved multi-family structures in excess of three stories with upwards of 250 dwelling units on 10 to 12 acres. Their designs included large surface parking areas to accommodate an average of 2 cars per household. This would dangerously raise the imperviousness of an environmentally fragile site that receives increased runoff from two recent developments – one with 300+ homes and one with 500+ homes. The combined impact of increased runoff from increased imperviousness can already be seen in the expanding floodplain and bank erosion along the main streambed.

Since zoning requirements are often rendered mute once the affordable housing exception with its alternative building types is used to permit development in a moratorium area, we feel strongly that general design guidelines need to be spelled out in the Master Plan to protect existing neighborhoods from the possible negative effects of incompatible building types. We have suggested specific wording for such guidelines in Appendix A.

## **8. CURRENT RECOMMENDATION**

**"If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing."**

Based on preliminary assessment of the 32 acres, we believe implementation of this recommendation would not be a win for the county, the greater Olney community, the MPDU program, affordable housing families, the immediate neighborhood, the developer, or the environment. Let me explain why.

As I mentioned earlier, knowledgeable environmentalists from the Sierra Club and the MD Native Plants Society have walked the 32 acres at different times. So has a professional hydrogeologist. Their observations are remarkably consistent.

"We do not believe that this site can support much development given its topographic and hydrologic features."

"The stream runs through an area that was not farmed and was left forested. This created a buffer in the area. For preservation purposes this buffer appears minimal and

it would be advantageous if this buffer was increased to a minimal lateral distance of 100-150 from the stream."

"The sediments that it flows through act as a large sand filter and appear to actually improve the water quality as the water flows through it."

"The buffer area appears to be subject to large surface water runoff from time to time. This is evidenced by the disturbed soils in the buffered area as well as the line of debris in the area. This indicates that the area can be subject to a strong storm surge, which could be mitigated with additional buffer as well as better storm water management from the up-gradient source."

Remediation of environmental impacts is always possible, but in the case of this site the evidence suggests it will be expensive to build and maintain. Bottom line, the economics of the site will likely push developers to seek denser clusters of taller alternative building types to get the yields they believe they need to make a reasonable profit. When we tested this with a couple of developers, Khalid Afzal's estimate of 78 dwelling units with about 12 MPDU's grew to over 250 condominiums in a four story structure. Such structures would create significant issues for other stakeholders. To understand how this plays out, it is useful to name the different stakeholder groups and review their interests.

## 9. MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The county needs to sell this land, cover the infrastructure costs associated with developing it as fully as possible, and protect existing neighborhoods from possible negative impacts. The County Council also has a vested interest in demonstrating that their actions contribute to ending gridlock and school overcrowding, not making these problems worse. The recent AGP update provides additional insights here.

We agree with the Planning Board's conclusion that:

"Traffic congestion has reached unacceptable levels in most areas of the county. The county's major roads, including I-270, I-495, U.S. 29 and many arterials [for example, Bowie Mill Road] experience traffic that far exceeds the roads' carrying capacity, compromising the quality of life of every county resident and the business climate for every county employer. School buildings throughout the county are overcrowded because the buildings do not accommodate actual class sizes. In many school service areas, the overcrowding is severe. The existing formulas for Policy Area Review simply do not reflect reality, and the Planning Board believes they should be abandoned."

We agree with the Planning Board's recommendation:

"The Board finds that the best long-term strategy is to (1) slow the rate of development approvals while continuing to support the County's economic well-being and (2) increase the financial resources available to construct needed facilities. The Planning Board therefore recommends that the County (1) biennially establish a *preliminary plan approval rate* [a 1% cap is currently under consideration] that balances economic needs with infrastructure delivery and (2) increase the rates of development impact tax for transportation and establish a development impact tax for schools."

Further, Chairman Berlage notes in his August 7, 2003 letter to Mr. Subin and Mr. Duncan that:

"When housing developments contain a threshold number of affordable units, both the affordable and market rate units are currently exempt from the transportation impact tax."

