



Item #\_8  
MCPB  
4/10/03

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 4, 2003  
**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** Joe R. Davis, Chief  
Michael Ma, Supervisor *Ma*  
Development Review Division  
**FROM:** Wynn E. Witthans, AICP, RLA  
Planning Department Staff *WW*  
(301) 495-4584

**REVIEW TYPE:** Site Plan Review  
**APPLYING FOR:** Approval of 28 dwelling units inclusive of 4 MPDU's  
**PROJECT NAME:** Goodwill  
**CASE #:** 8-03005  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Sec. 59-D-3, M. C. Zoning Ordinance

**ZONE:** R-60, MPDU development standards  
**LOCATION:** Wisconsin Avenue  
**MASTER PLAN:** Bethesda  
**APPLICANT:** Elm Street Development, John Clark, Contact Person  
**FILING DATE:** September 27, 2002  
**HEARING DATE:** April 10, 2003

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of 28 dwelling units inclusive of 4 MPDU's with the following conditions to be met prior to signature set:

1. The Planning Board approves the waiver of the 60% detached housing as required in Section 59-C-1.621.
2. The Planning Board allows the consolidation of lots for the attached MPDU's per 59-C-1.625 (a)(4) Where an individual lot for each dwelling unit is deemed to be

*infeasible because of the manner in which individual units are attached to each other, the Board may approve a site plan depicting more than one dwelling unit on a lot,' due to the unique assemblage of the units.*

3. The MPDU's will have identical exterior building materials as the market rate units and confirming details shall be submitted to staff prior to the release of building permits. The units will be constructed of stone, brick and "hardi plank" board or their equivalent and any amendments or refinements to this material will be reviewed by Planning Board staff prior to release of building permits.
4. Landscaping and Lighting Plans shall include the following prior to signature set for staff review:
  - a. Staff and the immediate adjacent neighbors shall review plans for the preservation of existing or the proposed plant material along the western boundary so to create a tall vegetative buffer of sufficient width and height within a reasonable time frame for the buffer area. Additional evergreen material shall be used at the end of Corsica Drive.
  - b. The driveway trees shall be a native species as is feasible.
  - c. The understory plantings within the central tree preservation area shall be reduced in quantity and scope and any future landscaping under the tree canopy shall be reviewed by staff prior to installation and phased-in after a 3-year period of adjustment (from the time of construction completion).
  - d. Street trees to be located within Corsica Drive right of way.
  - e. Buffer planting along the Corsica Drive frontage.
  - f. All retaining walls shall be stone or masonry units.
  - g. Lighting Plans to include photometric grid for the entire site and will include all proposed lights on buildings and within streets and driveways.
  - h. The project edge along Wisconsin Avenue will include an expanded sidewalk to allow pedestrian movement further from the curb, possible street trees and finish treatment to the adjacent retaining wall. MDSHA, Planning Board staff and the applicant shall coordinate the final details of the treatment prior to the release of signature set.
5. The applicant will supply to staff, prior to final site inspection, confirmation that an acoustical engineer has certified that the building shell has been designed to attenuate projected exterior noise levels to an interior level not to exceed 45 dBA Ldn. for the buildings adjoining Wisconsin Avenue. The builder commits to construct the units in accord with these design specifications, with any changes that may affect acoustical performance approved by the acoustical engineer in advance of installation.

6. Applicant will submit a Site Plan Enforcement Agreement, Development Review Program and Homeowner Association Documents for review and approval prior to approval of the signature set as follows:

The Development Program will include a phasing schedule as follows:

