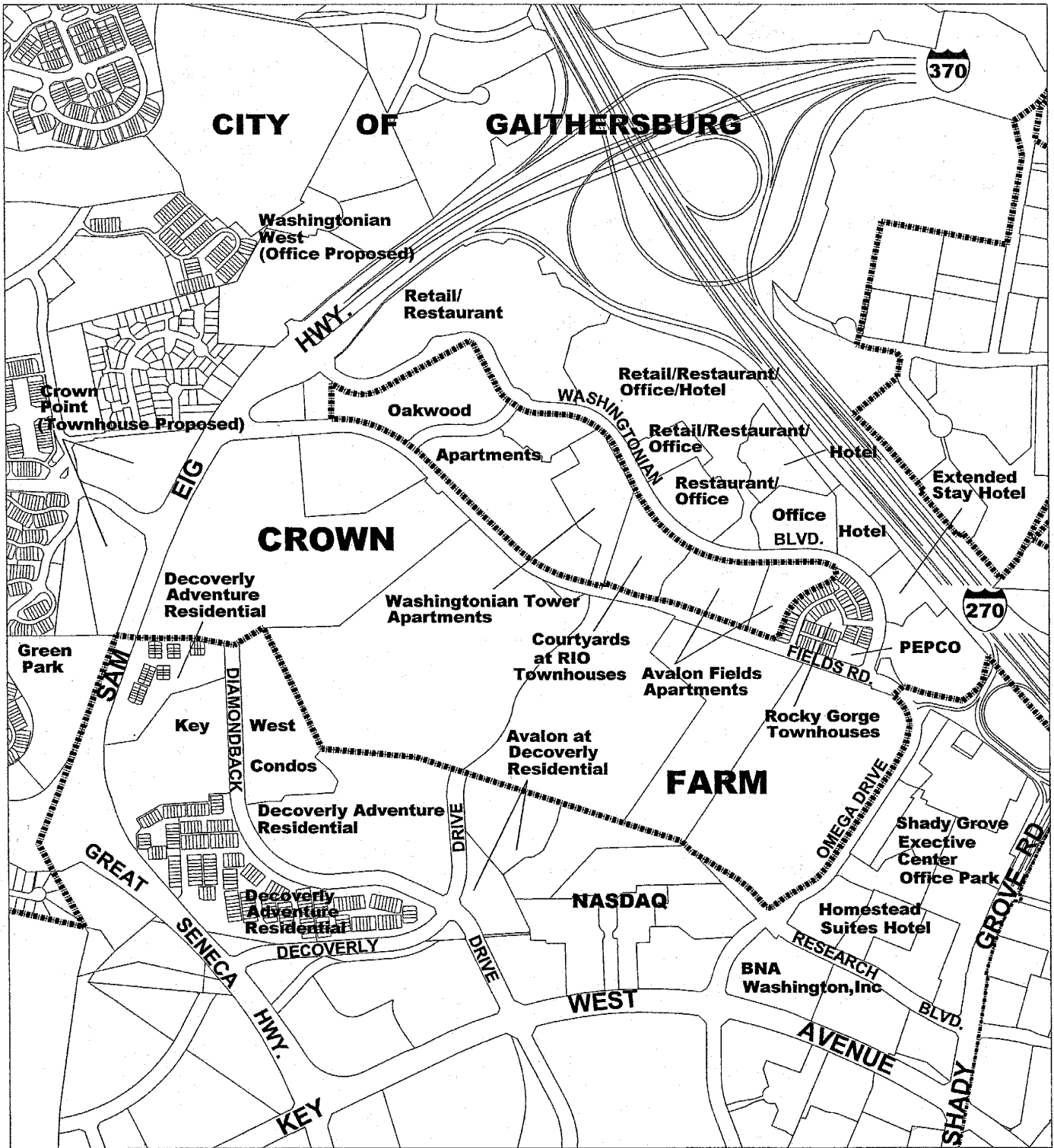


Existing Uses Surrounding Crown Farm



- Potential City of Gaithersburg Boundary
- City of Rockville Boundary



NO SCALE

MEMORANDUM TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
FROM: Greg Ossont, Director
Planning and Code Administration
DATE: March 6, 2006
SUBJECT: Staff Analysis and Preliminary Recommendations

X-182 - Application to annex 182.81725 acres of land adjacent to the present corporate limits, known as the Crown Property, located at the southwest side of Fields Road, bounded by Sam Eig Highway to the northwest and Omega Drive to the southeast. The application requests a reclassification of the subject property from the current R-60/TDR (Medium Density Residential with Transfer of Development Rights), R-200 (Low Density Residential), and R-200/TDR Zones in Montgomery County to the MXD (Mixed Use Development) Zone in the City of Gaithersburg, Maryland.

