





### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Prior Approvals**

The subject property was rezoned to the RNC zone as part of the Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) implementing the Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan as approved by the District Council in October of 1998.

The zone was written especially for this particular area of the county and the uniqueness of the Sandy Spring-Ashton Community. The intent of the zone is to provide areas of large acreage lots, or conservancy lots, and a variety of sizes for larger lots, with common and rural open space, extensive recreational opportunity, and protection of scenic and environmentally sensitive areas. The purpose of open space is to preserve the rural character along Norwood Road.

The site is being presented to the Planning Board concurrently with the Preliminary Plan of subdivision (#1-04011).

### **DISCUSSION OF ISSUES**

#### **ANALYSIS: Conformance to Master Plan**

The 1998 Approved and Adopted Master Plan for Sandy Spring/Ashton recommended rezoning of the property, known as the Farquhar property from the RE-2 Zone to the (RNC) Rural Neighborhood Cluster Zone. The proposal meets the requirements of the Master Plan. The Master Plan recommends 70-75% rural open space and site plan proposes slightly over 70%. The plan provides rural and common open space in conformance with the requirements of the RNC zone.

The proposed layout and road design reflects the intent of the Master Plan to preserve as much of the site as possible in rural open space and limit the impact on environmentally sensitive areas. The plan encourages clustering and creating a rural setting around the village center and in the rural entries to guide development towards the villages and away from rural surroundings. High priority reforestation areas have been identified on the Farquhar property for conformance with the forest conservation regulations.

The Master Plan describes the roadways, pedestrian connections and bikeways in detail. The Olney-Sandy Spring Road (MD 108) is a master-planned east-west Arterial Road (A-92) between Howard County to the east and Dr. Bird Road to the west, with a minimum 80-foot right-of-way. The road is the main street for Sandy Spring and Ashton village centers. The Master Plan also recommends regional trails along MD 108, with connections to the Rural Legacy Trail and the Northwest Branch Trail that connect to the Sandy Spring, Woodlawn Manor Park and to the northwest Branch park. A Class I (off-road) bikeway (PB-66) is recommended for MD 108 along its north side between MD 650 and Dr. Bird Road.

The Master Plan also describes Brooke Road as a Primary Residential Street (P-2) connecting MD 650 and MD 108 with a recommended right-of-way width of 70 feet and two travel lanes. A local trail and Class III (on-road) bikeway (PB-68) is also recommended along Brooke Road between MD 108 and Chandlee Mill Road.

Community-Based Planning staff finds that the proposed plan meets the intent of the Master Plan by providing the 70% open space, maintaining a rural setting and providing a diversity of lot sizes. The proposed plans identify the high priority reforestation areas on the site and retention requirements, meeting the intent of the forest conservation law.

# ANALYSIS: Conformance to Development Standards

Zoning

# PROJECT DATA TABLE

**RNC** 

Proposed Use	32 Single Family Lots Utilizing the Optional Method of Development		
Gross/Net Tract Area	70.5 Acres		
Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	<u>Proposed</u>	
Maximum Number of Lots	32	32	
Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.):	4,000	16,000+	
• from the street	15	15	
• from the side yard	8	8	
• rear yard	15 & 35*	5 & 35	
Minimum Lot Width at the R/W (ft.):	25**	25	
Minimum Building Height (ft.):	35	35	
Maximum Lot Coverage (%):	35	35	
Rural Open Space (%): HOA (34.36 Acres) Lot 32 (15.4 Acres)	70%	70%	
Common Open Space (0.24 Acres)		1%	
Total Impervious Area (5.4 acres)	10%	10%	

<sup>\*</sup> Rear yard undefined in the zone, 15' & 35' requested of Planning Board

<sup>\*\*</sup> Requesting less than 25 feet from right-of-way due to 10% impervious cap restrictions in the Patuxent Primary Management Area

# **RECREATION CALCULATIONS**

Demand Points	<u>Tots</u>	<u>children</u>	teens	<u>adults</u>	seniors
For 32 SFD units • SFDI (18)	1.8	3.6	4.0	15.3	1.4
• SFDII (14)	1.8	<u>3.36</u>	<u>3.5</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>1.5</u>
Total Demand	3.6	7.0	7.5	30.1	2.9
Supply Points					
On-Site Facilities:					
Picnic/Sitting (2)	2	2	3	10	4
Bike System	0.2	0.7	1.1	4.5	0.3
Pedestrian System	0.4	1.4	1.5	13.6	1.3
Natural Areas	0.0	0.3	0.7	3.0	0.1
Natural Trails	0.2	<u>0.7</u>	<u>1.1</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>0.4</u>
On-Site Total	2.7	5.1	7.5	35.6	6.2
Off-Site Facilities:			•		
Softball	<u>0.9</u>	<u>1.8</u>	<u>2.6</u>	<u>12.5</u>	<u>6.2</u>
Total Supply	3.7	7.0	10.1	48.1	2.2
% of Demand met					
on/off site	101	100	135.1	159.7	283.1

<sup>\*</sup>The credit for each off-site facility must not exceed 35% of its supply value for each population category. These numbers reflect that limitation.