- a. Streets tree planting must progress as street construction is completed, but no later than six months after completion of the units adjacent to those streets.
  - b. Community-wide pedestrian pathways and recreation facilities must be completed prior to seventy percent occupancy of each phase of the development.
  - c. Landscaping associated with each buffer areas and buildings shall be completed as construction of each unit is completed.
  - d. Pedestrian pathways and seating areas associated with each unit shall be completed as construction of each facility is completed.
  - e. Clearing and grading to correspond to the construction phasing, to minimize soil erosion.
  - f. Coordination of each section of the development and roads.
  - g. Phasing of dedications, stormwater management, sediment/erosion control, recreation, forestation, community paths, trip mitigation or other features.
7. Signature set of site, landscape/lighting, forest conservation and sediment and erosion Control plans to include for staff review prior to approval by Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS):
    - a. Limits of disturbance.
    - b. Methods and locations of tree protection.
    - c. Forest Conservation areas.
    - d. Conditions of DPS Stormwater Management Concept approval letter dated January 26, 2001.
    - e. Note stating the M-NCPPC staff must inspect tree-save areas and protection devices prior to clearing and grading.
    - f. The development program inspection schedule.
    - g. Conservation easement boundary.
    - h. Streets trees as shown along all streets and drives streets.
    - i. Centralized, screened trash areas for attached housing.
  9. No clearing or grading prior to M-NCPPC approval of signature set of plans.
  10. The Forest Conservation Plan shall satisfy all detailed conditions of approval prior to recording of plat and DPS issuance of sediment and erosion control permit.

## **ISSUES RESOLVED IN THE COURSE OF SITE PLAN REVIEW**

### **Voluntary MPDU's**

This application proposes voluntary MPDU's in order to develop a townhouse and semi-detached housing community. This development proposal is one that retains most of the R-60 zoning yield of the site while being able to address issues that make the site a difficult one to develop – steep slopes, stands of mature trees, vehicular access to and through the site and creating compatibility with the adjacent existing R-60 neighborhood. The location of the property, inside of the I-495 Beltway, on a bus route and within reasonable walking distance to the NIH Metro station make the site a candidate for utilizing the principals of smart growth – the site provides close to full density close to an urban center and has access to a variety of transit systems.

This development proposal has been controversial within the community and they have made their concerns know to the County Council. The County Council recently passed a bill to guide the use of voluntary MPDU's for projects of 20 units or less. The bill does not apply to this project. The proposal does conform to the R-60 MPDU development standards but does require the Planning Board's approval to waive the limitation of 60% attached units to allow for the development to include 100% attached units per Section 59-C-1.621.

Staff supports the use of MPDU development standards for the property and recommends the Planning Board approve the use of the waiver to allow 100 % semidetached and townhouse units based on environmental and compatibility rationale. This allows the site to utilize it's intended development potential and provide MPDU's in an 'inside the beltway' environment.

Staff believes that the additional preservation of a prominent tree stand central to the site, and the added protection/buffering along the site's perimeter, both of which are beyond the accomplishment of the minimum afforestation requirements of the site, justify the environmental finding, particularly when considering its urban location and size. Additionally, the increased setbacks and preservation of trees create a better relationship to the adjacent existing and proposed development. See discussion below.

### **Citizen Concerns**

The citizens have communicated their concerns about the project in e-mails, phone calls, letters and several meetings with staff and the developer. In summary, their concerns are about cut-through traffic from the new road connection, the discrepancy in building size between the existing and proposed housing, the type of architectural finishes used, the preservation of plant material along the buffers, adequacy of parking, the location of the tot lot and the MPDU's, the utilization of the 100% townhouse development provision and a drainage problem between Acacia Drive and Cedar Way. All correspondence received by staff concerning this application are attached to the Preliminary Plan packet #1-02038.

The applicant has met with the citizens on several occasions to explain the project and the design updates generated through the review process. The adjacent and confronting citizens received drawings of the projects at the initial site plan submittal and at least two more times after that. The most recent plan was presented to a citizen meeting on March 19, 2003.

### **Forest/Tree Conservation and the Waiver Proposal**

Although the subject property contains no existing forest areas, it does contain several large individual trees, some of which qualify as specimens. Recent revisions to the Forest Conservation Law (effective November 5, 2001) place added emphasis on the retention of specimen trees. Section 22A-12 (b) of the law specifies that development "...make maximum use of any available planning and zoning options that would result in the greatest possible retention..." of specimen trees. The revised law contains requirements for minimum amounts of forest, and in limited instances, tree cover, in certain types of development (including cluster and developments utilizing MPDU's). Where retention alone does not meet the minimums of the law, reforestation and afforestation is required in a preferred sequence in the following priority order: enhancement of existing forest through on-site selective clearing, supplemental planting, or both; on-site afforestation or reforestation; landscaping; and off-site afforestation and reforestation. On unforested sites such as this one, the law allows for a finding that afforestation is inappropriate for the site because of its location in an urban setting, and for the use of tree cover to meet afforestation requirements. Tree cover includes the canopy coverage of both existing and planted trees.

