

## **LAND USE AND ZONING HISTORY**

The property has been classified under the RE-2 Zone since the adoption of the 1954 Regional District zoning and this zoning has been confirmed by comprehensive zonings in 1958, 1980, 1987, 1990, and 2002, the last comprehensive zoning for this area of the County. (See Map 4) The Approved and Adopted 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan continues to recommend the RE-2 zone and the land use map indicates the site as a school/education facility. The Plan text does not specifically address the School site.

Commander Bullis and his wife initially founded the Bullis School in 1931 as a boarding school located in the District of Columbia that functioned as a one-year preparatory school for the Naval Academy. Subsequently, the school relocated to Silver Spring and continued as a boarding school with expanded grades 9 through 12.

1. During the 1960s, Commander Bullis acquired the Potomac site. The original special exception, Case Number CBA-1344, to permit operation of the School at its current campus, was granted on January 2, 1963.
2. On May 9, 1979, in Case Number S-687, the Petitioner was granted a modification to permit a revision to the site plan and an extension of time to implement the special exception. The time of implementation for the special exception was extended for five years.
3. On August 24, 1989, in Case Number S-687-A, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to the special exception to permit approval of a revised master site plan. The time for implementation of the special exception was extended for five years.
4. On June 8, 1994, in Case Number S-687-A, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to the special exception to permit construction of bathrooms and shower facilities and certain other modifications to the master plan.
5. On August 22, 1997, in Case Number S-687-C, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to the special exception to permit the temporary installation of two modular classrooms for a period not to exceed three years.
6. On October 19, 2000, in Case Number S-687-D, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to allow relocation and construction of the Arts Center; relocation of existing tennis courts to the eastern edge of the access road directly opposite the existing tennis courts and tennis bubble, the deletion of a proposed cross campus road, and the completion of the loop road extending from the western access point of Falls Road to connect with the existing road south of the academic facilities and immediately north of the Arts Center.
7. On January 12, 2001, in Case Number S-687-D, the Board of Appeals denied a request for administrative modification seeking a three-year extension on the implementation of the master plan and a two-year extension on continued use of modular classrooms.
8. On June 26, 2002, in Case Number S-687-E, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to allow retention of seven accessory sheds.
9. On November 20, 2002, in Case Number S-687-E, the Board of Appeals resolved that the time to implement the campus Master Plan was extended for one year from the effective date of the Resolution. (March 4, 2003)
10. On July 23, 2003, in Case Number S-687-E, the Board of Appeals granted a modification to allow an addition to the existing motor pool facility.



11. On January 16, 2004, and February 27, 2004 the Petitioner filed petitions for proposed modifications, Case Numbers S-687-F and S-687-G, the two cases now before the Board.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL S-687-F**

The applicant offers the following information on proposed physical improvements in support of application S-687-F:

#### New Lower School Classroom Building

Bullis proposes to construct a new one-story facility in the southwest quadrant of the campus to serve as the new Lower School building. The new building location will be directly across from the existing South Hall, where the Lower School is currently housed together with the Middle School.

#### New Upper School Classroom Building

Bullis proposes to raze the existing Upper School building (North Hall) and construct a 48,900 gross square foot L-shaped building to house the Upper School. The new structure will be located at the northeast end of the academic buildings that comprise the "spine" of the front campus.

#### Temporary Trailers

In conjunction with the implementation of the revised Master Plan proposed by this application, Bullis requests that it be permitted the use of seven (7) trailers on campus in order to temporarily house the Upper School and Middle School while construction of their respective projects is underway. The trailers would consist of six (6) double wide trailers for classrooms and one (1) single trailer for administrative staff, and are proposed to be located in the new student parking lot to be built behind Founder's Hall and the new Upper School. Bullis plans to phase the Upper and Middle School projects over a two year period, but requests permission to retain the trailers for up to three years in order to provide for potential delays in fundraising and/or construction.

#### South Hall (Middle School) Renovation

Once the new Lower School and Upper School buildings are complete, Bullis proposes to gut and renovate South Hall, which currently houses both Lower and Middle Schools, into an up-to-date Middle School-only facility.

#### Dining Hall Expansion/Kitchen Expansion to Founder's Hall

Bullis proposes to construct 1,600 net square feet of additional building area to the Dining Hall, divided into two 800-square-foot wings on either sides of the existing room. The existing kitchen (4,350 net square feet) will be gutted/renovated and expanded by an additional 1,000 square feet, in order to accommodate the added equipment and kitchen staff needed to serve 900 students.

### Athletic Facility Additions

A six-lane, 25-yard-long indoor swimming pool with banked tiers of fixed concrete seating for viewing, locker rooms, offices for the pool manager, an equipment room and storage area for pool maintenance items, comprising a total addition of 12,600 gross square feet.

An indoor practice facility, or field house, located east of the existing building and northeast of the pool addition. The 145' x 180' facility will contain 29,650 square feet of field area finished with a synthetic turf practice field and track.

At the intersection of the existing and proposed buildings will be a traffic circle, providing access to the Athletic Center main entrance.

### Stadium

Bullis proposes to demolish and replace the stadium house with a slightly larger facility, equipped to provide adequately sized and fully functional locker rooms for boys, girls, and visiting teams, as well as coaches. Bullis also proposes to replace the current track, stadium field and irrigation system.

### New Indoor Tennis Facility

Bullis proposes to remove the School's existing inflatable tennis "bubble", as well as the four tennis courts located inside, and to replace the entire facility with a new Indoor Tennis Facility.

In conjunction with this application, Bullis requests that the new Master Plan reflect the actual number and orientation of existing tennis courts located across the road from the present tennis bubble.

