



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

June 4, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*
Sue Edwards, I-270 Team Leader *SE*
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Nellie Shields Maskal, Senior Planner, I-270 Team, (301) 495-4567 *N Maskal*
Community-Based Planning Division
Michael Zamore, Senior Planner, Countywide Planning Division *MAZ*

SUBJECT: Forest Conservation Plan for Mandatory Referral No. 04302-MCPS-1, Clarksburg Area High School, MD 355 and Wims Road, Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area

Final Water Quality Plan for Mandatory Referral No. 04302-MCPS-1, Clarksburg Area High School, MD 355 and Wims Road, Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area

Mandatory Referral No. 04302-MCPS-1, Clarksburg Area High School, MD 355 and Wims Road, Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area

This combined staff report provides recommendations on the Forest Conservation Plan, Water Quality Plan, and Mandatory Referral No. 04302-MCPS-1 for the Clarksburg Area High School.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN

Staff recommends approval of the Forest Conservation Plan with the following conditions:

1. No encroachment into stream buffers for stormwater management facilities, or sediment control facilities, may occur without permission of the Planning Board, except for necessary outfalls and temporary sediment control facilities in non-forested portions of stream buffers. If at later stages of stormwater review and design it is determined that a stormwater management facility, or sediment control facility, is not properly sized and it must be enlarged to accommodate the proposed drainage areas the applicant will have to find additional space outside of the stream buffer. This may mean the reconfiguration of site layout, and loss of developable area outside of stream buffers.
2. Place a Category I Conservation Easement on all stream valley/wetland buffers on the site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: FINAL WATER QUALITY PLAN

Staff recommends approval of the Final Water Quality Plan with the following conditions:

1. No encroachment into stream buffers for stormwater management facilities, or sediment control facilities, may occur without permission of the Planning Board, except for necessary outfalls and temporary sediment control facilities in non-forested portions of stream buffers. If at later stages of stormwater review and design it is determined that a stormwater management facility, or sediment control facility, is not properly sized and it must be enlarged to accommodate the proposed drainage areas the applicant will have to find additional space outside of the stream buffer. This may mean the reconfiguration of site layout, and loss of developable area outside of stream buffers.
2. Reforest all unforested areas of the stream valley buffer as part of this project.
3. Conform to the conditions as stated in the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) letter of June 2, 2004 as amended on June 6, 2004, approving the elements of the SPA water quality plan under its purview.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: MANDATORY REFERRAL NO. 04302-MCPS-1

Approval to transmit the following comments concerning the Mandatory Referral to the Montgomery County Public Schools:

1. Submit a revised traffic study if the student enrollment of the proposed Clarksburg Area High School increases above 2,000 as analyzed in the submitted traffic study.
2. Construct a driveway connection with a hiker/biker path connecting Brickhaven Way to the proposed Clarksburg Area High School.
3. Dedicate the 120' right-of-way for MD 355 (60' from the center line) and provide roadway improvements along MD 355 as required by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), including widening of MD 355 per the Master Plan, and constructing an eight-foot wide bike path along the school property separated from the roadway by a 10-foot lawn panel.
4. Reconstruct Wims Road to the standard of a Primary Residential Street, with a 70-foot right-of-way, as shown on the site plan.
5. Install a new traffic signal with appropriate pedestrian crossing controls at the new entrance to the school site opposite Foreman Boulevard if the traffic signal is warranted and approved by SHA.
6. Participate with other area developers (LCOR, Miller and Smith, and others) in providing the intersection improvements at MD 355 and Shawnee Lane.
7. Consider using locally sourced sustainable or renewable materials, recommended by the U.S. Green Building Council standards for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), where feasible, in the proposed construction.
8. Provide a lighting plan that will provide for the safety of pedestrians and motorists and that will ensure no glare or reflection into nearby residential properties; lighting levels along the perimeter must not exceed a 0.1-foot candle. Pedestrian lighting should be provided along MD 355 and Wims Road.
9. Provide additional landscaping along the MD 355 frontage to Shawnee Lane in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and the Master Plan. A 10-foot wide lawn panel should be provided along MD 355 with landscaping as recommended in the Clarksburg Streetscape Plan.
10. See the above staff recommendations for the Forest Conservation Plan.
11. See the above staff recommendations for the Water Quality Plan.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) intends to expand and convert the existing Rocky Hill Middle School into a new high school to relieve overcrowding at Damascus, Seneca Valley, and Watkins Mill High Schools. Rocky Hill Middle School is in the Damascus High School Cluster and opened in 1995. It was designed to allow for expansion to a high school when enrollment warranted. The new Rocky Hill Middle School is under construction on a 23.29-acre adjacent property and is scheduled to open in the fall of 2004.

