



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 1, 2004
To: Robert Kronenberg, Development Review Division
Via: John Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*
From: Kristin O'Connor, Planner, Community-Based Planning, 301-495-2172
Subject: Twinbrook Commons, 8-05011
Zone: TS-R
Master Plan: 1992 North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan

Staff recommends **approval** of Phase 1 of the site plan application for the Twinbrook Commons project. The plan is in compliance with the proposed zoning, use, and density confirmed in the 1992 *North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan*. The project is located in the Twinbrook Metro Station Sector Plan area. The Sector Plan area is defined as the area east of the MARC/CSX railroad tracks, north of Montrose Parkway ROW, south of the City of Rockville, and west of Parklawn Cemetery. The Metro station project involves a transit-oriented, mixed-use development on 16.51 acres (gross tract area) of WMATA-owned land in the TS-R zone. The remaining portion of the station, approximately 10 acres, is located within the City of Rockville.

Phase 1

The project will be developed in several phases. The first phase consists of 7.85 acres in the TS-R Zone and encompasses the eastern portion of the site. Phase 1 proposes to develop 440 residential units, including 55 onsite MPDUs. The project includes plans for new pedestrian and vehicular patterns to connect the existing and proposed neighborhoods. A linear park, along the northern property line, provides a wooded buffer for the existing townhouses. In addition to the linear park, a multi-use/purpose field for public recreation in the northeast corner of the site (near Ardennes and Street A, just behind the church) will be developed in Phase 1. Once all phases are complete, the amenities will include: a Health Club, indoor community space, picnic areas in several plazas and courtyards, and a supervised playroom.

Master Plan Compliance

The Plan describes the land surrounding the Twinbrook Metro station as an "underutilized yet potentially important asset in the Rockville Pike Corridor." (p. 41) The Master Plan envisioned the development of the metro station into a mixed-use transit

community. The intent of this area is to “support development under the Transit Station-Residential (TS-R) for the WMATA property at Twinbrook Metro station”. (P. 41)

The application is in compliance with the Plan’s recommendation of an FAR of 1.9 (including structured parking) and a mix of uses. The project also depicts a maximum of 60 units per acre on this property, complying with the 1992 Master Plan. In addition, the project proposes the Plan’s recommendation of a step down in height and significant buffering and setbacks (including a linear park) in order to ensure compatibility with the existing Twinbrook residential neighborhood (p. 49-50).

The stated objective of the Plan for this area is:

1. Introduce a transit serviceable, residential component into the Sector Plan area, and ensure its compatibility with the adjacent single-family residential community.

Staff finds that the proposed application is in keeping with the intent of the Sector Plan. The proposal will “add streets to create a more interconnected local street network and reduce the size of blocks in the Twinbrook Metro Station area.” (p. 109) In addition, the proposal improves the pedestrian experience, particularly within walking distance of Metro, and creates a greenway system linking residential, commercial, and employment centers with open space, parks, and community facilities.

Staff recommends the following conditions for Phase I development:

- 1 Address compatibility in Phase II regarding the garage and buildings along the northern property line, adjacent to the existing townhouses. Staff is concerned about height, visibility and lighting. Landscape the entire linear park adjacent to the existing townhouses during Phase 1 to provide for a more mature tree buffer.
- 2 Preserve as many existing mature trees along the northern property line, especially the mature trees lining the existing Metro entrance, to buffer the existing townhouses from the garage and future residential buildings.
- 3 Provide a 12’ minimum sidewalk (including tree pit area) on both sides of Street A.
- 4 Plant street trees and provide the continued brick sidewalk pattern along the small portion of Ardennes Avenue that intersects with Street A. The Ardennes Avenue edge should be defined with similar streetscape details.
- 5 Ensure the trees and streetscape along Twinbrook Parkway are maintained and protected during Phase I construction.
- 6 Provide a future on-street bikeway connection on “Street B” to Halpine Road and Lewis Avenue to connect to the City of Rockville’s bikeway system, providing better access to and from Metro.
- 7 Support a future child day care center on the Metro property within the City of Rockville as recommended in the Master Plan (p. 50).



DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Robert C. Hubbard
Director

April 26, 2004

Mr. Barry Smith
Vika, Inc.
20251 Century Boulevard, Suite 400
Germantown, MD 20874

Re: Stormwater Management **CONCEPT** Request
for Twinbrook Commons
Preliminary Plan #: 1-04054
SM File #: 211123
Tract Size/Zone: 16.17
Total Concept Area: 16.17
Lots/Block: 8
Parcel(s): A
Watershed: Lower Rock Creek

Dear Mr. Smith:

Based on a review by the Department of Permitting Services Review Staff, the stormwater management concept for the above mentioned site is **acceptable**. The stormwater management concept consists of on-site channel protection measures via underground storage and on-site water quality control via Stormfilters. Onsite recharge is not required since this is redevelopment.