### Additional Parking Spaces/Areas

The total number of parking spaces currently on the campus is 434. The School proposal would bring the total number of spaces to 535, a net increase of 101 parking spaces:

- (a) A new 30-space faculty/staff parking lot located adjacent to the southern corner of the Blair Center, across from the two faculty houses.
- (b) 10 new faculty/staff parking spaces across from the motor pool/ maintenance facility entrance, with associated sidewalk improvements to enhance safety and access to the Blair Center, as well as the new Lower School.
- (c) 7 additional faculty/staff spaces adjacent to the motor pool/ maintenance facility entrance.
- (d) 16 additional faculty/staff parking spaces alongside the road at the tennis center.
- (e) 54 net new parking spaces in the expanded student parking lot.

### Playing Field Expansion

Bullis wishes to expand the athletic playing field located between the student parking lot and the stadium.

### New Sidewalk Linking Central Campus to Athletic Center

Bullis proposes to construct a sidewalk, extending from the Blair Center, past the tennis facility, head residence and pond, to the Athletic Center. Bullis plans at the same time to extend an existing 18-inch storm water line under the sidewalk, between the current outfall near the tennis courts to the culvert at the base of the head residence driveway.

### Front Entrance

Bullis proposes to redesign and reconstruct its existing brick wing walls flanking the main entrance on Falls Road with slightly longer brick walls that incorporate the existing sign elements.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL S-687-G**

The applicant offers the following information in support of application S-687-G. This petition requests a modification to the existing special exception pursuant to section 59-G-2.19(b) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit summer camp and special activity programs as described below:

### Schedule

The summer programs are operated Monday through Friday from mid-June until mid-August. Some sessions are of one-week duration; other programs, such as the Full Credit Academic Courses, have a three to five week term. The Bullis campus is in active use from approximately one week after the regular academic year ends in June until approximately two weeks before the next school year commences. The principles that will guide the operation of those programs will include the following:

1. Bullis students, and achievement of the School's educational mission, will have priority over any such adjunct activities.
2. Arrival and departure of non-Bullis participants for such activities will be scheduled to occur outside of the School's peak periods of traffic as well as the peak periods of traffic on the surrounding roadway network.
3. No activity will be allowed that would cause a condition to occur that would be different or that could be differentiated from the School's normal activities.
4. Bullis will not allow use of campus facilities by outside groups, except for: charitable organizations raising money for public causes; other non-profit organizations with educational missions; informal sports groups not exceeding twenty members on campus at any time; local non-school sports teams that include Bullis students; and existing groups described above.

### Hours of Operation

Almost all Bullis summer courses, camps and activities are operated between 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM, Mondays through Fridays. A few camps offer evening sessions during selected weeks, generally operating between 6:00 PM and 8:30 PM. Instructors, teachers and counselors, will arrive as early as 7:00 AM to prepare for the arrival of campers and to organize for that day's activities.

The staff may remain on the Bullis grounds until 5:00 PM to clean up activity sites and store equipment and materials. The limited outside use activities generally occur during the time periods of 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM or 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM during weekdays, or between 8:00 AM and 10:00 PM on weekends.

#### Number of Staff

Each of the summer camps, programs and classes described above maintains a different ratio of instructors to campers/students. Therefore, the total staffing for the School summer programs varies depending on the actual programs offered and, to some extent, the age of the campers registered in the respective programs. Each summer, Bullis employs up to 300 faculty, staff and junior counselors specifically for summer programs, in addition to the School's year-round administrative, maintenance and food service staff. During any given week, the total summer staff on campus typically does not exceed 100, since most summer staff work five or fewer weeks each summer, and camps are staggered throughout the summer.

#### Summer Campers

Participants in the School's summer programs range in age from five (5) to eighteen (18). The enrollment in the summer programs varies depending on the week of the summer and the programs that are being offered during that week. The School proposal is that the number of campers on the campus at any given time will not exceed the approved enrollment of the School itself. At present, School enrollment is capped at 604 students. If the S-687-F petition for modification is granted, the number of campers involved in activities on the property at any given time will not exceed the number of students authorized by the Board of Appeals in that petition.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Master Plan**

The property is located within the 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan area. The Master Plan confirmed the existing RE-2 zone and the land use map indicates the site as a school/education facility. The Plan text does not specifically address the School site. However, a private educational institution is allowed by special exception in the RE-2 Zone.

### **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

The petitioner has notified adjoining and confronting property owners and homeowner and civic associations and posted signs on the property. No community opposition has been raised to date by the proposed modification.

A brief summary of the School's outreach efforts is as follows:

January 7 and 14, 2004: Meeting of immediate neighbors at Bullis. Each contiguous neighbor was mailed an invitation to one of two evening meetings scheduled to present the School plan and hear community comments. The School followed up with reminder phone calls before both meetings. 11 neighbors attended the first meeting while 12

attended the second meeting. One letter received from a Nantucket Terrace neighbor after the January 7th meeting expressed appreciation for the School's efforts over the years to seek their views on various iterations of the Bullis master plan. (See Map 2)

A few neighbors on Democracy Boulevard expressed concern about the impact of the new Lower School building on the views from their back yards. The proposed building is one story in height, with residential scale massing, and will be 320' to 560' from the rear decks of the eight neighboring residences. The School indicated that they would be willing to enhance the vegetative screen along their back property lines. The School also agreed to prepare a perspective rendering of the proposed building, and to mount posts on site showing the corners of the building, and to reconvene to discuss the issue further.

