

1 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
2 HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

3

4 - - - - - X  
5 MASTER PLAN EVALUATIONS :  
6 Wild Acres Estate :  
7 :  
8 - - - - - X

9

10

11

A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on  
12 April 23, 2008, commencing at 7:34 p.m., in the MRO  
13 Auditorium at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland  
14 20910, before:

15

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

16

Jef Fuller

17

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

18

Timothy Duffy  
David Rotenstein  
Warren Fleming  
Nuray Anahtar  
Leslie Miles  
Caroline Alderson  
Lee Burstyn

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

ALSO PRESENT:

Joshua Silver, Staff  
Clare Kelly, Staff  
Scott Whipple, Staff  
Anne Fothergill, Staff

APPEARANCES

STATEMENT OF:

PAGE

O. Julia Weller	11
Mark Burgoffen	21
William Lebovich	22
Jody Kline, Esq.	21
Michael Goergen	21
Sheryl Lee	31
Michael Diehl	31
Wayne Goldstein	34
Lisa Gunner	35
Linda Eckert	37
Beth Savage	38
Edwin Grosvenor	40
Anne Martin	42
Bill Parkhurst	



1 Permits been duly advertised?

2 MR. SILVER: Yes, they have been advertised in the  
3 April 9th, 2008, edition of the Washington Examiner.

4 MR. FULLER: Thank you. The first thing we are  
5 going to do this evening is to go through the Historic Area  
6 Work Permits that we believe can be expedited. If there is  
7 anybody here to speak in opposition to the cases as we call  
8 them, please let us know so we can hear the case. Otherwise  
9 we are going to be expediting approval of these cases.

10 Is there anybody here to speak in opposition to  
11 case A at 36 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park? Anybody in  
12 opposition to case B at 3708 Washington Street, Kensington?  
13 Case C at 10403 Fawcett Street, Kensington? Case D at 3712  
14 Bradley Lane, Chevy Chase? Case E at 1 Quincy Street, Chevy  
15 Chase? Case F at 7017 Poplar Avenue, Takoma Park?

16 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Mr. Chair, hearing none, I move  
17 that we approve the following Historic Area Work Permits  
18 based on the staff reports as submitted. Case number 37/03-  
19 08T at 36 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park; case number 31/06-  
20 08D at 3708 Washington Street in Kensington; case number  
21 31/06-08E at 10403 Fawcett Street in Kensington; case number  
22 34/13-08H at 3712 Bradley Lane in Chevy Chase; case number  
23 35/13-08I at 1 Quincy Street in Chevy Chase; and case number  
24 37/03-08U at 7017 Poplar Avenue in Takoma Park.

25 MR. FULLER: Is there a second?

26 MS. MILES: Second.

1           MR. FULLER: Any discussion? All in favor? It  
2 passed unanimously. If those, if one of those are your  
3 application, or if you have any questions on those  
4 applications, please see staff after the hearing and they  
5 can tell you how to proceed. We appreciate your efforts in  
6 putting together a thorough application. Case G has been  
7 postponed at the applicant's request. They are unavailable.

8           The second item on our agenda, preliminary  
9 consultations, case A has also been requested to be  
10 postponed. So at this point we are ready to move forward  
11 with case, well, section 4 of our agenda, which are Master  
12 Plan evaluations. We are starting a little bit earlier than  
13 had planned, but I think we can start with the staff report.

14           MS. KELLY: Good evening. For the record, I am  
15 Clare Kelly. The Commission has received a nomination for  
16 an individual resource to be included in the Master Plan for  
17 Historic Preservation. The resource is historically known  
18 as Wild Acres, also know as the Grosvenor Estate, located at  
19 6400 Grosvenor Lane in Bethesda.

20           Tonight is the public hearing and worksession on  
21 this nomination. The hearing was advertised in the March  
22 24th issue of the Examiner.

23           You have a staff report, the Maryland Historical  
24 Trust research form, and the draft amendment to the Master  
25 Plan for Historic Preservation, as well as all  
26 correspondence received to date.

1           The letters that we passed out this evening were  
2 received this week, and there are letters in support of  
3 historic designation from 18 individuals, and two local  
4 civic associations. In addition, there's a petition  
5 supporting designation that's been signed by 231 residents.

6           I have a couple of corrections to the staff  
7 report. The top of page two should read, map on page seven  
8 and time line on page eight. And the top of page three  
9 should read, page nine for the criteria.

10           I also have a correction to the draft amendment,  
11 which is an attachment to the staff report. The draft  
12 amendment reflects staff's recommendations, and it should  
13 include the criteria that's stated on page three of the  
14 staff report. There are six criteria for which we are  
15 recommending the resource be designated.

16           This map shows the parcel on which the historic  
17 resource is located. The parcel is an irregular shape. The  
18 resources are the mansion house, the garage or carriage  
19 house, and a caretaker's cottage. They are located on  
20 Grosvenor Lane. To the east of the property is 270, and  
21 along the southern border is 495.

22           The staff endorses the nominator's position that  
23 Wild Acres Estate merits designation on the Master Plan for  
24 Historic Preservation. The nomination sites four criteria,  
25 and staff finds that the resource meets two more criteria,  
26 making a total of six. I won't go into great detail about

1 the history and architectural significance of the property.  
2 You will be hearing more on that from the nominator.

3 I will say that the Wild Acres Estate was the home  
4 of Gilbert H. Grosvenor and Elsie Bell Grosvenor. Gilbert  
5 Grosvenor was editor of the National Geographic magazine,  
6 and president of the National Geographic Society. He's been  
7 called the father of photojournalism. Here is a picture of  
8 him with his camera.

9 There are three historic buildings recommended for  
10 protection by the preservation ordinance. The primary  
11 residence, the mansion house, the carriage house or garage,  
12 and the caretaker's cottage. The Tudor revival style  
13 mansion house and coordinating garage, as well as the rustic  
14 craftsman style of the caretaker's cottage possess distinct  
15 characteristics of all these architectural styles.

16 The three buildings were designed by Arthur  
17 Heaton, an accomplished local architect, who was a prolific  
18 designer in the early 20th century.

19 Significant to this nomination, to this resource,  
20 is the setting, both vistas looking north and south from the  
21 main residence. This view is looking towards the south.  
22 Grosvenor Lane is in the foreground. The mansion house is  
23 in the center of the picture. You see a large lawn in front  
24 of the house, and an even larger rolling lawn behind the  
25 house. And the house really has two primary facades. Both  
26 are equally well designed.

1           And the lawn behind the house looks down toward  
2 the watershed. There's a stream that runs behind the house.  
3 And at the top of the view is Fleming local park, which is  
4 owned by Park and Planning. It's a 12-acre park.

5           Wild Acres is highly representative of the country  
6 estates that once lined Rockville Pike in the early 20th  
7 century. This view is looking east towards Rockville Pike.  
8 In the fifties, the 270 was constructed along the eastern  
9 portion of Wild Acres.

10           In this view, there is the main house at the  
11 bottom of the screen, and towards the top of the screen is  
12 the caretaker's cottage in the woods. And the entrance to  
13 the property went next to the carriage house, the  
14 caretaker's cottage.

15           And this map shows the larger area. There is a  
16 dedication for legacy open space which is the green on the  
17 right and lower part of the screen. And the park, 12-acre  
18 park is on the left lower part of the screen. Office  
19 buildings were built about 1981 on the yellow beige parcel,  
20 and there was a house built in 1951 on a separate parcel in  
21 the blue. The red is the recommended environmental setting.

22           It includes both the vista to the north of the house, and  
23 also the vista to the south of the house. And that view all  
24 the way from the house down to the park is significant to  
25 this historic building.

26           At the conclusion of the worksession, we expect

1 the Commission to take a vote to recommend whether the  
2 resource should be added to the Master Plan for Historic  
3 Preservation. This advisory recommendation will be  
4 forwarded to the Planning Board which will conduct the  
5 public hearing in a worksession.

6 The Planning Board then makes a recommendation on  
7 this amendment, and forwards the case to the County Council,  
8 the County Executive and the County Council. And the County  
9 Council has the final decision on historic designation. The  
10 Planning Board public hearing is scheduled for May 29th.  
11 Are there any questions?