The proposed conversion will consist of the existing core facilities, building additions, athletic fields, parking expansion, and the associated infrastructure. It will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is designed for an initial capacity of 1,600 students with master planned capacity of 2,000 students. Construction is scheduled to start in the summer of 2004, and will take approximately two years. The proposed opening date for the high school, for ninth to eleven grades, is September 2006.

BACKGROUND

Description of Site

The existing site is rectangular, 62.7 acres, and has frontage on Wims Road. Frederick Road (MD 355) and Shawnee Lane form the northern and western boundaries respectively of the property as shown in Attachment 2 – Vicinity Map. Foreman Boulevard and the proposed Little Seneca Parkway (Newcut Road Extended) are within a short distance of the school. The school is located in the R-200 Zone. It faces Clarksburg Local Park and the proposed 250-unit, The Glens at Hurley Ridge (Toll Brothers) community that is located south of the school on the 62-acre Martens property. A vacant portion of the COMSAT (LCOR) property is located directly south of the property. Athletic fields are located along the southwestern portion of the site adjacent to the stormwater management pond and the wetlands.

Originally constructed in 1995, the school is a two-story, brown-red brick building. The proposed building totals 324,323 square feet in size. A parking lot for 369-faculty/visitor cars is proposed for the northern edge of the site along MD 355, and has an access drive leading from Wims Road. Additional parking (105 spaces) is also provided along the southern portion of Wims Road adjacent to the gymnasium and ball fields. A bus pick-up/drop-off loop in front of the school has entrance and exit points on Wims Road. The exit drive for the bus loop also serves as the entrance drive for the parking lot (see Attachment 3 – Existing Site Plan).

A new pedestrian connection between the high school and the middle school is provided. As recommended during review of the mandatory referral for the new Rocky Hill Middle School, a future street connection to proposed Brickhaven Way is shown on the school property. Staff recommends that the MCPS construct a driveway connection with a hiker/biker path connecting Brickhaven Way to the school property (see Attachment 4 – Transportation Plan).

Project Description

The proposed project involves adding a two-story academic wing across the back of the existing building and enclosing the two existing open areas into courtyards to create two corridor circulation loops (see Attachment 5 – Proposed Site Plan). The existing gymnasium becomes the second gymnasium for the high school. A new main gymnasium will be added to the southwest end of the school. On the northeast portion of the building, an auditorium/stage/music complex will be built. The existing administration/guidance and media center are expanded to the front portion of the school. The cafeteria/kitchen and technical education suite remain in their current location but are enlarged. Construction will be phased so that the existing building's mechanical systems can remain intact and functional until the new mechanical systems are in place and operating to protect existing furnishings in the building.

Recreational and instructional site amenities include eight (8) tennis courts, four (4) basketball courts, a softball field, a football stadium, a baseball field, and a practice field as shown in Attachment 5. These facilities will be available for use by the general public and will be maintained by MCPS.

MCPS indicates that conserving and enhancing the natural environment on school sites is a high priority. Because approximately 50 percent of the site is wetlands or stream buffer, extreme care was taken to provide the programmatically required play fields in the space available. Site lighting will be designed to shield adjacent residences from intrusive glare while maintaining a safe and secure site. The tennis courts and football field will not be lighted.

