

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

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5 MASTER PLAN EVALUATIONS :
6 Wild Acres Estate :
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A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on
13 April 23, 2008, commencing at 7:34 p.m., in the MRO
14 Auditorium at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland
15 20910, before:

16

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

17

Jef Fuller

18

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

19

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

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25

ALSO PRESENT:

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

APPEARANCES

<u>STATEMENT OF:</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
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 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. FULLER: Good evening, and welcome to the
3 April 23rd meeting of the Montgomery County Historic
4 Preservation Commission. My name is Jef Fuller. I'm the
5 chair. I'd like the Commission and staff to introduce
6 themselves starting on my left.

7 MS. ALDERSON: Caroline Alderson, Takoma Park.

8 MR. DUFFY: Tim Duffy, Potomac.

9 MR. FLEMING: Warren Fleming, Damascus.

10 MS. MILES: Leslie Miles, Bethesda.

11 MR. ROTENSTEIN: David Rotenstein, Silver Spring.

12 MS. ANAHTAR: Nuray Anahtar, Bethesda.

13 MR. BURSTYN: Lee Burstyn, Rockville.

14 MR. WHIPPLE: Scott Whipple, historic preservation
15 supervisor.

16 MS. FOTHERGILL: Anne Fothergill, historic
17 preservation planner.

18 MS. KELLY: Clare Kelly, historic preservation
19 staff.

20 MR. SILVER: Joshua Silver, historic preservation
21 planner.

22 MR. FULLER: I'd like to remind anybody in the
23 audience, if you wish to speak tonight and you are not the
24 applicant, to please fill out a speaker's form in the back
25 of the auditorium and turn it into staff on my right. The
26 first thing we are going to -- have the Historic Area Work

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 Mather, 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