12 MR. FULLER: Any questions for staff at this time?

13 A couple of procedural things before we move into the  
14 testimony. First, as a matter of disclosure, I need to  
15 point out that my firm, D&C Architects, did work on this  
16 property with this owner back in 1980 time frame.

17 We have not done any work with this client in the  
18 last 20 plus years, so I do not believe that there should be  
19 considered any financial conflict of interest, but if any of  
20 the parties have any concerns about that, please let us  
21 know.

22 Secondly, as has been the policy with other  
23 Master Plan designations, we will be following strict time  
24 limits this evening. By, again, by recent policy, what we  
25 have set up is for the nominator and the property owner will  
26 be given equal time, 10 minutes, to make their presentation.

1 Beyond that, adjacent property owners, parties will have  
2 three minutes to speak. Citizens associations and  
3 interested groups will have five minutes. And any  
4 government officials will be given seven minutes.

5 Since we are starting a bit early, I want to find  
6 out, is the nominator available to make their presentation  
7 at this time?

8 MR. PARKHURST: Mr. Chairperson, I know who that  
9 person is, and I don't see her in the audience. I  
10 understood, I think she believed that this portion would  
11 start at a later time, so I believe she is not here at this  
12 time.

13 MR. FULLER: Thank you.

14 MR. PARKHURST: And she's coming, I'm positive.

15 MR. FULLER: I understand. Representatives for  
16 the owner, would you like to make your presentation before  
17 the nominator, or do you want to wait?

18 AUDIENCE: We'd prefer to wait.

19 MR. FULLER: Okay. Then we will put ourselves in  
20 recess for the next, hopefully, 10 minutes, I believe. What  
21 was the time that we said, we asked the nominator to be here  
22 by?

23 MS. KELLY: We asked her to be here at 8:00.

24 MR. FULLER: Okay. So thank you. We'll be in  
25 recess for the next 10 minutes.

26 (Whereupon, at 7:51 p.m., a brief recess was

1 taken.)

2 MR. FULLER: We have started the item number 4 on  
3 our agenda, Master Plan evaluation. Staff has made their  
4 report. At this point we are looking for the applicant to  
5 make their presentation. We have allowed 10 minutes for  
6 that application. Good evening. If you could state your  
7 name for the record?

8 (Discussion off the record.)

9 MS. WELLER: I would like to beg your indulgence  
10 and ask if I could have an additional few minutes. Other  
11 people might have been willing to cede their time so I could  
12 have an extra five minutes.

13 MR. FULLER: No. Our agreement has been that the  
14 applicant and the property owner would be allowed 10 minutes  
15 and no ceding of time to either the applicant or property  
16 owner. Thank you.

17 MS. WELLER: Okay. All right. The prior  
18 evaluations that have been made, found this resource to be  
19 significant. There were several evaluations done by the  
20 Maryland Historical Trust, one in '78 and one in 2000. Both  
21 found that the resource had historical and architectural  
22 significance. And the Society of American Foresters  
23 themselves did the same thing.

24 These are the four criteria on which I base my  
25 nomination, and the rest of my presentation will go through  
26 these four criterion.

1           First, the fourth criterion is that I believe the  
2 property is significant because it's representative of the  
3 country estates which grew up along Rockville Pike. They  
4 were carved out of farm land and they became property of  
5 Washingtonians, wealthy Washingtonians who could afford to  
6 buy these estates after the Rockville Pike was improved.

7           And this estate, I believe, ranks among some of  
8 the finest, like the Corby Estate, which is now the  
9 Strathmore Hall and Marwood House, and Woodend, which is now  
10 the Audubon Society. And I believe it ranks among those, as  
11 significant as those.

12           When Gilbert Grosvenor built the estate in 1912,  
13 it was a farmhouse, a 110-acre farmhouse, and it had no heat  
14 and electricity or running water, so it was used only in the  
15 summers. And this is a picture showing his oldest son  
16 grooming or petting a pony in 1918. Again, here is another  
17 picture from when it was a farmhouse.

18           And here is a picture showing the transition from  
19 a farmhouse to a suburban estate. On the left side you can  
20 see the original farmhouse, and in the middle is the estate,  
21 that the house has come there with the carriage house on the  
22 right.

23           Here is the final end result of the transition to  
24 a suburban estate. As you can see the beautiful lawn  
25 sloping down to the pond which is still there, even though  
26 it is very overgrown.

1           Finally, the second criterion is that the estate  
2 be, or resource be identified with a person or persons who  
3 influenced society. And why this is significant is because  
4 it was owned and built by Gilbert Grosvenor and his wife  
5 Elsie Mae Bell Grosvenor.

6           Grosvenor is best known as a long time editor of  
7 the National Geographic magazine, and president of the  
8 National Geographic Society. And he was a noted geographer  
9 and a world traveler, and logged tens of thousands of miles  
10 looking at new places that hadn't been discovered.

11           He was also a very firm supporter of the National  
12 Park System, and accompanied Steven Mavor, who is regarded  
13 as the father of national parks, to the western United  
14 States, and was so overwhelmed by the grandeur of the High  
15 Sierras that he became a life long supporter and had a lot  
16 of articles published about the park system.

17           And there are a lot of natural features around the  
18 world named after Gilbert Grosvenor, including in Antarctica  
19 and Alaska, in the Andes in Peru and Canada.

20           Another famous person who is associated with the  
21 property, although he died before the house that's currently  
22 there was built, and that is Alexander Graham Bell, who was  
23 Elsie Mae Bell's father. And the picture there on the left  
24 shows her, the oldest daughter on the left. And on the  
25 right shows one of her sisters with him, with Alexander  
26 Graham Bell at the farmhouse.

1           Other people who are associated with it, many  
2 famous people from Washington society who came for social  
3 functions. And this was a picture of a birthday party in  
4 1929 for Chief Justice Taft, who had been President of the  
5 United States, with his wife.

6           The third criterion is the architectural and  
7 design criterion, which the first one is that it embodies  
8 distinctive characteristics of a type or period or a method  
9 of construction. And I note the three buildings under this  
10 criterion.

11           The first is the manor house, which is a very fine  
12 example of Tudor revival architecture. And it reflects two  
13 different styles, the earlier style which is the half-  
14 timbering, like the Tudor buildings in England that I grew  
15 up with, and the stucco infill; and then the uncoursed row  
16 of stones, which is the longer section, if you look at it  
17 from the northern elevation. It's not pronounced. This  
18 asymmetry is more pronounced on the northern elevation, and  
19 I will show you that in pictures. The many sweeping lawns  
20 that were put in by the Grosvenors.

21           Here is a picture of the granddaughter of Gilbert  
22 Grosvenor laying the cornerstone, and it contained a box  
23 which had articles by Charles Lindbergh, who had been a  
24 guest at the farmhouse, and also pamphlets by Elsie Mae Bell  
25 about all the wild birds that could be found nesting in Wild  
26 Acres. There were over 200 species here identified.

1           Here is a picture of the southern elevation with  
2 that rather pretty vintage, sort of upside down looking, it  
3 looks like an upside down ice cream cone, which is still  
4 there and still visible. And here is a family picture taken  
5 in 19 -- I believe to be in the 1930's, because there are  
6 some Christmas wreaths in the window, and there are the  
7 grown children with some of the grandchildren as well.

8           Here is the Grosvenor family arms, which appears,  
9 which is carved in stone above the front door, and there's a  
10 Latin inscription which reads, deeds not words characterize  
11 the noble.

12           Their love of birds led them to have these friezes  
13 made, which is a cast of the birds frieze by a National  
14 Geographic magazine artist, Hashima Noriama. And the next  
15 picture shows it. You can't really see it very well, but in  
16 the top right side there, the ceiling, you can see that bird  
17 frieze.

18           Here are the architectural drawings that were done  
19 by Arthur B. Heaton. The south elevation, this is the south  
20 elevation of the east end, and here you can see what came up  
21 from his drawings, what it looks like from the south  
22 elevation. These pictures were taken by Victor Boswell, who  
23 was a National Geographic magazine photographer. And it  
24 shows the sweeping lawn, which I mentioned earlier, which is  
25 still there. And here you can see what it looks like today.  
26       So you can see there hasn't been any alteration on the

1 south side at all.

