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CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN #CSP-05001; Rezone Property to the M-U-I Zone, Amendment of Density and Height Requirements

Application	General Data
Project Name: Springhill Lake Location: Southeast of Cherrywood Lane, southwest of the Capital Beltway, northwest of Edmonston Road, and north of Breezewood Drive Applicant/Address: AIMCO 15800 Crabbs Branch Way, Suite 250 Rockville, MD 20855	Date Accepted: 05/06/05
	Planning Board Action Limit: Waived
	Plan Acreage: 174.81
	Zone: R-10/DDO
	Dwelling Units: 5,800
	Square Footage: 15,000 min.
	Planning Area: 67
	Tier: Developed
	Council District: 04
	Municipality: Greenbelt
200-Scale Base Map: 211NE06	

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
Redevelopment of Existing Apartment Complex (5,800 units)	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 02/07/05 (CB-12-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed: 6/28/05

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Gary Wagner	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

July 19, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board
VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor
FROM: Gary Wagner, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section
SUBJECT: Conceptual Site Plan, CSP-05001
Springhill Lake

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the conceptual site plan for the subject property and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions.

EVALUATION

The conceptual site plan was reviewed and evaluated for conformance with the following criteria:

- a. Conformance to the requirements of the *Greenbelt Metro Area Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, October 2001.
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for development in the Development District Overlay Zone.
- c. Referrals.

FINDINGS

Based upon the analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff recommends the following findings:

- 1. **Request:** The application is for the redevelopment of Springhill Lake, an existing rental housing complex constructed in the 1960s, consisting of 2,889 dwelling units in the R-18 Zone and located in the City of Greenbelt. The proposal is for a total of 5,800 dwelling units consisting of a variety of unit types with approximately 25 percent of the units for sale. The proposal also consists of a minimum of 15,000 square feet of retail, a community building and associated recreational facilities, and the relocation of an existing elementary school on the site. The application also includes a request to rezone the property to the M-U-I Zone, increase the density of the site over the recommended density of the sector plan, and amend the height restrictions

recommended by the *Greenbelt Metro Area Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*. Conceptual site plan approval is required by the sector plan.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	R-18, C-A	M-U-I, R-18
Use(s)	Multifamily Residential, Commercial, Civic, Elementary School	Multifamily Residential, For-Sale Residential, Commercial, Civic
Acreage	174.81	174.81 (includes elementary school)
Lots	0	To be determined at Preliminary Plan
Parcels	~13	To be determined at Preliminary Plan
Square Footage/GFA	~10,000 SF	15,000–50,000 SF
Total Dwelling Units:	2,889	5,800
Attached & Condominium	0	25 percent minimum
Detached	0	0
Multifamily	2,889	75 percent maximum

3. **Location:** The subject property is located southeast of Cherrywood Lane, southwest of the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495), northwest of Edmonston Road, and north of Breezewood Drive in Greenbelt.

4. **Surroundings:** Beltway Plaza Shopping Center abuts the site to the south; to the north is the Capital Beltway (I-495); to the east is Edmonston Road and existing office; to the west is Cherrywood Lane and the existing City of Greenbelt Recreational Center. Beyond Cherrywood Lane to the west is the Greenbelt Metro Station and the proposed Greenbelt Metro Center, a Planned Metro Community with an approved conceptual site plan (CSP-01008).

Required Findings:

5. The sector plan requires that a conceptual site plan be approved by the Planning Board in accordance with Part 3, Division 9 of the Zoning Ordinance. The conceptual site plan submitted has been reviewed in accordance with those provisions and it can be found that the plan represents a most reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines without requiring unreasonable costs and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

6. **Conformance to Development District Standards:**

The Planning Board is required to find that the conceptual site plan meets the applicable development district standards. If the applicant intends to deviate from the development district standards, the Planning Board must find that the alternative development district standards will benefit the development and the development district and will not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan. The conceptual site plan is in general conformance with the sector plan.

The sector plan calls for a range of residential unit types on a variety of lot sizes, including a mix of rental- and ownership-based housing options, creating the random pattern of a traditional neighborhood. The specific residential mix is to be determined at the time of conceptual site plan review. The applicant has provided a mix of residential development consisting of a variety of rental options, condominiums and townhouses and has agreed to provide a minimum of 25 percent for-sale units. The applicant intends to develop the property with new urbanism techniques by providing pedestrian-friendly streets, street trees and sidewalks; traditional on-street parking with the majority of the parking behind the buildings accessed by alleys; and a village square with live-work dwelling units, retail and recreational amenities. The applicant intends to utilize the existing streets and preserve as many of the existing mature trees on the site as possible. The old apartment buildings are to be torn down in phases as new buildings are constructed in their place. Total buildout of the project is to be 8-10 years.

