



Pre-Preliminary Plan, 720120030: Trotters Glen

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Staff Report Date: September 13, 2012

Description

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A request for Planning Board direction regarding Master Plan conformance. 176.54 acres; RNC Zone; located on both sides of Batchellors Forest Road, approximately 1000 feet east of Georgia Avenue; Olney Master Plan.

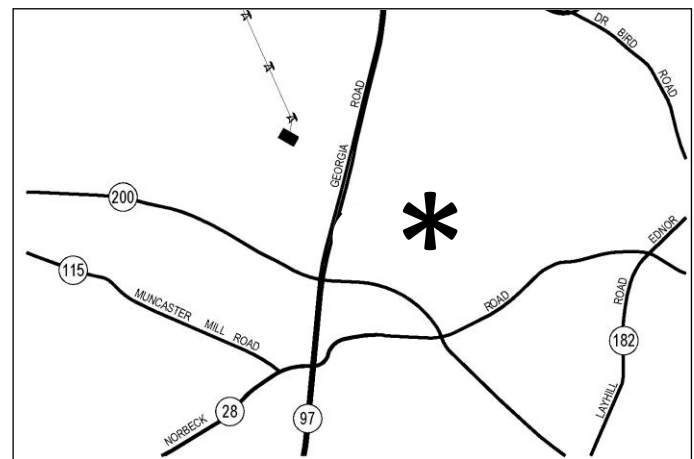
Submittal Date: February 22, 2012

Applicant: Tom Mateya for Toll Brothers, Inc.

Review Basis: Chapter 50

Staff Recommendation: No opposition to the submission of a preliminary plan.

Summary



Prior to submitting a Preliminary Plan, the Applicant seeks non-binding advice on the following items:

- Interpretation of the Olney Master Plan on various issues
 - Should new houses access both Batchellors Forest Rd and Emory Church Rd
 - Is the proposed layout clustering development on the north eastern portion of the property allowing for gravity sewer service to the existing sewer mains
 - Is the provided open space adequately sized and located
 - Protection of the Rustic Road Characteristics
- The appropriateness of making a roadway connection between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road
 - Existing 30' right-of-way for Emory Church to connect with Batchellors Forest
 - May encourage non-local trips on Batchellors Forest, which is a designated Rustic Road
 - Lack of a connection may bifurcate the community, depending on Master Plan interpretation
- Issues requiring Planning Board advice or comment are **in bold** throughout this report.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located along both sides of Batchellors Forest Road, approximately 1,000 feet east of the intersection with Georgia Avenue and is approximately 176.54 acres and zoned RNC, ("Property" or "Subject Property"). It is within the southeast quadrant of the Olney Master Plan area ("Master Plan"). Currently, the site is improved with the Trotters Glen Golf Course, a single family dwelling, a bed and breakfast dwelling and numerous buildings associated with the golf course operation (figure 1). The surrounding land uses are mostly single family detached dwellings on large lots within the RE-2 or RC zone.

The Subject Property is mostly cleared for the golf course use but retains small areas of existing forest in the northeastern, northwestern and southeastern edges, associated with streams and wetland areas. There is a pond and stream in the south central portion of the Property that was a feature of the golf course and has minimal vegetation around it. The terrain of the Property is that of rolling hills, with the highest elevations in the west central portion of the Property near the existing single family dwelling, sloping to the west, south and east into separate stream valleys, (figure 2). The Subject Property is in the Batchellors Forest tributary of the Northwest Branch watershed, which is a use IV-P watershed.

Figure 1



PROPOSAL

Pre-Preliminary Plan No. 720120030–Trotters Glen (“Application”) was submitted to seek advice from the Planning Board on certain issues pertaining to the interpretation and conformance with the Master Plan and the RNC zone, and whether or not there should be a vehicle connection between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road made through this Property.

The Applicant has prepared the pre-preliminary plan drawings to illustrate how the Property might be configured and how access can be provided. Under the RNC zoning the 175.4 acre Property has a recommended density of 0.33 units per acre in the Olney Master Plan. The base density yields 57 lots but the Applicant proposes to provide 15% of the units as Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU’s) to achieve a 22% density bonus. This will yield 59 market rate lots and 10 MPDU’s all of which will be clustered on 42.76 acres of the 176 acre Property. The MPDU’s for this plan are shown as duplex units rather than townhouse units. The area of road dedications account for another 14.43 acres and the remaining 114.95 acres (65.5%) is shown as open space. All of the lots as shown will access the existing sewer main that traverses the Property in the far northeastern corner. Some lots may require a pressure sewer to reach the existing gravity sewer. (Attachment A).

The layout indicates the Applicant’s preference that all of the lots should use Batchellors Forest Road as their means of access to the larger local roads. There are no lots that access Emory Church Road and there is no proposed road connection that links Batchellors Forest Road to Emory Church Road. Fifty-seven of the lots, including the 15 acre lot for the existing house, are located on the north side of Batchellors Forest Road and 12 lots are located on the south side of the road. Two new public streets will provide access for all lots except that the existing house will continue to use a private driveway.

