**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

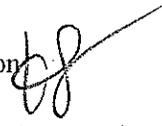
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Countywide Planning Division
Environmental Planning Section
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October 19, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Susan Lareuse, Master Planner, Zoning Section

FROM: Katina Shoulars, Acting Supervisor, Environmental Planning Section 

SUBJECT: Cafritz Property; A-10018

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the zoning map amendment for Cafritz Property, A-10018, including a Statement of Justification, a development plan, and a Natural Resource Inventory, stamped as received by the Environmental Planning Section on October 17, 2011. Verbal comments were provided at a Subdivision Development Review Committee meeting on November 4, 2011. The following comments are for your consideration. The Environmental Planning Section reserves the right to make additional comments throughout the application process.

Background

The Environmental Planning Section previously reviewed a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), NRI-121-06, for this property. The current application is a zoning map amendment request to rezone the 37.35-acre site from R-55 to M-U-T-C.

Site Description

This 37.35-acre site in the R-55 zone is located on the east side of Baltimore Avenue (US Route 1) where it intersects with Van Buren Street. A review of the available information indicates that streams, wetlands, areas of 100-year floodplain, steep slopes 15 percent or greater are not found to occur within the limits of this application. The CSX right-of-way is adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site and has been identified as a transportation-related noise generator with potential vibration impacts. The soils found to occur according to the Prince George's County Soil Survey are in the Croom, Leonardtown, Sunnyside and Urban Land series. According to available information, Marlboro clay is not found to occur on this property. According to information obtained from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program, there are no rare, threatened, or endangered species found to occur in the vicinity of this property. There are no designated scenic and historic roads located adjacent to this property. This property is located in the Northeast Branch watershed of the Anacostia River basin. The property is further located in the Developed Tier as reflected in the adopted General Plan.

Master Plan Conformance

The *Riverdale Park Mixed-Use Town Center Zone Development Plan* contains environmental standards for noise and tree preservation associated with this property. The applicable standards are as follows:

Landscaping

1. The required tree coverage for each property shall be ten percent of the gross site area, measured by the projected ten year coverage provided by a tree. The tree coverage should be accomplished through the provision of shade rather than ornamental trees. In lieu of meeting this standard, the applicant may plant street trees in conformance with the streetscape standards (see Public Space Section) either on the property or within the abutting right-of-way.
2. Healthy trees shall be preserved. Where they cannot be preserved on site, a professional arborist may transplant them to a new location within Riverdale Park.

Comment: The required tree canopy coverage as stated above supersedes the tree canopy requirement of Subtitle 25, Division 3, which is also 10%. Tree Canopy coverage will be addressed at the time of site plan review and grading permit review. With regard to Standard 2, every effort should be made to preserve the healthiest trees onsite. A condition analysis of all specimen trees near the far east and west portions of the site will be required with the future review of a required tree conservation plan and should be provided in an updated Forest Stand Delineation. Preference should be given to specimen trees close to US 1 and adjacent to the CSX right of way. For any specimen trees to be cleared, a variance will be required.

Noise Mitigation

2. The sound from the exterior to within the interior of all residences shall not exceed 45 dBA (Ldn) and should not exceed 35dBA (Ldn). This is to be achieved through material and design changes, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Double-glazed windows/double-pane windows.
 - b. Above-normal insulation in the roof and walls.
 - c. Above-normal insulation in doors and other construction elements.
 - d. The use of high mass construction materials such as concrete, masonry, and stone.

Comment: This property is located between US Route 1 (Baltimore Avenue) and the CSX right of way. US Route 1 is a major collector is not regulated for noise. Because the noise impacts of the CSX tracks cannot be determined with the submitted information, a Phase 1 noise and vibration study should be submitted with any future application for this site. If it is determined that there are potential noise and/or vibration impacts on proposed residential structures, or vibration impacts on proposed non-residential structures, a phase II study will be required and the associated site plans must demonstrate how the noise and vibration impacts will be mitigated prior to the issuance of the first grading permit.

Comment: A Phase 1 noise and vibration study for the CSX right of way will be required at the time of preliminary plan, site plan, or permit, whichever comes first.

Conformance with the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan

The *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan* indicates that the property contains a Network Gap Area and Evaluation Area within the designated network.

The site is significantly wooded with no development and contains no regulated environmental features such as streams, wetlands, or associated buffers. The site is bordered on the east by the CSX railroad tracks, to the west by US Route 1, to the north by the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and to the south by a site developed with a post office. The WMATA site to the north is partially wooded and partially developed with an existing building and WMATA metro tracks. There is no existing habitat corridor connection to the existing woodlands on the subject site due to the existing development, right of way, and railroad tracks on the properties to the west, east, and south. The woodland on the north section is isolated and the existing WMATA and CSX tracks make it impossible to establish a connection with the adjacent woodlands.

The surrounding area of the site has a significant and mature tree canopy which should be considered during the design of the site with respect to the preservation of specimen trees. Specimen trees will be evaluated further during the review of a tree conservation plan.

Environmental Review

1. An approved Natural Resource Inventory, NRI/121/06, was submitted with the application; however it has recently expired. While an NRI is not required with a zoning amendment application of this type, forest stand delineation (FSD) is required. The associated forest stand delineation submitted as part of the NRI also expired with the expiration of the NRI. An updated forest stand delineation is required for review of this application.

Comment: Any future applications for this site, such as a preliminary plan, will require a signed Natural Resource Inventory in conformance with the environmental regulations that became effective on September 1, 2010.

Required Information: Submit forest stand delineation that addresses the required information as outlined in the Environmental Technical Manual.

2. This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance because the site is greater than 40,000 square feet and contains more than 10,000 square feet of woodlands. A Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan was submitted with the application; however, tree conservation plans are not required nor approved with this application type.

The current R-55 zoning has a 20 percent woodland conservation threshold and the proposed M-U-T-C zoning has a 15 percent woodland conservation threshold. The submitted TCP proposes to clear the entire site and meet the total requirement in an off-site woodland conservation bank. While the proposed change in zoning will reduce the overall woodland conservation requirement,

it should have no effect on how the woodland conservation requirements will be met.

Comment: No additional information on woodland conservation is needed at this time.

3. A stormwater management concept plan was not included with the subject application. Stormwater management will be reviewed through subsequent applications for this site by the Department of Public Works and Transportation.

Comment: No additional information is required with respect to the Stormwater Management Concept Plan at this time.

If you have any questions concerning these comments, please feel free to contact me at 301-952-5404 or by e-mail at katina.shoulars@ppd.mncppc.org.

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