As part of the redevelopment, the existing elementary school located on the site is to be demolished and a new combined elementary/middle school is to be constructed on the adjacent existing middle school site that also houses a major county school bus facility. The school bus facility is to be relocated to a place to be determined. The applicant has met with the Prince George's County Schools, which indicated that it has no objections to the conceptual site plan, but they "cannot fully endorse the plan until all pending concerns regarding funding, scheduling, and enrollment capacities are reviewed and resolved."

Amendments to Development District Standards:

The applicant has requested two amendments to the development district standards, an amendment to the overall density of the site, and an amendment to the maximum building height requirements. The amendments are discussed below:

Density:

The applicant has requested that the density applicable to the M-U-I Zone be applied to the development with a 5,800 dwelling unit cap. Section 27-546.18(4) of the Zoning Ordinance allows multifamily residential densities up to 48 dwelling units per acre. The applicant proposes a density of 32 dwelling units per acre. The sector plan recommends that the current density be maintained for future redevelopment of Springhill Lake. The applicant makes the following justification to increase the overall density for the development:

"Two of the 'Countywide Goals' of the General Plan are to (1) make efficient use of existing and proposed local, state and federal infrastructure and investment and (2) enhance quality and character of communities and neighborhoods. Additionally, 'infill and revitalization' are expressed as 'priorities' for the General Plan. Collectively, the General Plan seeks to capture at least a third of the County's housing growth within the Developed Tier and at least half of it at Metropolitan Centers and Corridors. Springhill Lake abuts the Greenbelt Metro Metropolitan

Center and is accessed via the University Boulevard (Md. 193) Corridor. In these areas, the General Plan proposes a minimum residential density of 30 dwelling units per acre for properties within the 'core'. Most of Springhill Lake is within a third of a mile of the Greenbelt Metro Station which is the definition of the core.

“The Sector Plan proposes many goals, objectives and priorities that are consistent with the County General Plan. However, the Sector Plan proposes a continuation of the existing density which is inconsistent with the major policy espoused in the General Plan. As well, an important element of the new proposal is to create a more urban place (elimination of the suburban concept) that is more compatible with existing Greenbelt and a broader range of urban housing options (high-rise, mid-rise, townhomes, and condominiums). Retention of the existing density negates the ability to design a community of diverse housing options.”

Staff is in agreement with the applicant's justification to increase the density for the development, consistent with the M-U-I Zone, and is of the opinion that the alternative development district standards will benefit the development and the development district and will not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

Height:

The applicant is also seeking an amendment to the height requirements of the sector plan, requesting that “no minimum or maximum height be applicable to the property.” The regulations that are applicable to the M-U-I Zone are those of the R-18 Zone. The R-18 Zone allows a maximum building height of 80 feet. The applicant's request to amend the development district standard so that no minimum or maximum height requirements apply to the development is without adequate justification. While some relief from the building height limitations may be warranted when buildings are in the final stages of design, it is premature at this time to grant a wholesale waiver of the requirement at this time. Staff is of the opinion that the applicant's alternative development district standard for building height will not benefit the development and the development district and could substantially impair implementation of the sector plan because it would allow unlimited building height. An amendment to the height requirements should be submitted at the time of detailed site plan when adequate information can be submitted, such as a model, sections, architectural elevations and renderings, to assess the building height's impact on immediate and surrounding adjacent development.

7. **Amendment of Approved Development District Overlay Zone.**

The applicant has filed a request to change the underlying zone for a portion of the property from R-18 and C-A to M-U-I, pursuant to Section 27-548.26(b) in the Development District Overlay Zone section of the Zoning Ordinance. The owner of the property may request changes to the underlying zone in conjunction with the review of a conceptual site plan. Pursuant to Section 27-548.26(b)(3), the Planning Board is required to hold a public hearing on the application and make a recommendation to the District Council. Only the District Council may approve a request to change the underlying zone of a property.

Under Section 27-546.16 of the Zoning Ordinance for approval of the Mixed-Use Infill Zone (M-U-I) on a property, the owner is required to show that the proposed rezoning and development will be compatible with existing or approved future development on adjacent properties. Staff has concluded, based on the applicant's proposal, that the rezoning and the proposed development are compatible with adjacent properties, including the Beltway Plaza Mall, the existing office

development to the east, and the planned community adjoining the Greenbelt Metro station to the west of Springhill Lake.

Under Section 27-548.26(b)(5), the District Council is required to find “that the proposed development conforms with the purposes and recommendations for the Development District as stated in the Master Plan, Master Plan Amendment or Sector Plan, and meets applicable site plan requirements.” The development generally conforms to the applicable site plan requirements as discussed in Finding 5 above. The applicant’s justification for the use change is as follows:

“The Sector Plan expresses four ‘planning principles’, which are part of its purposes and recommendations, which a rezoning from R-18 and C-A to M-U-I will help to implement.

