

Shady Grove Sector Plan

Worksession #4 – County Service Park, Metro North, Buffer Area and Shady Grove Road Technology Corridor

Relevant Testimony: Summary and Letters

Land Use – Buffer Area	
Pat Labuda, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	The Buffer Area must be properly designed and uses should be limited to parks, schools, recreation facilities, and low-density housing.
Douglas Duncan, County Executive	Reconsider the proposed use change from industrial to residential. Because of adjacent transportation infrastructure, townhouses may not be appropriate.
Public Facilities – Jeremiah Park	
Shelly Winkler	Supports proposed Jeremiah Park and a new library at that location, which needs a recreation and cultural center
David Stopak	Supports Jeremiah Park and the public open space surrounding the Metro station for this underserved area.
Barbara Raimondo, Dennis Kirschbaum	The Plan should include a library next to the planned Jeremiah Park and an elementary school at another appropriate site that does not interfere with the planned park.
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	The planned library should be integrated with other uses to allow shared parking and residents can walk to it and other destinations.
Douglas Duncan, County Executive	The Plan does not justify the need for this park, and doesn't take into account the recreation and park facilities in adjacent municipalities. References to this park should be removed from the Plan along with references to an aquatic center and community center. Recommends a local park be part of the Plan.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Association	Supports Jeremiah Park.
Kay Guinane	The Plan should not recommend Jeremiah Park as a back-up elementary school site.
Public Facilities – Schools – Casey at Mill Creek Site	
John Compton, Mayor, Washington Grove	An elementary school on Casey at Oxbridge serves the existing and new communities, as well as creating an appropriate environment for schoolchildren.
Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble, David Stopak, Jan Davis, Sally Mansfield	An elementary school is the best use of the Oxbridge/Casey site adjacent to the historic meadow.
Richard Hawes, Director, MCPS Dept of Facilities Management	Supports location of school on Casey at Mill Creek so long as stormwater management can be accommodated off site. Failing this alternative, MCPS will explore other sites including Blueberry Hill or a site within the redeveloped County Service Park.
Jim Snee	The Amity Drive school reservation was never formally released and the current Plan provides only one elementary school, making the planning area dependent on surrounding area for school capacity.
Chip Berman	Locate the elementary school in proximity to the community, not at Blueberry Hill Park.
Gary Steele	Urges the Board to find a way to keep the original school site proposed for an undeveloped area near Amity Drive, rather than increased housing development on the Oxbridge site.

Pat Labuda, President Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	Support the Amity elementary school site. Plan to double residences must also reserve sufficient space to accommodate the students at all levels, especially in an already crowded system.
Kay Guinane	The elementary school proposed on the Casey site is a crucial element of the Plan. This is the most appropriate place for the school. It is safe and providing local recreation.
Land Use – Shady Grove Road Corridor – Casey 2	
Barbara Sears, Yum Yu Cheng representing owner	This site has gone through process to be annexed into the City of Gaithersburg where it would be rezoned CD for two office buildings totaling about 100,000 square feet. Housing was deemed inappropriate at this location. This use is consistent with the Plan's recommendations. Support Plan recommendation with two modifications: that the property be included in Stage 1 and that the building orientation not be limited to MD 355.
Land Use – Shady Grove Road Corridor – Casey 6	
John Compton, Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble, David Stopak, Bob Booher, Elizabeth Klinger, Jan Davis, Sally Mansfield	This site should be redeveloped with a height limit of no more than 50 feet and at a density lower than the .5 FAR allowed in the I-3 Zone (preferably lower than .3). No residential uses should be permitted on this site, and an adequate buffer that includes a green space transition should protect existing residences.
Bob Harris, Bob Youngentob, Eakin Youngentob	Support the Plan's recommendations but rezoning of this site should include an option for housing at a level consistent with existing zoning as an option if the County Service Park is not relocated. Requesting a PD-18 overlay, with a cap of 420 units, be applied to both Casey 6 and 7 to achieve more sale than rental units.
Pam Lindstrom	This area currently has an excess of employment and the industrial zoning proposed next to Washington Grove casts a cloud on that community.
Land Use – Shady Grove Road Corridor – Casey 7	
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Association	The industrial zone by Giant could be a technology park, something that serves the community.
Douglas Duncan, County Executive	This site should be considered for development of a local park/library site only after need is determined and other areas sites evaluated.
Land Use - Oakmont Industrial Park – Robert's Oxygen	
John Compton, Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble, David Stopak, Bob Booher, Elizabeth Klinger, Jan Davis, Sally Mansfield	The current I-1 zoning of this site, which directly abuts a residential street, is not appropriate. Future I-1 uses should not be permitted and a green buffer must be acquired between the site and residences.