#### **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. None is 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 locations of the buildings and structures, the open spaces, the landscaping, recreation facilities, and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe and efficient.

# a. Location of Buildings

The layout of the houses is adequate and efficient. The buildings have been clustered around a central road leading into the property, looping as a modified cul-de-sac with an internal green area at one end and terminating in a cul-de-sac to the north.

The location of the houses as shown on the site plan is conceptual. The precise location and site grading will not be determined until the owner has chosen a specific house type and a house location plan with grading, to be developed by the project engineer. Although the houses are conceptual in context, square footage calculations have been assumed for each lot in the PMA for maximum lot coverage.

### b. Open Spaces

The open spaces are generously laid out and provide attractive, efficient and accessible green space to the entire community.

Over 50 acres of the 70.5 acre site will be retained as open space. Of this area, 50.0 acres will be preserved as rural open space, as well as an additional 0.24 acres as common open space. The designation of rural and common open space is required by the RNC zone. Approximately 22.24 acres will be owned and maintained by the HOA and the additional 28.0 acres will be part of lot 32 as a conservancy lot.

The Master Plan requires that 70-75% of the site be retained as rural open space. The plans indicate that 70% will be preserved as rural open space and less than 1% will be created as common open space; therefore meeting the requirements of the Master Plan for this property.

The applicant has submitted the required document for review by the Planning Board: Meadowsweet Open Space-Use, Ownership, Development & Maintenance.

(See Appendix B). This document establishes the permitted uses, the initial construction responsibility and maintenance responsibility of the developer.

The Stormwater Management Concept for the proposed development was approved with conditions by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) on May 15, 2003. The stormwater management concept consists of on-site water quantity and quality control via a system of surface sand filters and retention basins.

### c. Landscaping and Lighting

The landscaping and lighting provides safety and efficiency for residents and visitors in the rural setting.

Landscaping and screening consists of the formal streetscape treatment for the public road and cul-de-sac. Planting is also proposed in the common open space within the islands containing the seating areas and internal pathway. The entrance to the site from Brooke Road provides a formal identity into the property. Buffer plantings have been included along the 5-foot sidewalk and equestrian easement to distinguish the boundaries of the subdivision and trail.

The natural vegetation will form an edge along the Board of Education property. The remainder of the lots backs up to rural open space mitigating the need for additional landscaping.

Proposed street lighting consists of Colonial Post-type fixtures, twelve feet in height creating a rural neighborhood effect. All of the proposed lighting will be located within the proposed rights-of-way for Meadowsweet Drive and Court. The lighting will not cause any negative glare on adjacent residential properties.

#### d. Recreation

Recreation demand is satisfied as shown in the recreation calculations table above. Proposed recreation facilities consist of a sitting area and pedestrian system in the common open space. Additional facilities throughout the site consist of natural areas, natural trails, pedestrian system, equestrian trails and an open play area.

#### e. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation in general is adequate, safe and efficient.

Sidewalks within the community are provided on the south side of Meadowsweet

Drive and on the east side of Meadowsweet Court. A waiver to sidewalks on both sides of a public road has been requested by the applicant due to impervious restrictions within the Patuxent Primary Management Area (PMA). A five-foot wide sidewalk will also be provided by the applicant from Meadowsweet Drive to the Board of Education property line, between lots 11 and 12.

A four-foot wide equestrian trail easement and natural trail within a 15-foot Public Access Easement (PAE) will be provided by the applicant through Rural Open Space-Parcels D and E, from Meadowsweet Drive to MD 108. This trail will provide a connection from MD 108 on the west side of Sherwood Elementary School to the northern property line, running parallel to Brooke Grove Foundation and connecting to Brooke Road. The trails will assist in providing future connections to the Bancroft property and Rural Legacy Trail systems to the south and Sandy Spring properties and developments to the east of the site.

Vehicular circulation is safe and efficient and consists of a reduced width tertiary public road with twenty-six feet of paving to minimize impervious coverage in the PMA. A waiver has been requested by the applicant and supported by staff for the reduced width tertiary road and modifications to the cul-de-sac.

4. Each structure and use is compatible with other uses and other site plans and with existing and proposed adjacent development.

The new houses are clustered preserving over 70% of the site as open space. All but one of the lots back up to the rural open space. Each structure and use is compatible with other uses and with existing and proposed adjacent development.

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

5. The site plan meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 22A regarding forest conservation.

Forest Conservation requirements have been met by the preservation of 11.89 acres of existing forest, with 5.93 acres of reforestation planting required to mitigate for forest clearing.

A Category I Conservation easement will be placed over the forest conservation and stream valley buffer areas as shown on the Forest Conservation Plan. All of the rural open space parcels, with the exception of the stormwater management facility will be protected by a forest conservation easement.

# **APPENDIX**

- A.
- B.
- Memorandums from other Divisions/Agencies

  Open Space-Use, Ownership, Development and Maintenance Exhibit

  Waiver Request for Cul-de-sac modifications and an increase in the clear area for the C. PUE