



10400 Detrick Avenue Attachment 3
Kensington, Maryland 20895-2484
(240) 773-9000

November 5, 2012

Françoise Carrier
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Carrier:

I am writing on behalf of the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) to offer feedback on the Chevy Chase Lake (CCL) sector plan staff recommendations. HOC enthusiastically supports the redevelopment efforts and many of the staff's recommendations for the community area. The Park and Planning staff has done an excellent job of embracing smart growth planning, while taking into account the changing character of Montgomery County.

As noted in the Steve Fuller Study prepared by George Mason University, Montgomery County will undergo expansive economic growth over the next 20 years and our current housing stock and policies do not meet our current affordable housing needs or support the projected growth. In recognition of the County's growing housing needs, the Draft Housing Policy of 2012 encourages housing development of varying types and price ranges, recognizing that the greatest need is for more rental housing to meet the housing needs for the County's expected 163,000 net new workers by 2030.

As a developer of quality mixed-income housing in Montgomery County, HOC is committed to redeveloping our parcel in the sector plan area to provide an amenity-rich housing option, which is accessible to renters of all income levels and closely located to a projected transportation node. As currently contemplated, the CCL sector plan recommendations include several elements that make the redevelopment of our parcel using a mixed-income model that maximizes affordability quite difficult financially. The paragraphs below detail the current plan limitations of our ability to provide a quality, amenity-rich mixed-income housing option and provide suggestions as to how we might achieve our redevelopment goals while supporting the design and intent of the sector.

Our preliminary concept for the redevelopment of the Chevy Chase Lake property calls for mixed-income housing that is amenity-rich, energy-efficient and designed to seamlessly integrate into the surrounding redevelopment. As you know, HOC has a strong track record of success in mixed-income development, including Metropolitan in Bethesda.



Desired Density

HOC requests 400 units of housing for our property as part of the redevelopment plan. The mixed-income model requires the right balance between market-rate units and subsidized units to be financially viable. In September 2012, the Planning Board staff recommended 230 units of housing for our property. While we understand the staff's desire to ensure the redevelopment is in keeping with the existing character of the neighborhood, we believe HOC can achieve density of up to 400 units that will be compatible with its neighbors.

As illustrated in the attached architectural drawings(see Enclosure A), HOC can reasonably achieve a unit of approximately 400 units by constructing a 8-story tower near Connecticut Avenue and then stepping down to 4 separate buildings that are 4 stories in height. The attached yield study prepared by our architects (see Enclosure B) finds that this approach would yield 403 units. We believe that the neighborhood impact of increased height limits on our site will be minimal. Our property is bounded on the west by the retail and office development, on the south by bike trails and a steep upward slope, and on the north by the proposed Purple Line track. Admittedly, the attached drawings are only gross massing studies that do not take into account amenities, recreation space, circulation, etc. HOC will revise these drawings to reflect the required amenities and proposed road at a later date.

Proposed New Road

There seems to be a community consensus supporting the construction of a new road that would connect Chevy Chase Lake Drive and Manor Road. While the added road would alleviate traffic created by the purple line station, it is likely that a portion of it would also almost certainly clip the western edge of HOC's property resulting in a loss of developable square footage. HOC recognizes that the proposed road is desirable in terms of traffic management, and is generally supportive of the idea. However, the Commission requests that the Planning Board relax height restrictions on the site to the extent that allows HOC to achieve 400 units in the re-development. The focus of our mission is to provide high quality affordable housing. If HOC cannot build out in the redevelopment, we must build up in order to create a viable project.

Open Space/Public Park

HOC understands that as a condition of being granted higher density, we will have to include the development of a park/open space on our parcel. As a matter of practice, HOC always attempts to improve the quality of our housing development by including parks and open spaces. However, including such an amenity on our Chevy Chase parcel is challenging because