Post-It™ Fax Note 7671		Date 1/8/04	# of Pages 4
To Karen Kumm	From Lisa Rother		
Co./Dept.	Co.		
Phone # 3	Phone #		
Fax # 3014951304	Fax #		

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
 ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Douglas M. Duncan
 County Executive

December 15, 2003

Mr. Derick Berlage, Chairman
 Montgomery County Planning Board
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Berlage:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Public Hearing Draft Shady Grove Master Plan. I have reviewed the plan and am in agreement with many of its main goals and objectives. There are, however, several issues that I want to address before the final draft plan is transmitted to the County Council.

I am generally supportive of the planning concept proposed in the Plan, especially for those areas closest to the Metrorail station. Encouraging high density development around the Metro station makes the most appropriate use of the valuable land that is most proximate to Metro. The mixed-use urban village at the Metro station, protection of the existing Derwood residential communities, and development of an Employment and Technology Corridor along Shady Grove Road are all goals with which I can agree over the long term.

However, the Plan does not adequately address the issues associated with meeting these goals. The recommendations are not for an area that is a greenfield, where development can progress on empty land. Instead, almost all of the uses recommended in the Plan rely on redevelopment of land that is currently used for a variety of purposes, many of which are industrial. Redevelopment of these sites will be costly and possibly impractical given the lack of suitable industrially zoned land in this area of the County.

County Services Park

I am concerned about the recommendation for a wholesale relocation of the County Services Park, particularly the financial and operational aspects of implementing such a plan. Neither the County government nor the school system has funds available at this time for relocation of specific facilities and, in fact, there are plans for improvements to several facilities in the area.



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I believe that individual components associated with the land use concept should be studied in further detail on a site by site basis. I am concerned about the provision of a 20-acre active park in the area. The Plan does not justify the need for this Park, just as it does not adequately address why all of the County Services Park is recommended for relocation. The Plan does not take into account the recreation and park facilities in the municipalities adjacent to the Planning area. Further, the recommended park land use would not produce any financial value from the land that could then be used for generating financing for relocation of government facilities. In addition, the idea of taking a developed industrial site and turning it into a site with ballfields and grass seems to be one that is impractical and would prove to be costly.

I recommend that each component of the County Services Park must be reviewed individually, including the possibility of moving some of the elements of the Service Park internally and maintaining a section of the industrial use in this area. The area to the east of Crabbs Branch Way, in particular, may be suitable to remain as an industrial use with public facilities in place. The Executive Branch staff is going to be working to identify the requirements for replacement and relocation of the current functions located in the County Services Park. Any relocation effort will require the support of not only the Executive Branch, but the Planning Board as well. Possible relocation sites and funding mechanisms should be included in the Plan.

Technology Corridor

I recommend that the designation of the Technology Corridor be supported and expanded to additional sites if possible, and that housing only be recommended for sites where it would not be in conflict with adjacent industrial uses. In addition, I recommend location of a Fire and Rescue facility, library, and/or neighborhood park on Casey site 3, and for possible development of a 10-acre local park/library site on site 7, should a need for a local park site be fully demonstrated after evaluation of all sites in the area, including sites in municipalities.

Metro West, South, and North Neighborhoods

I support the recommendations for these areas for redevelopment as part of the mixed-use urban village to support Metro ridership. I do question, however, the need for a new zone to be established in the area. This concept is not well-detailed in the Plan, and should be expanded.

Buffer Area

I believe that the recommendation for the change in use of these parcels from industrial to park and medium density residential should be reconsidered. Because of the highway transportation infrastructure located around and near this site, its use as a park and low density

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townhouses may not be appropriate. The Casey property (sites 6 and 7 in the Shady Grove Road Technology Corridor) could provide a better location for a park site. I recommend continued public industrial use for the sites in this buffer area, although a relocation of the existing uses may be appropriate.

Transportation

I recommend that the Shady Grove Plan include a fuller discussion of the InterCounty Connector and MidCounty Highway Extended. As for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), the language in the Master Plan should be flexible about the type of transit service to be provided in the CCT and should identify issues associated with planning the CCT.

