



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

May 26, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard Weaver, Subdivision Coordinator
Development Review Division

VIA: Sue Edwards, Team Leader, I-270 Team Leader *SUE*
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Nellie Shields Maskal, Community Planner *NM*
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Preliminary Plan No.1-03110: Cabin Branch; Clarksburg Master Plan and
Hyattstown Special Study Plan

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval: This plan generally is in conformance with the land use recommendations of the Master Plan. It will implement many of the goals and objectives of the Master Plan and will be compatible with the existing and planned development in the Cabin Branch and Ten Mile Creek Neighborhoods.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CLARKSBURG MASTER PLANLand Use Plan

The subject 535-acre property is located within the Cabin Branch Neighborhood of the 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan Area. It is located west of I-270, east of Clarksburg Road (MD 121), and north of West Old Baltimore Road near Black Hill Regional Park and Ten Mile Creek Area. The Master Plan states that the opportunity to provide a transit-oriented residential neighborhood is one of the most important public policy objectives. A summary of the Master Plan objectives is as follows:

- Provide a mix of uses including employment.
- Encourage an employment pattern that is supportive of I-270 as a high-technology corridor.

- Create a transit-oriented land use pattern.
- Maximize access to the proposed open space system.
- Provide a suitable transition to the rural/open space character south of West Old Baltimore Road towards Boyds.
- Provide an interconnected roadway system.
- Create a strong neighborhood focal point by concentrating public and retail uses in the same general area.
- Place special emphasis on protection of the west fork of Cabin Branch because of its high water quality and tree cover.

During the Clarksburg Master Plan process, the Planning Board and County Council devoted considerable discussion to the appropriate land use and zoning for the subject property. The Cabin Branch Neighborhood is the only portion of the western side of I-270 that is proposed for significant residential development. Most of the development in the Cabin Branch Neighborhood is recommended to occur on the Cabin Branch property.

The Master Plan states the recommended mix of uses for this neighborhood as follows:

Residential	1,950 dwelling units plus MPDU units
Employment	2.4 million square feet
Public Uses	Places of worship, childcare, community building, elementary school, and park

The proposed Preliminary Plan incorporates the Master Plan principles of a mixed-use, transit-oriented, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhood. Specifically, the Plan includes an interconnected street system and an emphasis on access to open space. The Plan is generally consistent with Pre-Preliminary Plan No. 7-02042 that was reviewed by the Planning Board on June 27, 2002, and the approved Development Plan that was submitted as part of the Local Map Amendment No. G-806.

The Master Plan recommends a maximum of 2,194 units for the entire Cabin Branch community and Linthicum West including all MPDU's (or 1,886 for Cabin Branch community). The Master Plan specifies a distribution range:

Detached 45%-55%	987 units
Attached 35%-45%	768 units
Multi-Family 10%-20%	439 units

The Cabin Branch development will contain all multi-family units for the entire neighborhood; zoning assigned to the remaining properties is not appropriate for multi-family dwelling units.

The proposed Preliminary Plan assumes a 12.5 percent MPDU increment for a total residential density of 1,886 units (768 attached, 679 detached, and 435 multi-family) for the subject property. The proposed Preliminary Plan contains the required 635 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) that are to be purchased. The Plan also is within the maximum development potential recommended by the Master Plan and binding elements of Local Map Amendment No. G-806.

The Master Plan includes many employment sites along I-270 to help implement the Plan's vision of I-270 as a high-technology employment corridor. The most significant area of new employment is located in the Cabin Branch Neighborhood where up to 2.3 million square feet of office-type uses could occur. The Master Plan recommends this development occur as part of a mixed-use concept to allow the opportunity for housing.

The 22-acre area located north of West Old Baltimore Road adjacent to Black Hill Regional Park was rezoned from the RMX-1/TDR to the MXPD Zone as part of Local Map Amendment No. G-806. The layout of this employment area provides a green edge along West Old Baltimore Road, consistent with a rural character.

As shown on the Cabin Branch Neighborhood Concept Diagram, the Master Plan recommends a landscape buffer along MD 121 to help maintain the present rural character along MD 121 and to provide a strong transition between the Cabin Branch and Ten Mile Creek East Neighborhoods. Staff recommends that the Plan be redesigned so that the lot orientation should front on West Old Baltimore Road and the setback along MD 121 increase to comply with the Master Plan land use policies and objectives, at the time of site plan review. See Figure 1.

Public Facilities

The Master Plan objective is to *"Locate public/civic uses adjacent to major stream valley."* The Plan also calls for *"A local park, an elementary school, and other civic spaces to be located in close proximity to each other as well as to the stream valley."*

The Preliminary Plan shows a combination park/school within the neighborhood. These facilities border the West Fork Stream Valley Park and the historic property, which would be used as a community facility. The proximity of these uses is efficient and beneficial.

It is also important that every parcel comprising this Preliminary Plan is self sufficient with respect to private recreation. This will be assured at the time of site plan review.

Development District Funding of Infrastructure

The Clarksburg Master Plan promotes “the formation of development districts (or other financing mechanisms) to implement the Plan’s staging policies (page 193). To date, the Clarksburg Town Center Development District has been formed by County Council resolution. Two other districts have been proposed for the Newcut Road Neighborhood located east of I-270; these districts are still under review by the County Executive.

The applicants propose to use development districts to satisfy the infrastructure needs of the Cabin Branch Neighborhood. Staff expressed concerns that any development district for the Cabin Branch Neighborhood meet the district intent of (1) supplying benefit to more than a single development; (2) provide facilities and greater benefits that those items conditioned by future preliminary plan (s); (3) that the fiscal burden for households within the development districts be determined as reasonable by the Montgomery County Department of Finance; and (4) assuring a conservative level of risk for the value of land secured for the development district bond issuance.

These factors are evolving as each of the development districts are formed. The extent of commercial development not subject to development district funding and tax-exempt health care businesses will have an effect on the burden of the special tax on future homebuyers due to the significant infrastructure costs generated by the Cabin Branch Neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary Plan for the reasons stated in this report. The applicants intend to develop Cabin Branch as a comprehensively planned, mixed-use, transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly community consistent with the goals of the Clarksburg Master Plan. However, further refinement of the site design along MD 121 and West Old Baltimore Road should occur at time of site plan review to insure compatibility of the proposed project with the surrounding Ten Mile Creek and Boyds communities.

In addition, given the extensive scale of the development, an Infrastructure Plan should be submitted to coordinate elements such as sidewalks, bikeways, street trees, lighting and paving materials in a comprehensive manner rather than site plan by site plan. The Infrastructure Plan should be submitted 60 days prior to the first site plan.

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Attachment

Cabin Branch Neighborhood Concept Diagram

Figure 27