### **Comparison of Alternative Plans - Staff Analysis**

Three alternative development scenarios examined for the Goodwill site present different options of varying effectiveness in achieving the priorities of the forest conservation law. The three scenarios include a standard R-60 single-family detached development, a R-60 MPDU Optional Development with an allowed 60-40 single family attached (SFA)/detached (SFD) mix, and a 100% SFA development, contingent on an environmental and compatibility finding.

#### **1. Standard Method of Development – R-60**

Development of the site in a standard R-60 development of single-family detached dwellings would likely result in standard size lot configurations and a layout that, in staff's opinion, would not allow adequate protection to any of the significant trees internal to the site. See sketch. The minimum lot sizes, setbacks, and standard public roadway design requirements and utility cross sections do not have the flexibility necessary to respond to the needs for protection of randomly located trees on this infill site. The R-60 standards do not provide for adequate contiguous open space to create forest cover. Under the standard R-60 scenario for the Goodwill site, planted landscape and street trees would be the primary way afforestation requirements are met. Offsite afforestation planting, or a fee in lieu, would also be acceptable.

This plan may not be more compatible because the units may still be of similar size as the proposal but will be closer to the adjacent homes – with 8 foot side yards and 20 foot rear yards as standard setbacks.

## **2. 60% Semidetached, Townhouse, Attached and 40% Detached Option**

The applicant's proposal to use the R-60 MPDU optional method of development allows for up to 60% SFA units as a matter of right. This option triggers the minimum onsite forest conservation requirements discussed above. These minimum requirements recognize that optional method developments contain additional flexibility for building standards and setbacks that provide an opportunity for onsite forest conservation, even in urban sites such as this one. The minimum requirement for forest (or tree cover) on this site is the afforestation threshold. The afforestation threshold is 15% of the 4.97 acre site, or 0.75 acres.

The applicant developed a plan illustrating the 60% SFA/40% SFD mix prior to site plan review submittal. See Sketch. The proposed layout did meet the requirements for minimum afforestation on-site by saving some of the existing individual trees, including a couple of specimen size trees along the perimeter of the property, and planting both forest and trees. The opportunity for creation of forest cover was created by preservation of the existing open space adjoining Wisconsin Avenue below the existing driveway.

However, the 60/40 plan requires a public roadway with its minimum width right of way, curve radii, and housing setbacks. The 60/40 plan does not retain the central tree preservation area of the final proposal and the setbacks are smaller (12 foot side yard to the west and 35 foot rear yard setbacks to the north and south). Again the units may be similar in size to the current proposal but the unit setbacks may be much smaller.

## **3. 100% Townhouse – Semidetached Units Option**

The third development scenario is the applicant's current proposal for 100% attached units. This option requires a dual finding that the development is both more desirable from an environmental perspective than development that would occur from adherence to the maximum number of attached units allowed in R-60 MPDU developments of 60 percent (per footnote in Section 59-C-1.621), and compatible with adjacent existing and approved development.

Forest conservation requirements for this option could be met simply by the preservation of the open space along Wisconsin Avenue and planting of forest and trees. Staff believes that the 100% development is more desirable from an environmental perspective than the 60/40 plan. It not only allows for preservation of a few perimeter specimen trees, but also for the additional preservation of a significant and diverse tree stand at a prominent location, central to the site and to the Wisconsin entry to the site. The stand consists of a 32" DBH specimen red oak, a 39" DBH specimen sweet gum, two large American hollies, unusual larch and loblolly pine trees, and assorted red maple and dogwoods, within a 10,000 square foot non-disturbance

area. Additional width of perimeter buffers afforded along the north, south, and west side of the site also allow both additional space for protecting edge and just-offsite trees, and added room for planting to increase compatibility.

The 100% attached unit plan does represent more compatibility for the adjacent community by preserving trees and some elements of the existing character of the Goodwill site. The increased setback that equals the height of the buildings reduces the impact of the proposed units to adjacent homes. The larger buffer areas allow for greater ability to create landscape buffers with existing or proposed plant materials or both.