2           And this is the north elevation now, another  
3 picture taken by Boswell in the fifties, shows the front  
4 door on the west end. And there is a closeup of the front  
5 door taken just a few weeks ago. So you can see it hasn't,  
6 other than the SAF little overhang thing, it hasn't really  
7 changed. And that's the east entrance, the Tudor faux  
8 timber and stucco on the east end. You see the picture.

9           And here's the drawings of the manner house done by  
10 Author B. Heaton of the east end. And you can see the north  
11 elevation, the front of the house. You can see the drawings  
12 of the stucco and the timbering.

13           Here you've got the drawings of the north  
14 elevation facing Grosvenor Lane on the west end. And now  
15 I'm going to move to the carriage house which was designed  
16 as a visual extension. It also has the half timbering, the  
17 stucco. It's on the same axis. It was built at the same  
18 time, and it was clearly intended to be an integral  
19 component, and an integral part of the house.

20           Here you can see pictures, unfortunately taken at  
21 night, but you can see the extension, how the false  
22 timbering extends from the east end of the house to the  
23 carriage house, and was designed intentionally like that to  
24 give a visual continuum.

25           You can see the carriage house and the main house  
26 were built together at the same time, and on the same axis.

1 And here is an architectural drawing done by Arthur B.  
2 Heaton showing the house, the two ends of the house and the  
3 south side of the carriage house with the dormer windows.  
4 And that's, again, the apartment on the upstairs. And it  
5 shows the dormer windows. And then the picture at the top,  
6 the drawing at the top left, you can see the garage doors.

7 Okay, the gardener's cottage, that was built  
8 earlier than the house, which was built in 1928 to '29,  
9 because the Grosvenors only used the property, the farm, in  
10 the summer because it didn't have any heating. And so they  
11 needed somebody to take care of it during the winter. So  
12 they built this.

13 And again, the house was designed by Arthur  
14 Heaton, and it's in a different style, a Craftsman style,  
15 which was characterized by a simpler, more practical design,  
16 because it was a reaction to the over-augmentation of the  
17 Victorian era.

18 So here is a picture I'm afraid also taken at  
19 night, so you can't see very well, but in the front  
20 elevation you can see the cut away porch. And here is an  
21 architectural drawing showing the cut away porch there on  
22 the left. This is the drawing by Arthur B. Heaton. And  
23 here is the side elevation again showing the cut away porch  
24 on the right side this time.

25 All right. The next criterion is that the  
26 architectural, of the architectural and the design criteria

1 is that it represents the work of a master. And the master  
2 in this case was Arthur Berthrom Heaton, who was a prominent  
3 architect for over 50 years in Washington. He held many  
4 important posts, including for the first 14 years of the  
5 construction of the Washington Cathedral, he was a  
6 supervising architect.

7 He also designed a number of buildings for George  
8 Washington University, and he was quite prodigious, although  
9 this was the only estate house in the suburban area that he  
10 built. He built a lot of smaller residences in Bethesda and  
11 Cleveland Park, and he also did commercial buildings. He  
12 was an early car enthusiast, had one of the first driver's  
13 licenses in Washington, D.C., so he built a shopping center  
14 that would allow the cars to come in, and also designed the  
15 capital garage, which it's a shame is gone now.

16 Okay, Heaton had used a number of different  
17 eclectic designs, the Tudor revival, also the Italian  
18 Renaissance. He liked, he had gone to study architecture in  
19 England and in Paris, and he liked the cathedrals of that  
20 era.

21 He was the leader of this renovate Washington to  
22 help people to have jobs during the depression. And he --

23 MR. FULLER: If I could ask you to start to wrap  
24 up. The time clock, unfortunately, didn't give you your  
25 warning. But you're actually about 30 seconds past time.

26 MS. WELLER: Sorry. Okay, I'll continue -- I'll

1 finish then. Okay. My conclusion. I believe that this  
2 property does have historical integrity because the location  
3 and the setting, the design and materials have all been  
4 retained, and it still conveys the estates semi-rural  
5 suburban character.

6 The two office buildings there have been sited in  
7 a sensitive way, so that one doesn't see them when looking  
8 out from the building on the south side. And when you  
9 combine them all together, they are, the environment and the  
10 property itself is one of the relatively rare Tudor revival  
11 style country houses of this period. And I believe it  
12 warrants saving in its environmental setting.

13 I just want to acknowledge, thank people who  
14 helped me on this, who went and got the photographs, and  
15 also to thank the Montgomery County Historic Society, and  
16 also the Library of Congress and National Geographic Society  
17 that made some of their archives available to me. Thank  
18 you. That's my presentation. Do you have any questions?

19 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Are there questions for  
20 the nominator?

21 MS. WELLER: I'm sorry I ran so fast, but I was  
22 running to get here. A bit out of breath. No.

23 MR. FULLER: Thank you very much.

24 MS. WELLER: Thank you.

25 MR. FULLER: At this time, we would like to ask  
26 the representatives of the owner to come forward. And we'll

1 also grant you 10 minutes to make a presentation. Good  
2 evening and welcome. State your names for the record. As I  
3 said, you will have 10 minutes.

4 MR. BURGOFFEN: Mark Burgoffen with Braverman,  
5 Gotz and Gilday, attorney for the property owners, Society  
6 of American Foresters.

7 MR. GOERGEN: Michael Goergen, chief executive  
8 officer of the Society of American Forestry.

9 MR. LEBOVICH: Bill Lebovich, architectural  
10 historian.

11 MR. KLINE: Jody Kline, land use attorney with  
12 Miller, Miller and Canby, and I represent Nations Academy,  
13 the contract purchaser of the property.

14 MR. BURGOFFEN: Mr. Chairman, and members of the  
15 Commission, I want to thank you for the opportunity to be  
16 here this evening to present to you our property and its  
17 historic resources.

18 We'd like to pursue a course of action that is  
19 mutually agreeable to all interested parties, and remain  
20 hopeful that we can reach agreement. We appreciate the  
21 historic nature of the Gifford-Pinchow Forestry Building,  
22 the national headquarters of a 15,000 member Society of  
23 American Foresters, and would support a designation that  
24 does not significantly alter our plans and options for the  
25 future.

26 Unfortunately, we find ourselves in a position

1 today where we can no longer afford to maintain the  
2 building. The property is choked with invasive weeds. The  
3 buildings are deteriorating. And the birds that the  
4 Grosvenors once loved are largely gone, due to the suburban  
5 encroachment and interstate highway system.

6 As a nonprofit organization, our resources are  
7 limited, and we prefer to spend our precious dollars on  
8 programs that improve the world's forest resources. It is  
9 with this recognition that we have decided to sell our  
10 headquarters and grounds to Nation's Academy, an  
11 organization that has pledged to restore the mansion, and  
12 maintain it for the future.

13 I would now like to introduce a historic  
14 preservation expert, Mr. Bill Lebovich, who will discuss the  
15 merits of the property, and after he concludes, Mr. Jody  
16 Kline, who will make a statement for Nation's Academy.  
17 Thank you.

18 MR. LEBOVICH: In evaluating the significance of  
19 this property, I will depend primarily on the records of Dr.  
20 and Mrs. Grosvenor and the National Geographic Society.  
21 This 1927 image by Dr. Grosvenor shows the rolling fields  
22 and long vista of this farm. His caption, along with the  
23 writing of his wife and son commented on the numerous birds  
24 once present in close proximity to the house, but not any  
25 longer.

26 I apologize for the low light. The property was

1 seen as a working farm, not a so-called country estate, as  
2 reflected in the title block of the 1915 survey done for Dr.  
3 Grosvenor. He raised horses and pigs, along with chickens.  
4 And he sold the eggs to the National Geographic Society  
5 cafeteria several times a week.

6           On the full view of the 1915 plat, one can see  
7 that the property was into cultivated fields near the house,  
8 which is, here is the original house, cultivated fields are  
9 straight down, pastures south of the house with woodlands  
10 and open fields -- woodlands and open fields to the right.  
11 The close in planting area and more distant pastures are  
12 clear in this early view. Cultivated field and pastures  
13 farther down.

