



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

September 13, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*  
Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, Georgia Avenue Team

**FROM:** Marilyn Clemens, Community-Based Planning Division *MC*  
(301) 495-4572

**REVIEW TYPE:** Mandatory Referral  
**APPLYING FOR:** Modernization of Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School

**APPLICANT:** Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)  
**CASE NUMBER:** 02502-MCPS-1  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Article 28, Section 7-112 of the Annotated Code of Maryland  
**ZONE:** R-60  
**LOCATION:** 4710 Saul Road, Kensington, Maryland 20895  
**MASTER PLAN:** 1989 Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington-Wheaton

**FILING DATE:** April 11, 2002

**FIRST PLANNING BOARD REVIEW:** June 13, 2002  
**SECOND PLANNING BOARD REVIEW:** September 19, 2002

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval with comments.  
Approval of Tree Save Plan.

**Comments:**

1. Any proposed additions to structures or parking should be the subject of further analysis through the Mandatory Referral process;
2. Replace five street trees removed from the public right-of-way with shade trees; species and size to be reviewed by staff of the M-NCPPC;
3. Reduce the radius of the western curb of the Franklin Road access to save an additional street tree; trucks are to exit east up Franklin Road;
4. Provide a description and specifications of the sound wall to buffer noise from the loading and servicing area; and
5. The revised plan is in compliance with Chapter 22a of the Montgomery County Code, the Forest Conservation Law.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

At the June 13, 2002 Mandatory Referral hearing, the Planning Board recommended that Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) revise the building footprint and the site plan for Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School to save more green space and trees. In response to the comments of the Planning Board, MCPS resubmitted plans with a reduced building footprint, relocated drop-off and parking area, and more tree preservation.

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

A community meeting was held September 12, 2002, to discuss the outstanding issues regarding the Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School plans. While there may be more understanding of the constraints and needs to compromise on the layout of the school, no consensus was reached.

1. MCPS has submitted a revised school plan showing a two-story wing on the north end of the school and the parent drop-off and teacher parking relocated to the Franklin Street parking lot. This is the plan reviewed in this report. MCPS staff and many parents continue to prefer a single-story north wing for reasons of student supervision, safety, and instructional programming. A letter from Richard Hawes to Charles Loehr, expressing MCPS's point of view is Attachment 5. MCPS staff will present the plan reviewed at the June Planning Board hearing with the drop-off and parking relocated. Only the two-story north wing brings the plan into compliance with the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law. The staff of the M-NCPPC is exploring further layouts to meet the school's needs and comply with the Forest Conservation Law.
2. Residents south and southwest of the school maintain that Franklin Street is a busy commuter street and cannot handle the congestion of the relocated parent drop-off, plus the loading, servicing, and teacher parking. Transportation Planning staff state that only 19 additional trips will be generated, and staff from the Department of Permitting Services believe that more queuing space is available with the new configuration of the Franklin Street lot and that congestion will actually be reduced. A memorandum from Transportation Planning is Attachment 7, and Attachment 8 is from the Department of Permitting Services. Permitting Services discourages moving the drop-off and parking to south of the bus loop on Saul Road, as staff of the M-NCPPC had suggested at the June Planning Board hearing, and supports incorporating the drop off and parking into the Franklin Street lot.
3. Residents to the southwest will incur many impacts as a result of the school modernization, i.e., loss of green space and vegetation, introduction of loading, delivery and parking noise, and a change in their "visual" environment. Staff acknowledges these impacts and has required screening and sound attenuation as mitigation. In addition, staff of the M-NCPPC has recently prepared a revised plan for the Franklin Street parking lot to reduce the size of the parking area. MCPS staff is reviewing this option.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School is in the Walter Johnson High School cluster. The original Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School was constructed in 1952. Located on a 9.98-acre site including playfields, the school has gone through several modifications over the years, the latest in 1973. Current enrollment is 395 students in a 35,131 square foot facility with a capacity for 374 students. MCPS has determined the most cost effective modernization is to construct a new building.