### **Recommended Environmental and Compatibility Finding**

Staff recommends that the Planning Board find the 100% plan is more desirable in regards to environmental and compatibility issues. Staff believes that the additional save of a prominent tree stand central to the site, and the added protection/buffering along the site's perimeter, both of which are beyond the accomplishment of the minimum afforestation requirements of the site, justify the environmental finding for 100% attached units.

The plan allows for increased compatibility by providing increased area for greater unit setback, tree preservation and tree planting. The setback, which exceeds the height of the building for side and rear yards, reduces the presence of the proposed homes as viewed from the rear yards of the adjacent homes. The 100% plan allows additional areas to be protected by consolidating development internally to a private street (with the more flexible design standards, greater pedestrian safety and reduced building setbacks), and eliminating the interior space separating units.

The unit setbacks would be far greater than the 8 foot side yard and 20 foot rear yard setbacks required in standard method of development than the 40 and 35 foot setbacks established in the proposed plan. The resultant perimeter open space would increase three fold from .30 acres in the 60/40 plan to .95 acres in the 100% attached unit plan. Overall on-site green space increases from 2.1 acres or 42% with the 40/60 plan of the site to 2.8 acres or 57% of the site with the all attached unit plan. See attached memo dated April 4, 2003 from CPJ. All the open space increases create larger buffers to the benefit of the adjacent residents.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Proposal

The proposal is for a 28 unit townhouse, semi detached and attached home community that requires an environmental waiver in order to have more than 60% townhouses/attached homes. The proposed units are townhouse type units arranged in a neo-traditional street oriented design. They are divided in groups of 2, 4 and 5 units each. The market rate units widths vary from 24 ft. to 32 ft. and their lengths are 63 ft. to 87 ft. Each market rate unit has a garage in the rear. The MPDU units are two stories over two stories in a townhouse type of unit with a surface parking in front and behind the units. They measure 22 ft. in width 32 ft. in length. They are located centrally to the project within the southern line of units. All the units are three stories and are less than 40 ft in height as measured at the front door. They include a fourth level as an in-ground or walk-out (exposed) basement level.

The homes are located to provide setbacks of 40 feet minimum where there are units adjacent to the property line and 35 feet where front doors face confronting units. The orientation of the units matches the adjacent units ie. side yards face side yards, rear yards face rear yards and front doors face confronting front doors.

Internally the units face an internal private street and mews area. The existing driveway from Wisconsin Avenue is re-used as the entry drive and the private street is proposed to connect to the Benton Avenue/ Corsica Drive intersection in the adjacent neighborhood. The drive is circuitous in design and includes three 90 degree turns which, in addition to the significant change in grade up hill from Wisconsin Avenue, creates a naturally 'traffic calmed' street. On street, parallel parking is provided in brick paved parking bays.

The units are designed with a traditional architectural styling with stone, brick and possibly siding ('Hardi Plank' not vinyl) that will be uniform for all housing – both market rate and MPDU housing. Masonry retaining walls are used to adapt the units and walks and steps to the slopes throughout the site. The retaining walls also aid in the retention of the tree save area.

Sidewalks are continuous within the subject property connecting from Wisconsin Avenue to Benton Avenue and to Acacia Drive. The sidewalks are to be constructed of brick pavers with brick crosswalks connecting across driveways and the private street. Interconnecting brick walks and curvilinear staircases with brick steps and stone or masonry retaining walls provide access to and through the site. They will provide connections from the site to the bus stop along MD Route 355 at the southeastern corner; from Wisconsin Avenue to the forest preservation area and Benton Avenue area; and from the mews in the southwest area to Acacia Drive.

Recreation for the site is provided for with outdoor sitting areas, a play area and walk system. The play area is located along the Wisconsin Avenue frontage and connects to the centrally located forest preservation area and to the sidewalk system. An iron fence surrounds it to keep kids on site. Initially the play area was located near Acacia Drive but was relocated in response to concerns of the citizens. A pergola with benches is provided along the mews at Acacia Drive



for resident sitting. Benches are located in a sitting area overlooking the forest preservation area as well.

