


**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
 PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

 8787 Georgia Avenue  
 Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760  
 301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

**MCPB**  
**Item # 2**  
**12/16/04**

**DATE:** December 10, 2004  
**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** Rose Krasnow, Chief, Development Review *RK*  
 Carlton Gilbert, Zoning Supervisor, Development Review *CG*  
**FROM:** Greg Russ, Zoning Coordinator *GR*  
**REVIEW TYPE:** Zoning Text Amendment  
**PURPOSE:** To add "Camp retreat, non-profit" as a use permitted by right in the Rural Cluster (RC) zone, under certain circumstances; and add a definition for the term "Camp retreat, non-profit".

**TEXT AMENDMENT:** No. 04-25  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Advisory to the County Council sitting as the District Council, Chapter 59 of the Zoning Ordinance  
**INTRODUCED BY:** Councilmember Floreen, Knapp, and Subin  
**INTRODUCED DATE:** October 26, 2004

**PLANNING BOARD REVIEW:** December 16, 2004  
**PUBLIC HEARING:** November 30, 2004; 1:30 PM

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVAL

**PURPOSE OF THE TEXT AMENDMENT**

To add "Camp retreat, non-profit" as a use permitted by right in the Rural Cluster (RC) zone, under certain circumstances; and add a definition for the term "Camp retreat, non-profit".

**BACKGROUND**

- Zoning Text Amendment 04-25 was originally proposed on behalf of the Central Union Mission (the "Mission"), the owners of the 219 acre property located in the RC (Rural Cluster) zone at 20501 Georgia Avenue in northeast Olney, approximately 3 miles north of the intersection of Olney-Laytonsville Road (Md. Route 108). The site is currently improved with agricultural buildings and the structures used for the operations of its Christian summer camp (overnight) for at-

risk children known as Camp Bennett, which utilizes approximately 20-40 acres in the northeast portion of the property and includes a full gymnasium, swimming pool, retreat center, and overnight facilities and which are all accessed by a service road to Georgia Avenue. The Mission has owned the property since 1934 and uses the site for Camp Bennett, as well as some agricultural, religious, and recreational activities. Also, since 1969, the Mission has also integrated the use and maintenance of the property into the third phase of its five-phase Spiritual Transformation Program. The main area of the camp is in the rear of the property, with the cabins, dining hall and recreational buildings surrounded by the wooded natural environment that the Mission has preserved.

Although in existence on the property since 1934, the use of the camp is not technically one that is currently permitted in the RC zone (although a religious organization, not all of the activities on the property are religious or related to worship). Since the use does not fit in any of the existing categories in the Zoning Ordinance, the Mission coordinated with DPS staff and attorneys, MNCPPC staff and Council staff to employ the language of the ZTA as currently proposed for the use: "Camp- retreat, non profit".

- The Central Union Mission, as a non-profit entity, also provides a number of services in the Washington DC vicinity including: serving more than 180,000 meals; making available over 40,000 beds for men; distributing tens of thousands of pieces of clothing; distributing over 250,000 pounds of food to families and the elderly; providing Christmas toys and clothing to over 1000 children; providing furniture and household goods to over 540 families; providing a week of summer camp to 350 children; serving over 60 individuals in Spanish Bible studies; offering English as a Second Language classes three times each week.
  
- Zoning Text Amendment No. 80009 was adopted by the County Council on July 8, 1980. The purpose of the text amendment was to create a new zone (Rural Cluster Zone) to provide a compatible mixture of agricultural and cluster residential uses. At the time of adoption, the ZTA permitted hunting and fishing cabins by-right in the RC Zone. Since that time, the Zoning Ordinance has been modified to limit hunting and fishing cabins to private property owners and their nonpaying guests.

## ANALYSIS

The text amendment proposes to add non-profit camp retreat to the RC zone with a footnote in the land use table that limits this use to existing uses as of the effective date of the approved amendment.