MCPS proposes a school of 63,972 gross square feet with an initial capacity of 499 students and a core capacity of 640 students. The school plan generally follows the layout of the existing school, an "L"-shaped configuration. The building has two, two-story elements at either end of the "L." One wing faces south/southwest and contains the multi-purpose room, the kitchen and the loading facility, as well as space for a future gymnasium. It is located on the southwestern or lower part of the site. The other two-story element is located north of the main wing, parallel to Saul Road.

The new building will be fully ADA accessible and will have new mechanical systems and modern computer facilities. The proposed gymnasium has not been funded although its location is included in the current site plan. Because the multi-purpose room, kitchen, and gym are proposed on the southwestern part of the site, the loading and service area must be located adjacent to these uses. The parent drop-off, teacher and handicap parking have been relocated from Saul Road to the parking lot off Franklin Street. Staff recommends reducing this by three spaces and reconfiguring the lot to maintain more green space. Fifteen additional parking spaces are located in the bus loop off Saul Road for a total on-site of 45 spaces. In the process of meeting with school faculty and community representatives, MCPS agreed to limit on-site parking to a maximum of 50 spaces, with additional parking along Saul Road.

## **THE SITE**

The school site is located west of Cedar Lane, north of the Capital Beltway, east of Rockville Pike, and north and east of Beach Drive in Rock Creek Park. It is in the southwest corner of the Kensington-Wheaton planning area. The school is located on the highest part of its site along Saul Road, between Parkwood Drive to the northwest and Franklin Street on the south. The existing site is hilly with many individual specimen hardwood trees as well as stands of pine and other evergreens; play fields are located on a plane on the lower western portion of the site. A "sledding hill" has been maintained at the northern edge of the school building at the request of the community. The school sits approximately 30 feet above homes to the southwest along Edgefield Road and Franklin Street to the south. The homes along Saul Road to the north are sited above the school and its existing parking. To the west, homes along Parkwood Drive back up to the school. The current bus and vehicle parking entry and exit are via a single lot off Saul Road. Mature healthy street trees and a sidewalk surround the site.

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

### **Neighborhood Context**

The community surrounding Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School is made up primarily of single-family detached homes built in the 1950's and 1960's in the R-60 zone. The school serves the function of a community green where residents meet, walk their dogs, and children play. Rock Creek Park and its bike trail are two blocks to the southwest.

### **Community Notification**

The local neighborhood civic association, the Parkwood Residents Association, was notified of the September 19, 2002 hearing by Planning Board staff. MCPS staff has notified adjacent and confronting residents. Staff of the M-NCPPC held a community meeting on the revised school plans on September 12, 2002.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Master Plan**

The 1989 Master Plan for the Communities of Kensington-Wheaton did not recommend changes to the land uses, the roads, or the zones of the southwest quadrant of the Master Plan area.

### **Development Standards for the R-60 Zone**

The proposed school modernization meets the setbacks, the height limits, and the coverage of the R-60 zone:

	<b>Required/Permitted:</b>	<b>Proposed:</b>
<b>Setbacks:</b>		
	Front - 25 feet	115 feet minimum
	Side - 8/18 feet total	45 minimum
	Rear - 20 feet	250 feet minimum
<b>Coverage:</b>	35% maximum	25%
<b>Height Limit:</b>	35 feet	34 feet exclusive of penthouse

### **Transportation**

A memorandum from Transportation Planning staff is attached. Evaluating the material received regarding the number of students and faculty projected, staff concluded that the modernization would add only 19 vehicle trips to the current traffic generated. Staff believes that the proposed project would satisfy the requirements of a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study if it had been submitted.

General traffic circulation around the site will be improved by creating separate bus access, drop-off area, and faculty parking. Currently, these activities all take place at the Saul Road frontage. The Department of Permitting Services memorandum, Attachment 8, evaluates the on-site circulation and access.

## **Recreation**

MCPS will supplement the existing ball field, paved play areas, and kindergarten play areas with two overlapping ball fields, basketball courts, and a large paved area adjacent to the future gym. Playground equipment and a small paved surface will be provided for the kindergarten children.