14           None of this survived, as can be seen by comparing  
15 the early photo from the back lawn to pond, and current  
16 photo from side of pond back towards house.

17           In this photograph the Grosvenors, Tafts and  
18 friends are gathered on the west law. This placement is not  
19 coincidental, as the most important entertaining rooms are  
20 at the west ends of the house, connected by the open porch,  
21 the west lawn, and the west half of the house is the most  
22 architecturally ambitious.

23           In these later photographs of the Grosvenors, at  
24 the front and back of the house, the camera is positioned,  
25 again, to place the emphasis on the west end of the house  
26 and lawn. To the Grosvenors, the west lawn was an extension

1 of the interior entertaining space, and along with the  
2 adjacent laws at the front and back of the house, probably  
3 the most treasured outdoor space. They also had bird  
4 feeders nearby.

5           The east end of the south lawn has been severely  
6 compromised by the new building. Even as late as 1969, much  
7 of the defining features, specifically the open pasture  
8 space and its vista remained. Routes I-270 and 495  
9 seriously impacted the property and caused the driveway to  
10 be reconfigured. Here. This is the house. These are the  
11 lawn vistas. There is the Beltway. There is 270.

12           The change from a large rectangular parcel of  
13 approximately 105 acres, to something less than half, is  
14 best seen by comparing the 1940's real estate map, and a  
15 Grosvenor plat done nearly 30 years later. Up here is the  
16 house. And here is the land being divided, the beltway,  
17 270, and the park, Montgomery County park.

18           These photos of the forest reflect how thoroughly  
19 the setting has changed. This is the line that's looking  
20 from the property at the beltway, and that's looking back  
21 across the beltway at the property in question.

22           Where there are properties being nominated for  
23 designation at the County, State, or national levels of  
24 government, it is required that the property have one,  
25 significance, and two, physical integrity to convey how it  
26 appeared at the time of the property's significance.

1           The farm setting has been destroyed, and is  
2 unrecognizable due to the growth of the forest on the  
3 pastoral field. However, the preserved house and the  
4 immediate area around the house, for their historical  
5 association with the Grosvenors and how they lived and  
6 entertained, and the house's architectural significance,  
7 should be designated.

8           Applying the relevant National Register of  
9 Historic Places in Maryland historical trust standards, the  
10 boundaries for this property must be limited to the area  
11 that retains its association with the Grosvenors and is  
12 reflective of how they used their property. Those  
13 boundaries, therefore, should be the immediate area around  
14 the house, and if deemed worthy, small areas around the less  
15 important altered garage and carriage. Thank you.

16           MR. KLINE: As I mentioned, my name is Jody Kline.  
17 I represent Nations Academy, and you probably are saying,  
18 Mr. Kline, you were anticipating a HAWP application where  
19 you would be putting a board up there. I wanted to show  
20 you, basically, what's going on on the property.

21           This is not, as you can tell from the ballet  
22 you've had already, this is not a designation issue. We are  
23 not opposing designation. The environmental setting,  
24 however, is critical to what happens for us in the future  
25 and the process we have to go through.

26           Nations Academy has filed a petition for special

1 exception with the County to seek permission to construct  
2 and operate a private school on the property. And I can  
3 tell you from the day that a pencil was put on paper for  
4 this school, for this proposed school, the designers have  
5 understood the importance of the future of the property,  
6 with its history and its buildings.

7 I know that it is your practice that at the time  
8 of designation you go ahead and designate the whole  
9 property, or in this case the 27 acres that were nominated,  
10 and then go ahead and deal with the size of that area to be  
11 assessed for a HAWP permit later on, with an application or  
12 when a development proposal is before you.

13 In this case, it is the development proposal that  
14 triggered the nomination itself. We have before us today  
15 the information adequate to make an assessment of the  
16 importance of the buildings, and what the impact of the  
17 school would be on those buildings.

18 And I would like to reiterate a request I made  
19 already to the chairman that said we would like what I will  
20 call a courtesy review or I think you call them a  
21 preliminary discussion. This does not have to go all the  
22 way, you know, ultimately it will go through to have the  
23 site put on the Master Plan for historic preservation, but  
24 it does not have to go through and we have to sit and wait  
25 until such time as it is designated and then come back to  
26 you for your recommendation to the Board of Appeals.

1           We will lose not only several months in doing  
2 that, but lose basically opening a whole academic year later  
3 because of the sequence of construction.

4           What we would like, is an opportunity to show you  
5 how we can deal with the buildings on the property in  
6 sensitive way that would allow it to be designated that  
7 would still not necessarily substantially prejudice our  
8 special exception.

9           At a minimum, I would ask that you try and give  
10 your staff some guidance so we can sit down with them; they  
11 can, in fact, tell us what they have heard from you; what  
12 their advice to us is going to be, what their advice is  
13 going to be later on on the HAWP permit, and then we can  
14 work with the special exception process to address that.

15           We need guidance from you, and we think that the  
16 information, a lot of the information is there that you  
17 could go ahead and provide that today. And it does not have  
18 to go all the way through the Council while our special  
19 exception sits and waits and is reactivated sometime  
20 probably late this year or early next year. Thank you.

21           MR. FULLER: Is that the end of your presentation?

22           MR. KLINE: Yes.

23           MR. FULLER: Thank you for being brief. Are there  
24 questions for the property owner? Okay. Thank you. And  
25 I'll move into the other speakers.

26           MS. ALDERSON: Actually, just one, please.

1 MR. FULLER: All right.

2 MS. ALDERSON: Would you like to take a moment to  
3 explain what the picture is illustrating in relation to the  
4 overall site that we have examined in the first  
5 presentation?

6 MR. KLINE: I'll just speak from here if you can  
7 pick it up. Thank you.

8 MS. ALDERSON: Perhaps if you could explain that  
9 in relation to the plan that we have here.

10 MR. KLINE: This is basically the state of our  
11 site plan for the special exception application. It's  
12 actually in the hands of the staff in this building, being  
13 reviewed.

14 Just to orient you, I-270 on the right hand side.  
15 495 and the beltway down on the lower right hand corner.  
16 Grosvenor Lane across the top of the property running out  
17 along the far west side. And Fleming Park as mentioned by  
18 the staff.

19 The entrance is the same, the same location as it  
20 is today, if you have a chance to make a site visit. The  
21 Academy would like, however, to be able to accommodate the  
22 large volume of traffic coming on the property.

23 Commission Alderson asked me to kind of correlate  
24 it to the exhibit that you've got here, and I would say the  
25 blue in the upper right hand corner is the Grosvenor house  
26 today, where Mr. Grosvenor lives today. The red area,

1 essentially, basically picks up our proposed athletic field  
2 on the right, sweeps across the front of the property.

3           The core in yellow is where the special exception  
4 buildings currently exist for the Society of American  
5 Forestry, the Natural Resources Foundation, and other  
6 charitable institutes in those buildings. And then we're  
7 basically everything you see down in green has been  
8 designated under the Legacy Open Space Program to be  
9 preserved in its natural state, either public or private  
10 ownership. So that won't be touched at all.

11           And that's one of the interesting issues related  
12 to what is going on. And we're going to come to point out  
13 where things are.

14           In the middle of the red, the house itself is  
15 located -- I'm pointing to it on my special exception, but  
16 it's shown in the middle of the red area. The garage is  
17 accordingly, of course, immediately to the right of that.  
18 And in approximately in the upper left hand corner of the  
19 competition athletic field is where the caretakers house is  
20 going to be.

21           When we started on this, we basically had enough  
22 room that we could have probably accommodated those  
23 buildings, if they were appropriate to do so. What did  
24 happen, though, is the Legacy Open Space designation came  
25 along, and probably maybe more than we expected, it was  
26 drawn as a hard line. So what happened was the entire

1 academic buildings all started to move to the north. They  
2 have to crest as well, but they basically had to be further  
3 to the north.