I am concerned that the Sector Plan goal of 35 percent transit mode share is unrealistically high and I recommend that the roadway analysis implications be reexamined with a more realistic modal share. In addition, I request that language in the Plan recommended increased transit service to Shady Grove be amended to clarify that all route decisions must be examined with respect to countywide service standards and must compete for available funding.

Public Facilities

I recommend that references to Jeremiah Park as a replacement use for the MCPS bus depot be deleted from the Plan, and the need for this scale of park be reexamined. In addition, the references to an aquatic center and community center should be removed from the Plan. The Executive should recommend that a local neighborhood park be included in the Planning area, with a simple shelter building perhaps with parking shared with the library.

I recommend designation of the parcel at the corner of Shady Grove Road and MD 355 for a future fire and rescue facility, and the location of a library within the Shady Grove Sector Plan area, perhaps to share a site or building with another public facility planned for the area.

General Comments

I recommend that a separate chapter on Historic Preservation should be added to the Plan to highlight Old Derwood's past.

I am skeptical of the ability of this area to support Urban Maintenance Districts and Development Districts, and believe references to these districts should be removed from the implementation section of the Plan. In addition, the assumption that linking a transportation management district and opening a transit store will alone achieve a commuter mode share milestone to permit development to occur should not be used as the basis for staging for this

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Plan. Commuter Services has been working to establish a transportation management district for years without success and linking development to this accomplishment is unrealistic.

I recommend the exploration of designating Shady Grove as a TDR receiving area.

As always, I thank you again for the opportunity to review and address this plan. The Executive Branch staff will be attending your worksessions on this plan to discuss these issues further and answer any questions that you may have on our detailed comment.

Sincerely,



Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

DMD:jgs



850 Hungerford Drive • Rockville, Maryland • 20850-1747

Telephone (301) 279-3425

Department of Facilities Management, 7361 Calhoun Place, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20855

FAX -301-279-3737

January 9, 2004

Mr. Malcolm Shaneman
Development Review
Maryland-National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Shaneman:

Re: Cascy Property @ Mill Creek (Preliminary Plan #1-02022)

This is to re-confirm our earlier request that an acceptable elementary school site be placed in reservation for 3 years, in accordance with Section 50-31 of the Montgomery County Subdivision Code, as a condition of approval of the referenced preliminary plan application.

The current plan to be presented at the Development Review Committee meeting on January 12, 2004, shows a school site that consists of approximately 9 acres, or 3 acres short of the Board of Education's 12-acre standard. Due to the inferior size, construction of a school will only be feasible if the applicant is also required to provide off-site afforestation and storm water management quantity control. This should also be a condition of the preliminary plan approval.

Prior to site plan, further review will be necessary to determine whether the site is feasible due to constraints of stream valley buffer, road alignment, and disturbance to the historic meadow buffer. Should this site prove to be unsuitable for elementary school construction, Montgomery County Public Schools will request that an alternate site be provided either from this development, the formerly designated Blueberry Hill elementary school site, or the Shady Grove Services Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should there be additional questions, please contact Janice Turpin, team leader for Real Estate Management, at 301-279-3131.

Sincerely,

Richard G. Hawes, Director
Department of Facilities Management

RGH:saw
Copy to:
Mr. Davis
Mr. Shaneman
Ms. Kumm
Mr. Lavorgna

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Harriet Henderson
Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nkosi Yearwood
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

FROM: Harriet Henderson, Director
Department of Public Libraries

DATE: April 1, 2004

SUBJECT: Shady Grove Section Plan

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Thank you for referring the Shady Grove Sector Plan to the Department of Public Libraries for review and comment.

As we have stated in our discussions with you, a public library in this sector of Montgomery County is highly desirable. Our departmental Strategic Facilities Plan includes the future need for an additional library in this general area based on population growth and distance from existing libraries. The primary service area for a branch library averages 2.5 miles (80% of the users are drawn from this vicinity). The residents of the Shady Grove Road/Muncaster Mill area clearly fall outside the primary service areas of existing branch libraries. The growth generated from the strategies presented in the Shady Grove Sector Plan will create increased demand for a public library in this area. We can easily foresee that the addition of a public library in this area would have similar results to the Quince Orchard Library which opened in 1999, with the majority of its users being new library users.