The following **condition(s)** will need to be addressed **during** the detailed sediment control/stormwater management plan stage:

1. Prior to permanent vegetative stabilization, all disturbed areas must be topsoiled per the latest Montgomery County Standards and Specifications for Topsoiling.
2. A detailed review of the stormwater management computations will occur at the time of detailed plan review.
3. An engineered sediment control plan must be submitted for this development.
4. You must provide for 100 year control of the drainage area to Ardennes Avenue (POA MC on drainage area map). All inlets and storm drain going to CPv structures must be designed to take 100 year Q.
5. Green roofs may be added for water quality. Adjustments may be made to WQv and CPv at time of design.
6. Provide external flow splitters where possible.

This list may not be all-inclusive and may change based on available information at the time.

Payment of a stormwater management contribution in accordance with Section 2 of the Stormwater Management Regulation 4-90 is not required.



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This letter must appear on the sediment control/stormwater management plan at its initial submittal. Any divergence from the information provided to this office; or additional information received during the development process; or a change in an applicable Executive Regulation may constitute grounds to rescind or amend any approval actions taken, and to reevaluate the site for additional or amended stormwater management requirements. If there are subsequent additions or modifications to the development, a separate concept request shall be required.

If you have any questions regarding these actions, please feel free to contact David Kuykendall at 240-777-6332.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Brush, Manager
Water Resources Section
Division of Land Development Services

RRB:enm CN211123 Twinbrook Commons.DWK

cc: R. Weaver
S. Federline
SM File # CN211123

QN -Onsite; Acres: 16.17
QL - Onsite; Acres: 16.17
Recharge is not provided

Statement on Development

The Cambridge Walk community (Cambridge Walk I and II) is immediately adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro property. As the quality of life in our community will be directly affected by the development of the Metro property, our residents want to ensure that the development is intelligently planned and that it enhances neighborhood amenities.

We believe that this can best be accomplished by the following:

The residential quality of the neighborhood should be respected. The scale of the buildings should not overwhelm the adjacent community. Buildings closest to our community should be of similar scale to the existing town homes. There should be sufficient space between the new buildings and our community. Screening and/or barriers should be employed to minimize the impact of the Metro development on the residential character of Cambridge Walk.

In order to satisfy the principles of "smart growth," the mix of offices, retail, housing and amenities, must all be carefully considered. The Metro development needs to be a positive and vibrant addition to the Twinbrook area. An attractive town center with small shops that are within walking distance of the Metro station, can add to the convenience, appeal and value of our neighborhood.

Lighting, green space and streetscape issues must be carefully developed to ensure an attractive southern gateway to the Rockville area. All of these considerations must factor into the already crowded condition of the roadways. Plans for the development must concentrate on minimizing traffic and maximizing walking and mass transit. As street parking is already limited in the area, there needs to be adequate parking space planned for the entire development and Metro station.

The Twinbrook neighborhood has a diverse character, while retaining a small town feel. At the same time, traffic congestion is growing. The diversity and charm of the neighborhood should be preserved by ensuring that there is a mix of housing types, from luxury to moderate income. This area needs a pedestrian-friendly destination for shopping and gathering. A development with a distinctive look would be a destination for many people in the community.

The development of the Twinbrook Metro property is a rare opportunity to revitalize the southern boundary of Rockville. Proper planning can ensure that it becomes a community asset that enhances the quality of life for Montgomery County.

Submitted by Cambridge Walk II Homeowners Association, Spring 2003

(letter sent to JBG in Winter 2003)

Dear Mr. Kraus:

Enclosed please find a statement on Twinbrook Metro Development. This is our neighborhood's articulation of concerns about the development of the Twinbrook Metro property and represents a consensus of both Cambridge Walk I and II communities.

We feel that giving you such a statement should prove helpful as it identifies the concerns and viewpoints of the property owners neighboring the Metro development area. We believe that there should be no conflict between our statement and the goals of JBG, WMATA, and the Montgomery County Government. Toward this end, we will share our statement with officials from all three groups, as well as with representatives of the Twinbrook Citizen's Association and the Halpine Church adjacent to our community.

We are aware of the many challenges inherent in creating such a large development in Montgomery County, as is proposed. We want to be a helpful and positive influence in getting a development that is both successful for your company as well as beneficial to the quality of life of our neighborhood. We would be happy to meet with representatives of JBG at any time to discuss proposed development. Please do not hesitate to contact me in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph C. McClane, President

Cambridge Walk II Homeowners Association, Inc.
216 Halpine Walk Court
Rockville, MD 20851

301-770-1926 (H)
202-512-1705 (W)
jmcclane@gpo.gov

Enclosure

October 18, 2004

Development Review Division
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Comments concerning Twinbrook Commons Phase I from the Cambridge Walk Communities.

The residents of the Cambridge Walk communities live directly adjacent to Phase I of Twinbrook Commons. This project will directly affect the quality of our neighborhood and our lives. Because of these effects, we have previously submitted statements to you concerning the proposed development.

Although this project will affect our community in many ways, our principal concern remains the transition between our low density suburban developments and the much higher density of this urban transit village. Such a transition must be handled sensitively and in a way that at least maintains and preferably improves the quality of life in our neighborhood.