Vicinity Map



DISCUSSION

Rural Neighborhood Cluster Zone

The purpose of the RNC zone is described in Chapter 59-C-9.23.1 of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

The intent of the Rural Neighborhood Cluster zone is to preserve open land, environmentally sensitive natural resources and rural community character that would be lost under conventional, large-lot development. This would be accomplished by requiring clusters of residential development in the form of small neighborhoods that provide neighborhood identity in an open space setting.

It is further the intent of this zone to implement the recommendations of the relevant master plan, such as maintaining broad vistas of open space, preserving agrarian character or preserving environmentally sensitive natural resources to the maximum extent possible, and to ensure that new development is in harmony with the policies and guidelines of the relevant master plan and is compatible with existing development in adjoining communities.

There are also specific development requirements in the RNC zone with optional method of development, set forth in Chapter 59-C-9.574 including a diversity of lot sizes, a diversity of house sizes, providing common open space, connections to public water and sewer, and the provision of rural open space, comprising 65-85% of the total tract area. Under the optional method, lot sizes may be as small as 4,000 square feet for detached units and 3,500 square feet for semi-detached (duplex) units.

The Application is in general compliance with the intent and development standards of the RNC zone. The Application will place 114.93 acres of land in to rural open space, which represents 65.5% of the total tract area; just above the minimum 65% required by the RNC Zone. The proposed rural open space is well dispersed throughout the Subject Property, including environmental buffers, landscaping buffers and the 15 acre conservancy lot. The southern half of the Property contains a very large rural open space parcel and at this time it is envisioned as a recreational amenity for the residents of the community through a network of trails, most of which are pre-existing golf cart trails. There are a variety of lot sizes being proposed with this Application. The remaining 68 lots range in size between 7,000 square feet for the smallest MPDU lot, to 99,900 square feet (2.29 acres) for the largest one-family detached lot. The MPDU lots range in size between 7,000 and 11,100 square feet, and are distributed throughout the community, with MPDU units located on both sides of Batchellors Forest Road. The table below shows the distribution of lot sizes. The variation in lots sizes for this development is consistent with other RNC developments in the southeast Olney area.

Table 1
 Lot Size Range and Number of Lots

Lot Size Range	Number of Lots
7,000 to 10,999	8
11,000 to 14,999	2
15,000 to 18,999	5
19,000 to 22,999	12
23,000 to 26,999	18
27,000 to 30,999	9
31,000 to 34,999	4
35,000 to 38,999	3
39,000 and larger	7
15-acre Conservancy Lot	1
Total	69 lots

Staff believes that there are additional opportunities to increase open space, but not to any significant degree. As discussed later in this report, there are areas on the plan that should have landscape buffers, and these areas are most appropriately placed into open space, where the landscaping is under homeowner’s association control rather than on private lots. This will increase the open space percentages slightly. The Application proposes 65.5% open space which is just above the minimum required for the zone and slightly less than that provided in with other RNC developments in southeast Olney. (Stanmore - 67%, Batchellors Forest – 70.5%, Olney Estates – 71.92%)

Olney Master Plan

As previously stated, the Applicant is seeking advice from the Planning Board on how the Application complies with the recommendations in the Master Plan and other transportation related issues. The Olney Master Plan contains both *area wide* recommendations that indirectly pertain to the Subject Property and other *site specific* recommendations about the Subject Property. Many of the recommendations in the Master Plan overlap one another but they all tend to share common themes of promoting low density rural residential development, cluster development, enhance the rural character, provide substantial open space, and to protect water quality and forest resources. The protection of Batchellors Forest Road by using various means through appropriately locating new homes and to screen them from views is a common theme repeated throughout the Master Plan.

The Master Plan area is broken into four quadrants that are defined by the intersection of Georgia Avenue (MD 97) and MD 108 in the Town Center of Olney. The Master Plan introduces the southeastern Olney area as a “transitional agricultural area”, and states that the “focus is on low-density character and open space along stream valleys that form the headwaters of the Northwest Branch.”

The Master Plan recommended that specific properties in southeast Olney be zoned RNC, with properties greater than 10 acres in size included in the sewer service envelope with a maximum density of 0.33 units per acre. The Master Plan also designated Batchellors Forest Road as a rustic road for the purpose of “precluding any change or improvement that may alter the character of the road”. The RNC zone was carefully analyzed for impacts to this area and was deemed the appropriate zone to achieve these goals.

Following is the Master Plan language that indirectly pertains to the Subject Property and a brief staff response on how the plan addresses that recommendation:

Southeast Quadrant (Attachment A)

- 1) Preserve open space, stream, significant forest, and the low-density character of the Southeast Quadrant through cluster development, on community sewer where appropriate.