A public library is a valuable civic presence in development areas. Our busiest branch libraries will draw an average of 200-250 people per hour of service; there are over 7,000,000 visits to Montgomery County's public libraries each year.

We believe a public library in the Shady Grove Sector Plan is a desirable and compatible function to include in the Plan.

HH:sh

Cc: Barbara Norland



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April 6, 2004

ROBERT R. HARRIS
301-216-6607
rharris@hklaw.com

Ms. Karen Kumm
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Shady Grove Sector Plan (Casey Sites 6 & 7)

Dear Karen:

As you prepare for the April 29, 2004 worksession regarding both the County Service Park area and Casey Sites 6 & 7, we want to review with you our understanding of your expected recommendations for these properties. As we have attended the worksessions so far, we have seen a strong Planning Board commitment to the housing goal which Casey Sites 6 & 7 can address, either in terms of a County Service Park relocation or the independent development of Casey Sites 6 & 7 for housing use. Our understanding of your intended recommendations would support this goal.

COUNTY SERVICE PARK RELOCATION

One potential use for Casey Sites 6 & 7 is the relocation of a substantial portion of the County Service Park (potentially the Department of Public Works and Transportation Ride-On Bus and Highway Services facilities and the Park and Planning maintenance facility). The land use recommendations in the Staff Draft Plan appear to appropriately accommodate this option. As you are aware, we initiated discussions with Montgomery County more than a year and a half ago. Eakin/Youngentob Associates and RST Development are still committed to this option and are awaiting anxiously the release of the County's Request for Expressions of Interest now scheduled for April 19. We look forward to the

Ms. Karen Kumm

April 6, 2004

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Planning Board's support for your recommendations so that we are in a better position to respond the County's REOI.

MIXED RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE/R&D

We all recognize the challenges which the County and any private developer will face in relocating the County Service Park. While you have made significant headway with the County agencies and we are thrilled that the REOI is scheduled for release, we have also been careful to recognize that relocation of the County Service Park to Casey Sites 6 & 7 might not occur. Under any circumstance, however, you have indicated an interest in downzoning the property to I-3, with a recommendation for mixed housing, office, R&D use, and potential PD zoning for a portion of it. From our discussions following the release of the Staff Draft, I believe your final recommendations to the Planning Board will include the following:

- Downzoning both parcels 6 & 7 to I-3 with a recommendation of Optional Method of Development for both, allowing housing on both sites if the County Service Park does not relocate there.
- A maximum non-residential density of .30 FAR.
- A cap of 130 dwelling units on Parcel 6.
- PD-18 floating zone for Parcel 7.

This would accommodate the plan we have presented to you previously showing a mix of townhomes and condominium units on Parcel 7, multi-family units with an affordable housing focus on the southern portion of Parcel 6, and low-intensity office/R&D uses on the northern portion of Parcel 6 adjoining the Roberts Oxygen facility. The total yield would be limited to 420 dwelling units (approximately 300 on Parcel 7 and 120 on Parcel 6). Building heights would be limited to four stories.

We believe this option will be responsive to the Planning Board's objectives. First, it will allow the property owner to agree to downzoning the sites from I-1 to I-3. Second, it will provide a housing opportunity close to transit. Third, it will improve the overall mix of units in the Shady Grove area by providing a significant townhouse component unlike most of the properties directly at the Metro station. Fourth, these properties can provide housing resources within the very near future. Both are vacant, unlike most of the properties in the Shady Grove area.

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STAGING

We understand the Planning Board is expected to discuss the staging issue at a worksession in May. Should the issue come up at the April 29 worksession, however, we would like to see the discussion re-focused from the current staging concept in the Draft Plan to one where any residential project could proceed. Although the Sector Plan is likely to provide for residential development on a wide variety of properties, the Planning Board should recognize the likelihood that staging of development will occur through a natural process over a long period of time. Given the costs of redeveloping WMATA sites with structured parking paid for by the developer, relatively few Metro station properties have actually seen housing development. The point at which such development can be justified at Shady Grove is unknown. Additionally, as reflected by the many years it has taken to work through WMATA issues for development at the White Flint and Twinbrook stations, we believe the earliest you would see development of the Shady Grove Metro properties would be a minimum of 5 years and possibly 10 or more. Most of the other properties in the Sector Plan recommended for housing development are currently occupied by car dealerships, offices, industrial and retail uses. Even with the strong residential market today and interest rates at historic lows, it is likely to be some time before the economics support relocating many of these businesses. This is particularly true for car dealerships and industrial uses for which there are relatively few suitable locations.