OWNERS:

Crown Village Farm, LLC
c/o KB Home Maryland LLC
8000 Tower Crescent Drive #1350
Vienna, VA 22182-6207
(Owner of 176.20820 Acres)

Meridian Northwestern Shady Grove West, LLC
c/o Meridian Group
3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 610
Bethesda, MD 20814-5392
(Owner of 0.15773 Acres)

Montgomery County
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(Owner of 6.45123 Acres)

APPLICANTS:

Crown Farm Village, LLC
c/o KB Home Maryland LLC
8000 Tower Crescent Drive #1350
Vienna, VA 22182

Catherine C. Stinson
10000 Fields Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

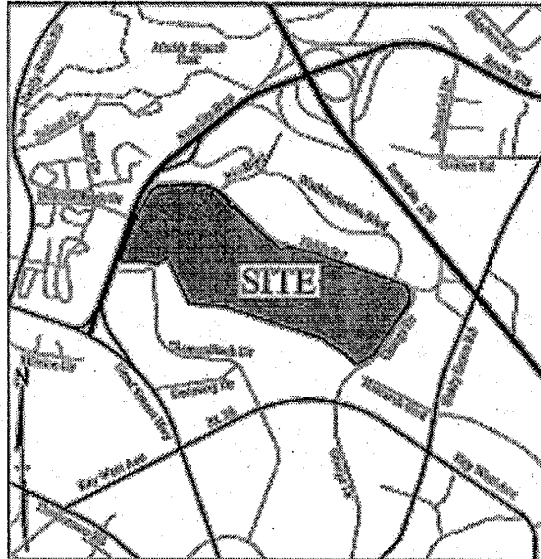
Clyde A. Stinson
10000 Fields Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

DEVELOPER:

Crown Farm Village, LLC
c/o KB Homes
8000 Towers Crescent Drive #1350
Vienna, VA 22182

TAX MAP REFERENCE:

Tax Sheets: FS 341, FS 342, FS 561, FS 562
Tax ID Numbers: 09-00769292, 09-00777372, 09-00769270,
09-00769268, 09-00769304

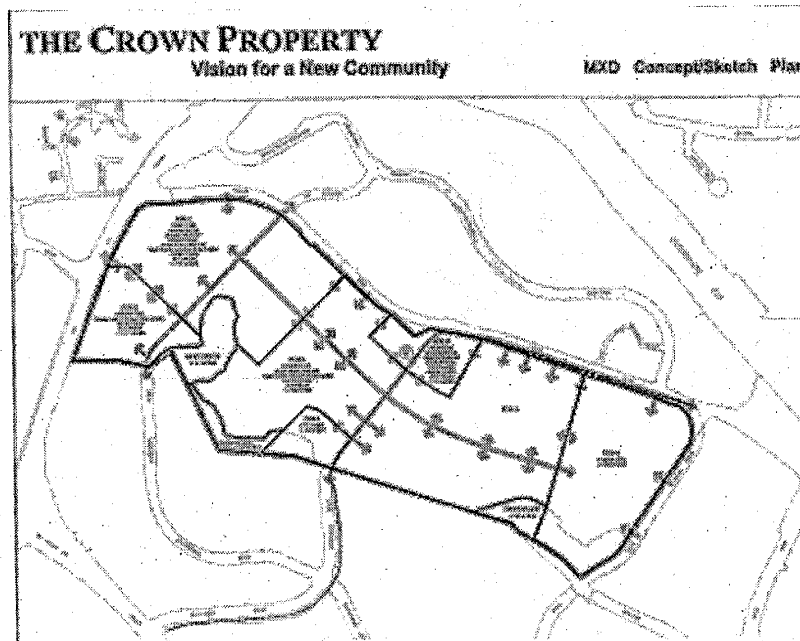


LOCATION:

The subject property is generally located east of the intersection of Diamondback Drive and Sam Eig Highway, south of that portion of Fields Road located within the corporate limits of the City of Gaithersburg, west of Omega Drive, and north of the current terminus points of Diamondback Drive and Decoverly Drive. The property includes portions of Sam Eig Highway, Fields Road and Research Boulevard right of ways that abut the property and are not currently within the municipal limits of the City of Gaithersburg. The above map shows the area of the proposed annexation.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant has requested a range of 1,975 to 2,550 residential dwelling units and 260,000 to 370,000 square feet of commercial density. The applicant is proposing a transit-oriented, traditional neighborhood design. The applicant has voluntarily agreed to donate a 30-acre site for construction of a public high school at the location shown on the Sketch Plan. The applicant's attached presentation from the February 6, 2006 Public Hearing provides an overview of the vision for this property.



BACKGROUND:

The annexation petition requests the annexation of 182.81725 acres. Crown Village Farm, LLC, is the owner of 176.20829 acres with the remainder of the property consisting of 0.15773 acres owned by Meridian/Northwestern Shady Grove West, LLC, and 6.45123 acres of Montgomery County owned right of ways. The property further consists of Parcels P600, P445, P833, P820, P905, and N094, as shown on Montgomery County Tax Maps. The roadways and the parcels are adjacent and contiguous to the current City limits.

A three-day public charrette, sponsored by the developer, Crown Farm Village LLC, was held September 22-25, 2005, and attended by approximately 250 people. Attendees, including City staff and officials as well as Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning, Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery County staff and officials, participated in a tour of the Crown Property and provided input into the vision for its development. The results of the charrette were formally presented by the developer to the City Council and Planning Commission on October 10, 2005.