Staff Response: The Olney Master Plan placed the Property in the RNC zone and allowed connections to public water and sewer only if the optional method of clustering development were used. The Application does protect the environmental resources and character by minimizing development to less than 35% of the land area and providing 65% of the site in open space.

- 2) Promote a zoning pattern that does not require off-site extensions of sewer mains in the stream valleys of Batchellors Forest tributary.

Staff Response: The Application has located development in such a way to avoid off-site sewer main extensions and connect to the existing sewer main in the northeastern corner of the Property. However, some disturbance within stream buffers required to reach the existing sewer mains on the Property was recognized by the Master Plan as necessary.

- 3) Preserve forest in and around stream valleys of the Batchellors Forest tributary of Northwest Branch on existing residential properties using forest conservation easement and land banking.

Staff Response: This recommendation actually applies to “existing” residential properties, however, for this proposed residential property, forest will be protected in all stream buffers on the Property with the exception of the sewer laterals discussed above. Land (or forest) banking is an option for the Applicant but there is no forest conservation plan submitted at this stage of the review to help refine where this is likely to occur.

- 4) Rezone all existing LDRC properties to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.2 units per acre. Delete the current LDRC Zone from the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff Response: This recommendation is not an issue for this Applicant.

- 5) Restore forested stream valleys and wetlands on properties as they redevelop.

Staff Response: The Applicant is aware of the forest conservation requirements to afforest all stream valley buffers including wetlands. Forest conservation will be analyzed at the time of preliminary

plan with the submission of a forest conservation plan but staff is confident that all forest conservation requirements can be met on site. Forest banking is also an option for this Applicant.

- 6) Connect properties in the quadrant with bikeways, walkways and park trails to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, school, and other facilities.

Staff Response: The Bikeways section of the Master Plan identifies three sections of bike path that abut this Property, B-1 on Batchellors Forest and B-12 and B-13 on Emory Church Road. B-1 is designated as a *Shared Road* path to be located within Batchellors Forest Road and extend from the Emory Church Road right-of-way to Dr. Bird Road to the north. B-12 is a *Shared Road* path that is to be located on the paved section of Emory Church Road between Georgia Avenue to the end of the pavement for the road. (Staff believes that the public street pavement ends at the intersection of Emory Church Road and Norbrook Drive). A preliminary plan submission by this Applicant will need to identify a *Shared Road* bike path within the Emory Church Road pavement along the Property frontage.¹ A *Shared Road* path will only require the Applicant to be responsible for placing appropriate signage to designate the roadway as having a shared bicycle use. B-13 is a *Share Use* path that is to be located within the unpaved Emory Church Road wide right-of-way that begins at the intersection with Norbrook Road and continues to the east ending at Batchellors Forest Road where it connects to B-1 as described above.

B-13 would be a new paved path between 8 and 10 feet wide, and is recommended by the Master Plan to be located within the unpaved 30 foot wide right-of-way of Emory Church Road. The Master Plan makes no recommendation as to whether Emory Church Road should be completed as a public street from Norbrook Drive to Batchellors Forest Road but only recommends that the B-13 path should constructed there. The existing unpaved right-of-way is located within a few feet of a stream and runs with the stream down to the Batchellors Forest tributary. The recommended Master Plan alignment for B-13 would place the path within 40 feet of this small stream for its entire length and the path would then need to be bridged over the mainstem of the Batchellors Forest Run (stream) to reach Batchellors Forest Road and connect to B-1. The small unnamed stream that would be greatly affected by this path was in all likelihood not identified in the Master Plan discussions. The stream's existence and the concern about the potential impacts of the B-13 path became evident during the review of this Application. Staff understands that the use of the 30 foot wide right-of-way is a convenient and efficient alignment for the path, but with no plans to expand or improve this right-of-way as a public road, it seems there is a better alignment for B-13 and B-1 that avoids impact to the small stream and avoids the need to bridge the Batchellors Forest Run.

The Application shows an 8 foot "bike and pedestrian connection" through the Property along Public Road B that connects Emory Church Road with Batchellors Forest Road running with proposed Public Road B. This alternative alignment provides the same function as the Master Plan alignment but in a more environmentally responsible manner. At the intersection of Public Road B with Batchellors Forest Road, this Shared Use path would end; however, the Master Plan recommends that B-13 connect to B-1 on Batchellors Forest Road. To meet this Master Plan goal, B-1 would need to be extended further south on Batchellors Forest to make this connection. **Staff recommends that the**

¹ Staff has suggested that it might be more appropriate to require the Applicant to build an off road bike path within their dedicated right-of-way for Emory Church Road to terminate at the Graefe Property for eventual connection to Olney Manor Park. This is discussed later in this report.

Planning Board support an alternative alignment for the B-13/B-1 bike paths that avoids stream impacts but provides the same function that the Master Plan alignment was designed to do.

- 7) Determine the exact amount and configuration of open space to be preserved on each property at the subdivision stage.