According to Planning Board estimates, the cost of transportation improvements per housing unit is \$26,000. The cost to build school buildings (is)... about \$10,300 per housing unit. That means new units cost the county approximately \$36,300 each. Proposed impact taxes under the new AGP range from a low of \$500 to a maximum of \$14,000 per unit. The county loses between \$22,300 and \$35,800 per housing unit that is built.

When the county sells the 32 acres on Bowie Mill Road, the fewer units the developer builds, the smaller the tax shortfall the county and the taxpayers will need to make up. Furthermore, the increased market appeal of single-family detached homes in this area may produce a better price for the land to begin with.

The fewer units the developer builds, the lower the impact on roads and schools and the more consistent the land use will be with the character of existing neighborhood. Clearly the merits of a slower growth option for this land should be considered.

## 10. COMMUNITY INTERESTS

As you know from the 923 responses to the Park and Planning survey done to provide community input to the Olney Master Plan Amendment, Olney's community wide issues include:

The top 3 reasons people purchase homes in Olney are

"Quality of schools"

"New housing"

"Peace and quiet"

The top 3 issues facing the community are

"Traffic congestion"

"Speeding"

"Over-development"

The top 3 environmental issues for the area are

"Over-development"

"Too much traffic"

"Loss of open space"

More than 73% of the respondents said that they drive to work alone. This is an automobile dependent community.

Since the overwhelming majority of households have more than one member in the workforce, this translates to 2 cars per household that commute on roadways that are already failing.

The top three reasons that respondents do not use public transportation are:

"Not available in the neighborhood"

"Doesn't go where I need to go"

"Takes too long"

## 11. NEIGHBORHOOD INTERESTS

Neighborhood associations along Bowie Mill Road are interested in protecting the things that led them to buy homes here in the first place (quality schools, new housing, and peace and quiet.) They want solutions to school overcrowding now. They are disturbed that class sizes exceed recent research about the best environment for learning, children are warehoused in mobile units, and teachers work in closets.

They want solutions to traffic congestion now. They strongly endorse GOCA's recommendation to downgrade Bowie Mill Road from an arterial road to a primary residential road from R 108 to

the boundary of the Olney Master Plan Area to enhance pedestrian safety and protect the quality of life of the homes on the original section of Bowie Mill Road. The roadbed here is narrow and the homes were built very close to the median line, as was the custom when these homes were built.

Neighborhood associations share the Planning Board's conclusion that we need to slow the pace of growth and balance infrastructure capacity with the demands of new development. They want the character of their neighborhood and their community preserved. They want trees and open spaces on their block not just across town. They want adequate and responsive emergency services (fire, rescue, EMS, police.)

## **12. DEVELOPER INTERESTS**

The developers we spoke with are concerned about the shrinking supply of land available for development within Montgomery County. They want access to land and they want permits. They want to do what they do best, which is, develop. They want exceptions to zoning constraints that they see as inhibitors to the profit margins they seek on each project.

## **13. AFFORDABLE HOUSING FAMILIES' INTERESTS**

They want a decent place to live and raise their children that includes good schools, reasonable transportation options, and responsive public services. They want this in an area with housing they can afford. Their issues are no different than any other families' issues.

## **14. ENVIRONMENT INTERESTS**

The air we breathe, the water we drink, the natural habitat that supports native plants and animals need to be protected for us and for future generations to thrive. Patterns of land use and development that respect these interests ensure the quality of life that is essential to sustaining a vibrant economy.

## **15. A WIN-WIN ALTERNATIVE**

We agree with Park and Planning that the current R-200 zoning should be retained and strictly adhered to ensure that any new development on this site is compatible with the design of existing neighborhoods.

Based on our preliminary assessment that less than half of the 32 acres will support development of any kind, we developed a slower development scenario and compared it with the alternative building type scenario favored by some developers to better understand how tradeoffs across interest groups might shape the development of this site.

Let's assume that we have 16 acres to work with. Let's further assume 6 of these acres will be used for vehicular surfaces (roads, driveways, etc.) That leaves 10 acres that are developable.