A joint public hearing on the proposed annexation was held before the City Council and the Planning Commission of the City of Gaithersburg on February 6, 2006. The public hearing was duly advertised and posted. In addition, adjacent property owners within 500 feet and required agencies were notified per Article 23A, Subsection 19(a) of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*. The required outline of public facilities was prepared and distributed to appropriate parties.

At the public hearing, Matthew Bell of Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut and Kuhn Architects and representing the developer, reiterated the outcome of the community charrette and stated that public feedback suggested a walkable community with high quality design, a

community friendly high school design at the southern end, greater retail choices anchored by a grocery store and a connection to Washingtonian retail at the Sam Eigh side of the site, convenient mass transit integrated with the community, and access to natural and active public parks.

Attendees at the public hearing raised additional issues relating to adequacy of infrastructure and public facilities, affordable housing, increase in traffic, the proposed high density, impact on schools, and the proposed development of the Cities Corridor Transitway (CCT).

Minutes and a transcript of the meeting are available at www.gaithersburgmd.gov, or the taped version may be viewed online under *Archived City Council Meetings*. The records of both the City Council and Planning Commission were held open indefinitely.

The first public joint work session with the City Council and Planning Commission was held on February 27, 2006, at which time the issues were discussed in more depth. During the course of this work session, the Mayor and City Council and Planning Commission provided the following guidance:

- Overall residential density should not exceed density permitted under the County's existing Master Plan;
- Clubhouse and Homeowner's Association (HOA) facilities must be better integrated into the community, and additional green space must be provided;
- Significant affordable housing component must be included;
- Five-acres of land should be dedicated to the City as parkland;
- Proposed changes to the CCT alignment and proposed changes to the location of the transit station are appropriate;
- POD #2 should be eliminated and integrated into POD #1; and,
- Overwhelming majority of multi-family dwellings should be located over the retail components of POD #1 and near the transit station within POD #6.

MAXIMUM EXPANSION LIMITS:

Neither the *City of Gaithersburg 2003 Master Plan Process and Overview* nor the *Land Use Element of the Master Plan (2003)* addresses Maximum Expansion limits. However, the purpose of setting maximum expansion limits was defined in the City's previous Master Plan of 1997, namely, that the determination of maximum expansion limits serves as a useful planning tool in determining service needs and responsibilities.

While not shown as part of the maximum expansion limits in 1997, the Crown Farm is nevertheless listed in the City's 2003 Land Use Master Plan as a potential area to be incorporated into the municipal boundaries. It is labeled as future "Special Study Area 4" due to its proximity to the existing City boundaries.

ENVIRONMENT:

The Crown Farm property is a roughly rectangular shaped 177.9-acre site, located along the south side of Fields Road extending to Sam Eig Highway to the west and Omega Drive to the east. The property slopes and drains south towards the property line that follows a stream valley. The stream drains in a westerly direction and is a perennial tributary to the main-stem of the Muddy Branch. The current land use is predominantly agriculture, as the property is composed of four (4) separate farmsteads with associated buildings and open agricultural fields. The England/Crown House, identified on Montgomery County's Master Plan as a historic structure, is located in the central portion of the property. Fencerows delineate the fields and many are overgrown with invasives such as Japanese honeysuckle. Common to working farms, underground fuel tanks exist on the site, as do areas for dumping and machine storage. Future environmental assessments and clean up of these sites is recommended.

Two (2) underground water transmission lines, traveling in a north-south direction, bisect the property. A storm drain system travels from the Washingtonian Center beneath the subject site and outfalls beyond the southern boundary of the Crown Farm site. A number of grading and drainage easements are found along the improved perimeter of the site.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has confirmed there are no rare, threatened, or endangered species on the site. The Crown Farm contains the typical array of urban wildlife species: deer, chipmunk, squirrel, fox, and assorted bird species.

The Crown Farm site contains seven soil types according to the "Montgomery County Soil Survey." The majority of the site is Gaila and Glenelg silt loams and comprise the agricultural fields. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has identified two (2) of the found soils, Baile silt loam and Hatboro silt loam, as hydric and one (1), Brinklow-Blocktown channery silt loam as highly erodible. These soils are allied with the stream and stream valley buffer. These soil types help confirm the presence of wetlands. Approximately 6.02 acres total of the site are considered 100-year floodplain, in which are found the wetlands. The National Wetlands Inventory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified two (2) wetlands: one being the farm pond and the other a palustrine forested wetland found along southern property line. Following an on-site wetland delineation performed by McCarthy & Associates, a total of .88 acres of non-tidal wetlands were identified. This was confirmed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who issued a Jurisdictional Determination (JD).

The 15.05± acres of southern stream valley buffer holds not only the 0.88± acres of on-site wetlands, but also the greater part of the identified forest. Although dominated by rotation crop agricultural fields, 7.5± acres of forest composed of eight (8) separate stands have been delineated. These stands are home to the majority of the 141 specimen trees found throughout the Crown Farm. The eight (8) stands fall into one of four descriptive categories: