MCPB 10-21-10

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

October 11, 2010

TO:

Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA:

Rose Krasnow, Chief, Development Review Division

Mark Pfefferle, Acting Chief, Environmental Planning

Catherine Conlon, Supervisor, Development Review Division

Robert Kronenberg, Supervisor Development Review Division

FROM:

Richard A. Weaver, Planner Coordinator, Development Review Division EAU

Josh Penn, Senior Planner, Environmental Planning

Molline Smith, Senior Planner, Development Review Division (69)

APPLYING FOR:

Amendments to a Preliminary Plan, Final Forest Conservation Plan (FCP),

and Site Plan in response to a Forest Conservation Violation

PLAN NAME:

Potomac Crest

PLAN NUMBERS: 12002119A and 82003035A

REVIEW BASIS:

Chapter 50 and Chapter 59, Montgomery County Code, and Forest

Conservation Regulations, Section 113.A. (2), Regulation No. 1-01AM

(COMCOR) 18-01AM

ZONE:

R-90

LOCATION:

Located on Patriot Lane south of the intersection with Declaration Lane,

southwest of intersection of Declaration Lane and Seven Locks Road in

Potomac.

APPLICANT:

The Churchill Group

ATTORNEY:

Rebecca Walker

HEARING DATE: October 21, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: These amendments were initiated by two violations cited in October 2008 specifically documenting a failure to comply with Chapter 22A of the Forest Conservation Law. The violations consisted of the removal of a forest protection fence and encroachment into a Category I Forest Conservation Easement to accommodate the construction of an entrance monument.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Limited Amendment to Preliminary Plan #120021190 and associated Final Forest Conservation Plan and approval of the Limited Site Plan Amendment #82003035A, Potomac Crest, subject to the conditions at the conclusion of this report.

BACKGROUND

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan #120021190 "Potomac Crest", on January 9, 2003. Site Plan #820030350 was approved on July 10, 2003. The original approvals were for 21 lots on 9.1-acres of land in the R-90 zone. The property was subject to forest conservation law (Chapter 22A of the County Code) and a forest conservation plan (FCP) was required and previously approved.

The original approved FCP showed 5.82 acres of existing forest onsite, with 1.60 acres retained, and 4.22 acres cleared. The original FCP generated a 1.07 acre planting requirement. The subject property is currently in violation of the Category I conservation easement that was recorded to provide long-term protection for the retention and planting areas. The applicant has constructed an entrance monument partially within the Category I conservation easement. The Forest Conservation Inspector issued a Civil Citation (#DRD0000205) on January 7, 2009 for the encroachment (see Attachment A).

The applicant requests that the Planning Board revise the approval of the preliminary plan of subdivision, the forest conservation plan and the site plan to remove a portion of the conservation easement on the lot with appropriate compensation, so the entrance monument can remain in the same location. The proposed amendment is to remove 289 square feet of Category I conservation easement and to replace this easement by adding 600 square feet of wooded area into Category I conservation easement on site adjacent to forest retention area #3. The amendment to the site plan will reflect the location of entrance monument, the deletion of the entrance features and the revised forest conservation areas.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on Patriot Lane south of the intersection with Declaration Lane, which is southwest of the intersection of Declaration Lane and Seven Locks Road in Potomac. The subject site is a developed, 21-lot single family residential neighborhood. The site contains 1.91 acres of forested Category I conservation easement, 1.60 acres of retained forest and 0.31 acres of planting on-site.

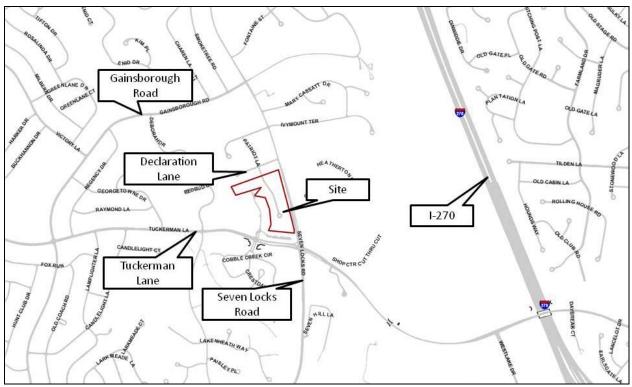


Figure 1: Vicinity Map



Figure 2: Entrance Monument: Red Flags are Approximate Easement Line

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW AUTHORITY

The Forest Conservation Regulations require Planning Board action on certain types of modifications to an approved FCP. Section 113.A.(1) of the Forest Conservation Regulation states:

Minor amendments which do not result in more than a total of 5000 square feet of additional forest clearing may be approved by the Planning Director on a case by case basis...

