

# Montgomery County Planning Board

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Date Mailed:

January 31, 2024

MCPB No. 24-008

Forest Conservation Plan No. CU202311

**Worldshine Ruby Drive**

Date of Hearing: January 18, 2024

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, under Montgomery County Code Chapter 22A, the Montgomery County Planning Board is authorized to review forest conservation plan applications; and

WHEREAS, on 12/21/2022, *Worldshine Homes, LLC* (“Applicant”) filed an application for approval of a forest conservation plan on approximately 4.66 acres of land located at 12450 West Old Baltimore and 21908 Ruby Drive, Clarksburg (“Subject Property”) in the Clarksburg Policy Area and the 1994 Clarksburg Area Master Plan (“Master Plan”) area; and

WHEREAS, Applicant’s forest conservation plan application was designated Forest Conservation Plan No. CU202311, *Worldshine Ruby Drive* (“Forest Conservation Plan” or “Application”); and

WHEREAS, following review and analysis of the Application by Planning Board Staff (“Staff”) and other governmental agencies, Staff issued a memorandum to the Planning Board dated January 5, 2024, providing its analysis and recommendation for approval of the Application, subject to certain conditions (“Staff Report”); and

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2024, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Application and voted to approve the Application subject to conditions, on the motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Commissioner Linden, with a vote of 3-0-1; Chair Harris, Commissioners Hedrick and Linden voting in favor with Vice Chair Pedoeem being absent. Commissioner Bartley abstained.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Board APPROVES Forest Conservation Plan No. CU202311 on the Subject Property, subject to the following conditions:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of these conditions, the term “Applicant” shall also mean the developer, the owner, or any successor in interest to the terms of this approval.

1. The Applicant must plant the variance tree mitigation plantings on the Subject Property with a minimum size of three (3) caliper inches totaling 115.75 caliper inches. Planting locations to be shown on the Final Forest Conservation Plan (“FFCP”)
2. Applicant must submit a FFCP for review and approval Before obtaining a Sediment and Erosion Control Permit from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services for this Subject Property.
3. The FFCP must be consistent with the approved Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that having given full consideration to the recommendations of its Staff as presented at the hearing and/or as set forth in the Staff Report, which the Board hereby adopts and incorporates by reference (except as modified herein), and upon consideration of the entire record, the Planning Board FINDS, with the conditions of approval, that:

1. *The Application satisfies all the applicable requirements of the Forest Conservation Law, Montgomery County Code Chapter 22A, and ensures the protection of environmentally sensitive features.*

A. Forest Conservation

The Board finds that as conditioned, the Forest Conservation Plan complies with the requirements of the Forest Conservation Law.

The Subject Property is zoned R-200 and is assigned a Land Use Category of High Density Residential (“HDR”) as defined in Section 22A-3 of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law (“FCL”) and in the Land Use Table of the Trees Technical Manual. This results in an afforestation threshold of 15% and a conservation threshold of 20% of the Net Tract Area.

The Net Tract Area for forest conservation purposes is the 5.2 acres which includes 0.54 acres of offsite work. There is a total of 1.36 acres of existing forest on the Subject Property with the Applicant proposing to remove 1.36 acres of forest. This results in a total afforestation/reforestation requirement of 2.24 acres within the same watershed/Priority Area or 2.92 acres outside of the same watershed/Priority Area. The Applicant proposes to meet the planting requirement offsite.

B. Forest Conservation Variance

Section 22A-12(b)(3) of the Forest Conservation Law identifies certain individual trees as a high priority for retention and protection (“Protected Trees”). Any

impact to these Protected Trees, including removal or any disturbance within a Protected Tree's critical root zone ("CRZ"), requires a variance under Section 22A-12(b)(3) ("Variance"). Otherwise, such resources must be left in an undisturbed condition.

This Application will require the removal or CRZ impact to fifteen Protected Trees as identified in the Staff Report. In accordance with Section 22A-21(a), the Applicant requested a Variance, and the Board agrees that the Applicant would suffer unwarranted hardship by being denied reasonable and significant use of the Subject Property without the Variance.

The Board makes the following findings necessary to grant the Variance:

1. *Granting the Variance will not confer on the Applicant a special privilege that would be denied to other applicants.*

Granting the Variance will not confer a special privilege on the Applicant as the impacts are due to reasonably necessary development requirements of the site. These impacts cannot be avoided. Therefore, the granting of this Variance is not a special privilege that would be denied to other applicants.

2. *The need for the Variance is not based on conditions or circumstances which are the result of the actions by the Applicant.*

The requested Variance is not based on conditions or circumstances which are the result of actions by the Applicant. The requested Variance is based on based upon conditions and circumstances inherent to site conditions and development standards associated with best management practices and orderly development.

3. *The need for the Variance is not based on a condition related to land or building use, either permitted or non-conforming, on a neighboring property.*

The requested Variance is a result of the existing conditions and proposed improvements, not as a result of land or building use on a neighboring property.

4. *Granting the Variance will not violate State water quality standards or cause measurable degradation in water quality.*

The Variance will not violate State water quality standards or cause measurable degradation in water quality.

Mitigation for the Variance is at a rate that approximates the form and function of the Protected Trees removed. The Board approves the

replacement of Protected Trees at a ratio of approximately 1-inch caliper for every 4-inch DBH removed. No mitigation is required for Protected Trees impacted but retained.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution constitutes the written opinion of the Planning Board in this matter, and the date of this Resolution is

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(which is the date that this Resolution is mailed to all parties of record); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any party authorized by law to take an administrative appeal must initiate such an appeal consistent with the Maryland Rules for the judicial review of administrative agency decisions.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Hedrick, seconded by Commissioner Linden, with a vote of 3-0-2, Chair Harris, and Commissioners Hedrick, and Linden, voting in favor of the motion, Vice Chair Pedoeem and Commissioner Bartley abstaining, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, January 25, 2024, in Wheaton, Maryland and via video conference.



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