Staff Response: This Application provides 65.5% of the site in open space which meets the minimum requirement of the RNC zone (65%). Although the Application protects the areas specified in the Master Plan, Staff believes the additional landscaping areas are needed and that this will increase the amount of open space. **Staff recommends additional open space area to accommodate landscaping along the rear of Lots 1, 4, 6 and 7 on the south side of Batchellors Forest Road for landscape buffering of the homes on these lots.**

- 8) Protect the rustic road character of Batchellors Forest Road by using topography, clustering of houses away from the road, and landscaping to preclude, or minimize, the visibility of new development from Batchellors Forest Road.

Staff Response: The Application has used setbacks, topography, and the clustering of homes to minimize views from both Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road. The Plan has sufficient areas to locate landscaping to further reduce the visibility of new homes. Landscaping will be addressed in detail at the time of site plan.

The Olney Master Plan provides the following Design Guidelines to be implemented as each RNC property developed:

Design Guidelines in the Southeast Quadrant (Attachment B)

- 1) Cluster new houses away from sensitive areas.

Staff Response: Application generally satisfies this requirement.

- 2) Minimize the fragmentation of forest by preserving contiguous forest areas covering more than one property.

Staff Response: The Application can satisfy this requirement at the time of preliminary plan.

- 3) Minimize new driveway entrances on Batchellors Forest Road to preserve its rustic character.

Staff Response: The Application has been revised to reduce driveway entrances on to Batchellors Forest Road from three to one (for the existing house). However, there are two new road connections and they will be reviewed in detail at the time of preliminary plan.

- 4) Design connections of new access roads to Batchellors Forest Road to be respectful of the rustic character of the road.

Staff Response: In the initial submissions by the Applicant, the access to the community using Public Road B was shown at one of the 90 degree curves in the road, effectively creating a "T" shape intersection. Meetings with the Applicant and Montgomery County Department of Transportation ("MCDOT") led to shifting the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and Public Road B south, by approximately 150 feet in an attempt to protect the integrity of the curve and the viewshed into the stream valley buffer as one travels north on Batchellors Forest Road towards this curve. The

Applicant was also willing to reconfigure the number and layout of the 12 lots that are now shown on the south and east side of Batchellors Forest Road. An open space parcel is now located right at the 90 degree bend which helps buffer the lots. By eliminating lots that directly front on to Batchellors Forest Road, driveways have been reduced. Staff believes that there is the need for additional landscape treatment within this area.



5) For properties along Georgia Avenue, provide a green buffer of at least 100 feet outside the master plan right-of-way, to screen views of houses from the road.

Staff Response: This recommendation does not apply to this Property.

6) Preserve exceptional vistas of open fields on larger properties from Batchellors Forest Road, especially on the Casey, Hyde and Polinger properties by clustering homes in such a way that they are not visible from the road. If that is not feasible, use landscaping techniques to screen houses from the road.

Staff Response: Staff believes that this Application generally addresses the protection of the most outstanding views on to the Property. New homes will however, be visible from the surrounding roads, including Batchellors Forest and Emory Church Road. Landscaping will need to be placed in

such a way to minimize the visual impacts but landscaping detail is most appropriately addressed at the time of site plan. The local residents are aware of this requirement and are very interested in working with Staff and the Applicant to devise a mutually agreeable landscape plan.

In addition to the area-wide recommendations, the Master Plan contains recommendations specific to the Polinger Property:

Polinger Property (Attachment C)

- 1) Rezone the Polinger property from RE-2 to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre.

Staff Response: This is has been accomplished.

- 2) Cluster development on the northeastern portion of the property, away from the stream valley to the south, to allow for gravity sewer service to the existing sewer mains which traverse the property near the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and the Emory Church Road right-of-way, eliminating the need for an off-site sewer main extension along the tributary stream valley originating at the Lockwood property.

Staff Response: The Application clusters development on the northeastern portion of the Property and away from the stream valley to the south. This allows the lots to take advantage of the gravity sewer main that traverses the Property near the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road right-of-way. This avoids the need for an off-site sewer main extension along the tributary stream valley originating at the Lockwood property to the south of the Subject Property. The 15 acre conservancy lot will remain on a septic system.

The northeastern corner of the Subject Property is encumbered with stream valley buffers, wetland buffers and forest, prohibiting development in that area. The southern portion of the Property, labeled as Rural Open Space Parcel B, is being left undeveloped. This portion of the Property could not be serviced by the existing identified sewer connection, and will be maintained as a large open space amenity for the new residents including the utilization of the old golf cart trails for a pedestrian trail network.

Staff believes the Applicant has sufficiently complied with the Master Plan recommendation for clustering development in the northern and eastern portion of the Subject Property while avoiding environmentally sensitive areas and protecting view sheds along Batchellors Forest Road. Staff also believes the layout provides sufficient protection to the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road, as described in the previous discussion about Batchellors Forest Road and its Rustic Road designation. Staff and the Applicant will explore the ability to provide additional open space, especially on the south side of the two 90 degree curves to allow screening to be planted and maintained by the homeowners association.