Specifically, while the landscaped linear park on the border with our community is a positive development, we have always maintained that a seven-foot-high wrought iron like fence that matches the character of our community, be installed by JBG along that border before the start of construction. This fence would act as a barrier between the proposed large, dense urban cluster of apartment buildings, office buildings and parking garages and our small quiet community.

We also continue to request that all future buildings immediately adjacent to our community do not exceed four stories in height. Although the completed project will keep us from seeing the sunrise, it should not be allowed to plunge our houses and yards into darkness. We are particularly concerned about the proposed seven story parking garage as this height should not be a model for the future planned garage adjacent to our community. Finally, we request that the temporary holding pond for storm water drainage be designed so that it has no long standing water.

We have deliberately kept our comments brief and focused on the priorities that are particularly important for the quality of life in our community.

Please contact us if you would like further clarification or comment.

Sincerely,

Tracy Pakulneiewicz-Chidiac
President
Cambridge Walk I HOA

Joseph C. McClane
President
Cambridge Walk II

Cc: Phil Andrews
Rod Lawrence

(letter to JBG from CWII HOA after JBG presentation of Twinbrook Commons plan)

Dear Rod and John:

Your presentation to the Cambridge Walk communities and the Halpine Church on April 23rd generated much discussion about the proposed Twinbrook Commons development. Based on the feedback from our members, there is a community consensus on the following points:

We are pleased with the general direction of the proposed development. The changes in the plan since our previous meeting with you have all been positive and they demonstrate that JBG has been listening to our concerns as outlined in our original statement. JBG's concern for a "quality" development and the basic design criteria and materials mentioned in your presentation were all well received.

Specifically, saving the trees and berm and incorporating them into a "linear park" would do much to transition from urban density to our suburban back yards. This, combined with under story plantings and an attractive wrought-iron-like fence, would ameliorate the deadening effect of a solid wall of buildings close to our homes. Reducing the number of floors and increasing the setback of the buildings bordering our common property line are also a welcome improvement. We would not support any future increase in the size or the proximity of these buildings to our property.

Likewise, the repositioning of the garage so that a smaller garage wall faces our homes (in terms of height and width) is also a welcomed change. We strongly encourage you to plan for a solid wall on the side of the garage that faces our community. A solid wall with an attractive façade (brick or stone with wall plantings) would do much to eliminate the noise, light and air pollution that a parking structure could contribute to our community. This would certainly be in line with the Mayor's recent statement about the problems of multi-storied parking structures near homes.

Having condominiums as part of the residential mix has the support of our neighborhood. Twinbrook is mostly a community of homeowners. Condominiums would foster the stability and pride of ownership and of place that are hallmarks of the Twinbrook neighborhood.

Envisioning Twinbrook Commons as a transit village could be better accomplished if Twinbrook had a MARC station. With bicycle, zip cars, and other forms of mass transit already planned, adding MARC service makes sense. For reasons of safety, convenience and practicality, we think that transit buses should not have to loop around the village center square. The WMATA garages should be accessed from a street lined with storefronts. This would encourage foot traffic and street life in front of neighborhood retail and eliminate the need for commuters to use alleys and passageways that could be havens for illicit activity.

This community strongly supports your intention to center traffic access towards Twinbrook Parkway and away from our neighborhood. The massing of buildings towards Rockville Pike/Twinbrook Parkway and away from our neighborhood also has much neighborhood support.

Our landscape committee looks forward to meeting with the representatives of the Halpine Church and with your landscaper to offer suggestions on the development's landscaping and amenities. We all look forward to working with you and the local authorities to ensure that Twinbrook Commons is a great asset to our community.

Sincerely,

Joe McClane
President, CWII HOA

Development Review Division
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Plan Number 1-04054
Twinbrook Commons

Dear Sirs:

Our residential community borders the proposed Twinbrook Commons development. As the neighbors immediately adjacent to the project, we will be the most directly affected by the development. While we have gone on record as generally supportive of the project, we do have some very real concerns. Enclosed please find the two statements we have made to the JBG Developers concerning the project.

Our principal concern is with the area of the project directly adjacent to our low rise suburban neighborhood. JBG has stated that this area will be a "linear park" thickly planted with vegetation for screening. We have also asked for a black wrought iron looking fence, similar in style to our community's fencing, that would act as a barrier between our private property and the many people and pets in Twinbrook Commons. The barrier park and fencing are not indicated on the most current plan.

We think the scale of the proposed buildings immediately adjacent to our homes is too massive. The buildings (E3, E1, E4) and parking garage (E1) should be four stories high or less so that they do not tower over our homes. The taller buildings should be closer to Twinbrook Parkway, away from the small scale homes and smaller streets of our community. We have also asked JBG for a building design that matches the character of our neighborhood (brick facing) especially on the parking garage. We would like a solid wall on the side of the garage facing our community with a trellis and plantings to soften the impact of such a large building and help in noise reduction.

We hope that the county pays particular attention to the amenities of the development and that parks, planting, lighting and shops be community enriching. We would be happy to discuss any of these issues with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Joe McClane
President,
Cambridge Walk II Homeowners Association.

Tracy Pakulniewicz-Chidiac
President,
Cambridge Walk I Homeowners Association

Attachments: