## **Jeff & Emily Popera**

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THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

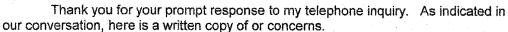
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ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING DIVISION

January 11, 2006

Mr. Mark Pfefferle M-NCPPC 8787 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Pfefferle:



We were notified yesterday of an application to change plan #8-94027, a final forest conservation plan that includes Outlots B and C (future home lot 31) at Eden Rock Court and Darnestown Road in Darnestown, MD. It is our understanding that this plan was originally approved on December 6, 2002.

We currently own the property – lot 25, 15204 Eden Rock Court- directly across the street from the area of the plan in question. The reason that this site is of interest to us is because it is a buffer between our street and the adjacent commercial property, formerly a Food Lion Grocery Store, soon to become a Harris Teeter Food Store. Prior to signing the contract to purchase our home, we were very concerned about sight lines to the existing building and had a meeting on February 3, 2004 with the builder's (Gosnell Homes) architect, Mark Benas, to specifically discuss this issue. At this point, we were assured that Gosnell's intent was to obscure the Food Lion Building to the fullest extent allowed by Park & Planning. However, Mr. Benas produced only a landscaping/tree plan for the lots under construction, not the area in question. We now know that Plan #8-94027 was approved at this time and that plan called for the planting of 48 trees and 16 shrubs in this area.

We have several questions regarding the amendment to plan #8-94027:

- The property owner claims that the existing plan must be abandoned because the forest conservation easement overlaps a storm water management easement. The storm water management easement is clearly marked on the approved plan. Why was the plan originally approved if this easement overlap was an issue?
- Why must the plantings for the entire area be abandoned? Can just the areas of overlap be addressed?
- Approximately forty trees were planted in the area in question in the fall of 2004 along with trees along Eden Rock Court and on the properties under/just completed construction. Do these plantings answer the partial plan question raised above? What is the guarantee that these trees will not be removed?

To summarize your response to these inquiries, if the plan were submitted today, the easements overlap would not be allowed. You also mentioned that you had never seen a plan for a Category II Tree Conservation easement to be converted to a Category I. It appears as if the current conditions on the site satisfy, or come close to, a Category II Tree Conservation Plan.

Our concerns, therefore, regard the future of this area. When we purchased the property we were obviously aware of the existence of the commercial building. We sought and received assurances from the builder that trees planted, in the area in question, would screen the building. In the fall of 2004, we were satisfied that an attempt

had been made at such screening. We are now concerned that if the easement is removed, there is no statutory protection for the trees planted in this area. Despite assurance from the current property owners not to remove any existing trees, we fear that these trees could be removed at any time without penalty, thereby eliminating the screening that was a concern to us even before we decided to purchase the home.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter, specifically regarding the details of a hearing, if one is necessary. We can be reached at the address, e-mail, and telephone numbers listed above. We also appreciate your checking into whether the county is, in fact, responsible for replacement of the street trees that have died along Eden Rock Court.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Lamber Poper

Jeff & Emily Popera