## **Environment**

MCPS has made revisions to the earlier plans, creating a two-story north wing and relocating the drop-off and parking for 15 cars. This results in a slightly more compact building footprint and the retention of a grove of specimen and smaller trees. If another classroom is added to the north end of the school, one to three of the trees retained will be lost. MCPS staff and many parents and teachers continue to support a one-story facility because the land is available, and they believe a single story school is better for educational programming, surveillance, and safety. In addition, they maintain that "daylighting" of classrooms is easier to accomplish in a one-story structure where clerestory windows and vaulted ceilings increase natural lighting. Staff believes that the concept of green buildings has to take into consideration many factors, such as solar orientation, shading against heat gain, reduction in imperviousness and run-off. The Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law requires using all means possible to save existing specimen trees and mitigation for the loss of those that cannot be saved.

The staff of the M-NCPPC supports the revised school plan with its increase in tree conservation and decrease in imperviousness. The revised plan meets the requirements of the Forest Conservation Law. A memorandum from Environmental Planning staff is Attachment 6. The staff of the M-NCPPC will explore a reoriented single story north wing that complies with the Law.

## **Landscape, Lighting, Sediment and Erosion Control, and Site Development Plans**

The landscape, lighting, sediment and erosion control, and site development plans have been revised and accurately reflect the tree conservation and mitigation that can be accomplished on-site with the current plan. MCPS has agreed to increase the landscape buffer adjacent to the residents on the southwest and will replace any street trees removed. In addition, some of the parking in the Franklin Street lot may be relocated. A sound wall will be provided to buffer noise emanating from the loading and servicing area towards the residential areas.

## **CONCLUSION**

The revised school footprint and layout are an improvement over the previous plans, retaining much of the existing green setting and providing mitigation for impacts to the neighborhood. The plan addresses some of the concerns Planning Board members expressed at the June 13, 2002 hearing and represents an acceptable compromise between MCPS' preferred elementary school layout and environmentally sensitive design practices. Staff recommends approval with the comments listed on page 1.

MC:ha: a:/clemens1/mrkenparktwo.doc

### **Attachments:**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Existing Site Plan
3. Proposed Site Plan
4. Elevations
5. Memorandum from Richard Hawes, Director, Department of Facilities Management
6. Memorandum from Environmental Planning
7. Memorandum from Transportation Planning
8. Memorandum from Department of Permitting Services

VICINITY MAP FOR

# KENSINGTON PARKWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Map compiled on June 06, 2002 at 8:21 AM | Site located on base sheet no - 2129W05

### NOTICE

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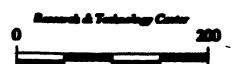
Property lines are compiled by adjusting the property lines to topography created from aerial photography and should not be interpreted as actual field surveys. Planimetric features were compiled from 1:14400 scale aerial photography using stereo photogrammetric methods.

This map is created from a variety of data sources, and may not reflect the most current conditions in any one location and may not be completely accurate as to date. All map features are approximately within five feet of their true location. This map may not be the same as a map of the same area plotted at an earlier time as the data is continuously updated. Use of this map, other than for general planning purposes is not recommended. - Copyright 1999

