



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

1132 Main Administration Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-5035
301.405.1105 TEL 301.314.9659 FAX
www.adminaffairs.umd.edu

January 9, 2012

Ms. Elizabeth Hewlett, Chairman
Prince George's County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
County Administration Building
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Re: Cafritz Property, A-10018

Dear Chairman Hewlett:

The University of Maryland is pleased to reiterate its enthusiastic support for the subject project and the importance that the Cafritz development will have for the surrounding community and prospects for M Square, the University's research park. Taken together with recent development in Hyattsville, M Square and the anticipated UMD East Campus development, this project represents a valuable contribution to the continued growth of the region.

Recognizing that a crossing of the CSX rail is an important element to the success of the project, we have begun substantive discussion with the developer. Although it is too early to be assured of a mutually acceptable outcome, each party is engaged in good faith and, I believe, a satisfactory resolution of issues is possible. As a reminder of my earlier comments, I have enclosed a copy of my December 7 letter to Mr. Cafritz suggesting that the character, quality and economics of a proposed crossing are of particular interest to both parties in these discussions.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this application. Please feel free to contact me at 301-405-6400 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Specter
Vice President for Administrative Affairs and
Chief Financial Officer

cc: Council Member Eric Olson
Mayor Vernon Archer
Mayor Andrew Fellows
Mayor John Tabori
Assistant Deputy CAO David Iannucci
President Wallace D. Loh

Enclosure



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS

1132 Main Administration Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-5035
301.405.1105 TEL 301.314.9659 FAX
www.adminaffairs.umd.edu

December 7, 2011

Mr. Calvin Cafritz, Chairman
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
1825 K Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20006

Re: Cafritz Property, A-10018

Dear Mr. Cafritz:

Thank you for your letter of November 11, 2011 acknowledging our support for the Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) for a mixed use development of the subject property, with the caveat that the concept for access through the University's parcel east of the CSX rail line is a future consideration, not a part of the ZMA.

The University believes that responsible development of the Cafritz property would be beneficial to the nearby communities and is prepared to work with you on the question of access through its land. While supportive of rezoning, I am concerned about the timing for very significant issues directly affecting the University under the whole of your plan. As I understand it, your application for rezoning to Mixed Use Town Center (scheduled to go to public hearing before the Prince George's County Planning Board on December 15) requires that a development plan and design guidelines be approved at the same time. Accordingly, I feel compelled to restate our position: The University has not had the opportunity to undertake an evaluation of options for vehicular connectivity through its land, and no specific information for such a connection has been provided to us. We supported rezoning with the understanding that any traffic analysis would be addressed as an Adequate Public Facilities requirement at Preliminary Plan. Showing a specific alignment for a vehicular flyover into University land is, at present, premature and presumptive given that we have not yet engaged in substantive discussion and negotiation about the access question. It would be more appropriate to reflect in the plan submission that the Applicant shall work with the property owner(s) east of the CSX rail to reach agreement for an acceptable vehicular access plan.

As you may be aware, Jim Soltesz and Jane Cafritz recently visited UMD to introduce my staff and me to the project. We had an open and wide-ranging conversation during which we were advised that various vehicular access options had been evaluated as the plan evolved.

Further, we discussed access/egress through surrounding neighborhoods, a bridged connection over the CSX tracks and an underpass below the tracks. The more discreet and less land-consumptive nature of an underpass makes it a significantly more desirable element for both properties, though it is likely to be more expensive than an overpass. While an overpass right-of-way will have a determinable market value, its placement might well detract significantly from the value of the useable remainder of the University parcel, both in terms of excessive land use and the potential urban blight that often accompanies such structures. On the other hand, an underpass has value that may, in part, offset the cost of the right of way. An example of just such a successful connection is the four lane Metro and CSX underpass at Paint Branch Parkway.

Regarding this project overall, the University of Maryland is enthusiastic about its prospects for success. We have had only an introduction to the plan thus far, and specific implications to the University of Maryland have yet to be fully explored. I have asked my staff to work with your organization to explore and resolve remaining issues. We look forward to continuing our working relationship to mutual benefit.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Specter
Vice President for Administrative Affairs
and Chief Financial Officer

cc: President Wallace D. Loh
Mayor Andrew Fellows
Mayor Vernon Archer
Mayor John Tabori