Although the total modification is below the 5000 square foot threshold, the Board has stated in other cases that the removal of, or change to, a recorded conservation easement warrants consideration in a public forum with a final decision from the Planning Board.

PRELIMINARY PLAN

Applicant's Proposal

On August 20, 2010 the applicant submitted an application proposing to amend Preliminary Plan of Subdivision and Forest Conservation Plan #120021190 by removing a portion of Category I conservation easement from Parcel A. The proposed amendment includes the removal of 289 square feet of previously forested Category I conservation easement. The area proposed for removal from the conservation easement is based on the area disturbed by the applicant to locate the monument. The amendment proposes 2:1 mitigation for area removed from the Category I easement. The applicant is proposing to compensate for the removal of 289 square feet of existing easement by placing an additional 600 square feet of existing forest in a Category I easement. The new easement area is adjacent to an existing easement and exceeds the 2:1 mitigation required. This in-kind mitigation provides compensation on the subject property which increases the overall easement area.

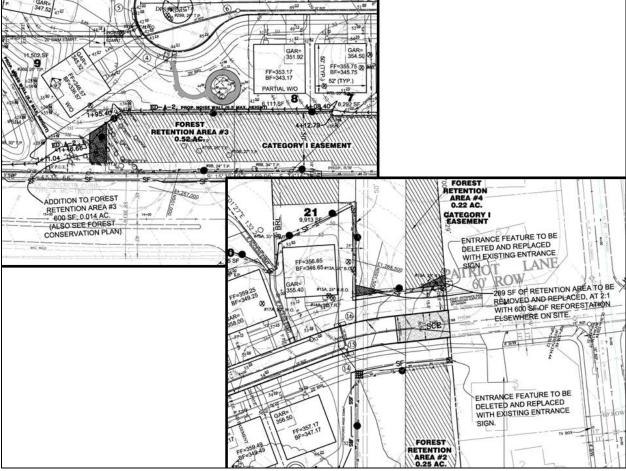


Figure 3: Proposed Easement Changes

REVIEW

Staff Analysis/Position

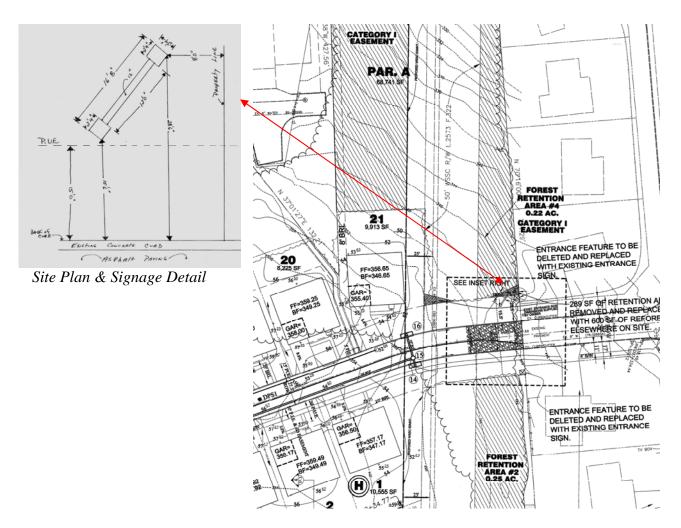
The limited amendment to the preliminary plan in this case is a retroactive process to resolve a violation and not a proactive attempt to bring the site into compliance. In this case, however, the applicant is proposing to mitigate for the encroachment onsite and in an area adjacent to an existing forest retention area. With a more than 2:1 mitigation ratio the development will have a net gain of Category I conservation easement and canopy coverage on-site. On-site mitigation is always preferable to off-site and, possibly, out of the watershed mitigation.