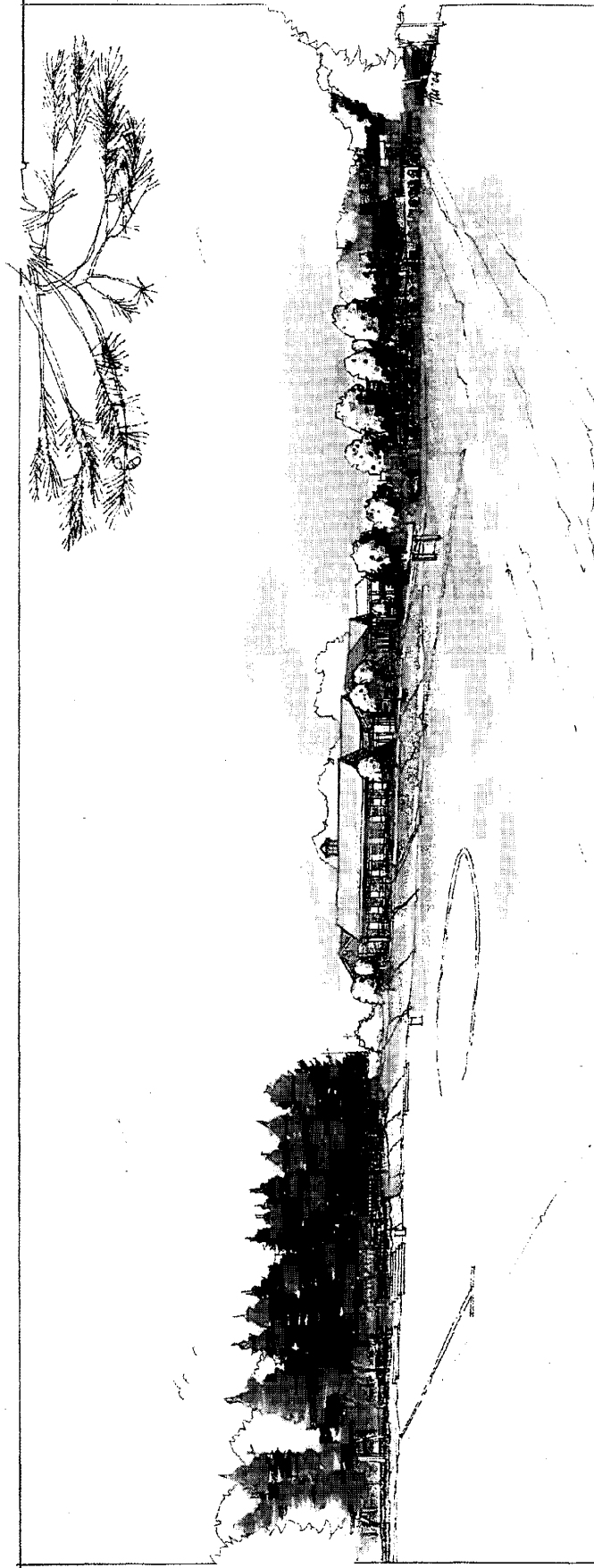
January 28, 2004: Presentation to the West Montgomery County Citizens Association (WMCCA) board. Questions following the presentation covered a number of topics, including phasing, faculty/staff growth, and traffic impacts. No serious reservations were expressed. The School agreed to provide additional information concerning the increase in impervious area that the master plan would entail, as well as information on the Lower School appearance issue. The WMCCA has indicated to staff that, after careful review of the plans, they do not intend to oppose the petition.

April 12th, 2004: Follow-up meeting with Democracy Boulevard neighbors, at Bullis. Once the perspective rendering was complete (See Graphic 5) and the corner poles installed, the School mailed invitations to each Democracy Boulevard neighbor. Two neighbors attended, representing the families that had initially expressed concerns about the Lower School view issue. The School presented the rendering and discussed in more detail the vegetative screen that the School would be willing to plant. The School agreed to plant a supplemental screen of evergreens, Green Giant arborvitae (*Thuja plicata*), or similar, this fall, well in advance of the earliest possible date to begin construction of the new Lower School building. This row of trees will supplement the existing screen of white pines (15-30' tall). According to the School, based on the perspective rendering and the promised screening enhancement, the concerns of both neighbors were satisfied.

March 15th, 2004: Meeting with Mr. Randy Elliott, president of the Normandy Farms neighborhood association. School representatives met Mr. Elliott at Bullis to discuss the plan and answer any questions. Mr. Elliott was most interested in traffic impacts, since his association is not contiguous to the campus. The School spent much of the time discussing the proposed traffic mitigation plan. According to the School, Mr. Elliott expressed support for the plan at the end of the meeting.

## **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

Development Review staff reviewed the subject petitions and determined that the proposed improvements to the stadium, which include cosmetic and structural modifications, are in conformance with Chapter 50, section 50-20(a)(3). The other modifications proposed under this special exception will require full compliance under





Chapter 50 of the Subdivision Regulations and approval of a preliminary plan of subdivision from the Montgomery County Planning Board.

### **LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING**

The Bullis School property is extensively landscaped with mature plantings. The applicant proposes to augment the landscaping with 158 trees and shrubs to screen parking lots, and to enhance new buildings. The proposal includes a mix of 30 deciduous canopy trees at 3-3.5" caliper, 18 deciduous understory trees at 2-2.5" caliper, 13 evergreen trees at 8-10ft. and 97 evergreen shrubs at 6-8ft. The species and sizes selected are all appropriate. Supplemental screening by evergreen trees is depicted to the rear of the Athletic Center addition, in order to ameliorate the view from the adjacent neighbor on Stapleford Hall Court. Staff recommends that Landscape Plan SE-23 be amended to include the Arborvitae screen to the rear of the Democracy Boulevard residences referred to above.

The applicant has submitted a Lighting Plan and Photometric Study for new or expanded parking lots as follows:

- Area 1. Between the proposed Lower School and the adjacent proposed parking expansion.
- Area 2. The proposed new parking lot north of the staff housing.
- Area 3. The expanded senior parking lot adjacent to the practice field.
- Area 4. The private drive and expanded parking area between the Athletic Center and the tennis facility.
- Area 5. The proposed parking expansion north of the Athletic Center.