### Definition

The proposed definition of a non-profit camp retreat is as follows:

*Camp retreat, non-profit: Land used by a non-profit institution to provide social, recreational and cultural activities for children, youth, or adults. A camp retreat may contain permanent structures for lodging, meeting, and recreational purposes.*

The proposed definition reflects the existing uses and activities included on the Camp Bennett site.

### RC Zone

The intent of the Rural Cluster (RC) zone is to provide designated areas in the county for a compatible mixture of agricultural uses and low-density residential development to promote agriculture, and to protect scenic and environmentally sensitive areas.

Staff recognizes that the camp retreat operates in the RC Zone due to its establishment there prior to the creation of the zone. Staff therefore has no objection with the continuation of the subject use and believes that this type of use could be appropriate in the RC Zone as well as in some other agricultural zones. However, staff further believes that additional study (outside of the scope of this text amendment) would be necessary to determine whether new uses of this type should be permitted by-right or through a public hearing process (site plan, special exception, etc.) in order to address potential impacts to surrounding properties (traffic, noise, environmental issues, etc.). Again, in the case of the subject proposal, staff believes that any existing non-profit camp retreat use in this category should be permitted to continue as a conforming use.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The staff has no objection to the proposed text amendment to allow a non-profit camp retreat in the RC zone with a footnote in the land use table that limits this use to existing uses as of the effective date of the text amendment.

Attachment 1 depicts the proposed text amendment as proposed.

GR

#### Attachments

1. Proposed Text Amendment 04-25

# ATTACHMENT 1

Zoning Text Amendment No: 04-25  
Concerning: Camp Retreat Facility in Rural  
Cluster zone  
Draft No. & Date: 1 – 10/21/04  
Introduced: October 26, 2004  
Public Hearing: 11/30/04; 1:30 p.m.  
Adopted:  
Effective:  
Ordinance No:

**COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION OF  
THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT WITHIN  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

---

By: Councilmembers Floreen, Knapp, and Subin

---

**AN AMENDMENT** to the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance for the purpose of:

- adding “Camp retreat, non-profit” as a use permitted by right in the Rural Cluster zone, under certain circumstances; and
- adding a definition for the term “Camp retreat, non-profit”.

By amending the following section of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code:

DIVISION 59-A-2	“DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION”
Section 59-A-2.1	“Definitions”
DIVISION 59-C-9	“AGRICULTURAL ZONES”
Section 59-C-9.3	“Land uses”

**EXPLANATION:** ***Boldface** indicates a heading or a defined term.*  
*Underlining indicates text that is added to existing laws by the original text amendment.*  
*[Single boldface brackets] indicate text that is deleted from existing law by the original text amendment.*  
*Double underlining indicates text that is added to the text amendment by amendment.*  
*[[Double boldface brackets]] indicate text that is deleted from the text amendment by amendment.*  
*\*\*\* indicates existing law unaffected by the text amendment.*

*ORDINANCE*

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following ordinance:*

1           **Sec. 1. DIVISION 59-A-2 is amended as follows:**

2   **DIVISION 59-A-2. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION.**

3   **59-A-2.1. Definitions.**

4   \* \* \*

5   **Camp retreat, non-profit:** Land used by a non-profit institution to provide social,  
 6   recreational and cultural activities for children, youth, or adults. A camp retreat  
 7   may contain permanent structures for lodging, meeting, and recreational purposes.

8

9           **Sec. 2. DIVISION 59-C-9 is amended as follows:**

10   **DIVISION 59-C-9.        AGRICULTURAL ZONES.**

11   \* \* \*

12   **59-C-9.3.    Land uses.**

	Rural	RC	LDRC	RDT	RS	RNC
<b>(i) Cultural, Entertainment and Recreational:</b>						
Boathouse, private.	P	P	P	P	P	
<u>Camp retreat, non-profit.</u>		<u>P*</u>				
Campground.	SE					

13

14   \*    If established before (ZTA effective date).

15

16

16           **Sec. 2. Effective date.** This ordinance becomes effective 20 days after the  
17 date of Council adoption.

18

19 This is a correct copy of Council action.

20

21

22

---

23 Mary A. Edgar, CMC

24 Clerk of the Council