ANALYSIS

Master Plan

The proposed Clarksburg Area High School is located in the Transit Corridor District of the Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area, adopted and approved in 1994 (see Attachment 7 – Transit Corridor District Land Use Plan). The Master Plan states the following for the high school property.

The Montgomery County Board of Education owns a 62-acre site fronting MD 355. The location of a school complex here would help establish a strong community image along this portion of MD 355 and help mark the entry into Clarksburg.

The Master Plan recommends that a high school be located on a portion of a 62-acre site owned by the Board of Education at the intersection of MD 355 and Shawnee Lane. The Board of Education has determined that only 30 acres are buildable and plans were under way to construct a middle school on the site until it can be converted later when needed for a high school. The Master Plan states that the ultimate development plan for this site should place special emphasis on an attractive frontage along MD 355 since this is a critical entry into Clarksburg.

The Master Plan recommends the need for a high school site. The need for new schools is determined by the Board of Education based on the capacity of existing schools and the projected increase in student enrollment. The Master Plan designates a “floating symbol” for the high school on the subject property.

The proposed Clarksburg Area High School project is consistent with the Master Plan recommendations and policies.

Proposed Site Plan

The site plan consists of the school structure, several playing fields, a football stadium, parking, and a bus area. The proposed building, which is approximately 2,732,066 square feet in size, consists of two stories (see Attachments 8-13, Floor and Elevations Plans). It faces the intersection of MD 355 and Wims Road. Vehicular access and parking (369 spaces) is located immediately northwest of the building, which is closer to the tennis courts, basketball courts, and football stadium. There is additional parking (105 spaces) located in the southeastern portion of the site adjacent to the gymnasium.

Transportation

Access and Circulation

The site plan includes one access point from MD 355 and two access points, one to the school bus loading/unloading lot and the other to the staff/visitor parking lot, from Wims Road.

MD 355 is a two-lane arterial highway (A-251) and will provide the primary access to the school site opposite from Foreman Boulevard. The applicant should provide the roadway improvements along MD 355 per SHA’s requirements in connection with the access permit. The MD 355 roadway improvements may include roadway widening and providing an eight-foot wide bike path along the school frontage, and providing acceleration/deceleration lanes, a left-turn lane, and traffic signal installation at the school entrance road opposite from Foreman Boulevard.

Wims Road exists as a dead-end local street providing access to a few homes on the east side of MD 355. This roadway should be reconstructed to the standard of a primary residential street, as shown on the site plan, to provide adequate accessibility to the school.

During the Planning Board review of the preliminary plan for the Martens property and the mandatory referral for the Rocky Hill Middle School, there was a lengthy discussion regarding the need to improve connectivity for local circulation. Staff recommends that the MCPS make every effort to construct a private driveway to facilitate travel between their properties in order to provide this important connectivity. The private driveway should connect to proposed Brickhaven Way in order to improve connectivity between the residential community and the school sites. Brickhaven Way connects to future Newcut Road Extended that connects to MD 355. Brickhaven Way is under construction as a part of the Rocky Hill Middle School construction. The Rocky Hill Middle School is

scheduled to open in September 2004. Connectivity is a major principle of the Clarksburg Master Plan (see Attachment 4 – Transportation Plan).

There is a traffic safety concern raised by the Principal of the Rocky Hill Middle School in regard to the recommended driveway connection between Brickhaven Way and the proposed Clarksburg Area High School. The Principal indicated in his letter dated April 2, 2004 (a copy is attached), that a road or driveway would increase the traffic between the schools and increase the exposure to accidents. Staff finds that overall safety is improved by reducing school-related traffic on public streets as a result of connecting the two schools and the adjacent community. If the private driveway connection is not achieved, all the high school-related traffic generated by the proposed Glens of Hurley Ridge community will need to use Newcut Road Extended and make a left turn onto MD 355 followed by another left turn onto Wims Road. The recommended driveway can be managed by the MCPS during the school arrival/dismissal periods and special events, and could be closed at other times if required to address concerns relating to cut-through traffic.