Françoise Carrier
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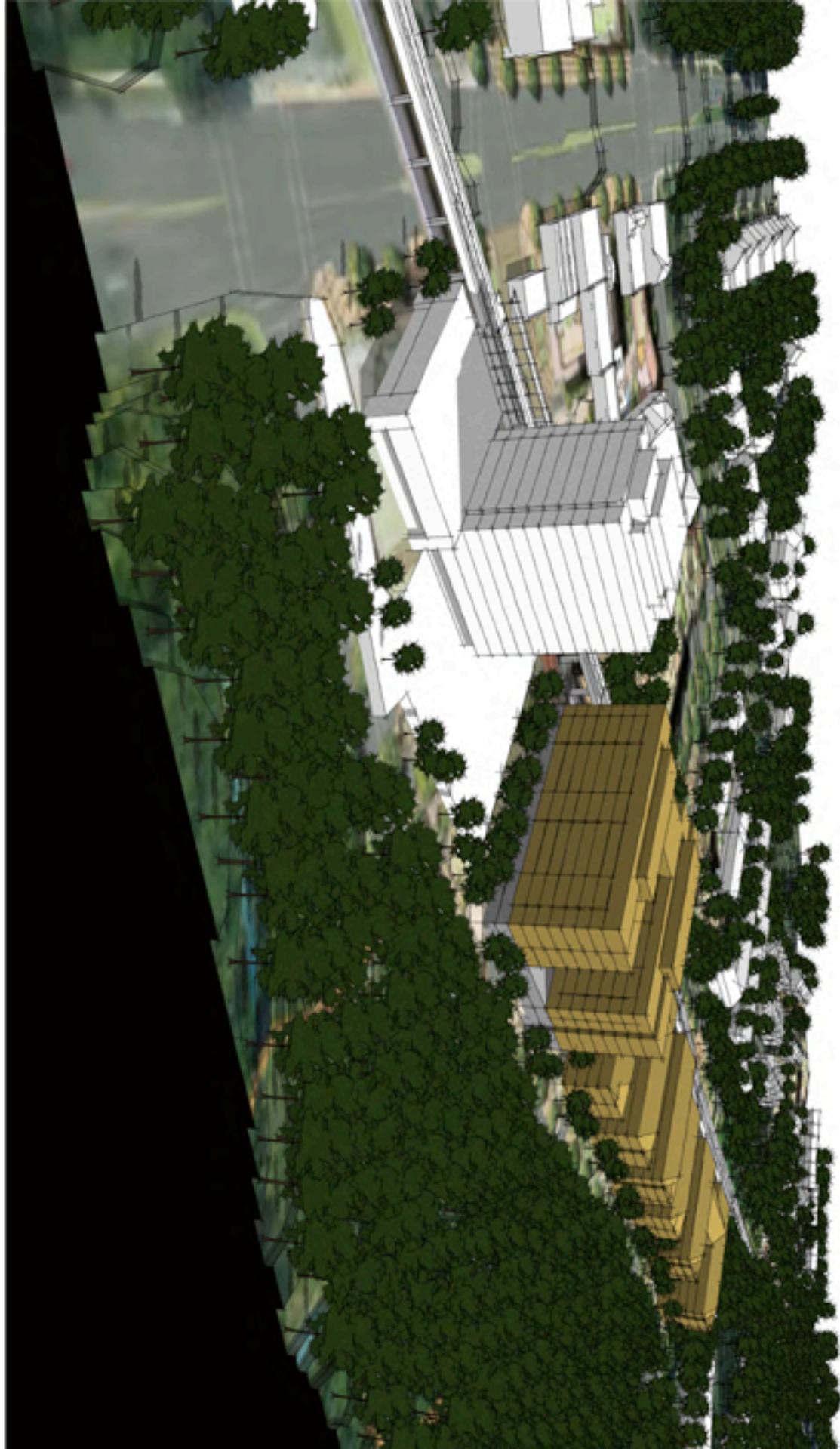
our parcel is limited in size. The complexities are further complicated by Maryland Transit Authority's proposed berm wall to support the elevated Purple Line. So, while we would be open to developing an open space that enhances the character of our development project, we are also mindful that we will have to work closely with Planning staff to ensure that the park can be developed without adversely impacting the density to make our project financially sustainable. Additionally, because of the complexities of multilayered financing that is needed to make a mixed-income housing project financially feasible we have to be careful to ensure that development of the park is not cost-prohibitive.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Chevy Chase Lake sector plan process, and look forward to discussing our request for relaxed height limits and increased density as the process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stacy L. Spann", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stacy L. Spann
Executive Director



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HOC-CHEVY CHASE LAKE STATION
Chevy Chase Lake Drive, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Southwest Aerial Perspective
Scale: N.T.S.

#1026

BENNETT FRANK McCARTHY
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HOC-CHEVY CHASE LAKE STATION
Chevy Chase Lake Drive, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Southeast Aerial Perspective
Scale: N.T.S.

#1026

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Unit Yield

	Block A	Block B
Gross SF	235,880	269,280
Factor 80%	0.8	0.8
Net SF	188704	215424
Unit Size	1000	1000
Total Units	188.704	215.424
Total Block A & B		404.128