In summation, the more than 2:1 area of forest retention is reasonable mitigation and would provide additional protected canopy and forest onsite, above what was originally to be retained on the property. The provision of in-kind onsite compensation provides a net gain of the area of contiguous Category I conservation easement onsite and is justified.

SITE PLAN

The site plan amendment proposes to reconcile an as-built condition to include an existing entrance sign. Churchhill Reserve's main entrance sign is currently located on the west side of Patriot Lane; set back approximately 15.5 feet west of the existing curb and 8 feet south of the

property line. The overall dimensions of the sign are 16.6 feet long by 2 feet wide by 6.5 feet tall. This sign differs from the entrance features previously approved on the certified site plan, and it encroaches into a Forest Conservation Category I Easement, resulting in an encroachment of 289 square feet. The Applicant has accepted to a greater than 2:1 on-site mitigation agreeing to incorporate 600 square feet of existing forest into existing Forest Retention Area 3. No new construction is proposed on the actual grounds of the property. The proposed modifications will affect forest retention areas 3 and 4 on the Preliminary Plan, the Forest Conservation Plan and the Record Plat. These changes will be reflected on the revised Site Plan with specific regard to the total areas of the forest retention areas, the location of the main entrance sign, and the deletion of the entrance features currently shown on the certified Site Plan.



The proposed modifications to the site plan do not alter the overall design character of the development in relation to the original approval and the site remains compatible with existing and proposed development adjacent to the site. Despite the violation to the certified Site Plan, these modifications do not adversely impact the efficiency, adequacy, or safety of the site with respect to vehicular and pedestrian circulation, open space, landscaping, or lighting.

Notification and Outreach

The subject property was properly signed with notification of the upcoming preliminary plan amendment prior to the August 20, 2010 submission. Notice of the subject site plan amendment

was sent to all parties of record on October 14, 2008 giving 15 days for comments. Staff received one phone call regarding the name of the project. The caller was confused because the adjoining property to the south has the same name (Potomac Crest) as this application. The name of the subdivision is actually Churchill's Reserve; however, the project name and/or plat name assigned to this application is Potomac Crest. This community has no direct association with the adjacent communities to the north and south (Regency Estates and Potomac Crest).

Staff responded to the caller via a fax with further information on the site description and project summary (Appendix B). All adjoining and confronting property owners, civic associations, and other registered interested parties will be notified of the upcoming public hearing on these proposed amendments.

Recommendation: Preliminary Plan

Staff recommends approval of the Limited Amendment to the Preliminary Plan and associated Final Forest Conservation Plan with the following conditions:

- Applicant must record a new record plat within nine (9) months of the mailing of the Planning Board Resolution approving the limited amendment to the Preliminary Plan. The record plat must reference the standard Category I (liber 13178 folio 412) conservation easement as recorded in the Land Records for Montgomery County, Maryland.
- 2. All other conditions of Preliminary Plan and Forest Conservation Plan No. 120021190 that were not modified herein, as contained in the Planning Board's Resolution dated February 6, 2003, remain in full force and effect.

Recommendation: Site Plan

Staff recommends approval of Site Plan #82003035A. All site development elements shown on the site and landscape plans stamped "Received" by the M-NCPPC on September 27, 2010 are required except as modified by the following conditions.

Conformance with Previous Approvals

1. Preliminary Plan Conformance

The modifications proposed in this amendment must specifically comply with the conditions of approval for the Limited Preliminary Plan (12002119A) and Forest Conservation Plan; which include all references to the amended Final Forest Conservation Plan and Record Plat.

The overall development is still subject to the conditions of approval for preliminary plan 120021190 as listed in the Planning Board Resolution dated February 6, 2003. This includes but is not limited to all references to density, rights-of-way, dedications, transportation conditions, DPWT conditions, and DPS stormwater conditions.

2. Site Plan Conformance

The proposed development must comply with the conditions of approval for site plan 820030350 as listed in the Planning Board Resolution dated July 31, 2003, except as amended below.

Environment

3. Forest Conservation & Tree Save

The proposed development must comply with the conditions of the amended final forest conservation plan or tree save plan. The Applicant must satisfy all conditions prior to revising the plat(s).

4. Certified Site Plan

Prior to approval of the Certified Site Plan the following revisions must be made and/or information provided subject to Staff review and approval:

a. Include the revised final forest conservation approval, and site plan resolution on the approval or cover sheet.