Key Map



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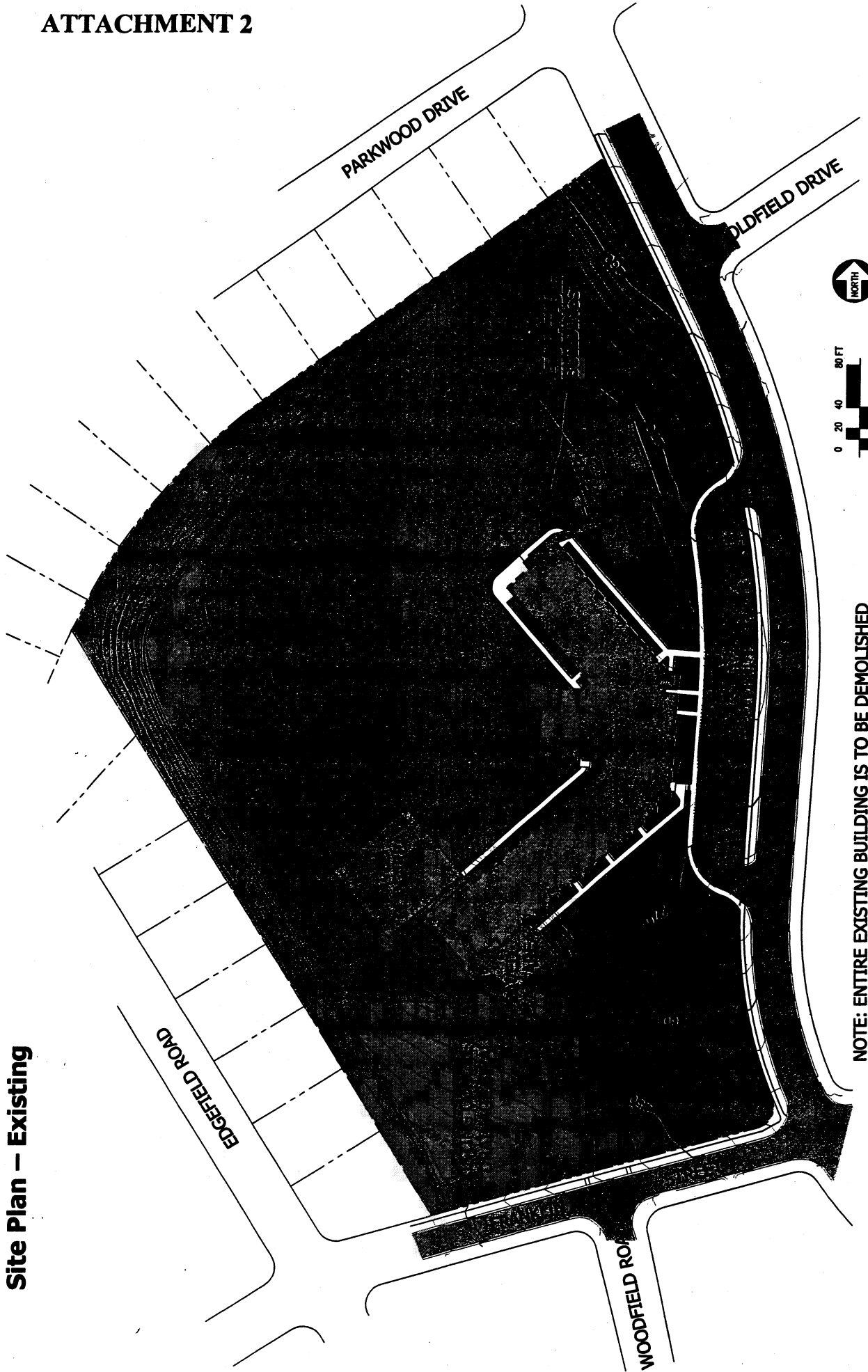
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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**  
 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