Landscaping for the site preserves many trees on site and proposes extensive screening, streetscaping and detail planting around the units. The buffer yards on all sides of the property allow for the preservation of a number of mature trees and the addition of numerous evergreen trees and shrubs. To further insure the buffering of units, the applicant has agreed to place a six foot wooden fence at the common boundary per the adjacent neighbors request to the north and west. To the south, the tiered retaining walls will be planted with a variety of evergreen plant material – new and transplanted mature stock – to create a buffer.

Additional site landscaping includes shade trees along the driveway, smaller trees near the unit frontages; the evergreen buffering as noted above, and shade and screen planting around the recreation area. Reforestation areas complete the project's open space landscaping along the Wisconsin Avenue frontage.

Lighting for the street is provided with decorative fixtures that include a 100 watt metal halide lamp on a 12 foot pole. The average footcandle on site is .56 – within the IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) guidelines for pedestrian areas. A more developed footcandle plan is required to review the full distribution of the light on site using a grid print-out of the footcandle values.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Prior Approvals

The proposed site plan will be concurrently reviewed with Preliminary Plan # 1-02038. There are no other past approvals that apply to the site.

**ANALYSIS:** Conformance to Master Plan

**The proposed site plan is in conformance with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan.**

The Community-Based Planning Division has completed its review of the revised Site Plan for the Goodwill Property. The site is zoned R-60 and is located in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan area.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan, approved in April 1990, confirms the R-60 zoning of the site, but it makes no specific recommendations for its redevelopment. On page three, the plan emphasizes, "The major goal of the Master Plan is to protect the high quality of life, the residential character, and the natural environment throughout the area."

**Green Corridors Along Major Highways**

The Master Plan also endorses a policy of "*maintenance and enhancement of residential communities through a program of Green Corridors along major highways.*"

The Goodwill site rises high to the west of Wisconsin Avenue, classified a major highway. The site is hilly with slopes over 25% in some areas, and it contains many large and specimen native trees. Single-family homes in the Maplewood/Alta Vista community surround the site to the west and partly on the north and south. Other uses on the north and south and east of the homes are institutional.

The applicant has requested a waiver from the 40% single-family detached units required in an R-60 development. Using the Optional Method of Development to provide MPDU's on a voluntary basis, the proposed plan fits attached units into the site, conserving much of the open space and providing greater setbacks from the existing homes than would normally be achieved under the standard method R-60 development standards. Many large trees will be saved and integrated into a central community open space area. The landscaping plan enhances the Wisconsin Avenue frontage in conformance with the "Green Corridors" approach called for in the Master Plan.

**ANALYSIS: Conformance to Development Standards**

**PROJECT DATA TABLE**

Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Proposed
Lot Area (ac.):	n/a	4.97 acres
Net Density (dwelling/acre): @6.10x 4.97 acres	30	28
<b>Dwelling Units:</b>		
One-family attached (the MPDU units)	P	4
One Family Semi-detached	P	10
Townhouse	P	14
TOTAL		28
Moderately-priced DU's included -	4	4
Setbacks from street	20 ft	35 ft. @Corsica Dr.
<b>Yard Requirements</b>		
<i>59-C-1.624 For a side or rear yard that abuts a lot that is not developed under the provisions of section 59-C-1.6 (the MPDU development standards), the setback must be at least equal to that required for the abutting lot with no rear yard less than 15 feet</i>		
Front yard	N/a	35 feet at Corsica Drive
Side yard	8 feet	40 feet
Rear yard	20 feet	40 feet
<b>Lot area and width (min)</b>		
One Family Semi Detached	3,500 s.f.	3,503 s.f.
Townhouse	1,500 s.f.	2,278 s.f.
One Family Attached	4 units on one lot	4,851 s.f.
<i>(Per 59-C-1.625 (a)(4) Where an individual lot for each dwelling unit is deemed to be infeasible because of the manner in which individual units are attached to each other, the Board may approve a site plan depicting more than one dwelling unit on a lot.)</i>		
Staff recommends the Planning Board allow the MPDU's to be on one lot given the unique assemblage of the units.		
Max. Building Height	3 stories or 40 feet	
	Provided : 31.5 ft. MPDU's and 30.5 ft. Market Rate Units	
Green Space (%): @2,000 s.f. per unit	56,000 sf or 1.28 ac	112,498 sf or 2.58 acres

Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Proposed
Parking:		
Total @ 2 per unit	56	48 in garage 17 surface pkg