The luminaries selected for the new parking areas are unobtrusive and provide adequate parking area illumination while minimizing lateral light spillage. Foot-candles range from a maximum of 13.8 to a minimum of 0.1 with a level of zero at property lines. It is the School's intent to use the selected light fixture to replace existing streetlights on campus as they reach the end of their useful service lifetimes. Lighting fixtures identical to those used on the new parking lots will also be added to the currently dark stretch of campus road between the tennis facility and the Athletic Center, to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety at night.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the subject modifications and recommends approval with the following conditions:

- Approval of a final forest conservation plan by M-NCPPC Environmental Planning prior to issuance of sediment and erosion control permit. The Plan shall specify forest protection measures and proposed afforestation areas. A Category I Forest Conservation easement or comparable long-term protection measure shall be placed on remaining forest and the stream valley buffers.

- Approval of a finalized storm water management concept by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) prior to preliminary plan approval for this site.

### **Forest Conservation**

This application has an approved Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD). It indicates that there are 19.3 acres of existing forest, much of which is located within stream valley buffers. A preliminary forest conservation plan has been approved indicating that 1.2 acres of forest will be removed in order to make the proposed improvements. No mitigation is required according to the law, however the applicant has proposed that afforestation of the un-forested stream buffers be included as part of the final forest conservation plan. In addition, staff anticipates that adjustments to the preliminary storm water management concept, to be finalized with the subsequent preliminary plan, will further reduce the amount of forest removal necessary for the proposed improvements.

### **Water Quality**

This property is located primarily within the Ken Branch sub-watershed of Cabin John Creek watershed. Part of the area fronting Falls Road drains to the Kilgour Branch sub-watershed of Watts Branch. According to the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS), Ken Branch has good stream conditions with fair habitat and is a watershed protection area. Kilgour Branch has fair stream conditions with good habitat and is a watershed restoration area.

### **Storm Water Management**

A preliminary concept for storm water management has been reviewed by DPS and by planning staff. In addition to currently facilities, the concept includes several new bio-retention facilities and a new storm water management pond. These facilities are located outside of the stream valley buffers. The concept will be finalized and approved by DPS before submission of a subsequent preliminary plan for this site.

### **Environmental Guidelines**

The current impervious level for this site is 17.3%. The proposed improvements will bring this level to approximately 19.3%. Stream buffer encroachment is limited to outfalls for the storm water management facilities.

### **Noise**

Based on the submitted information, noise levels generated by this site should not measurably increase because of the proposed improvements.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation Planning staff have carried out an Adequate Public Facilities review of the subject special exception modifications. The School proposes to increase its enrollment to a total of 900 students from its current enrollment of 604 students under the special exception application S-687-F. The school also proposes, under the separate special exception application S-687-G, to operate Summer Programs with a maximum enrollment of 900 students.

**Recommendation**

Transportation Planning staff recommends the following conditions for transportation requirements related to approval of this application:

- The student enrollment under the special exception application S-687-F is limited to 900.
- The student enrollment of the summer programs under the special exception application S-687-G is limited to 900.
- Vehicles destined to the school are not permitted to be stacked (queue) on off-site streets during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods.
- The applicant shall implement a comprehensive traffic management program as described in the submitted Transportation Management Plan.
- The applicant shall address the final alignment of Falls Road as part of a preliminary plan of subdivision for the proposed expansion of enrollment to 900 students.

**Local Area Transportation Review**

Based on existing driveway counts, the current site generates 624 peak hour trips during the AM peak period (7:30 to 8:30 am) and 166 peak hour trips during the PM peak period (5:30 to 6:30 pm). With the proposed expansion, the school would generate 1,085 peak hour trips during the AM peak period and 290 peak hour trips during the PM peak period.

The critical lane volume (CLV) impacts of the proposed expansion on critical intersections in the vicinity of the site were analyzed and are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Intersection Capacity Analysis with CLV During the Peak Hour						
Intersection	Existing		Background		Total	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Falls Road (MD 189)/Bells Mill Road	885	995	885	995	967	1,015
Falls Road & South Glen Road/ Democracy Boulevard	1,449	1,320	1,449	1,320	1,514	1,350
Democracy Boulevard/Seven Locks Road	977	1,311	977	1,311	987	1,317

As shown in the above table, the three intersections analyzed are currently operating at acceptable CLVs (below 1,525) and this acceptable level will continue for the background development condition (existing traffic plus approved but not-built subdivisions in the area) and the total development condition (background traffic plus traffic from the site).

Staff has reviewed the April 1, 2004, traffic statement relative to the proposed operation of summer camp and special activity programs and finds that the enrollment cap of 900 students can be accommodated without adversely affecting the area roadway system. Both petitions therefore pass Local Area Transportation Review.

### **Truck Traffic**

Precise counts of truck traffic have not been taken at Bullis. In addition to the School bus transportation and visiting team buses, the School is served by a typical array of trucks for food service, waste collection, office supplies, postal services, maintenance and construction. Observations by staff did not indicate any problems related to truck traffic, either on site, or at the property entrances.

### **Site Access**

Access to the school exists on Falls Road (MD 189) and on Democracy Boulevard. (Graphics 6-7). The stadium access on Falls Road (Graphic 8) is closed immediately before, during and after stadium games. The following is a general description of Falls Road and Democracy Boulevard:

**Falls Road (MD 189):** Classified as a major highway (M-14) with two lanes and a shared use path (Class I bikeway) proposed within the master plan right-of-way of 120 feet. This highway provides access from the I-270 interchange to the site. A possible future alignment of this roadway is recognized in the school master plan.