APPENDICES

- A. Statement of Justification
- B. Citations & Correspondence
- C. Submitted Plans

Appendix A: Statement of Justification

MILES & STOCKBRIDGE P.C.

Rebecca D. Walker 301-517-4830 rwalker@milesstockbridge.com

October 5, 2010



VIA E-MAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Ms. Molline Smith
Development Review Division
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Potomac Crest Site Plan Amendment (82003035A) Preliminary Plan Amendment (120021190A)

Dear Ms. Smith:

Per your request, the following letter summarizes the history of the current plan amendments that are scheduled to be heard by the Planning Board on October 21, 2010. Should you have any questions, upon review of this correspondence, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In October 2008 the applicant submitted a request to amend the site plan for the property. On January 7, 2009 two civil citations were issued to Bill Wogatske, representative of the Churchill Group, regarding the alleged encroachment of a monument entrance sign into a Category One Forest Conservation Easement Area, the removal of a tree protection fence, and the failure to sign the maintenance agreement form. The alleged encroachment is approximately 289 square feet. The applicant's submittal in October 2008 addresses this issue.

The Applicant and their legal representatives met several times with Park and Planning legal staff, development review staff, and environmental planning staff to resolve the outstanding violations. On May 13, 2010 the final mitigation plans were submitted and eventually accepted by the environmental planning division staff. The discussions with staff resulted in the applicant retaining the monument sign and protecting an additional 600 square feet of existing forest, at a ratio of 2:1, in a Category One Forest Conservation Easement. The 600 square feet of existing forest will be added to an existing adjacent protected Category One Forest Conservation Easement. See attached plan.

As a result of the additional forest being protected, it is necessary for the applicant to submit a limited site plan and preliminary plan amendment to show the additional forest conservation area, as well as to re-plat the property to reflect the larger conservation easement area. See Plan Submittal Requirements for Minor, Consent Agenda and Limited Plan Amendments dated June 10, 2010 from Cathy Conlon attached hereto.

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Hopefully the foregoing proves helpful in the completion of your staff report.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rebecca D. Walker

cc: Kevin Mack, Dewberry

Bill Wogatske, Churchill Group

Cathy Conlon

Carol Rubin, Esquire

ND: 4818-2353-8695, v. 1

Appendix B: Citations & Correspondence

Smith, Molline

From:

Smith, Molline

Sent:

Wednesday, January 07, 2009 3:38 PM

To:

Kronenberg, Robert; Penn, Joshua; Pfefferle, Mark; Peck, Stephen

Subject:

Potomac Crest Meeting Notes

Just to recap the meeting this afternoon, please make corrections as needed.

<u>Project:</u> 82003035A Potomac Crest <u>Date/Time:</u> January 7, 2009 @ 2pm

In Attendance: Mark Pfefferle (Environmental Planning), Joshua Penn (Environmental Planning), Steven Peck (Site Inspector), Robert Kronenberg (Site Development), Molline Smith (Site Development), James R. Crawford (Engineer), and William J. Wogatske (Applicant).

Notes:

- A citation was issued to the applicant for the encroachment of a forest conservation area (category 1), the removal of a tree protection fence, and failure to sign the maintenance agreement form (an extra copy was provided at the meeting). The applicant refused to accept and/or sign any of the forms presented at this meeting.
- Discussion regarding new location of replacement plantings (300 square feet). The proposed replacement area (highlighted on the certified site plan, sheet 2 of 3), is located within an existing category 1 easement and will not be accepted. Environmental Planning requires a 2 to 1 area replacement. The suggested new area is located on the northeast side of the property (along Steven Locks Road), in between the existing SWM easement (PAR. C) and the forest retention area 3 (PAR D). The engineer agreed to survey this area noting existing trees (6" or above) and resubmit to Environmental Planning for a second review (possible 2 week turn around).
- Other issues discussed included landscape maintenance needed, and the removal of a utility pole. Applicant was in agreement with the removal of the utility pole.
- Staff expressed serious concern with regard to taking this amendment to the board prior to payment of the
 citation and full compliance with Environmental Planning. Assuming this happens and there are no further
 comments regarding the new submittal, Staff suggests a possible 4 week turn around to the Applicant.
- Site development review has been postponed until the applicant has paid the fine and/or is in full compliance with Environmental Planning.