The remaining internal vehicular/pedestrian circulation system elements as shown on the site plan are adequate.

Local Area Transportation Review

The proposed new Clarksburg Area High School with the proposed capacity of 2,000 students would generate 920 morning and 300 evening peak hour trips, respectively, using the Institute of Transportation Engineer's trip generation rates for the high school. As a requirement of the mandatory referral review and the Local Area Transportation Review Guidelines, the applicant is required to submit a traffic impact study since the proposed school will generate additional traffic volumes. The traffic study analyzed the maximum enrollments for the Clarksburg Area High School (2,000 students) and the Rocky Hill Middle School (990 students). The following is a summary of staff's traffic analysis.

The congestion standard for the Clarksburg Policy Area is a critical lane volume (CLV) of 1,500. Based on the submitted traffic analysis, all analyzed MD 355 intersections operate at an acceptable level within the congestion standard. With the future traffic volumes from the maximum enrollments of the middle school and high school and projected roadway improvements to be provided by the area developers, the acceptable level of the traffic conditions along MD 355 are projected to continue. The intersection improvements at MD 355 and Shawnee Lane are currently not defined. With anticipated developments at the COMSAT sites, extensive improvements are to be provided by the area developers and the MCPS should coordinate/participate in the future improvements. A limited improvement at this intersection is included in the traffic analysis for the total traffic condition.

Results of Critical Lane Volume (CLV) Analysis

Location	Existing Condition		Background Condition		Total Future Condition	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
MD 355/Shawnee Lane	1,213	1,041	1,406	1,217	946	1,259
MD 355/Foreman Blvd	1,299	951	1,475	1,144	1,265	1,235
MD 355/West Old Baltimore Road	1,266	1,111	1,106	1,252	1,231	1,295
MD355/Newcut Road	1,178	942	890	735	1,041	811

Policy Area Transportation Review

The site is located in the Clarksburg Policy Area, which is in a moratorium under the Fiscal Year 2004 Annual Growth Policy (-811 jobs as of April 30, 2004). The Clarksburg Policy Area will have significant roadway improvements from the area developers, such as Cabin Branch and the COMSAT site, and these improvements will provide adequate policy area transportation capacity to accommodate the new middle school and high school in this area. Also, the Policy Area Transportation Review is not applicable after July 1, 2004 as a result of the County Council's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2005 Annual Growth Policy.

Landscaping and Lighting

MCPS proposes new planting in the parking lot, between the parking lot and the gymnasium, and along MD 355. Staff recommends continuing the tree plantings along MD 355 from the parking lot to Shawnee Lane, where trees will be removed for grading. About 10 trees should also be added on the hillside between the tennis courts and the parking lot, near MD 355, to screen the parking lot from more distant views.

An evergreen hedge, at least three feet in height, or a wall or fence, is required (Zoning Ordinance 59-E-2.71) between the parking area and the adjacent roadways, MD 355 and Wims Road. Along Wims Road, in the lawn panel between the roadway and the sidewalk, staff recommends continuing the row of trees up to MD 355. Along MD 355, the Clarksburg Streetscape Plan specifies planting a row of *Zelkova serrata* 'Village Green' trees between the roadway and the bike path. Staff recommends that they be planted in a 10-foot wide lawn panel adjacent to an 8-foot wide bike path.

Staff recommends the substitution of three plants. The *Liquidambar styraciflua* should be replaced with a non-fruiting cultivar (*L.s.* 'Rotundiloba), or with *Acer rubrum* 'October Glory,' A.r. 'Red Sunset,' or *Ulmus Americana* 'Valley Forge,' as recommended elsewhere in the Clarksburg Streetscape Plan (see Attachments 14 and 15 – Clarksburg Streetscape Plans). The *Cornus alba* 'Siberica' and C.a. 'Flaviramea' should be replaced by cultivars of the native, *Cornus sericea*.