**MPDU CALCULATIONS:**

MPDUs required (12.5% of 28 units)= 3.5 or 4	4	4
--	---	---

**RECREATION CALCULATIONS:**

	Tots	Children	Teens	Adults	Seniors
<b>Demand Points</b>					
For 28 units	4.8	6.2	5.0	36.1	2.0
<b>Supply Points</b>					
Sitting areas (4)	4.0	4.0	6.0	20.0	8.0
Tot Lot (1)	9.0	2.0	0.0	4.0	1.0
Pedestrian System	.5	1.2	1.0	16.2	.9
Natural Area (1)	0.0	0.3	0.5	3.6	0.1
<b>Total Supply Points</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>10.0</b>

**59-C-1.628. Additional Requirements.**

(a) **Usable area.** The usable area upon which the density of development is calculated, as set forth in section 59-C-1.622, is determined by de-ducting from the gross area of the tract the following:

- (1) All land indicated on the master plan of highways as a right-of-way with a width of 100 feet or more; and
- (2) All ultimate 100-year floodplain areas which, in the opinion of the Planning Board, would constitute an excessively high percentage of the total area of the tract.

The Proposed plan does not include right of way and includes no 100-year flood plain.

(b) **Townhouse frontage.** Each townhouse must front on a public street, a private street or a common open space.

The proposed plan conforms.

- (c) **Common open space.** The preliminary or site plan must include a description of the procedure and methods to be followed for assuring the common use and adequate maintenance of common open space included in the plan.

The proposed Plan will include a Homeowners Association to maintain the open space.

- (d) **Dedicated land.** Land dedicated to public use for school and park sites may be included in the calculation of the density of development, provided that development of the remaining land can be accomplished in compliance with the purposes of this section.

The proposed Plan does not include park or school dedication.

- (e) **Development in different zones.** The Planning Board may permit a combined MPDU development in 2 or more zones, each of which has provisions for MPDU development, provided that each of the following conditions is complied with:

- (1) The tracts to be combined for development must share a common boundary with one another sufficient to provide a unified development which will achieve the purposes of MPDU development.
- (2) No uses are permitted in any part of the combined tract except those that are permissible in the zone in which that part is classified.
- (3) The total number of dwelling units in the combined development does not exceed the total number that would be permitted if the component areas of the combined tracts were developed separately.
- (4) The amount of green area in the combined development is not less than the total amount that would be required if the component areas of the combined tracts were developed separately.

This does not apply to the proposed plan.

- (f) **Preservation of trees.** The preliminary plan and site plan must show the location and extent of all trees as well as methods for preservation of those trees selected to remain.

The Forest Conservation Plan complies with this requirement.

**FINDINGS: For Site Plan Review**

1. *The Site Plan is consistent with an approved development plan or a project plan for the optional method of development if required.*
2. *The Site Plan meets all of the requirements of the zone in which it is located. See project Data Table above.*
3. *The location of the building and structures, the open spaces, the landscaping, recreation facilities, and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe and efficient.*

a. Buildings

The building locations are adequate, safe and efficient because they provide for housing sites that allow for adequate access and living space for each unit's occupants and highly visible orientation to each unit. The building locations provide for sufficient separation from adjacent housing to allow for tree preservation and privacy for adjacent existing and proposed housing. The use of townhouse and semidetached housing types allow for more efficient housing locations. The use of the MPDU development standards with the waiver to allow 100% townhouses allow for this greater efficiency of land use that develop less of the land available and preserve more of the open space and existing vegetation. The proposed building orientation close to the street allows for more direct access to the street and thus promotes pedestrian use on site.

b. Open Spaces

The stormwater management concept consists of on-site water quality control, and waiver of onsite quantity control, as approved by the Department of Permitting Services. While quantity control has been waived, all new impervious surface runoff will be diverted from the current overland flow condition through adjoining residential lots, and directed into the public storm drain system, thereby improving an existing drainage problem from storm drainage off Acacia Drive affecting residents along Cedar Way.