4           And the interesting tension on this project is  
5 those 35 acres. When you start trying to preserve trees  
6 along the east side, a belt of trees so that the respective  
7 folks who drive on Grosvenor now don't really want to see  
8 what's going on on the property. And then the Legacy Open  
9 Space area. Our site is constrained. And that's why you  
10 hear us here talking about trying to work out an  
11 environmental setting that would be, allow us to be able to  
12 come in with buildings where we want to construct them on  
13 the property.

14           The idea is to go ahead and use the mansion as  
15 some sort of adaptive reuse or an educational facility  
16 itself, and maintain as much of the field in the back as we  
17 can. This dormitory building is for international students.

18 I guess I should add Nations Academy is attended -- I'm  
19 beyond the scope, more than --

20           MR. FULLER: Very quick.

21           MR. KLINE: Suffice it to say, this is a dorm  
22 where students come from overseas who will be living on the  
23 property. It's architectural treatment will be, have cues  
24 and basically remnants, excuse me, take cues from the main  
25 buildings so that they would look like they were together.  
26 That was probably a longer answer than you expected.

1 MS. ALDERSON: Thank you.

2 MR. FULLER: Okay. Any other questions for the  
3 property owner? All right. At this point I would like to  
4 go through some of the other speakers. We have three  
5 speakers that are representing groups. I would like to ask  
6 the three of you to come forward together. Each of you will  
7 be giving seven minutes.

8 We have Michael Diehl representing Fleming Park  
9 Community Association. We have Sheryl Lee representing  
10 Wildwood Manor Citizens Association. And we have Wayne  
11 Goldstein representing Preservation, Inc.

12 MS. LEE: Can I just say, I'm Sheryl Lee and I was  
13 going to cede my time to Julia. I prepared my testimony and  
14 sent it in, so I don't have to speak.

15 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Please, if you would  
16 state your name for the record? You have seven minutes.  
17 Thank you.

18 MR. DIEHL: Thank you. My name is Michael Diehl,  
19 and I am the president of the Fleming Park --

20 MR. FULLER: Excuse me.

21 MR. DIEHL: I'm sorry?

22 MR. FULLER: It's five. I was corrected. It's  
23 five minutes, not seven.

24 MR. DIEHL: Five minutes. Okay. My name is  
25 Michael Diehl. I'm the president of the Fleming Park  
26 Community Association, and we represent 470, approximately

1 470 residences that are the neighbors of the Grosvenor  
2 Mansion and estate.

3           And I'm actually also here representing five other  
4 community associations. They are the Wildwood Manor  
5 Citizens Association, and then you are going to notice a  
6 name that repeats itself, the Grosvenor Homeowners  
7 Association, the Grosvenor Woods Homeowner Association, the  
8 Grosvenor Muse Homeowner Association, and the Grosvenor  
9 Towers Homeowner Association. So you can see that we're all  
10 named for Grosvenor. We're all neighbors of Grosvenor. We  
11 lie to the east, the west, and the north.

12           And I am not able to speak as eloquently as the  
13 nominator with respect to the factors that you have to  
14 consider, but what I can tell you is our experience as  
15 neighbors of the Grosvenor Estate, and we consider this an  
16 architectural and a historical gem.

17           I mean, this is something that when people visit  
18 from out of town, we can take them on a walk and say that  
19 Alexander Graham Bell's daughter lived there, and her  
20 husband Gilbert Grosvenor of the National Geographic  
21 Society. So I am just hoping I can try to convey the human  
22 connection that we feel with this, and how special it is to  
23 us.

24           The only other thing I would like to say, I'm not  
25 sure I understood everything Mr. Kline said, because I don't  
26 understand the procedures here. I'm not a land use

1 attorney. But it sounded to me as if he was trying to  
2 encourage you to shorten or cut short your procedures for  
3 review. I might have misunderstood that.

4           If that were the case, I guess I would urge that  
5 the procedures are probably there for a reason, and they  
6 probably sometimes serve a very good purpose. And so I'm  
7 not qualified to advise you on whether you should, what I  
8 think as shorten your procedures, but I would urge that  
9 maybe, you know, maybe that's the stuff that should be taken  
10 only very carefully.

11           And you were also shown a diagram of site plans,  
12 and as a neighbor of the proposal from the Nations Academy,  
13 I've seen three site plans so far, and they've shifted. So  
14 I take Mr. Kline at his word that that's their present  
15 intention for what's going on, but I've seen more than one  
16 version. And you know, I think that's something also that  
17 speaks to whether you're going to shorten the procedures. So  
18 I don't want to take anymore of your time.

19           Thank you, by the way, for scheduling this  
20 evening. It makes it so much easier for us to appear. I  
21 know it's not convenient for you, it's convenient for us, so  
22 thank you so much.

23           MR. FULLER: Are there questions for the speaker?  
24 Thank you. Wayne.

25           MR. GOLDSTEIN: I'm Wayne Goldstein, president of  
26 Montgomery Preservation, Inc. I wasn't sure what I was

1 going to say tonight, but because I had the sense that the  
2 owner was supportive of designation.

3 I'd like to compliment the nominator, as well as  
4 staff, for their excellent presentation. I've learned a lot  
5 about the history of summer mansions in that part of  
6 Montgomery County, reading them.

7 I actually shouldn't be surprised that the owner  
8 is supportive of designation because Jody Kline helped write  
9 the historic preservation statute back in the late  
10 seventies.

11 You have Montgomery Preservation's letter, and we  
12 talk about the importance of the environmental setting. And  
13 clearly there is a negotiation trying to meet the needs of  
14 history, and the needs of the property owner. And I can  
15 understand the owner wanting to try to get as good a sense  
16 from the Commission of what the environmental setting should  
17 be or what they might support in terms of reductions if it  
18 were designated to come back to you.

19 But like the gentleman before me said, we do have  
20 a process, and it can move at a certain speed, and I think  
21 we need to respect that. So I do support, Montgomery  
22 Preservation supports the staff's recommendation for the  
23 criteria that it meets, and hopes that the HPC will agree.  
24 Thank you.

25 MR. FULLER: Are there questions for the speaker?  
26 Thank you both. We have three more speakers, Lisa Krepner,

1 Linda Eckert, and Beth Savage. If I butchered your name, I  
2 apologize.

3 MS. GUNNER: That's all right. Lisa Gunner, and I  
4 get it butchered every day, so we're good.

5 MR. FULLER: Good evening, welcome. And each of  
6 you that are speaking as individuals will be given three  
7 minutes.

8 MS. GUNNER: Thank you. I've prepared a statement  
9 In this week that celebrates Earth Day, I'm especially  
10 privileged to add my voice in support of the designation of  
11 Wild Acres to the Montgomery County historic register.

12 Those of us who are here to testify on behalf of  
13 preserving Wild Acres are asked to stake our claims on  
14 history. So we are each of us casting this broad net to  
15 capture all of what that property means to us, because  
16 historically significant properties such as Wild Acres are  
17 most assuredly deemed worthy of preservation when you can  
18 demonstrate the good of the larger community through that  
19 shared legacy.

20 The Grosvenor Mansion and its surrounding  
21 outbuildings, lawns, and forests, certainly represent a  
22 variety of historically significant characteristics, and  
23 each demand preservation. Tonight's testimony has spoken to  
24 the importance of the site from architectural, cultural,  
25 scientific, environmental, political, and social  
26 standpoints.

1           The historic significance of Wild Acres is  
2 demonstrated by the personal and professional story of  
3 Gilbert Grosvenor. His contributions through his leadership  
4 at the National Geographic alone are imbedded not only in  
5 our own national heritage, but in our global consciousness  
6 as well.

7           And on an international scale, Grosvenor's efforts  
8 helped to shape our understanding of the planet and an  
9 appreciation and even a celebration of the wonders of our  
10 natural surroundings, and the architectural and social  
11 heritage of civilizations around the globe.

12           Not to recognize the contributions of this man in  
13 the same terms preserving the architectural integrity of the  
14 house and its surrounds, denies Grosvenor's critical role  
15 and undoes in a real sense his mission and his life's work.

16           But in characterizing the property in those  
17 grandest terms of importance, it is important not to lose  
18 sight of its significance to those who have cultivated a  
19 sincere personal affection for it, over many lifetimes.