6707 Georgia Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-6200

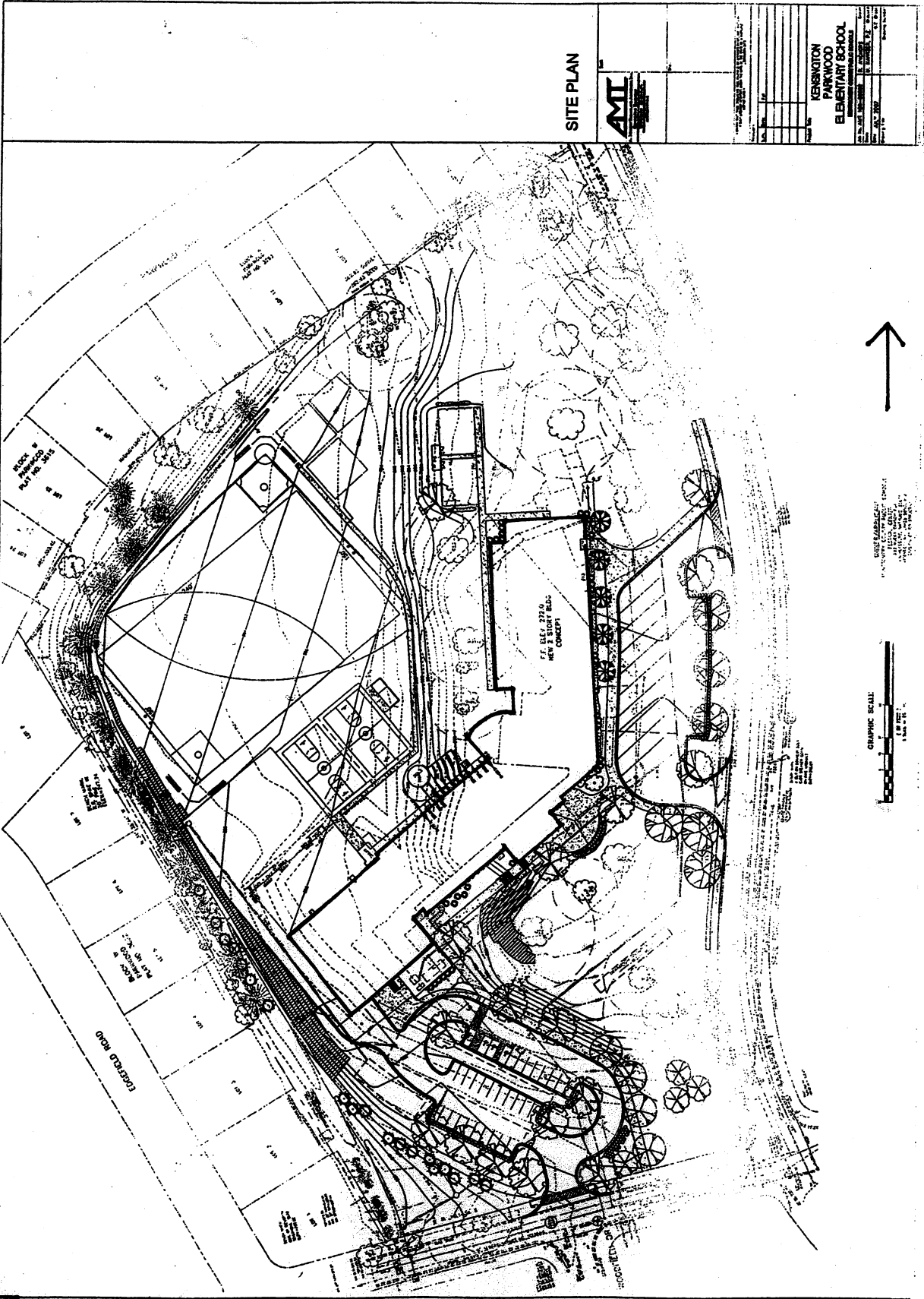
Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School  
Modernization

Site Plan -- Existing



NOTE: ENTIRE EXISTING BUILDING IS TO BE DEMOLISHED

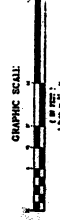
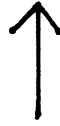




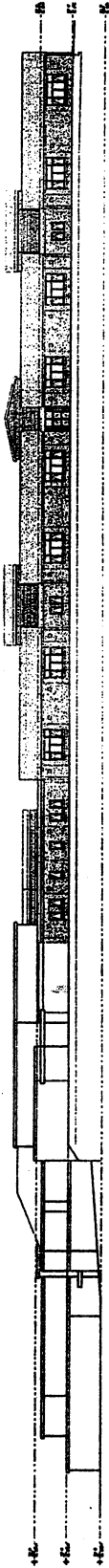
SITE PLAN



KENSINGTON PARKWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	
DATE	12/15/2011
PROJECT NO.	11-001
SCALE	AS SHOWN
DRAWN BY	J. B. B.
CHECKED BY	J. B. B.
DATE	12/15/2011