- “1. Provide quality development within a safe and effective multimodal transportation system that balances transit, bicycle, pedestrian and automobile circulation: The M-U-I Zone allows additional density which is a key component to redeveloping the type of dense housing that will utilize multimodal transit. The CSP proposes the denser housing in proximity to Metro and the design concept promotes pedestrian travel to adjacent shopping and dining. Additionally, the interior road design is being changed to make all streets public with bike routes throughout which also provide connections to adjacent urban communities.
- “2. Protect and strengthen the regional ecological systems: Developing density at ‘close-in’ areas near transit, benefits the regional ecological system by helping to stem the pressure for growth in the outer areas and the M-U-I Zone will allow for more compacted development. Moreover, the Applicant’s CSP proposes little impact to areas not already impacted by existing development.
- “3. Create a sense of community identity and place: While some ‘identity’ does currently exist, Springhill Lake is largely perceived as a ‘transient’ community. Implementation of the M-U-I Zone will create a more diverse community, inclusive home ownership opportunities and a more diverse make-up as a result of multiple housing types for various income ranges. The CSP proposes a community focal point—around an amenity pond—that along with other recreational amenities and on-site commercial will help create a sense of place. The regulations of the M-U-I Zone accommodate the mix of uses intended for the redevelopment proposal.
- “4. Apply transit village and other neo-traditional planning concepts common in urban design to promote residential communities oriented toward activity centers, transit and pedestrians: The Applicant’s planners, Duany Plater Zyberk & Company have a background in neo-traditional planning principles and have actively participated in the planning of such places throughout the region. As well, they have provided input via two design charrettes and have a familiarity with mixed use zones and have expressed affirmation in the use of M-U-I as an appropriate vehicle. M-U-I provides the necessary density, uses, dwelling types, design and architectural flexibility to utilize the desired planning concepts evident in the CSP.

“In sum, the Applicant asserts the purposes and recommendations of the Master Plan and Sector Plan can best be satisfied by rezoning the property to M-U-I and implementing the redevelopment via the regulations applicable to that zone. Section 27-546.16 provides the M-U-I zone may be approved for property which is the subject of a DDOZ, which is the case in this instance.

“It is noted, the promotion of ‘economic vitality and investment’ is one of the specific purposes of the DDOZ. In this instance, the community could continue as an ‘obsolete’ collection of suburban rental units or be redeveloped and revitalized as part of a thriving Greenbelt and take advantage of its immediate proximity to Metro and the Md. 193 corridor. The proposed plan includes a demolition of the entire existing community as well as creation of more diverse housing product and home ownership opportunities for the first time in the community. This is the type of economic vitality and investment envisioned by the County Plans and cannot be accomplished if the existing density is retained because it becomes a limiting factor.

“The conceptual site plan proposal for Springhill Lake provides for a predominantly residential new urbanism neighborhood community. The M-U-I zone allows for a density of up to 48 dwelling units per acre. Herein the Applicant is proposing to cap the density 5,800 dwelling units, all of which would be consistent with the General Plan and Sector Plan guidelines for the core of a metropolitan center along a corridor. If the M-U-I zone is granted, the Applicant would also need relief from the building height restrictions applicable to the R-18 zone in order to obtain the density applicable to the zone and create the urban transit place envisioned by the Sector Plan.

“Pedestrian friendly streets, street trees, sidewalks, predominantly rear parking for residents with traditional on-street parallel parking to accommodate guests are part of the design which will create the new enhanced identity. Public spaces, parks, neighborhood interaction design, pedestrian and vehicular connectivity, a main square, live/work dwelling units and the 15,000 Square foot Clubhouse will add to the ‘sense of place’. These are some of the highlights of the CSP proposal which shows consideration and attention to specific ‘design policies’, although not mandatory, applicable to the Springhill Lake DDOZ in the Sector Plan.