20           Even were it measured only by its purely local  
21 interest, if you base the wealth of familiar experiences and  
22 interactions of neighbors and life long residents who, on  
23 their own, help to protect the surroundings, the Grosvenor  
24 Mansion and its surrounding acres put into really personal  
25 terms many of the characteristics that deserve historical  
26 designation.

1           We as County residents appreciate on a daily basis  
2 those architectural, environmental, and social aspects of  
3 this perfectly beautiful community asset. And we believe it  
4 should be preserved for everything that that represents.

5           I so urge the Planning Board to take to heart the  
6 testimony of our County residents who recognize this  
7 property for the historical treasure that it truly is, and  
8 to accord it the designation that it deserves. Thank you.

9           MR. FULLER: We're actually the HPC. Are there  
10 any questions for the speaker? Thank you.

11           MS. ECKERT: My name is Linda Eckert, and I will  
12 be very brief. I live in Alta Vista Gardens. I've lived  
13 there for 11 years. And I've lived in the general area for  
14 most of my life.

15           I've driven down Grosvenor Lane and seen this  
16 property many -- more times than I can count, but I never  
17 really appreciated it until recently when I started doing  
18 research on it. I was overwhelmed by the photographs that I  
19 saw and the information that I read on the importance of  
20 this property.

21           And I am here to speak for people like myself who  
22 are sitting home watching television now and having no  
23 concern about that property. But if they had seen what I've  
24 seen, and read what I've read, they would want that property  
25 preserved. Thank you. And designated. Thank you.

26           MR. FULLER: Thank you. Are there questions for

1 the speaker?

2 MS. SAVAGE: Good evening. I'm Beth Savage. I  
3 also am a resident of the Alta Vista Gardens neighborhood  
4 adjacent to Wild Acres.

5 I'm not going to reiterate a lot of the message  
6 you've already heard tonight, because I think that the  
7 nomination that was submitted to the Commission clearly  
8 demonstrates the historic and architectural significance of  
9 the property in accordance with the criteria that are  
10 codified in the preservation ordinance that I now know was  
11 co-written by Mr. Kline.

12 This estate is clearly important as a relatively  
13 rare surviving intra-war suburban estate built by a clearly  
14 significant individual. The property retains the three  
15 buildings that we've seen lovely photographs of, which have  
16 been adaptively reused, and have great potential for  
17 continuing to be adaptively reused.

18 One of the points that Mr. Lebovich brought up  
19 about it not being a working farm, that it's not a country  
20 estate, but it was a working farm, and that it's lost  
21 integrity as a working farm, I would profess that these two  
22 functions were not mutually exclusive, but they were rather  
23 commonly practiced at gentleman farms of this era by people  
24 like Gilbert Grosvenor.

25 Arthur B. Heaton's significance has been firmly  
26 established. He was a fellow of the AIA, the highest honor

1 accorded to an American architect. He was, as has been  
2 stated, very interested in the automobile. And I do believe  
3 that the correct statement was already made about the garage  
4 being an integral and complimentary building built for the  
5 mansion house in the same style with the same degree of  
6 care.

7           On the issue of the historic integrity of the  
8 property, the historic resources of the property, the  
9 contribute, all of them, to the historic and architectural  
10 importance of the property, and they retain a very high  
11 degree of historic integrity, of location, setting, design,  
12 materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, which  
13 we've heard testimonials about, very eloquently stated.

14           These resources combine with their in tact,  
15 immediate historic acreage, convey the property's  
16 significance as a relatively rare, Tudor revival style  
17 country estate designed by a master architect, built between  
18 the wars, in outlying Montgomery County for a prominent  
19 Washington family.

20           And although the extent of the estate's historic  
21 acreage has been diminished substantially by the  
22 construction of the interstate highways, the sale of a  
23 parcel for Fleming Park, and another portion for the  
24 construction of the two moderate office buildings, the  
25 acreage encompassed by this nomination retains more than  
26 sufficient integrity to convey the estate's historic semi-

1 rural character.

2 For the aforementioned reasons, I urge the  
3 Commission to support this amendment to the Master Plan, and  
4 I thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration and  
5 I also have copies of testimony that I can give to each of  
6 you. Thank you.

7 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Are there questions for  
8 the speaker? Thank you. I have one more speaker, Edwin  
9 Grosvenor. If you'd like to come forward. Welcome. If  
10 you'd like to state your name, for the record

11 MR. GROSVENOR: Yes. My name is Edwin Grosvenor.  
12 My name is Edwin Grosvenor. I'm a next door resident, and  
13 have lived on the property or next to it for 56 years. I'm  
14 also the editor and chief of American Heritage Magazine, a  
15 magazine dedicated to appreciation for historic heritage.

16 I don't have any prepared comments. I do want to  
17 just say, I can't speak on behalf of our family, because  
18 Gilbert Grosvenor has probably 100 descendants at this  
19 point. And I can tell you they wouldn't agree on anything.

20 But I think that they would want to express our  
21 appreciation for the attention everyone has given, and the  
22 comments about Gilbert and Elsie Grosvenor. I want to thank  
23 Julia for an excellent write up and the staff, the work  
24 they've done.

25 As a next door neighbor, we've been concerned over  
26 the eventual disposition of this property for decades. The

1 existing Master Plan, I think, has calls for seven office  
2 buildings on the property, I think 700 or 800 parking  
3 spaces. We've been concerned about that. There have been  
4 other plans floated for several hundred townhouses.

5           So I do want to speak in favor of historic  
6 designation for the property. On the other hand, I think  
7 that of all the ideas for the property that I've seen  
8 floated, I think that the school campus seems to me a  
9 relatively good solution.

10           I share the concerns, a lot of the concerns of the  
11 other neighbors in the area with regard to traffic, et  
12 cetera. I hope those can be worked out. But I would hope  
13 that whatever solution is put in, or whatever designation  
14 you give is at least some flexibility so that the Nations  
15 Academy does not become an impossibility.

16           I think that the buffer, the tree buffers that  
17 I've seen, the preservation of the trees, and the general  
18 use of the property just seems to me a relatively good use  
19 of the property, and is consonant with what Gilbert  
20 Grosvenor, I think, would have wanted, since he was also a  
21 teacher and felt that as an editor, that was -- education  
22 was something that was very important to him.

23           I share concerns of the neighborhood with regard  
24 to a lot of things about the academy, but in general I think  
25 that it seems like a good solution. So all I wanted to do  
26 was thank staff and thank Julie and just say that we hope

1 that whatever solution is worked out, it's the best for the  
2 neighborhood, and keeps all the balancing considerations in  
3 mind. Thanks.

4 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Are there any questions  
5 for the speaker? I have misplaced one form. We have one  
6 last speaker. Anne Martin, adjacent property owner. You  
7 have three minutes as well.

8 MS. MARTIN: Thank you. For the record, Anne  
9 Martin from the law firm of Linowes and Blocher,  
10 representing Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, which  
11 is both an adjacent property owner, the property shown in  
12 yellow on the staff report with the office buildings, but  
13 they are also the special exception holder of the entire  
14 property that's before you today for the Renewable Natural  
15 Resources Foundation special exception, which, as noted in  
16 the staff report, was approved back in 1973, and has been  
17 modified along the way, but essentially is for 300,000  
18 square feet of nonprofit office uses, which includes, as you  
19 can see by the site plan that I've distributed, that's the  
20 1991 site plan that includes office buildings and parking  
21 areas that have been approved for a portion of the property  
22 that's before you today for the designation.

23 Therefore, our position is we support the  
24 designation as reference by those before you today,  
25 including the property owner, the Foresters, the contract  
26 purchaser of Nations Academy, but request that it's limited

1 to the area of the house, and the immediate vicinity.

2           Otherwise, a sweeping designation of the entire  
3 property would not be consistent with the approvals that the  
4 government has already placed on this property going back 35  
5 years.

6           It was noted that the property was, in the staff  
7 report that the property was de-listed in 1980. There have  
8 been plans approved since then that have gone before the  
9 Planning Board. And I've also attached copies of the North  
10 Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan which, issued in 1992  
11 which specifically references a special exception, the  
12 approved buildings, and supports the continued use, and does  
13 not mention any historic resources on the site.