Parking lots should be provided with adequate lighting (Zoning Ordinance 59-E-4.2), while recognizing that Clarksburg is a “dark sky” community; fixtures should not cast light upward. Staff also recommends pedestrian lighting along bike paths and sidewalks on MD 355 and Wims Road (see Attachment 16 – Landscape Plan).

As stated in the Master Plan, the location of a school complex here will establish a strong community image along this portion of MD 355 and help mark the entry into Clarksburg. The ultimate development plan for the site should place special emphasis on providing an attractive frontage along MD 355.

MCPS proposes new planting in the parking lot, and between the parking lot and the gymnasium. Staff recommends that landscaping for the school be enhanced by providing additional shade trees along the northern edge of the site along MD 355 for screening of the proposed parking lot and the tennis courts. These trees should be planted at intervals of 30 feet on-center. As stated in the Master Plan, the location of a school complex here would help establish a strong community image along this portion of MD 355 and help mark the entry into Clarksburg. The ultimate development plan for the site should place special emphasis on an attractive frontage along MD 355 since this is a critical entry into Clarksburg.

Environment

Site Description

Clarksburg Area High School is bounded by single-family housing to the north (across Shawnee Lane and MD 355), by Clarksburg Local Park and the new Rocky Hill Middle School to the east, and The Glens at Hurley Ridge (Martens Phase II) housing development, to the south. The site is unusual in that approximately half the acreage is wetlands or stream buffer. The revised natural resource inventory (No.4-94136R of 11/03/03) approved for the site delineates these onsite environmental buffers. Parts of the site are steeply sloping and will require grading and extensive retaining walls to facilitate the construction of parking and athletics facilities.

The project site is located within the Upper Little Seneca (South) of the Little Seneca Creek Watershed. Stormwater runoff flows mainly west into a small tributary to Little Seneca Creek that runs along the western property boundary. A small part of the southeastern portion of the property drains south and east to a second tributary of Little Seneca Creek. Little Seneca Creek is classified as a Use IV-P waterway.

Compliance with Forest Conservation Law

Staff reviewed the project with a view to ensuring that it complied with Forest Conservation Law and forest conservation objectives such as reduction in impervious area and forest conservation. The project has an approved Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD). The NRI/FSD (No. 4-94136) was first approved in April 1994 and revised in May 2003, October 2003, and November 2003. During a field visit for this current project, staff noted that a small stream located near wetlands west of the proposed stadium had not been included in the original NRI/FSD.

The environmental buffer has already been amended to include a buffer for this stream. Due to the lateness of the determination (after detailed engineering drawings had been submitted) staff recommends that minimum encroachment be allowed at that location only, to facilitate construction.

The 62.72-acre school site contains 22.02 acres of forest, 8.28 acres of which the applicant proposes to clear. The forest to be cleared includes one specimen tree and four significant trees. The 13.74 acres of forest to be retained contain 19 specimen trees and 34 significant trees. The retained forest is within an environmental buffer (combined stream and wetlands buffer) containing 17.5 acres, which the applicant has agreed to place in a Category I Conservation Easement. There are 3.76 acres of unforested area within this environmental buffer. The total planting requirement for the project is 0.88 acres of forest, which will be met onsite.

Water Quality Plan

Section 8 of Montgomery County Executive Regulation 29-95, *Water Quality Review for Development in Designated Special Protection Areas*, requires the preparation of water quality plans for development plans within an SPA. The proposed project is entirely within the Clarksburg SPA. SPA Regulations establish ten performance goals to be addressed by any development. Under the SPA law, Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) and the Planning Board have different responsibilities in the review of the water quality plan and in determining the degree to which the performance goals have been addressed. DPS has lead agency authority over, and conditionally approves, stormwater management, sediment control, BMP monitoring, and similar elements of the final water quality plan. The Planning Board reviews the site for imperviousness, compliance with environmental guidelines, and forest conservation.