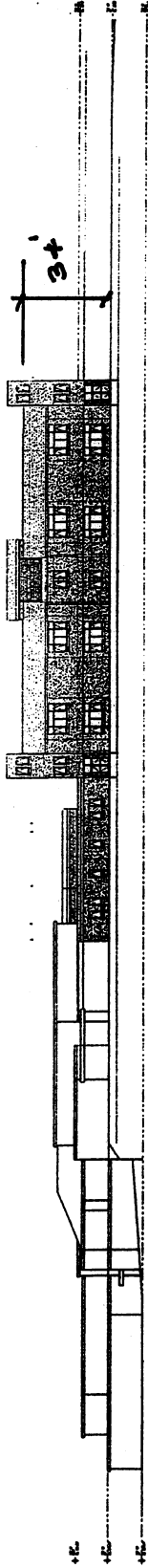


ATTACHMENT 4



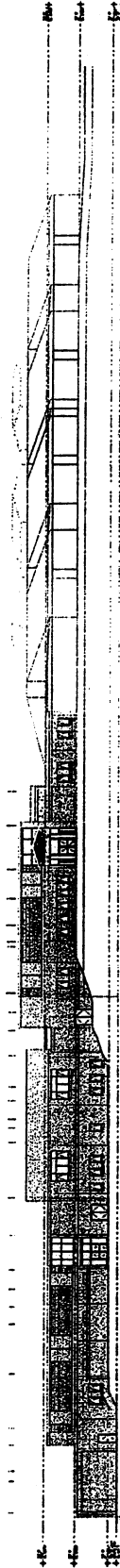
○ SAUL ROAD ELEVATION (ONE-STORY CLASSROOM)

1/16" = 1'-0"



○ SAUL ROAD ELEVATION (TWO-STORY CLASSROOM)

1/16" = 1'-0"



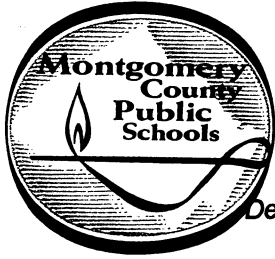
○ FRANKLIN ROAD ELEVATION (ONE-STORY CLASSROOM)

1/16" = 1'-0"



○ FRANKLIN ROAD ELEVATION (TWO-STORY CLASSROOM)

1/16" = 1'-0"



850 Hungerford Drive \* Rockville, Maryland \* ~~20850-1747~~  
279-3425  
Department of Facilities Management, 7361 Calhoun Place, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20855  
Telephone: (301) 279-3425  
FAX: 301-279-3737

August 1, 2002

Mr. Charles Loehr, Director  
Maryland-National Capital Park  
& Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Charlie:

The enclosed material is the information that your staff requested for the mandatory referral resubmission for the Kensington Parkwood Elementary School modernization. This material contains the revisions to the modernization plan that we discussed with regard to saving the six priority trees identified by the Planning Board during the initial review.

The proposed plan revisions include relocating the parent drop-off area and consolidating the single-story wing into a two-story structure. The parent drop-off relocation will save five of the priority trees. The consolidation of the single-story wing will save the remaining tree.

The school community supports the parent drop-off relocation. However, there are certain neighbors on the south side of the school site that will most likely object to the plan revision. The Facilities Advisory Committee that worked on the development of the modernization plan evaluated more than 20 plan variations before agreeing to the final scheme that was submitted as part of the initial mandatory referral. As part of the plan development, the committee met on numerous occasions with adjacent property owners and neighborhood representatives. The parent drop-off area was located at the north end of the site in the final plan, primarily to address concerns raised by the neighbors to the south. I wanted you to be aware of this issue because the revision to the parent drop-off will relocate it to an area of the site that the neighbors objected to when it was presented as part of one of the earlier plans. Unfortunately, relocating the parent drop-off is the way to save the majority of the priority trees.