14           Again, we do support the designation of the house  
15 that's been before you today. I think it's important to be  
16 consistent with the historical association of the Grosvenor  
17 family, and the architecture referenced in the thorough  
18 report before you today.

19           But we also believe it's important, as mentioned  
20 earlier, to have a balance and to recognizes a) the existing  
21 government approvals on this property that you would want to  
22 make your decision consistent with; and also the fact, the  
23 efforts of the foundation and the Foresters over the past 35  
24 years to preserve the house on the property.

25           Included in the testimony as an attachment, the  
26 1974 special exception opinion, when the mansion was

1 specifically referenced because we had to come in and use it  
2 as office uses. It was not certain, I'm quoting, it was not  
3 certain at the time whether the mansion would ultimately be  
4 removed or not, but the foundation decided to maintain the  
5 mansion and the house and preserve the campus environment  
6 around the house.

7 So again, we hope their efforts will be recognized  
8 and that we can collaborate in the future to respect all  
9 interests. Thank you.

10 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Are there questions for  
11 the speaker? Thank you. I think that concludes any of the  
12 speakers that have submitted forms. Okay. At this point I  
13 would like to move into deliberations. Do we have any  
14 comments, thoughts?

15 MS. MILES: Can I ask a question of staff? Clare,  
16 do you have any reaction to the last testimony, because this  
17 is news to me.

18 MS. KELLY: Well, the staff report describes the  
19 special exception that was approved. And it was approved  
20 before Wild Acres was put on the atlas originally. There's  
21 a time line that's on, in the staff report, on page eight,  
22 that shows the approval of the special exception in '73.  
23 And the locational atlas was published in 1976.

24 The plan that you see in color does show all the  
25 historic Grosvenor house, and it shows the carriage house,  
26 and it's not clearly shown on this map, the caretaker's

1 cottage. But certainly the parking lot configuration could  
2 include the caretaker's cottage.

3 So if this plan were to go forward, I think that  
4 the designation of the property would not preclude this  
5 special exception going forward.

6 I would also note that the vista out the front and  
7 the back of the house, which we pointed out, is significant,  
8 is preserved in this particular special exception.

9 MS. MILES: Thank you.

10 MR. FULLER: Other thoughts or comments?

11 MR. DUFFY: I have a question for staff. My  
12 understanding, correct me if I am wrong, but my  
13 understanding is that the environmental setting that's being  
14 proposed in this proposed designation is that that's shown  
15 in red on page seven.

16 MS. KELLY: Yes, it's shown in red on page seven,  
17 and it's a little more clearly delineated in the actual  
18 amendment, which is the attachment 3 to your staff report,  
19 and it's on page -- it's attachment 2 of your staff report,  
20 and it's on page four. So if you look at that page. Can we  
21 do slides, Josh, or are they not working right now? They're  
22 not working. Okay.

23 So page four of the draft amendment before you  
24 shows the proposed environmental setting, which is the  
25 northern portion of the parcel on which the historic  
26 buildings are located. It includes the frontage of that

1 parcel along Grosvenor Lane, and it includes the frontage of  
2 the parcel along Fleming Avenue, which is south of the 1951  
3 Grosvenor house, and north of Fleming Park.

4 That environmental setting includes the vista from  
5 the north, looking north from the house, and looking south  
6 from the house.

7 MR. BURSTYN: It seems to me that it would be good  
8 to have some options here. It seems like everyone is in  
9 agreement that the structures should be retained, and the  
10 primary issue is the size of the environmental setting. Is  
11 that correct? Is that how other Commissions would see this?

12 MS. MILES: I think actually that the caretaker's  
13 house is going to be subsumed under an athletic field under  
14 the proposal by the buyers. So I think possibly not the  
15 caretaker's house. Do you guys want to react to that?

16 MS. ALDERSON: I think we need to return to  
17 deliberations about the merits of the submission rather than  
18 reviewing a potential HAWP, because they are separate  
19 processes, and I think that we never, discussing hardships  
20 or property viability is the arena of the work permit  
21 process. And at this time we should be looking at the  
22 eligibility criteria.

23 And I think those were presented very well. It's  
24 as really quite a straightforward a case as we have  
25 received. It has, the property has very strong significance  
26 on all counts, and very strong integrity for the kind of

1 location where this has survived.

2           And, you know, it has been our experience, I think  
3 it would be extremely rare that we could receive a property  
4 like this in the condition that it was constructed. That  
5 never happens. And I can think of dozens, hundreds of  
6 historic properties that never would have been saved if we  
7 expected them to look as they did on completion, or 10 years  
8 after completion.

9           There's no question from what we see of the  
10 photographs and the documentation, that the character  
11 remains. And so with that in mind, I'm very strongly of the  
12 opinion that the property should be designated with the  
13 recommended view sites, and that will then give us an  
14 opportunity at the time of permitting to examine the other  
15 issues such as economic hardships or other concerns that are  
16 to be discussed within that arena.

17           MR. ROTENSTEIN: I fully agree with Commissioner  
18 Alderson. I personally find this a very compelling  
19 nomination, and it is probably one of the more significant  
20 ones that we've had before the Commission since I've been  
21 here.

22           One of the speakers on behalf of the designation  
23 summed it up fairly well. You have a place name that is so  
24 closely identified with this family and this historic  
25 property that it would be impossible to divorce the built  
26 environment from its surrounding setting.

1           And I would, at this point, fully agree with  
2 Commissioner Alderson that we should not be taking into  
3 account future land use issues at this point. We are solely  
4 here to evaluate the property under the criteria established  
5 in 24A, and to determine if it meets those criteria, whether  
6 or not it has integrity.

7           MR. BURSTYN: I wouldn't disagree with any of  
8 that. My only issue involved is how you define the  
9 resources. And in defining the structures, I have no  
10 problem whatsoever. We've dealt with this issue before,  
11 before the Commission, and the issue is how many acres  
12 accompanies the environmental setting?

13           And in reviewing the documents, to me the boundary  
14 lines are somewhat arbitrary and they should be -- it could  
15 be subject to change, and you could still maintain the  
16 environmental setting, maintain the structures, of course.  
17 But whether it has to have the exact shape, as drawn in red,  
18 I would just question that.

19           I can't, at this point, throw out other options,  
20 but for instance, if you just arbitrarily say 10 feet off of  
21 Fleming Avenue, it's in red, is there something significant  
22 about that little piece of land right against Fleming Avenue  
23 that that has to be part of the environmental setting?

24           And again, I think the property meets all these  
25 criteria. I just question our ability to draw the  
26 environmental setting in the way that preserves the property

1 in the 21st century.

2 MR. FULLER: I guess a couple comments, and they  
3 sort of all deal with process, and they tie in with the  
4 environmental setting.

5 The first thing is, I want to compliment, it's my  
6 understanding staff has been working with the applicant and  
7 the planning staff as it relates to the development of the  
8 plans. And I want to continue to encourage that to happen.

9 As you noticed out of tonight's agenda, most of  
10 the HAWP's were approved on an expedited basis. Our staff  
11 does tend to understand what our preferences are, and I  
12 think they are batting at 85 or 90 percent. So I think  
13 that's a real important process that should allow the  
14 property owner to have some level of confidence that work  
15 that's going on proceeds and has some merit to it.

16 I am a little bit concerned in our process on the  
17 other side is that if this was a subdivision of a farm, and  
18 at the point in time that we did the historic designation,  
19 we would have a larger setting that would be tied into the  
20 property, but at the time they came in for subdivision, that  
21 environmental setting would be subject to some future  
22 reduction.

23 There is really nothing in our process if there is  
24 not a secondary subdivision process to reduce that  
25 environmental setting. And somehow I think that at some  
26 point, there ought to be some ability to, just like you

1 would in a subdivision, to tie the environmental setting  
2 with the plan, and make sure that both pieces work together.

3 But that being said, the environmental setting  
4 doesn't necessarily mean it doesn't preclude development.  
5 It simply means that the development is subject to our  
6 review and approval. So drawing an environmental setting  
7 today does not say it can't be touched.

8 I support the application. I think there is no  
9 question on the mansion and the garage. I'm a little back  
10 and forth on the caretaker's house, but definitely the  
11 setting around the houses and the garage, it certainly  
12 merits protection.