Option A would use an alternative building type that requires 3,000 to 3,500 square feet per dwelling unit with the "half open space" requirement met by the riparian forested area and associated buffers. That leaves 1,500 square feet per unit to be carved out of the developable 10 acres and works out to about 250 dwelling units.

Option B, the other end of the continuum, would be designed around single-family detached homes at 2 dwellings per acre or 20 dwelling units on the 10 acres. Since this is under the threshold that requires MPDU's, all units could be sold at full market value and they would all contribute impact taxes to fund road and school improvements.

Now let's see how these two alternatives stack up against the needs of each stakeholder group.

## COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

INTERESTS SERVED	ALTERNATIVE BUILDING TYPES SCENARIO	SLOWER GROWTH LOW DENSITY SCENARIO
<b>COUNTY</b>		
Sell the land	Yes	Yes – county may even be able to get a better price because this is a more profitable approach for the developer
Maximize impact tax collected to minimize deficit and fund required road and school improvements	No. Cost per unit \$36,300 Tax per unit \$0 Loss on 250 units \$9 million+  (Cost estimates from pg 6 of 8/6/03 cover letter to AGP)	Yes Cost per unit \$36,300 Tax per unit \$12,500 Loss on 20 units \$476,000
Support goals of affordable housing program	Limited. Puts affordable housing away from jobs in an auto dependent area where families least able to support 2 cars will have no choice	Yes. Use proceeds from sale of land & increased impact tax collections to promote affordable housing at traffic nodes & in job rich areas
End Grid Lock	No. 2 cars X 250 = 500 cars added to gridlocked area	No – but does less harm. 2 cars X 20 = 40 cars added to gridlocked area
<b>OLNEY COMMUNITY and NEIGHBORHOOD</b>		
Minimizes negative impact on school overcrowding	No. Average 2 children per household = 500 new students	Yes. Average 2 students per household = 40 new students
Minimizes new demands for Emergency Services	No. 250 households average 4 residents per household = 1000 more people to serve	Yes. 20 households average 4 residents per household = 80 more people to serve
Minimize loss of open space and prevent further overdevelopment	No. Even the best designs will urbanize the area. Required large surface parking areas increase imperviousness and significantly erode open space.	Yes. Not as good as transfer to Open Space or Parkland, but visually more space and environmentally lower impact than dense clusters with large parking areas.
Preserve & enhance sense of community	No. Design is totally incompatible with existing neighborhoods.	Yes. Design is consistent with existing neighborhoods.
Peace & quiet	No. Dense growth increases congestion and reduces peace and quiet.	Yes. Slower development and less dense design do more to preserve peace and quiet.
<b>DEVELOPER</b>		
Make a profit	Maybe But requires high production volumes of multi-family units	Yes Under the threshold so developer can build to suit

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	<p>that exceed current height restrictions &amp; are incompatible with the existing neighborhoods.</p> <p>Large surface parking areas are expensive and increase imperviousness. This in turn requires expensive corrective storm water management facilities.</p> <p>New storm water designs are not visually appealing and often don't work. This may reduce the marketability of units &amp; may erode profits.</p>	<p>market demand and sell at market rates which are the most profitable.</p> <p>Protecting existing forest, streams &amp; wetlands as Legacy Open Space or Parkland adds to the visual appeal and thus enhances the developer's profit potential.</p> <p>Fewer dwelling units with more open land enhance the area's ability to absorb and filter storm runoff and protect the headwaters of the North Branch of Rock Creek.</p>
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING FAMILIES</b>		
A decent place to live & an affordable commute to work.	<p>Yes &amp; No</p> <p>Forces families into an auto dependent area away from jobs &amp; virtually requires them to become 2 car households further stretching their limited financial resources</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Refocuses affordable housing initiatives to appropriate sites in job rich areas near transportation nodes.</p>
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>		
Preserve existing natural resources and work to improve air quality, water quality and natural habitat for native plants & animals.	<p>No</p> <p>More cars and significantly increased impervious area harms the environment.</p> <p>Some of the newer storm water management designs are as yet unproven. There are environmental experts &amp; developers who believe they don't work.</p> <p>Storm water ponds increase the temperature of streams. The ecosystem of the North Branch of Upper Rock Creek is especially sensitive to temperature increases.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Fewer cars and lower impervious area reduces environmental damage.</p> <p>Extending the buffer around the wetlands, spring and streams is economically feasible with this development option.</p> <p>This is consistent with the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy for this area and the environmental goals of protecting the sensitive headwaters of the North Branch of Upper Rock Creek.</p>