- 3) Preserve the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road and the existing vistas on this property through careful placement of housing clusters in appropriate locations and other techniques.

Staff Response: The issue has been addressed by the Application and discussed in preceding sections. Again, Staff generally believes that development on this Property is properly located to protect the character and the vistas along Batchellors Forest Road as well as Emory Church Road.

- 4) Provide a pedestrian path between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road through the property.

Staff Response: Application shows a connection through the site. The preliminary plan and site plan will refine the pathway systems.

- 5) Provide a bike and pedestrian connection from any redevelopment on the Polinger property to the Olney Manor Park.

Staff Response: The Subject Property does not physically abut the Olney Manor Park but it does abut one of two properties (Graefe) that are recommended to be acquired and added to the Olney Manor Park. The Applicant must dedicate right-of-way along Emory Church Road from the western Property boundary to Norbrook Drive. Typical frontage improvements require a sidewalk to be constructed within the right-of-way, however, rather than build a separate sidewalk and have a Shared Road path (B-12) in the pavement, Staff believes it is more efficient to consider one, 8 to 10 foot wide off-road bike path that would connect to the B-13 path and terminate at the common property line between the Graefe Property and the Subject Property. This path would provide an easy connection into the Park when the Graefe property is acquired for Park purposes. While the removal of roadside trees is an issue for any construction, Staff believes that the most appropriate location for a Master Plan recommended pedestrian and bicycle connection to the Park would be within dedicated right-of-way. Other locations for a path along the western property line abutting the Graefe property would require stream crossings and bisect forest. It is Staff's opinion that placing a bike path on the south side of Emory Church Road will efficiently connect to the B-13 path; provide an accessible path for existing and proposed residents to eventually reach the Park, and that it is environmentally sound location. The decision to make this change to the Master Plan recommended B-12 Shared Road path must have Planning Board support. **Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Board support further investigation into an alternative to the Shared Road path (B-12) that uses the dedicated right-of-way for Emory Church Road to provide the recommended bike and pedestrian connection to Olney Manor Park.**

- 6) Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into naturalized wetland areas where appropriate.

Staff Response: The Applicant is interested in maintaining the largest existing golf course pond as an amenity to the open space. The ability to leave the pond and allow it to become a naturalized wetland is subject to review by County and State agencies who must determine the integrity of the dam for dam safety purposes. If the pond(s) is allowed to remain, required maintenance of the dam to avoid tree roots from damaging the core of the dam may be counter to the Master Plan goal of allowing it to revert to a natural state.

- 7) Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into stormwater management facilities (e.g., upland isolated ponds).

Staff Response: With the adoption of the new stormwater management regulations for Environmentally Sensitive Design, the use of the pond(s) for stormwater management is not likely.

- 8) Require the applicant to reforest all stream valleys on the property as part of redevelopment. If such reforestation exceeds the minimum standards required under the Forest Conservation Law, encourage the use of forest "banking."

Staff Response: The Applicant understands that all stream valley buffers must be reforested and that there is an option to establish forest banks for forest that exceeds the minimum standards. Issue to be fully addressed with the review of forest conservation plans.

Other Issues to be discussed

- Should the proposed subdivision provide a public street connection that allows vehicles within the community and from outside the community to drive from Batchellors Forest to Emory Church Road?

In the interest of creating good neighborhoods that are interconnected and to provide alternatives for vehicular access, Staff questioned if the project should or should not have a public street that provided a connection through the Property linking Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road. It was soon understood that such a connection had positives and negatives and this resulted in considerable Staff debate. The single most compelling reason to provide such a connection is that the intersection of Emory Church Road and Georgia Avenue operates much more efficiently than the Batchellors Forest Road/Georgia Avenue intersection which requires a right out only on to northbound Georgia Avenue and U-turn at Emory Road to travel southbound on Georgia Avenue. However, any positives for placing additional traffic on Emory Church Road was tempered by the fact that Emory Church is a substandard road with insufficient right-of-way and an almost, rustic character of its own that was brought to light as part of the Wheaton Baptist Church application. It should also be noted that the Olney Master Plan does not specifically recommend for such a connection and the Applicant does not support such a connection through the development yet, the option was explored in detail and was a significant reason that the Applicant asked for this Application to come to the Planning Board for advice.