Site Performance Goals - The following site performance goals were established at the pre-application meeting and will be met as specified in the Preliminary/Final Water Quality Plan:

- Protect the streams and aquatic habitat.
- Protect springs, seeps and wetlands.
- Maintain the natural on-site stream channels.
- Minimize storm flow runoff increases.
- Identify and protect stream banks prone to erosion and slumping.
- Minimize increases to ambient water temperature.
- Minimize sediment loading.
- Minimize nutrient loading.
- Maintain stream base flows.
- Control insecticides, pesticides and toxic substances.

Stormwater Management and Sediment Control

Stormwater management for the project is being provided in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Maryland Department of the Environment's *2000 Maryland Stormwater Management Design Manual, Volumes I and II*. The project's location within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area (SPA) requires that stringent stormwater management requirements must be established to satisfy the SPA criteria and protect this sensitive, high-quality watershed. Retrofitting the existing dry pond, and constructing a new extended detention dry pond and an underground detention system, will provide channel protection measures for the site. These structures will provide channel protection volume for the one-year storm with a maximum detention of 12 hours as per state standards.

A treatment train that consists of infiltration trenches, recharge structures, surface sand filters in series, separator sand filters, dry swales, structural water quality inlets, and vegetated buffer filtering, will provide quality control. Sizing and retrofitting all structures to treat their entire drainage areas to current SPA standards will do this. All areas intended for vehicular use will be pretreated before entering any water quality filtration or infiltration structures.

Redundant sediment control structures are required throughout the site. DPS requires that these include upland sediment traps that drain to secondary traps down grade. When this is not feasible sediment traps with forebays may be substituted. The total storage volume must be between 125% and 150% of the normally required volume. Site grading will be controlled as much as possible and immediate stabilization will be emphasized for such grading. Due to the sensitive nature of the watershed, the project may be required to use flocculants, compost material, or other measures to increase the effectiveness of sediment removal. DPS will make that determination at Detailed Sediment Control Plan stage.

Site Imperviousness

The proposed building improvements will increase impervious surface area by a little over 9 acres (from 5.5 acres to 15.1 acres). This will result in 25% of the site being impervious. Although there are no imperviousness limitations within this portion of the Clarksburg SPA, Environmental Planning staff evaluated all opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces. Staff suggested a reduction in the number of tennis courts and new parking spaces, to keep more open space, but was unsuccessful. Staff was also not successful in its efforts to have the high school share facilities with the Clarksburg Local Park and the new Rocky Hill Middle School. Staff finds 25% imperviousness to be within the acceptable range for the underlying R-200 zone.

Compliance With Environmental Guidelines

Two areas of potential conflict with environmental guidelines were addressed. The applicant will comply with the guidelines governing reforestation of open areas of stream valley buffer:

“On development projects where standard forest conservation requirements do not completely forest the buffer area, the entire buffer should be reforested as part of the development project. This may be accomplished either by the applicant planting the entire buffer and selling the area in excess of their requirements to others as credit toward their off-site requirements, or by the applicant arranging for planting by other applicants.”

The Forest Conservation Table on the applicant’s FCP shows the stream valley buffer to be 17.50 acres of which 13.74 acres are forested. The forest conservation requirement for this project is 0.88 acres. The applicant will reforest the remaining areas of unforested stream valley buffer in accordance with the environmental guidelines. All planting over and above the FCP requirements for the project may be banked and used for other school projects if desired.

The second issue involved encroachment into stream buffers on the property. In its approval of the part of the Water Quality Plan under its purview, DPS expressed concern that additional water quality/recharge volume could be required for the area west of the proposed stadium, at final Stormwater Management Plan design submission. DPS initially recommended locating any required sediment control trap inside the stream buffer at that location. The Environmental Guidelines however, require the protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as stream buffers, with wider wetland buffers in Special Protection Areas. The Guidelines require that all available tools be used to avoid to stream buffer encroachment.