In summary, we believe win-win options between these two extremes for the 32-acre parcel on Bowie Mill Road. To support and encourage these options we want the Draft re-worded to:

- ◆ Reflect environmental protection requirements
- ◆ Document community preferences



- ◆ Stipulate design guidelines for future development.

We wish to be notified whenever a specific site plan is proposed for developing this land. We want to participate in the design and review sessions that will shape a solution that satisfies all stakeholders' interests. We want the time to complete the environmental assessment work we have begun and to have the consultant's recommendations included with all previous and future testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the process.

Respectfully,  
Arnold Gordon  
Norbeck Meadows Civic Association

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APPENDIX A – REQUESTED CHANGES TO OLNEY MASTER PLAN DRAFT 9/25/03

CURRENT WORDING	PROPOSED WORDING
<p>Land Use Plan, page 23, Following the paragraph titled "Design Guidelines for all RNC properties in the Southeast Quadrant"</p>	<p>Add a paragraph entitled "Design Guidelines for New Development in Mature Neighborhoods" with the following text.</p> <p>In order to protect existing neighborhoods from the possible negative impacts of new development, all in-fill development including MPDU's and other affordable housing types must comply fully with environmental protection regulations and the standard zoning requirements without exception. Specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building heights will not exceed the height of existing homes in surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>2. Building types will be visually compatible with the design of existing homes in surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>3. Environmentally sensitive areas will be protected and enhanced wherever possible to manage run off naturally to minimize the ongoing costs and compliance issues associated with functional equivalents.</li> <li>4. Green buffers of at least 150 feet will be provided to screen existing development from new development.</li> <li>5. New roads, surface parking areas, and illuminated public areas will be designed not to run along the property lines of an existing development.</li> </ol>
<p>Land Use Plan, page 36, #17</p> <p>This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was recommended for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes, surplussed it, and transferred it to the County. It is zone R-200 and contains a stream but no significant forest.</p> <p>The public ownership, its location on a major road, and the size of the property make it suitable for a housing development with a significant portion as affordable housing.</p>	<p>This approximately 32-acre property on the south side of Bowie Mill Road was recommended for a high school site in the 1980 Master Plan. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) later determined that it was not needed for school purposes, surplussed it, and transferred it to the County.</p> <p>The property may be suitable for Legacy Open Space, undeveloped Parkland with unpaved pedestrian trails, or some housing not to exceed 64 units consistent with R200 zoning.</p>

<p>Land Use Plan, page 36, #17</p> <p>Recommendation: If the property is not needed for educational purposes, it should be used for affordable housing.</p>	<p>If the property is not needed for educational purposes, portions of it may be suitable for Open Space, undeveloped Parkland with unpaved pedestrian trails, or standard R200 zone housing not to exceed 64 units.</p>
<p>Housing Plan, page 58, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 5<sup>th</sup> sentence, lines 10, 11</p> <p>The County-owned property on Bowie Mill Road is also suitable for affordable housing.</p>	<p>Delete</p>
<p>Housing Plan, page 59, Recommendation #4</p> <p>Use the 32-acre County-owned site on Bowie Mill Road for housing.</p>	<p>Delete</p>
<p>Implementation Plan, page 132, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence</p> <p>However, buildings containing Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU's) or other affordable housing would be allowed flexibility in height restrictions to facilitate absorption of affordable housing in the Town Center.</p>	<p>Add the following sentence:</p> <p>In areas other than the Town Center, MPDU's and other affordable housing must comply with the standard limits of existing zoning without exceptions in order to protect existing neighborhoods from the potentially negative impacts of new development.</p>

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