To briefly conclude what was a long debate, **Staff does not support a through-street connection between Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road.** This decision was made after two significant pieces of information became available to Staff:

- 1) The traffic that would be generated by the development of the RNC zoned properties in the southeast Olney quadrant was carefully analyzed during the Master Plan update process in 2004 through 2006. In reading the worksession documents, it is clear to Staff that Batchellors Forest Road was to be *the road* that provided access for the southeast Olney properties, and that it was imperative that the additional traffic created by the proposed zoning densities would not push traffic to exceed 3,000 trips per day on Batchellors Forest Road as was the established maximum for a rustic road. The traffic studies done at that time indicated that the zoning densities would not cause traffic to exceed this level. Note that at no time did the traffic studies anticipate a connection with Emory Church Road that would possibly alter traffic levels by adding non-local traffic.
- 2) The Applicant's traffic consultant concluded that such a connection of Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road would likely invite additional non-local trips to use this route, mostly in the morning peak hour. While it is difficult to precisely forecast how users might choose, the consultant concludes that even if 10% of the non-local trips that currently use Old Baltimore Road to travel from MD 108 to southbound Georgia Avenue in the morning were to use this new route, the number of daily trips on Batchellors Forest Road would easily exceed 3,000.

- Should new homes have access to both Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road?

The Master Plan provides a general suggestion in the discussion of the Polinger Property that, “Access to new houses should be provided to both Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road.” This statement is not a specific recommendation but must be recognized as guidance. The current layout proposed by the Applicant has all of the new homes with vehicular access to Batchellors Forest Road, but with bicycle/pedestrian and emergency vehicle access shown onto Emory Church Roads. This issue relates directly to the earlier discussion on whether to connect Batchellors Forest and Emory Church Roads with a vehicular connection or leave the two roads separated. If a road connection were to be provided, access to both roads for new homes would be accommodated by default. However, Staff does not support the road connection; the Applicant does not wish to create a bifurcated community that has homes within the subdivision with no local street connections.

Staff does not believe that the lack of homes with access to Emory Church Road puts the plan into nonconformance with the Master Plan and at the same time, Staff is not overly concerned with a community that is bifurcated. Staff understands that Batchellors Forest Road has sufficient capacity to carry the additional trips generated by this Application and this traffic issue was studied when the Master Plan was being updated. It is possible to front a number of lots on to Emory Church Road and to extend a public street on to Emory Church Road with numerous homes. At some point, however, the additional traffic that is placed on Emory Church Road will require upgrades to that road to bring it up to full standards and this may require acquisition of right-of-way from residential lot owners along that road. The change to the character of Emory Church Road, again, was a significant community issue when the Wheaton Baptist Church application was reviewed.

Staff does not oppose the layout of the subdivision showing access to all homes on Batchellors Forest. If the Planning Board wishes to explore placing some lots on to Emory Church Road, strong pedestrian and bicycle linkages between the two sections of the subdivision could attenuate the effect of bifurcation. **The Planning Board should provide advice as to whether it would be desirable to place a number of units with access on to Emory Church Road.**

Community Outreach

Staff met with members of South East Rural Olney Civic Association (SEROCA) on two separate occasions to discuss this Application. The members will provide a position paper on the Plan, however, they have trouble with the traffic, the safety of the Batchellors Forest Road, and the views of new homes from their homes and the roadways. The members are aware that this plan is a pre-application but they are proactive in working with the Applicant who has also had numerous meetings with the group. Staff anticipates receiving correspondence from SEROCA prior to the hearing on this Application.

Attachments:

- A. Master Plan Southeast Quadrant
- B. Master Plan Design Guidelines and Specific Property Recommendations
- C. Master Plan Polinger Property

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

The 1980 Master Plan envisioned the Southeast Quadrant of Olney as a transitional agricultural area. It gave the property owners the option to develop on community water and septic in the RE-2 Zone, or rezone to five-acre densities (RC or LDRC) on community water and sewer if feasible. Some properties have utilized the sewer/cluster option and the area today is a mix of RE-2, RC and LDRC Zones. Over the past 20 years, it has become less agricultural and some of the remaining large properties are being planned for residential development.

Batchellors Forest Road—the only through road in this quadrant—is a two-lane road with 90-degree turns, narrow pavement, and constrained right-of-way with limited sight lines around sharp curves and trees. In 1996, it was designated as an Interim Rustic Road by the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan. Despite some gaps along its entire stretch, this road has visual character and other attributes to qualify it as a Rustic Road and should be designated as such, precluding any change or improvement that may alter the character of the road (see the Transportation Chapter for more detailed discussion and recommendations).

The Southeast Quadrant contains significant environmental resources including the headwaters of the Northwest Branch. Most of the larger parcels along the stream valleys have already been subdivided and developed. The remaining vacant and redevelopable large parcels are scattered along Batchellors Forest Road, precluding the possibility of a large contiguous open space system in public ownership if park dedication were proposed on future subdivisions. The significant green infrastructure in this area should therefore be protected through conservation easements on key resource areas, especially along streams. This open space will remain in private ownership, with additional stewardship provided by private land trusts, such as the Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc., private landowners, and public conservation easements.

In the Southeast Quadrant, existing sewer lines should be used to cluster development and save large areas of forest along streams and headwaters. New sewer lines should not be extended along tributaries in the western portion of the Batchellors Forest tributary above the Intercounty Connector (ICC) right-of-way because environmental benefits would not outweigh the potential impacts to the stream.