On the other hand, Casey Sites 6 & 7 are vacant and are under contract to a development team familiar with residential development and ready to proceed. Therefore, if the County decides not to relocate the County Service Park to those properties, our clients are ready to proceed immediately with housing development. Therefore, should the staging element of the Sector Plan not be deleted in its entirety, at a minimum, it should say that any housing project can proceed irrespective of its location within the Sector Plan. The subdivision process and the County's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, including the new school capacity test, provide ample staging controls in addition to market conditions and the economics of redeveloping existing uses. None of the other 11 Metro stations in Montgomery County has a property specific master plan staging restriction. All but two allow any property to proceed if it meets County APFO requirements. The other two, Bethesda and North Bethesda, contain limited staging components which have not precluded any housing project so far from proceeding. We believe the staging section of the Draft Plan either should be deleted or should be modified to indicate that any housing project can proceed subject to subdivision approvals and compliance with APFO tests including the new school capacity test.

Ms. Karen Kumm
April 6, 2004
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We would like to discuss these issues with you as you prepare your Staff Report for the April 29 worksession in order to be sure that we have a correct understanding of your recommendations. I will plan on calling you in the next few days.

Cordially yours,



Robert R. Harris

cc: John Carter
Sue Edwards
Nikosi Yearwood
Bob Youngentob
Scott Copeland

1839446_v1

**Shelley Winkler and David Stopak
501 Brown Street
P.O. Box 1423
Washington Grove, MD 20880
(301) 330-6446**

April 19, 2004

Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Sliver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Re: Shady Grove Sector Plan

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

I am writing to urge the Board to retain the 13-acre meadow adjacent to the Town of Washington Grove as the significant historic resource it is, described in detail in the staff report adopted by the Board in the Board's designation of the meadow as Legacy Open Space property.

As you know, the Town as a whole is a National Register Historic Site. The meadow has particular countywide and national significance in terms of its association with the Town, a heritage resource of national import with exceptional architectural character and rural viewsapes. The meadow also contributes significantly to the Legacy program's heritage theme of the Rail Community Cluster, of which the Town is a part. The meadow provides a protective buffer of the historic resource, which becomes even more important with the proposed, intense development at the Shady Grove Metro.

Use of that meadow for active recreation would require regrading and improvements totally inconsistent with the historic passive open and rural nature of the meadow and the Town's historic heritage. The meadow serves as contextual open space for the Town by helping convey a rural location and a sense of historic time and place, which would be defeated if active recreation was established there.

We appreciate your serious consideration of the need to protect a small part of the historic setting of the only (?we think?) entire Town in the County listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Thank you very much for your serious attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Shelley Winkler and David Stopak

Dorothy G. Tippens
117 Grove Road, PO Box 87
Washington Grove, MD 208

Derrick P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-Natural Park + Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Chairman -

I am writing to request that the Board act to preserve as is the historic meadow on the Casey site adjacent to Washington Grove in its natural state.

Keeping the meadow as natural open space contributes to the preservation of the historic character of the Town of Washington Grove and its designation as a National Register Historical site.

There is also the fact of the meadow as a legacy open space being a significant resource as an undeveloped place which is heavily occupied by birds, wildflowers, foxes, deer, groundhogs and other flora and fauna. I believe strongly that both adults + children benefit greatly from walking around exploring the meadow and observing the inhabitants. This benefit would surely be lost if the meadow were regraded and developed for active recreation and all the plants and animals either dead or fled.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely -

Dorothy G. Tippens

(12)

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

April 21, 2004

Dear Chairman:

Thank you for your hard work planning appropriate development for our county. This is an incredibly important issue that links directly to why my wife and I chose to move here in June 2003. We bought a house in Washington Grove because it is a charming, quiet community with a rural character. It is a perfect place to raise a family. To keep the quality of our community intact, I request that you please ensure that the Shady Grove Sector Master Plan specifically preserve the historic meadow on the Casey site adjacent to Washington Grove.

Having moved here from Long Island, New York I know first-hand how the lack of sufficient natural open space can have adverse effects on both the quality of life and beauty of towns. The attributes that once made Long Island so desirable have been lost to overdevelopment (hence, the reason why I and others left). My wife and I moved here to get away from all of that; please don't make us have to leave here too.