MCPS has proposed building a stepped retaining wall west of the stadium and softball field. DPS is confident that the wall will enable all temporary sediment control traps or basins to be located outside of the stream valley buffer, provided the second (lower) wall is placed as close as possible to the location shown on the amended Site Development Plan. Staff supports the idea of a stepped retaining wall at the location recommended by DPS. There may be a need to install silt fence and super silt fence inside the buffers. Such installation will require that the root zones of mature trees be avoided wherever possible, and that the fence must be completely removed as soon as the Sediment Control Inspector deems it no longer necessary.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

Staff encourages the use of sustainable building design in all public projects, in keeping with the work of LEED. The applicant has agreed to use special insulation in all exterior wall cavities, energy recovery units that use the exhausted air to temper incoming fresh air, efficient lighting fixtures and ballasts, solar loads controlled by horizontal blinds, natural daylighting, and other energy-saving devices and measures. Additionally, as part of the proposed renovation and new additions, the applicant may be able to incorporate building materials that employ locally or regionally sourced materials, with sustainable or renewable technologies.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is planning a new Northwest Elementary School #7, at Dairymaid/Mateny Road, Germantown, Maryland, and the Clarksburg/Damascus Elementary School in the Clarksburg Town Center. These new schools are now in facility planning. They will be the first LEED – Gold Certified schools in Montgomery County and will be the facilities on which future new schools and renovation/modification of existing schools will be modeled.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

MCPS sponsored a public informational meeting on April 23, 2003 to present the school design plans. Public comments were solicited at this meeting. Many parents raised concerns that the Special Education Program at Damascus High School would move to the proposed Clarksburg Area High School. In addition, the issue of bicycle and hiking trails were brought up at the meeting. The high school site will have a jogging path but it is not linked to any other off-site jogging trails.

On February 19, 2004, MCPS staff also met with the Clarksburg Civic Association Planning Committee to present the plans for the school. Ms. Krisna Becker who lives near the school, expressed concern that the football games will increase noise and the lights would be distracting. Mr. Steve Reeves, Project Manager for school, stated that the football field has been depressed 20 feet so that the noise should not be as much of a problem. In addition, Mr. Reeves stated that the football stadium would not have lights for night games. Ms. Becker stated that Clarksburg has endorsed a dark sky initiative and was concerned about the lights at night.

Ms. Becker also questioned if there would be any sustainable design elements to the building or site. According to Mr. Reeves, the retrofit is not specifically designed for sustainability but the materials and fixtures used in all of the new construction of schools have sustainable elements. Finally, Ms. Becker recommended a pathway to the school from the proposed Meadows at Hurley Ridge community.

To date, one letter has been received from Mr. Stephen Whiting, principal of Rocky Hill Middle School concerning this project. Mr. Whiting believes that the road or private driveway would create a serious safety hazard to the students of both the middle school and the high school. As stated in Attachment 18, Mr. Whiting also expressed concern about liability and security issues of high school students visiting the middle school. See the transportation section of this report for a detailed discussion of this issue.

Staff accepts the public outreach conducted by MCPS prior to submittal of the mandatory referral.

CONCLUSION

Based on its analysis, staff believes the proposal is consistent with the Master Plan, meets the requirements of the R-200 Zone, and meets applicable environmental and transportation guidelines and requirements. The Department recommends approval of this mandatory referral and transmittal of comments.

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Attachments:

1. Letter from DPS – Water Quality Plan
2. Vicinity Map
3. Existing Site Plan
4. Transportation Plan
5. Proposed Site Plan
6. Environmentally Sensitive Areas
7. Transit Corridor District Land Use Plan
8. Existing First Floor Plan
9. Proposed First Floor Plan
10. Existing Second Floor Plan
11. Proposed Second Floor Plan
12. Existing Elevations
13. Proposed Elevations
14. Clarksburg Streetscape Plan – Proposed Sidewalks and Bikeways
15. Clarksburg Streetscape Plan – Proposed Street Tree Plan
16. Landscape Plan
17. Site Development Plan
18. Letter from Stephen Whiting