A low-density cluster method of development is the best way to establish the green infrastructure and preserve headwaters and significant forests in this area. Some of the redevelopable properties are located near the existing sewer line in the Batchellors Forest tributary stream valley and should be allowed to receive community sewer service if deemed appropriate by the County Council. Those that require disturbance of stream buffers for anything other than lateral connections are not recommended for zoning requiring community sewer service.

All properties of more than five acres currently zoned RE-2 in this quadrant should be rezoned to RNC. Properties of more than 10 acres within the recommended community sewer service envelope (see the Implementation Chapter) should be allowed to develop at a maximum of 0.33 units per acre on community sewer. Larger properties and

assemblages that produce 20 or more units will be required to provide MPDUs at 12.5 percent of the total units pursuant to the MPDU law. If these properties are subject to the MPDU law, 0.33 units per acre would be considered the base density, which can be increased to a maximum density of 0.4 units per acre if 22 percent bonus density is achieved for providing 15 percent MPDUs in accordance with Section 25-A of the County Code. Properties outside the recommended sewer envelope should develop on community water and septic with 0.2 units per acre.

Recommendations for specific properties are included in the Specific Properties section in this chapter.

The four LDRC zoned areas should be rezoned to RNC on community sewer with no more than 0.2 units per acre. The LDRC Zone was created for the Southeast Quadrant and exists only in this area. Rezoning the current LDRC properties to RNC would allow removal of the zone from the Zoning Ordinance. The Plan proposes a zoning text amendment (see Implementation Chapter) to grandfather the existing properties already developed under the LDRC Zone as conforming uses. Any significant expansion or redevelopment of these properties would have to follow the RNC Zone requirements.

Recommendations:

- 1. Preserve open space, streams, significant forests, and the low-density character of the Southeast Quadrant through cluster development, on community sewer where appropriate.**
- 2. Promote a zoning pattern that does not require off-site extensions of sewer mains in the stream valleys of Batchellors Forest tributary.**
- 3. Preserve forest in and around the stream valleys of the Batchellors Forest tributary of Northwest Branch on existing residential properties using forest conservation easements and land banking.**
- 4. Rezone all existing LDRC properties to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.2 units per acre. Delete the current LDRC Zone from the Zoning Ordinance.**
- 5. Restore forested stream buffers and wetlands on properties as they redevelop.**
- 6. Connect properties in the quadrant with bikeways, walkways and park trails to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, schools, and other facilities.**
- 7. Determine the exact amount and configuration of open space to be preserved on each property at the subdivision stage.**
- 8. Protect the rustic road character of Batchellors Forest Road by using topography, clustering of houses away from the road, and landscaping to preclude, or minimize, the visibility of new developments from Batchellors Forest Road.**

Design Guidelines for all RNC properties in the Southeast Quadrant

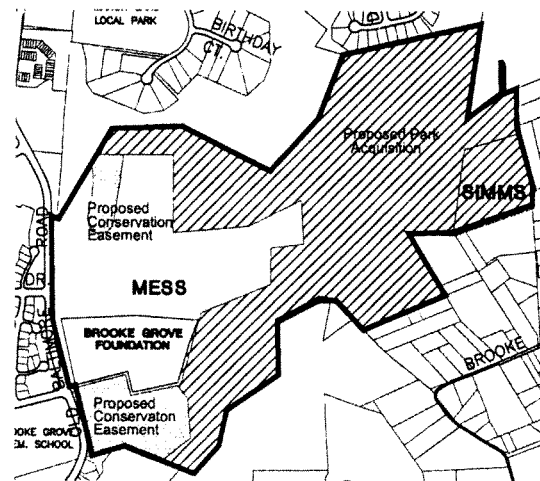
The following design guidelines are proposed for all properties recommended for the RNC Zone.

1. Cluster new houses away from sensitive areas.
2. Minimize the fragmentation of forest by preserving contiguous forest areas covering more than one property.
3. Minimize new driveway entrances on Batchellors Forest Road to preserve its rustic character.
4. Design connections of new access roads to Batchellors Forest Road to be respectful of the rustic character of the road.
5. For properties along Georgia Avenue, provide a green buffer of at least 100 feet, outside the master plan right-of-way, to screen views of houses from the road.
6. Preserve exceptional vistas of open fields on larger properties from Batchellors Forest Road, especially on the Casey, Hyde and Polinger properties by clustering homes in such a way that they are not visible from the road. If that is not feasible, use landscaping techniques to screen houses from the road.