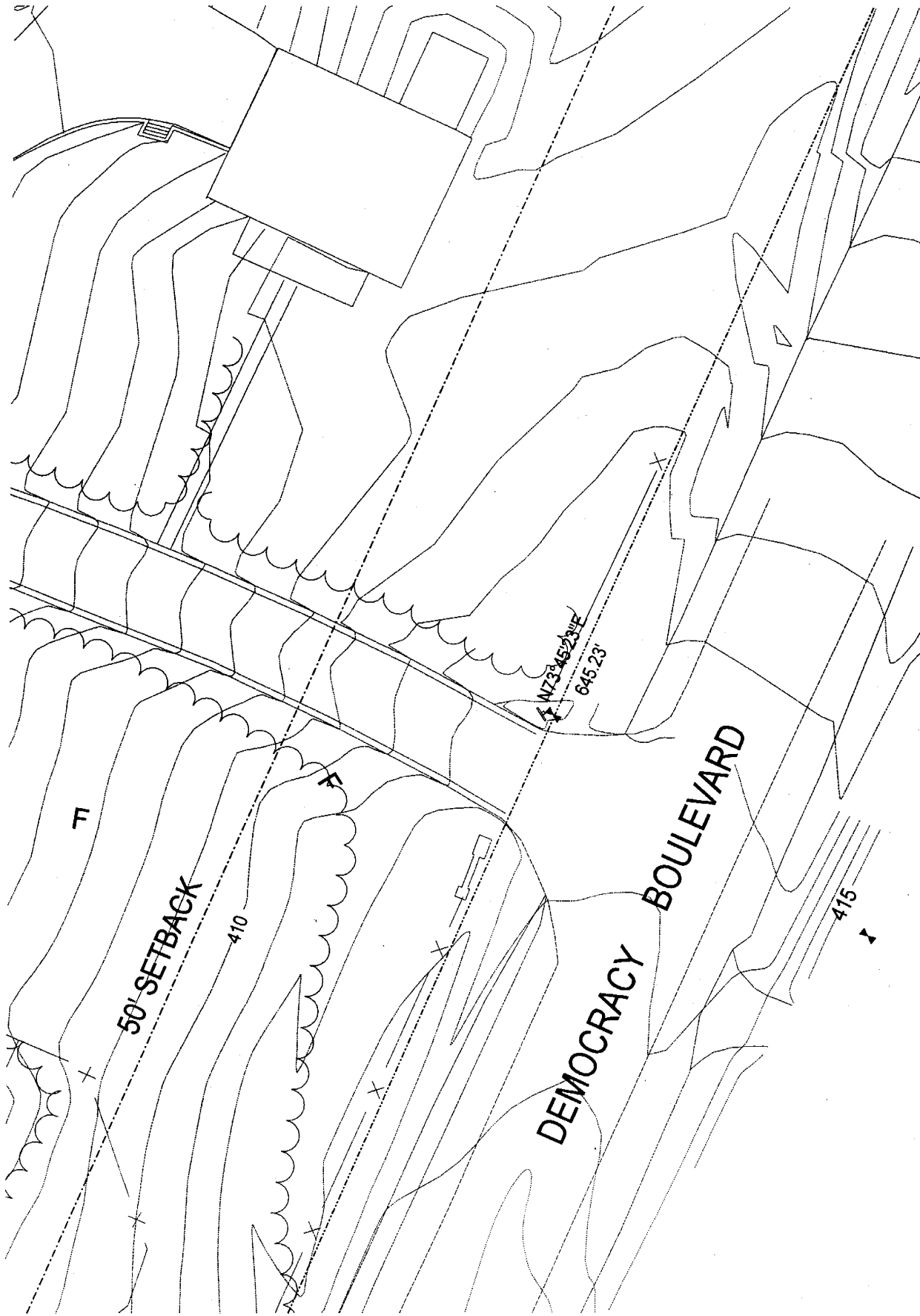
**Democracy Boulevard:** Classified as an arterial roadway (A-73) with two lanes and a shared use path (Class I bikeway) proposed within the master plan right-of-way of 80 feet.

The Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan proposes adding a signed Shared Roadway designation (Class III bikeway) to both roads.

### **Potential Re-alignment of Falls Road**

Falls Road is classified as a major highway with a right-of-way of 120 feet from River Road to the Rockville City line. The potential master plan re-alignment of Falls Road affects several properties between the intersections of Democracy Boulevard, South Glen Road and Eldwick Way, including the Bullis School and the Revenue Authority's Falls Road Golf Course. Representatives of the School have met with staff and the State Highway Administration and a study is ongoing to identify an alignment that addresses both the public interests and the concerns of adjacent property owners. Any special exception approval will be followed by submission of a preliminary plan of subdivision during the review of which the location and status of the Falls Road right-of-