13 MR. DUFFY: I'm generally in agreement with all  
14 the Commissioners who have spoken. This application clearly  
15 meets several of the criteria for designation, and I think  
16 as we've all been saying, the one question is the  
17 environmental setting. I don't think there is a better way  
18 to address it at this moment other than to designate it as  
19 submitted tonight.

20 I would like to add, as our chairman just said,  
21 that designating the entire area submitted as the  
22 environmental setting, doesn't preclude development within  
23 that area in the future. And considering that there have  
24 been approved plans in the past, I think we may want to take  
25 the history of what's been approved into consideration if  
26 and when a HAWP comes before us for development.

1 MS. KELLY: I'd just like to add the policy that  
2 the Historic Preservation Commission has had in defining  
3 environmental settings. And it's summarized on page, Roman  
4 numeral VII in the Master Plan amendment that's before you.

5 The practice of the Commission has been to, and of  
6 the Planning Board and of the County Council has been to  
7 designate the entire parcel that a historic resource is  
8 located on.

9 And in -- and the amendment states, by describing  
10 an appropriate area to preserve the integrity of the  
11 resource, and by identifying buildings and features  
12 associated with the site that should be protected as part of  
13 that setting. It is anticipated for the majority of sites  
14 designated, the appropriate point at which to refine an  
15 environmental setting will be when the property is  
16 subdivided, but that the designation of the entire parcel is  
17 what we typically recommend.

18 In this case we did not recommend the entire  
19 parcel. We're recommending something smaller than that.  
20 This is an irregularly shaped parcel, and the northern part  
21 of it is protected to some extent under Legacy Open Space.  
22 So we're recommending only the northern part of the parcel  
23 as the environmental setting.

24 MR. DUFFY: The only issue I would take with that  
25 is that the, what's being proposed as the environmental  
26 setting, may or may not be subdivided in the future. And

1 our comments about potential development in the  
2 environmental setting are regardless of subdivision.

3 MR. BURSTYN: I have one point of clarification.  
4 What is the dark red area between the green and the red?

5 MS. KELLY: That's the overlap between the  
6 recommended environmental setting and Legacy Open Space. So  
7 there's a small strip on the northern part of the Fleming  
8 local park that would be both environmental setting and  
9 subject to Legacy Open Space.

10 MS. MILES: I'll just loan my two cents, and I  
11 agree that it's an overwhelmingly supportable nomination,  
12 and that I believe we should expeditiously vote to nominate  
13 it.

14 MR. FULLER: I think we're voting on a  
15 recommendation to the Planning Commission.

16 MS. MILES: Yes, recommend. Sorry.

17 MR. FULLER: Does somebody want to make a motion?  
18 Is there any more deliberation?

19 MS. ALDERSON: I'd like to make a motion that we  
20 recommend designation of the property with the environmental  
21 setting as stipulated in the staff report.

22 MR. DUFFY: I second the motion.

23 MR. FULLER: Is there any further discussion? I  
24 guess the only thing I would like to add at that point is, I  
25 don't disagree with the idea the environmental setting  
26 should be appropriate at this point, but I would hope that

1 if, in the future, the environmental setting should be  
2 reduced and they do not want to go through subdivision, that  
3 we would be open to the suggestion of reduction, just like  
4 we would if this was to be a subdivided parcel. I don't see  
5 why an owner who chooses not to subdivide should be  
6 penalized and not have that opportunity as he goes forward.  
7 So that's just my comments on that. Any other questions,  
8 comments?

9 MR. BURSTYN: I would concur with Chairman  
10 Fuller's comment on that.

11 MR. FULLER: All in favor? All opposed. Passes  
12 unanimously. Thank you. All right.

13 MS. KELLY: I also wanted to remind Commissioners  
14 that the public hearing for this is May 29th, and I would  
15 like to ask if one of the Commissioners would like to  
16 volunteer to testify before the Planning Board with the  
17 HPC's recommendations? Caroline. Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. FULLER: Okay. Next on our agenda, our review  
19 of the minutes. It looks like we've got three minutes that  
20 are outstanding, March 12th, March 26th, and April 9th.

21 MS. FOTHERGILL: March 12th was Commissioner  
22 Miles, and corrected minutes have been submitted.

23 MS. MILES: I sent them right back. Yes.

24 MS. FOTHERGILL: Okay. And then March 26th was  
25 Commissioner Alderson, and the corrected minutes have been  
26 submitted. And then April 9th was --

1 MS. ANAHTAR: Yes, I haven't received the minutes.

2 MS. FOTHERGILL: Oh, maybe they haven't come out  
3 yet. Okay.

4 MS. ANAHTAR: I'm waiting.

5 MR. FULLER: Can we have a motion for March 12th  
6 and 26th?

7 MS. MILES: I move that we adopt the minutes from  
8 March 12th and 26th, as amended.

9 MR. FULLER: Second?

10 MS. ALDERSON: I second.

11 MR. FULLER: In favor? Approved. Other business?

12 MS. ALDERSON: Who has the next minutes?

13 MS. FOTHERGILL: Can we have a volunteer for  
14 tonight?

15 MS. ALDERSON: Yes. We need to make the motion to  
16 approve the March 26th minutes.

17 MS. FOTHERGILL: It was in Commissioner Miles'  
18 motion.

19 MR. FULLER: She did both. She did both.

20 MS. FOTHERGILL: Can we have a volunteer for  
21 tonight's minutes?

22 MR. FULLER: I haven't done them recently. I'll  
23 do these.

24 MS. FOTHERGILL: Thank you, Commissioner.

25 MR. FULLER: Other business? Commission items.  
26 Just to remind everybody, Scott indicated if you want to do

1 the field trip to Hagerstown to get your applications in if  
2 you want the County to pay for your applications. Staff  
3 items?

4 MR. DUFFY: One minor Commission item.

5 MR. FULLER: Yes.

6 MR. DUFFY: On the back of our agenda, the little  
7 map we've had disappeared.

8 MS. FOTHERGILL: It actually is a second or in  
9 this case third page of the agenda. It doesn't come to you  
10 but it would go to the public.

11 MR. DUFFY: Okay. I've heard positive comments  
12 about it.

13 MS. FOTHERGILL: Good.

14 MR. FULLER: One other thing that, based on the  
15 delay we had to take this evening, I've had some discussions  
16 with staff as it relates to elimination of the estimated  
17 times from the agenda.

18 On one hand, as an applicant sometimes appearing  
19 before groups like this, I like have minutes or times  
20 identified, but on the other side, it is very cumbersome  
21 when we have situations like tonight and we had to have a  
22 20-minute delay. Is there any strong feelings one way or  
23 the other? I think staff is leaning right now towards  
24 eliminating the times.

25 MR. ROTENSTEIN: I think that's an excellent move,  
26 the fact that we have a posted time for the worksession and

1 the beginning of the hearing. I think that's fully  
2 consistent with what other boards do.

3 MS. ALDERSON: I would take it further. I would  
4 recommend that, discouraging applicants from simply looking  
5 at where they are on the agenda and estimating an amount of  
6 time, and tell them that they cannot predict what will be  
7 expedited or what will be postponed, and that they should be  
8 here at the beginning of the meeting or risk being delayed  
9 themselves by having their property bypassed.

10 MR. FULLER: Besides --

11 MS. ALDERSON: Or a decision made without them.

12 MR. FULLER: Besides it gives us the opportunity  
13 to have our groupies like Wayne here the entire evening.

14 (Discussion off the record.)

15 MR. FULLER: So I would suggest we strike that  
16 from future agendas. Staff items. We went through several  
17 upstairs.

18 MR. WHIPPLE: I would remind everybody of the  
19 possibility of a meeting on the 21st to discuss the design  
20 guidelines. The 21st of May.

21 MR. FULLER: Thank you. Meeting adjourned.

22 (Whereupon, at 9:15 p.m., the meeting was  
23 concluded.)

√ Digitally signed by Teresa S. Hinds

ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATE

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the foregoing pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings before the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa S. Hinds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and "H".

Teresa S. Hinds

4/30/08