SPECIFIC PROPERTY RECOMMENDATIONS

#1 Mess and Other Properties

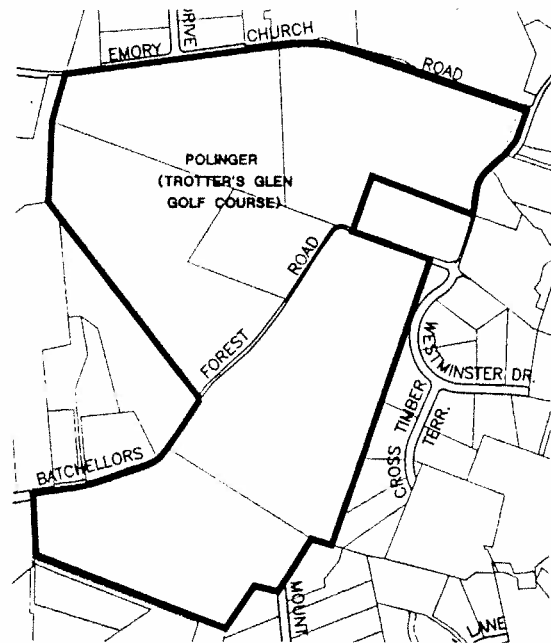
The 204-acre Mess property, the 15.8-acre Brooke Grove Foundation property within the Mess property, and the 10.6-acre Simms property at the eastern edge of the Mess property, are in the Hawlings River watershed. They are currently zoned RE-2 on community water and septic in the 1980 Master Plan. The Brooke Grove Foundation property, which is developed with an assisted living facility, has sewer as an institutional use. The Mess property has a sewer line running through it, which serves the Dellabrooke subdivision to the northeast of this property.



The eastern portion of the Mess property and all of the Simms property are included on the Legacy Open Space list of water supply protection and natural resource properties because of their high quality forest resources. The Mess property can absorb all of its potential development on its unforested portion if clustered on community water and sewer. The Simms property cannot be connected to a sewer system by gravity, and any development on this property would fragment the large forest stand. The forested portion of the Mess property should be preserved through land dedication during the subdivision process and the Simms property should be acquired, through dedication or purchase, and kept undisturbed as parkland. Parkland on these properties should provide needed trail linkages in the larger Rachel Carson Greenway.

#8 Polinger Property

This property comprises five parcels on both sides of Batchellors Forest Road and totals approximately 176 acres. It is currently zoned RE-2 and is mostly open land with a golf course (Trotters Glen Golf Course), a residence, and a bed-and-breakfast near the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and the unimproved right-of-way of Emory Church Road. The Batchellors Forest tributary of the Northwest Branch stream system runs through the lower portion of the property; the environmental buffer area is currently part of the golf course. There is a small forest on the northeastern part of the property. It is eligible for sewer under the 1980 Plan if it were rezoned to LDRC, which would allow a maximum density of one unit per five acres. The northeastern portion of the property can be sewered by gravity to the existing sewer main in the Batchellors Forest tributary.



A septic large-lot development on this property would negatively impact the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road and the open space in the Southeast Quadrant. A clustered development would be the best mechanism to create significant open space and protect the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road. It should be rezoned to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre. Access to new houses should be provided from both Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road. A pedestrian and bikeway connection between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road should be provided through the property. All new houses should be clustered near the corner of Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road leaving the western and southern portion of the property as rural open space.

Recommendations:

1. **Rezone the Polinger property from RE-2 to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre.**
2. **Cluster development on the northeastern portion of the property, away from the stream valley to the south, to allow for gravity sewer service to the existing sewer mains which traverse the property near the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and the Emory Church Road right-of-way, eliminating the need for an off-site sewer main extension along the tributary stream valley originating at the Lockwood property.**

3. **Preserve the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road and the existing vistas on this property through careful placement of housing clusters in appropriate locations and other techniques.**
4. **Provide a pedestrian path between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road through the property.**
5. **Provide a bike and pedestrian connection from any redevelopment on the Polinger property to the Olney Manor Park.**
6. **Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into naturalized wetland areas where appropriate.**
7. **Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into stormwater management facilities (e.g., upland isolated ponds).**
8. **Require the applicant to reforest all stream valleys on the property as part of redevelopment. If such reforestation exceeds the minimum standards required under the Forest Conservation Law, encourage the use of forest "banking."**

#9 Bruzee, Kupersmidt, Gandel and Lyons Properties

The 24-acre Bruzee, 45.11-acre Kupersmidt, 59-acre Gandel, and the 8.9-acre Lyons properties are currently zoned RE-2 and have significant forest. The ICC master plan right-of-way marks the southern edge of this group of properties. The 8.9-acre Lyons property contains an historic resource, Willow Grove.

Of these properties, only a small southern portion of the Kupersmidt property could possibly be connected by gravity to the existing sewer main in Norbeck Road. The property should be placed in the recommended sewer envelope. However, putting it in the sewer envelope would not automatically entitle this property to development on public sewer. The feasibility of extending sewer to this property would be determined at the time of subdivision.

Placing the entire property in the sewer envelope also does not guarantee that all parts of the property would be allowed to have development on public sewer service with the possibility of achieving the full permitted density of 0.33 units per acre.

The Bruzee and Lyons properties in this group cannot be served by gravity sewer and therefore are not recommended to be in the sewer envelope. They should be rezoned to