Any noise impact affecting the proposed units along Wisconsin Avenue will be mitigated to the extent feasible by architectural treatment as certified by an acoustical engineer.

c. Landscaping and Lighting

The landscaping proposed for the site adequately provides for the preservation of existing mature plant material, shade for the streets, play and sitting areas and screening to adjacent houses. The wide buffer areas and the central tree preservation area save a number of large trees that maintain the existing character of the site as viewed from the neighborhood and adjacent streets. The plant material proposed will be adequate for this climate and some plant selections are native to the Maryland area. The plant material proposed for the retaining walls will soften their appearance and will provide screening. The plant material located adjacent to pedestrian area will be conducive to pedestrian function providing shade and seasonal interest.

The lighting proposed for the site should provide for light levels that will safely direct the public through the site but will not overpower the residential land uses on site and adjacent to the site. The proposed 100-watt lamps for the internal streets are comparable to interior light levels and should not be a nuisance to adjoining homes. Planning Board staff will further review the lighting plan prior to the prior to the release of the signature set. The elements that require review are the lighting plans for the garage areas next to the adjacent neighborhood and a full site footcandle distribution plan. With Planning Board direction, staff shall determine the sufficiency of these plans.

d. Recreation

Recreation demand is satisfied as shown in the recreation calculations table above. The recreation areas are dispersed through the site and connected via the pedestrian system. The recreation provided allows for a variety of recreation opportunities - sitting areas, natural areas and tot lot areas. The open fence will safely contain activity on site.

e. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The street connections to the site are in accordance with the proposed Preliminary Plan providing interconnection between Wisconsin Avenue and the adjacent neighborhood. This interconnection provides for efficiency of vehicular circulation for this proposed neighborhood and the Maplewood neighborhood. The safety of the vehicular system is developed in the circuitous nature design of the street with three 90-degree turns and a significant change in elevation that will slow traffic down. The paved crosswalks accent the intersection of the pedestrian and vehicular systems, creating safer pedestrian crossing by defining the crossing area and highlighting the vehicular stop bar.

Pedestrian circulation is efficient in the provision of sidewalks to connect all parts of the site – both housing and open space areas - to an overall system. The two sets of steps allow for more efficient pedestrian connections over the steep areas

of the site. The sidewalk connections to Acacia and Benton Avenue/Corsica Drive extend efficient pedestrian access to the adjacent neighborhoods from Wisconsin Avenue. The sidewalks safely connect to an existing sidewalk on Corsica Drive (there are no sidewalks on the other neighborhood streets).

Public sidewalks along sidewalks along Wisconsin Avenue will safely improved with the recommended widening.

4. *Each structure and use is compatible with other uses and other Site Plans and with existing and proposed adjacent development.*

The proposed buildings are compatible with adjacent homes because they have a significant setbacks (4 to 5 times the required setback) that result in a setback that approximates the height of the proposed building – a zoning technique typically reserved for use for the development of more dense zones. The building locations allow for the preservation of existing vegetation thus maintaining the character of the site as viewed from the adjacent neighborhood. And where vegetation is not present, fencing and new plantings are proposed and conditioned for the site that will create a vegetative buffer between new and existing development. The combination of the setbacks and new or existing vegetation and fencing will minimize the differences in building height and mass between the new and existing development.

The topography of the site also aids in the compatibility of the proposed project, the units slope down and away from the level of the existing homes.

The control of lighting using low wattage and house shields if necessary will add to the compatibility of the existing and proposed development by reducing off- site light spread or glare.

The MPDU's blend with the market rate units in a more seamless way by fitting into a pattern of 'groups of two' within the southern row of housing. The use of identical building materials for MPDU and market rate units creates an internal compatibility within the project.

The placement of the recreation area at the northern Wisconsin Avenue corner of the site allow for improved visibility and orientation to the play area without placing it adjacent to existing homes a the sites other perimeters.

The vehicular connections that allow for connections between the existing and proposed neighborhoods create a more even distribution of traffic for the adjacent neighborhood (by providing another point of access) thus, creating a more compatible situation for them.

The activity associated with the proposed residential uses will not cause any negative effect on the adjacent residential uses.



5. *The Site Plan meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 22A regarding forest conservation.*

The proposed Forest Conservation plan conforms to the FCP regulations by providing on-site afforestation and tree preservation per Approval of final FCP (per standard condition language) revised March 28, 2003.

## **APPENDIX**

- A. Correspondence referenced in report.
- B. Citizen letters are within the Preliminary Plan Packet