

ATTACHMENT 17



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MARYLAND
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

March 6, 2017



Ms. Gwen Wright
Planning Director
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Dear Ms. Wright:

This letter is to recapture the meeting discussion on February 22, 2017, with Montgomery County Department of Parks (Parks), Montgomery County Planning Department (Planning), and representatives from Toll Brothers, Inc. regarding the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision #120160290—WMAL Bethesda. In particular, we discussed the potential dedication of a 4.3 acre elementary school site in the plan. I appreciate you and your staffs' efforts to engage Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in the early stages of the plan reviews and opportunities to participate in negotiations with the developer.

It was encouraging to review the proposed plan with approximately 4.3 acres of land dedicated for a future school site. While this site is smaller than the recommended 7.5 acre size in MCPS Regulation FAA-RA, *Long-range Educational Facilities Planning*, the relatively flat site, with most of the site being developable with little environmental constraints, may be able to accommodate an elementary school as demonstrated by a couple of the options presented. In an effort to maximize the school site utilization that could both benefit the future school as well as the community, we offer the following comments.

- Ensure the adjacent Private Street #3 is wide enough to accommodate a student drop-off lane along the street curbside and could be used for community parking during non-school hours.
- Widen Greentree Road to accommodate a school bus student drop-off lane along the street curb. This area could be used for community parking during non-school hours.

The rationale behind these two suggestions is to minimize the impervious areas, such as parking and driveway on the school site, and maximize the green space on the school site that would allow adequate space for the school-related site amenities as well as a larger field for both school and community use.

Department of Facilities Management

45 West Gude Drive, Suite 4000 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850 ♦ 240-314-1060

- Consider having the developer rough grade the entire site so that the future school site could be utilized for various programs until the school site is built.

Given the undetermined timeframe for build-out of the development and the future school, we would like to explore possibilities of the interim use of the site, such as vegetable gardens, ground-mount solar panels, community recreation, only to mention a few.

I know you are well aware of the significant student enrollment growth MCPS faces in the Walter Johnson Cluster, and we will continue to collaborate with you and your staff as we explore school sites in urban settings that can meet the needs of MCPS and address the goals of approved and proposed sector plans in the area. I look forward to evaluating revisions to the WMAL— Bethesda Preliminary Plan.

Thank you for considering these comments. If you have any questions, please contact me at 240-314-1064.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Song". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

James Song, Director
Department of Facilities Management

JS:lmt

Copy to:
Dr. Zuckerman
Mr. Gallihue



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

December 2, 2015



Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Vice Chair, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The purpose of this letter is to provide our strong support for dedication and/or acquisition of land at the WMAL property for possible future school system use. I understand that negotiations are under way with the property owner to consider either the dedication of five acres for a park that could, in the future, become a school/park site or dedication of five acres for a park with a reservation on four additional acres for possible purchase in the future. Other options also may be under consideration. Regardless, dedication of land is far more preferable than placing land in reservation for later purchase. The high cost of land at properties such as the WMAL property makes purchase extremely problematic.

I know you are well aware of the student enrollment growth Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is experiencing in the Walter Johnson Cluster. The community and the Board of Education are concerned that we have options open to us for locating additional schools as intense residential development continues in the area. Although MCPS has four closed elementary schools in the cluster, three of these sites are 4.0 acres or less in size. In addition, MCPS has no closed middle schools or middle school sites in the cluster. At the high school level, only the former Charles W. Woodward High School may be part of a solution for the enrollment increase in the Walter Johnson Cluster.

This spring, a Roundtable Discussion Group process will be conducted to engage representatives in the Walter Johnson Cluster to review short- and long-term options to accommodate enrollment increases. All options will be on the table. It would be extremely beneficial to include land at the WMAL property as one of the options for accommodating future enrollment growth. Thank you for including the interests of MCPS in your negotiations with the WMAL property owners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia B. O'Neill".

Patricia B. O'Neill
President

PBO:LAB:AMZ:bmr

Copy to:

Members of the Montgomery County Council
Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board
Members of the Board of Education
Mr. Bowers
Dr. Navarro

Dr. Statham
Dr. Zuckerman
Mr. Crispell
Mr. Song
Mr. Ikheloa