Graphic 6



THE BULLIS SCHOOL  
Potomac, MD  
2003

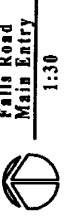
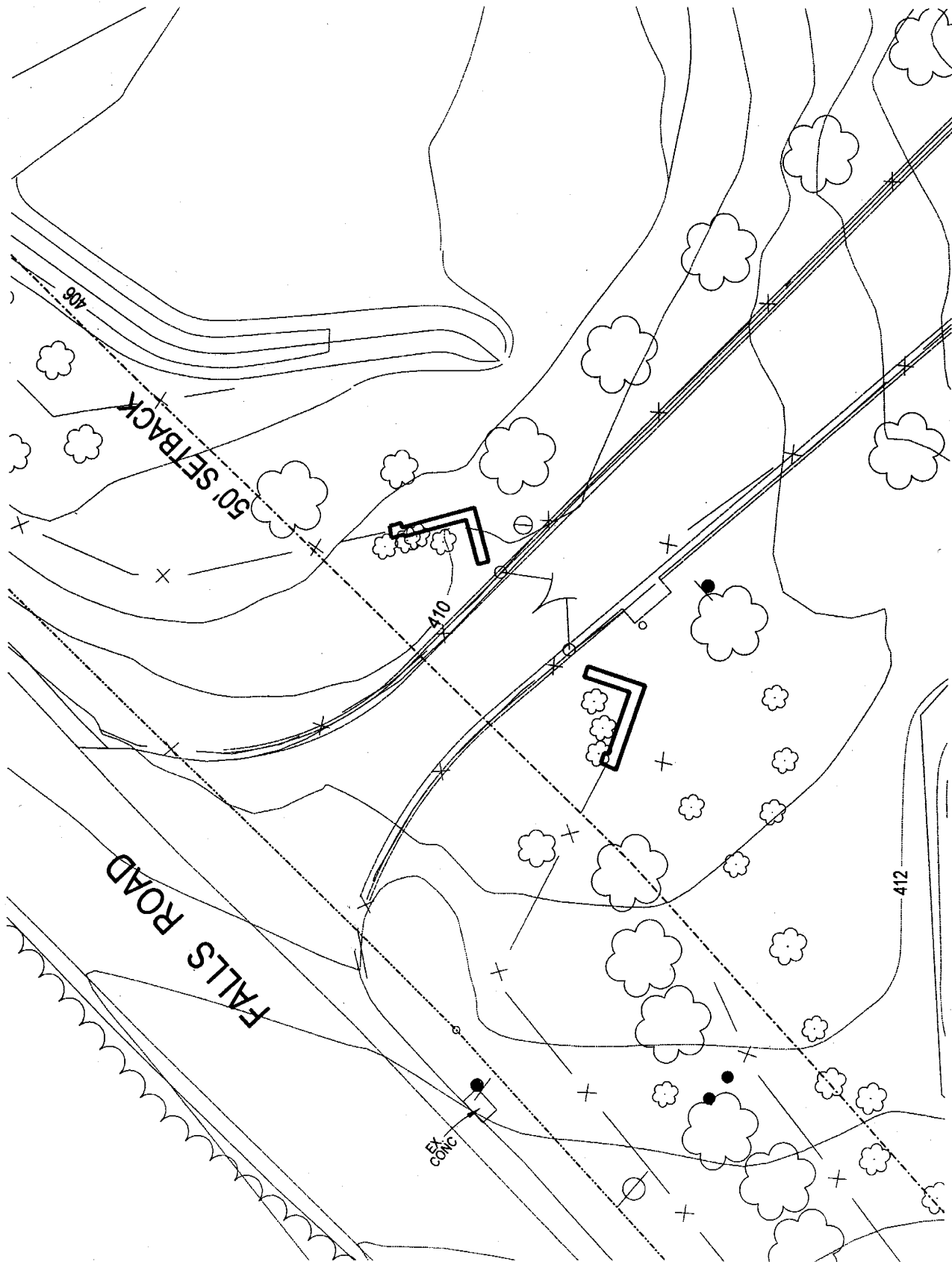
Bowie-Gridley Architects  
Washington, D.C.



Democracy Blvd  
Entry  
1:30



Graphic 7

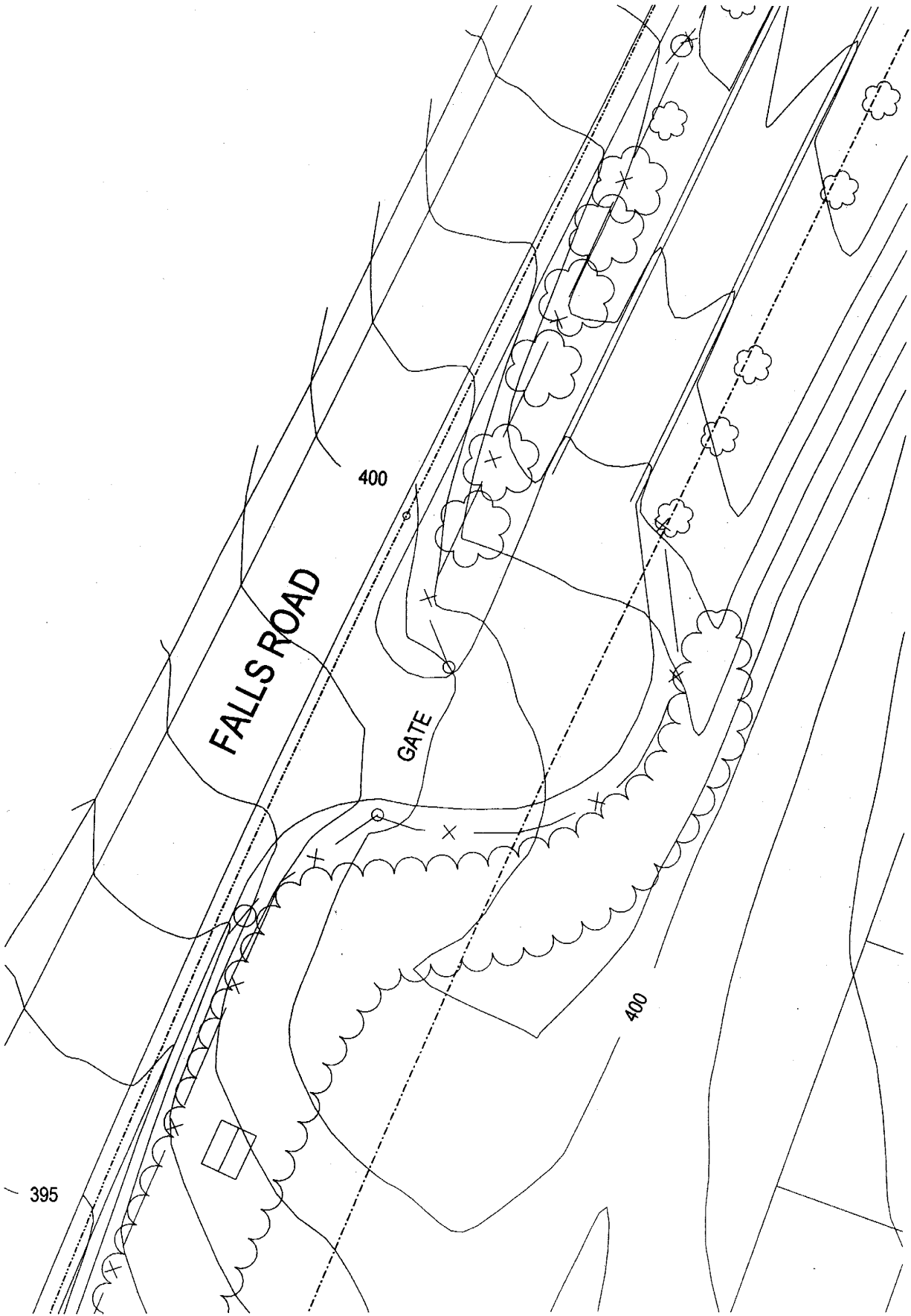


**THE BULLIS SCHOOL**  
Potomac, MD  
2003

Bowie-Gridley Architects  
Washington, D.C.



**Graphic 8**



way will be conclusively determined. Staff's review of the School master plan indicates that no physical structures are proposed within the re-alignment of Falls Road as recommended in the Potomac Master Plan.

### **Pedestrian Access**

Pedestrian safety between the Athletic Center and central campus is compromised by the lack of a sidewalk. The School proposes to construct a sidewalk extending from the Blair Center, past the tennis facility, head residence and pond, to the Athletic Center.

There are no sidewalks existing along either Falls Road or Democracy Boulevard. Based on the pedestrian data collection contained in the applicant's traffic study, there is considerable pedestrian activity crossing Falls Road in the vicinity of the School's main entrance. A total of 34 pedestrians were observed crossing Falls Road at this location during eight hours of observation. There is no lead-in sidewalk from the bus stop on Falls Road at the School's main entrance. It is recommended, since there is some usage by both students and staff at the school of the bus service along Falls Road, that a lead-in sidewalk from Falls Road be included as a part of the expansion plans. It is also recommended that the School work with Montgomery County and the State Highway Administration to secure public funding and approval for a sidewalk from the existing northbound public bus drop-off/pick-up point onto the campus gate to make pedestrian movements to and from bus stops on Falls Road easier and safer.

### **Transportation Management Program**

Bullis submitted a Transportation Management Program (TMP) to manage the flow of traffic at the School's points of access so that vehicular movements to and from the campus are made in a safe and efficient manner without impeding the flow of through traffic on either Falls Road or Democracy Boulevard. The TMP includes transportation management elements to ensure that queuing and circulation of vehicles on campus is conducted in an organized and efficient manner to support the School operations.

The TMP describes a comprehensive traffic management program, including designation of a staff person as Transportation Coordinator. The Coordinator will implement traffic management elements associated with carpooling, bus transportation, and vehicle operations. The other major component of the TMP is management of vehicular traffic including use of an off-duty police officer at the Democracy Boulevard exit during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods to facilitate the movement of cars off campus.

The TMP also includes traffic management to ensure that no school-associated vehicle stacking (queuing) occurs on off-site streets during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods. This is a requirement of the County Code and the queuing diagrams submitted by the School (Graphics 9 and 10) demonstrate that no waiting/queuing within the Falls Road right-of-way is to occur at any time. The queuing diagram assumed a 40% increase of queuing vehicles assuming that implementation of trip mitigation programs contained in the TMP would reduce the number of vehicles per student, a desirable goal, but one not assumed in the LATR study. The queuing diagram demonstrates that the longest vehicle queue of 41 vehicles would not extend to the right-of-way of Falls Road. Staff notes that if the queue length remains proportional







to the proposed 50% increase in student enrollment, the maximum queue length would be 44 vehicles and still would not extend to the Falls Road right-of-way.

The TMP describes means by which the School staff will actively monitor queue lengths on a daily basis and direct arriving vehicles to store in a parking area if the queue lengths extend beyond the campus entrance gate.

Staff finds that the proposed transportation management elements are reasonable to handle the projected school traffic associated with the proposed expansion in a safe and efficient manner.

### **Policy Area Review**

The site is located in the Potomac Policy Area where staging ceilings are not applied in Policy Area Review because development is controlled by zoning, and by water and sewer constraints. Policy Area Review is therefore not applicable.

### **Summary**

Transportation staff concludes that the proposed expansion of the Bullis School up to an enrollment of 900 students, and the proposed operation of the summer camp and special activity programs with an enrollment cap of 900 students can be adequately accommodated with implementation of the proposed Transportation Management Program.

### **COMPATIBILITY**

The School's 78-acre campus is sufficiently expansive to accommodate 900 students and to ensure a harmonious and compatible use with adjacent properties. By way of comparison, a typical public high school may have many more students on a site of 30 acres or less. The projected maximum density at full enrollment of 900 is 11.5 students per acre, compared with the zoning ordinance maximum of 87 students per acre. The Master Plan also depicts significant buffers of forest and/or open space between the School's facilities and the School's neighbors. Setbacks are in excess of the minimum requirements of 50 feet, 17 feet and 35 feet for the front, side and rear yards, respectively.

The Master Plan displays both internal cohesion and external compatibility by sensitively integrating the proposed additions in an architecturally harmonious manner. All proposed new buildings or expansions are below the 50 feet height limit for the RE-2 Zone. The new one story Lower School has been sited so that it forms a terminus of the main cross-campus sidewalk that currently links South Hall, the Library, and North Hall. This location will extend and strengthen the central campus quadrangle lawn. Adjacent to the south side of the building will be a playground area for the Lower School students. The existing Lower School playground area, located adjacent to South Hall and built in 1994 with pressure-treated lumber, will be razed and replaced by turf grass. The new playground that will replace it next to the new Lower School building will be similar in size, and likely fabricated in metal and plastic, with muted colors chosen to blend into the campus landscape.

The new Upper School structure will be located at the northeast end of the academic buildings that comprise the "spine" of the front campus. The building will be three stories in height, but will appear to be only two stories on the sides of the building facing the Library and Founder's Hall due to the grading in that area.

The exterior of the indoor swimming pool will conform to the building materials of the existing Athletic Center while the indoor practice facility, or field house addition, is planned as a pre-fabricated metal building, with a partial veneer of concrete block to match the existing Athletic Center and to present an attractive view from all sides.