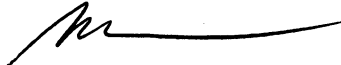
The school community does not support the consolidation of the single-story wing into a two-story structure. There are valid educational reasons, including supervision and safety, which make it preferable to have the lower grades on the first floor at the elementary school level. The single-story wing also allows us to incorporate green building features in a large portion of the classrooms. Consolidating the single-story level proposed in the initial plan will force us to place first and second graders in second floor classrooms and will scale back the environmental features that can be incorporated in the design. While we are showing the consolidation of the single-story wing as part of the revised submission, this was done to show how the remaining priority tree could be saved and not because the school community prefers this option.

August 1, 2002

I am requesting that your staff research the educational reasons associated with our preferring the single-story wing for the lower grades and examine the impact the floor consolidation will have on the green building features before making their recommendation. While we recognize the importance of saving the one priority tree, I feel it is important that this be balanced against the educational preferences and environmental features of the single-story wing along with the fact that the two-story structure will require a waiver of the zoning height limitations for the site. The Kensington Parkwood Elementary School principal and my staff are available to answer questions or provide information regarding the educational preferences for the single-story wing.

I understand that the Planning Board will review the resubmission in September. Please let me know if you need additional information or if there is anything we can do to help facilitate your review. I appreciate the assistance we have received regarding the resubmission and look forward to resolving the outstanding issues so we can move forward with the architectural planning.

Sincerely,



Richard G. Hawes, Director  
Department of Facilities Management

RGH:jlc

Enclosure

Copy to:

Mr. Bowers  
Mr. Burke  
Mr. Ceschini  
Mr. Song  
Dr. Stetson  
Ms. Roberts  
Mr. Shepherdson





THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: September 12, 2002

TO: Marilyn Clemens, Community Based Planning

VIA: Mary Dolan, Environmental Planning Division 

FROM: Marion Clark, Environmental Planning Division 

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral No. MR-02502-MCPS-1  
Parkwood Elementary School

The Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the mandatory referral referenced above. Staff recommends **approval** with the following comments:

- That a Storm Water Management Concept Plan approved by MCDPS be submitted to M-NCPPC, CWP, Environmental Unit prior to issuance of sediment and erosion control permit.

**Forest Conservation**

Exemption of a Forest Conservation Plan has been granted, however the plan is still subject to requirements for a Tree Save Plan for any specimen and significant trees. The Forest Conservation Law requires that significant trees (those trees over 24" dbh) be given consideration for preservation wherever feasible.

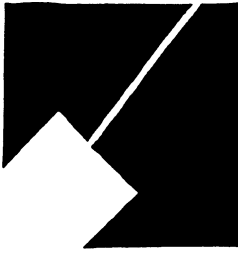
Environmental staff believes the plan submitted showing a two story building and a relocated parking lot fulfills the Planning Board request to preserve a grove of five specimen trees on the north side of the site. The resubmitted plan shows one of the specimen trees removed at the time of construction. The arrangement of the five specimen trees forms an open space that we believe has considerable intrinsic value, value as an educational tool, value as a recreational area, and value in promoting energy reduction for the school. A one story building wing would destroy two, possibly three, of the five specimen trees and the landscape space formed by them. The two largest trees in the stand would be removed with the one story building option reducing the grove by half its size. We believe every effort should be made to preserve the grove and save all five specimen trees by using the two story building option.

**Water Quality**

Full water quality and quantity storm water management control shall be expected to protect the integrity of the Lower Rock Creek watershed. This project site is located in the Lower Mainstem Bethesda subwatershed that has a poor stream condition and a fair habitat in the County Wide Stream Protection Strategy (CWSP). CWSP labels this watershed as a Watershed Restoration

Area where efforts are underway to comprehensively examine and address stormwater retrofit, stream restoration and habitat improvement opportunities.

M-NCPPC



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

June 4, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Marilyn Clemens, Planner  
Community-Based Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*  
Transportation Planning

FROM: Shahriar Etemadi, Coordinator  
Transportation Planning *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral: 02502-MCPS-1, Kensington-Parkwood  
Elementary School Modernization

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This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review of the subject application

**RECOMMENDATION**

Transportation planning staff recommends no conditions to support approval of the above-referenced application because it has no significant impact on the area transportation system.