Steve may we get a copy of the of citations issued? Thanks in advance.

Molline C. Smith, ASLA
(Senior Planner)

Development Review Department
MNCPPC-MC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 495-4573 Office
(301) 495-1306 Fax

Civil Citation

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Name Middle Company/Position: Address: Fax Number: Location and Description of Violation: Address/location of site: In violation of: ☐ Montgomery County Code, Chapter 59 Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A Approval of Forest Conservation Plan No. Civil Fine and Compliance: 1. (a) You shall pay a fine of \$ \.\ (date) and complete the remedial action listed below, if any, to avoid trial. (b) You shall pay a daily fine of \$ 25.00 if the original fine has not been paid and/or the remedial action has not been completed by dal of (date). The daily fine shall accrue until the original fine is paid and all remedial action is completed. until the remedial action listed below is completed. This fine shall be paid within 15 days of completion of 2. \(\subseteq \text{You shall pay a daily fine of \$ } all remedial action. Checks should be made payable to M-NCPPC and shall be paid during normal business hours at the Information Counter of M-NCPPC's Montgomery Regional Office located at 8787 Georgia Avenue, 2nd Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, 301-495-4610. Failure to comply with this citation may result in formal court action or issuance of additional citations including additional fines. You may also elect to stand trial. If you elect to stand trial, you must notify the M-NCPPC Office of the General Counsel, in writing, at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Suite 205, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, within 15 days of date of citation. The District Court will thereafter notify you of the trial date. Remedial Action: (date) 2.

You have violated Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code, and maybe subject to an Administrative Civil Penalty, which may include an additional monetary fine in addition to corrective measures. You must contact Environmental Planning Department of M-NCPPC at 8787 Georgia Avenue, 1st Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, 301-495-4540, within 15 days of issuance of this citation. Acknowledgement: I sign my name as a receipt of a copy of this Citation and not as an admission of guilt. I will comply with the requirements set forth in this Citation. I have a right to stand trial for the offense(s) charged. If I do not exercise my right to stand trial, I agree to entry by the court of judgment on affidavit for the amount of the fine. Date Defendant's Signature I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury, and upon personal knowledge or based on the affidavit, that the contents of this citation are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief and that I am competent to testify on these matters. The defendant is not now in the military service, as defined in the Soldier's and Sailor's Civil Relief Act of 1940 with amendments, nor has been in such service within thirty days hereof. Inspector's Signature

District Court to send notices to M-NCPPC, Office of the General Counsel, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Suite 205, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Phone number

Print name:

Civil Citation

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Name: Middle Company/Position: 02 Phone Number: Fax Number: Email Location and Description of Violation: Address/location of site: Pursuant to the M-NCPPC's authority under Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland and Chapter 50 of the Montgomery County Code, it is formally charged that the above named defendant on (date) at the stated site location did commit the following: that the above named defendant on (date) at the stated site location did commit the following: In violation of: Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A ☐ Montgomery County Code, Chapter 59 Forest Conservation Other: Civil Fine and Compliance: 1. (a) You shall pay a fine of \$ (date) and complete the remedial action listed below, if any, to avoid trial. 35.00 if the original fine has not been paid and/or the remedial action has not been completed by (b) X You shall pay a daily fine of \$ (date). The daily fine shall accrue until the original fine is paid and all remedial action is completed. 2.

You shall pay a daily fine of \$ until the remedial action listed below is completed. This fine shall be paid within 15 days of completion of all remedial action. Checks should be made payable to M-NCPPC and shall be paid during normal business hours at the Information Counter of M-NCPPC's Montgomery Regional Office located at 8787 Georgia Avenue, 2nd Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, 301-495-4610. Failure to comply with this citation may result in formal court action or issuance of additional citations including additional fines. You may also elect to stand trial. If you elect to stand trial, you must notify the M-NCPPC Office of the General Counsel, in writing, at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Suite 205, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, within 15 days of date of citation. The District Court will thereafter notify you of the trial date. Remedial Action: by: (date) 2.

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District Court to send notices to M-NCPPC, Office of the General Counsel, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Suite 205, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Phone number

Inspector's Signature Print name:

Appendix C: Submitted Plans