The School stadium grandstand is a landmark structure on Falls Road. The stadium house under the grandstand will be demolished and replaced with a slightly larger facility, equipped to provide adequately sized and fully functional locker rooms for boys, girls, and visiting teams, as well as coaches. The reconstructed grandstand and new stadium house will be integrated with a brick veneer on all sides. The four-foot chain link fence that surrounds the track will be replaced with a four-foot high brick wall, to unify and enhance the appearance of the entire stadium facility.

The new Indoor Tennis Facility will be partly sunken into the site and covered with a more permanent attractive structure lower in height than the current tennis bubble by approximately 12 feet.

The new Master Plan reflects the actual number and orientation of existing tennis courts located across the road from the present tennis bubble. The previous Master Plan showed three courts. When the School's first Forest Conservation Plan was finalized in September 2000, shortly after the Master Plan showing the three relocated courts was approved, the establishment of a stream buffer forced a redesign of the new tennis court site. The design that emerged as best protecting the stream and minimizing the need for unsightly and expensive retaining walls involved locating the new courts on two terraced pads. With that design, it was then possible to add a fourth court, making two pairs of courts, while meeting storm water and other regulatory requirements. The revised four-court design was thus included in both the final Forest Conservation Plan as well as a revised storm water management plan, both of which were approved by the County prior to construction.

The existing brick wing walls flanking the main entrance on Falls Road will be reconstructed with slightly longer brick walls that incorporate the existing sign elements, School name, motto, and signboard, to provide an attractive entrance to the campus and a more legible sign that complies with the County's sign regulations.

The temporary trailers, to be located in the proposed student parking lot behind Founder's Hall and the new Upper School, are proposed to be clustered together and will not present a visual intrusion. They will be effectively screened from the west, south and east, and will be located a minimum of 400 feet from the northern property line.

## **PHASING**

The School does not plan to rapidly grow student enrollment under a 900-student cap, but rather to continue gradual growth. Partly out of a desire to maintain current admission standards, partly from the fact that the School's core classroom facilities (North and South Halls) are currently at capacity, and partly out of the perceived benefits of gradual enrollment growth, Bullis envisions taking at least seven years, and probably more than ten years, to grow from 600 to 900 students.

To the extent that Bullis is able to sequence fundraising, the School would prioritize the construction of the Master Plan as follows:

1. New Lower School Building
2. New parking behind Upper School, and temporary classrooms
3. Demolish and replace North Hall with a new Upper School building
4. Gut and renovate South Hall as a Middle School-only facility
5. Dining Hall expansion and completion of rest of proposed new parking
6. Athletic Center additions
7. Stadium improvements
8. Permanent tennis structure replacing current tennis bubble.

## **INHERENT AND NON-INHERENT EFFECTS**

### **59-G-1.2.1. Standard for evaluation.**

A special exception must not be granted without the findings required by this Article. In making these findings, the Board of Appeals, Hearing Examiner, or District Council, as the case may be, must consider the inherent and non-inherent adverse effects of the use on nearby properties and the general neighborhood at the proposed location, irrespective of adverse effects the use might have if established elsewhere in the zone. Inherent adverse effects are the physical and operational characteristics necessarily associated with the particular use, regardless of its physical size or scale of operations. Inherent adverse effects alone are not a sufficient basis for denial of a special exception. Non-inherent adverse effects are physical and operational characteristics not necessarily associated with the particular use, or adverse effects created by unusual characteristics of the site. Non-inherent adverse effects, alone or in conjunction with inherent adverse effects, are a sufficient basis to deny a special exception.

The inherent adverse characteristics associated with a private educational institution include the size, scale, and institutional character of the facilities including parking and traffic. Based on a review of the Application, planning staff finds that the physical and operational characteristics of the proposed modification are associated more with non-inherent than inherent effects.

The non-inherent characteristics of the proposed modification would be the summer camp and special activity programs. Although summer camp programs are increasingly commonly associated with private educational institutions, Section 59-G-2.19.(b) of the Zoning Ordinance commences with, "If a Private Educational Institution operates or

allows its facilities by lease or other arrangement to be used for:.....(v) summer day camps...” The use is therefore an option and a non-inherent characteristic.

Planning staff finds that the expansive 78-acre campus, ample setbacks, the existing forest areas, the existing mature landscaping, the proposed grading, landscaping and screening, and the fact that the preponderance of activities will be indoors, mitigate the non-inherent characteristics of the proposed modifications, and that the existing and proposed activities are compatible with the adjacent residential areas. Planning staff finds that the physical and operational characteristics of the proposed modification regarding the summer camp and special activity programs are reasonable and that the submitted transportation management plan is efficient and will not have an adverse effect on the surrounding neighborhood.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed uses are permitted under the provisions of the RE-2 Zone and will comply with all standards and requirements of that zoning district. The uses are consistent with the 2002 Potomac Subregion Master Plan and will be in harmony with the general character of the neighborhood in terms of density, scale, bulk, intensity and level of activities, traffic and parking conditions. The proposed modifications will have no external impact on the surrounding community and will not cause any detriment to adjacent properties. The special exception continues to meet the specific standards for a private educational institution and the modification will not change the character or nature of the special exception. The intensity of use will gradually change but will not cause a nuisance because of the expansive 78 acres that allows for ample setbacks, screening and landscaping. The proposed modification is in conformance with all zoning design standards relating to height, bulk and density, and will be architecturally compatible with adjacent uses. Staff finds that the proposed special exception modification satisfies all of the general and specific requirements for this use found in Sections 59-G-1.21 and 59-G-2.19 of the Zoning Ordinance and recommends approval, subject to conditions.

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### **MAPS/GRAPHICS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Master Site Plan
3. Aerial photograph
4. Zoning Map
5. Perspective of Lower School from Democracy residences
6. Democracy Boulevard entrance
7. Falls Road entrance
8. Falls Road stadium entrance
9. Stacking Diagram – existing p.m.
10. Stacking Diagram – 900 enrollment, p.m.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. General and Specific Conditions
2. Letter from Nantucket Terrace resident
3. Bullis Transportation Management Plan