Please ensure that the Master Plan prevents active recreation and any other use which would require any development in the meadow on the Casey site. Natural open space for passive recreation is the best use of this land. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,
David Tortorelli
16 Maple Avenue, Washington Grove, MD 20

April 21, 2004

Dyck P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland-National Capital
Park & Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman,

We are writing to urge the Planning Board to help preserve the designated 13 acres adjacent to Washington Grove as natural open space under the Legacy Open Space Program.

With the proposed intense development of the Shady Grove sector, it is extremely important that this space remain as a natural meadow to protect and provide a buffer to the Town. We urge the Planning Board to ensure that this space remain as it has always been - natural and beautiful!

Thank you for your consideration to this issue.

Sincerely,

Cynthia and Steven Werts
410 Oak Street
Washington Grove, MD 20880

102 Ridge Road
General Delivery
Washington Grove MD 20880
April 21, 2004

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Berlage,

I am writing to urge you to preserve the 13-acre meadow designated as Legacy Open Space adjacent to the town of Washington Grove. Our town is a National Register Historic Site. This field helps define the character of the town and preserve its rural heritage. My historic cottage overlooks the meadow. The name of the cottage is "Clear View" which reflects the picturesque vista: the rural meadow with its abundant flora and fauna, the tree line which frames each morning's spectacular sunrise.

The Shady Grove Master Plan will radically change the area to the east of the meadow. Please preserve the Legacy Open Space from development. Using the field for active recreation or any other purpose would drastically change the nature of the meadow and tragically change the character of the adjacent town of Washington Grove.

Sincerely,

John M. Mahaffey

Daniel Gutes
P.O. Box 582
Washington Grove, MD. 20888

Mr. Derek P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland - National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

It has come to my attention that the historic meadow on the Casey property (formerly) adjacent to Ridge Rd. in Washington Grove is being considered as a site for active recreation purposes. It seems to me that in keeping with the board's designation of the area as a historic resource under the Legacy Open Space program that it would be more suitable to maintain the site as it now stands for passive recreation uses.

In view of the increased development occurring in this part of the county and the decrease in availability of sites such as this, it is important to preserve if possible what little remains.

Yours truly,

Daniel J Gutes

April 21, 2004

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
The Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760
cc: Town of Washington Grove

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The reason for this letter is to highlight the fact that there is not a unanimous consensus among the citizens of Washington Grove. Not all of us spurn progress and development for no other reason than a longing for past, "simpler" times. Many of the other letters you receive are from the same people who petition for smaller class sizes and low-income housing for the "less fortunate." The same mentality complains about long commute times & then fights against the ICC. In other words, they want to have their cake and eat it too. The real question at hand is: does an owner get to decide what to do with his/her own property? Does the government respect the property rights of its citizens? Or, as in this case, do property owners have to submit to the whims of neighboring governments whose officials they cannot elect? You will hear all sorts of opinions from Grove citizens and possibly an "official" statement from the town government. However, the town & its citizens have no right to control private land outside of their jurisdiction. The town is only wasting the Board's time & taxpayer money on this issue. They probably could have found a way to purchase the land years ago considering all the effort & time they have put into controlling something that is not theirs.

I would encourage you to resolve this by not creating a situation where owners' without control can exist in Montgomery County. Let private owners develop their land under existing statutes.

Sincerely,

Margot Bohan & Ned Cyr
122 Grove Avenue/PO. Box 301
Washington Grove, MD 20880

April 21, 2004

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman
Mont. Co. Planning Board
The MD Nat'l Capital Park & Planning Comm
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760
RE: Shady Grove Sector Plan

Dear Chairman & Members of the Planning Board:

We are writing to express our strong support for the preservation of the historic meadow (13 acres) on the Casey site adjacent to Washington Grove. We are relatively new residents here but certainly not too new to recognize the significance of this meadow to all of us in the surrounding community.

The meadow also contributes to the Legacy Open Space Program's heritage theme of the Rail Community Cluster, of which the town of Washington Grove is a part. The meadow should be designated as an historic resource under the Legacy program, and the Washington Grove National Register Historic Site should continue to be protected.

Finally, please ensure that the Master Plan prevents use of this meadow for active recreation or any other use which would require development in the meadow.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspectives & suggestions.

Sincerely,
Margot Bohan & Ned Cyr