**Local Area Transportation Review (LATR)**

The school modernization plan has been under consideration for more than a year, although the need for a traffic study to meet LATR requirements, per the Board's Uniform Standard for Mandatory Referral, effective October, 2002 was not determined prior to the April 2002 submission.

Staff reviewed the application after its April 11, 2002 submission and determined that a traffic study would be needed to satisfy LATR requirements. The modernization plan results in an increase in enrollment from 395 students to 459 students. Based on the rates in the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Institute of Traffic Engineers Trip Generation Manual, the proposed facility will generate 138 peak hour vehicle trips during the weekday morning peak period, higher than the 50-vehicle threshold specified in the LATR guidelines.

However, the expansion will only add 19 vehicle trips to the traffic already generated by the existing site.

Conducting traffic counts and preparation of a traffic study at this time would delay the review of the project by the Planning Board until next fall. Staff determined that the two affected intersections for evaluation are Cedar Lane at Saul Road and Knowles Avenue at Parkwood Drive. These intersections are located in a predominantly residential neighborhood. There are no traffic data available in our file for these intersections, reinforcing staff's judgment that the two intersections have sufficient capacity to accommodate the 19 additional peak hour trips generated by the site.

It is our judgment that if completed, the LATR study would find that the applicant satisfies LATR requirements.

Policy Area Review/Staging Ceiling Analysis

The site is located within the Kensington-Wheaton policy area, which has a remaining capacity of 2768 jobs and 2533 housing units as of April 30, 2002.

SE:cmd

Kensington-Parkwood ES MR 02502-MCPS-1.DOC





## DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Douglas M. Duncan  
*County Executive*

September 4, 2002

Robert C. Hubbard  
*Director*

Marilyn Clemens, Planning Coordinator  
Community Based Planning Division  
Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Kensington Parkwood Elementary School

Dear Ms. Clemens:

I am sorry that schedule conflicts will not allow me to attend the upcoming meetings on the Mandatory Referral for the proposed modifications to the Kensington Parkwood Elementary School. Therefore, I hope the following comments regarding the access and circulation will be helpful.

Based on my review of the site plans and field evaluations, the proposed access scheme with the bus loop on Saul Road and parking and student drop-off on Franklin Street opposite Woodfield Drive provides the safer alternative for vehicular and pedestrian traffic than providing access for all activities along Saul Road for the following reasons:

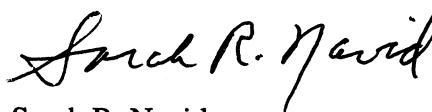
- Separating the parent drop-off/parking driveway from the bus loading driveways to different streets will minimize conflicts between the school related bus, automobile and pedestrian traffic. I would anticipate that some parents will continue to use Saul Road as a pick-up/drop-off area. Locating a driveway between the intersection with Franklin Street and the bus egress driveway would lead to the potential for a great deal of congestion in a relatively short stretch of roadway. All the vehicular activity would be concentrated in the front of the school where the greatest number of students are walking.
- The 4-Way Stop control, as well as the crossing guard, at the intersection of Saul Road and Franklin Street provides for "metered" traffic flow through the intersection, providing gaps in traffic entering Franklin Street. This should allow vehicles to enter and exit the new driveway opposite Woodfield Drive without any more conflicts than at any other intersection along Franklin Street. However, parking and stopping will need to be prohibited along the north school-side of Franklin Street to allow for smooth traffic flow and good driveway sight distance.



- The proposed drop-off/parking scheme with the access on Franklin Street allows almost three times as much queueing capacity and more parking spaces than it appears a similar area would located between the bus loop and Franklin Street off Saul Road.
- As discussed previously, we will allow a tighter radius (15') on the northwest corner of the proposed driveway on Franklin Street, if it will save an additional existing street tree.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this access/circulation plan.

Sincerely,



Sarah R. Navid  
Permitting Services Specialist

srn/kensparkwood.doc

cc: Joe Cheung  
James Song  
Dan Hardy  
Shahriar Etemadi