“Additionally, the implementation of the M-U-I zone and the development proposed via the zone conforms to the Objectives (purposes and recommendations for the Springhill Lake DDOZ), stated in the Sector Plan on page 113 as follows:

- “1. Implement the County’s policy of redeveloping and revitalizing the Inner Beltway communities: Without the M-U-I implementation, the redevelopment would not be financially feasible, nor could it be developed substantially different from its current design as suburban apartments. The density, uses and flexibility inherent in the zone will allow for a long lasting design concept that will retain vitality and the creation of a true urban place.
- “2. Redevelop the existing rental apartment complex into a transit village with a variety of quality housing types to attract a diverse residential population: The M-U-I zone with its allowable density, dwelling types and flexibility, along with relief from building height limitations is essential to accomplishing this objective. The existing R-18 zoning is oriented toward developing only suburban apartment complexes. Creating public streets and eliminating large parking lots will allow for design techniques that will take advantage of the proximity to transit and enhance the likelihood of market driven product that will be attractive to a variety of income levels. A wide range of economic levels will replace the largely ‘transient population’, a factor the Sector Plan desires to correct via this redevelopment proposal. Price ranges will vary even within the same unit type as some units will be upgraded with more options than others of the same generic type. Characteristic of lifestyle communities, multiple builders will provide product diversification and market competition that ultimately benefits the end user.

- “3. Provide complementary neighborhood-oriented commercial, civic and open space/recreational amenities. The M-U-I zoning has resulted in a CSP proposal that would allow a variety of commercial uses oriented toward the needs of the residents and creates a focal point for the community. Civic, community and recreational amenities will be with walking distance to much of the community and the public streets will encourage biking and pedestrian trips. Additionally, the older existing elementary school will be demolished and a new one will be constructed by the applicant as part of a new ‘civic institutional’ building in the community. The new school will better serve the school age population of the community and its location is oriented to make access easier for the walking students while still providing a safe pedestrian crossing. Current zoning would not facilitate such a proposal.

- “4. Provide suitable linkages to adjacent existing and proposed developments, the transit station and/or open spaces. Again, the M-U-I allows for the development of a CSP that emphasizes connectivity to surrounding communities anticipated for new development and redevelopment. The higher density is proposed in the area most adjacent to Metro and a variety of types of ‘open space’ are proposed within the community. The size of the individual neighborhoods as well as the overall neighborhood structure is determined by the pedestrian shed, which is the distance covered by a five minute walk from the neighborhood center to the neighborhood edge. This distance is conventionally 1320 feet (quarter of a mile). The CSP proposal arranges the land uses to create better relationships amongst themselves and the surrounding community. For instance, a pedestrian path will link to Metro and facilitate increased ridership.

“In sum, the specific purposes of the Springhill Lake DDOZ, as expressed in the Sector Plan, are best implemented via a change in the zoning of the property to M-U-I.”

Staff is in agreement with the applicant’s justification to rezone the entire property to the M-U-I Zone, with the exception of Parcel 20, owned by the Prince George’s County Public Schools, and concludes that the proposed development conforms with the purposes and recommendations for the development district as stated in the sector plan and meets applicable site plan requirements.

In rezoning the property to the M-U-I Zone, staff also recommends that some of the uses that are typically allowed in the zone be restricted. In accordance with Section 27-546.17(a)(2), use restrictions can be imposed at the time of rezoning. If use restrictions are imposed, the District Council is required to follow the conditional zoning procedure in Part 3, Division 2, Section 27-157 (b)(1), which states:

- (1) When it approves a Zoning Map Amendment, the District Council may impose reasonable requirements and safeguards (in the form of conditions) which the Council finds are necessary to either:**
 - (A) Protect surrounding properties from adverse effects which might accrue from the Zoning Map Amendment; or**
 - (B) Further enhance the coordinated, harmonious, and systematic development of the Regional District.**

The uses below that are recommended to be restricted have been determined to be uses that could have adverse effects on the community and surrounding properties. These uses have also been restricted in other DDO zones that have been approved in the county. As indicated in the

Community Planning Division memorandum dated July 14, 2005 (Chang to Wagner), “staff recommends that the range of uses listed as permitted in the M-U-I Zone be amended to prohibit the following uses on the Springhill Lake site:

- “1. Drive-in restaurant
- “2. Fast-food restaurant that is not within a shopping mall or an integrated shopping center, an office building, or a hotel
- “3. Vehicle, boat, mobile home, camping trailer rental, repair, service station, storage and sales
- “4. Gas station
- “5. Animal hospital
- “6. Motorized bicycle repair shop
- “7. Funeral parlor
- “8. Lawn mower sales or repair shop
- “9. Limousine service
- “10. Massage establishment
- “11. Methadone treatment center
- “12. Printing shop exceeding 2,000 square feet of gross floor area
- “13. Pawnshop
- “14. Seafood market containing more than 3,000 square feet of gross retail space
- “15. Amusement park within a wholly enclosed shopping mall
- “16. Outdoor rifle, pistol, or skeet shooting range
- “17. Animal or poultry raising (other than customary household pets)
- “18. Sand and gravel wet-processing
- “19. Satellite dish antenna more than 10 feet in diameter, to serve only 1 dwelling unit, in accordance with Section 27-451.01
- “20. Taxicab dispatching station
- “21. Cemetery”

Referrals:

8. In a memorandum dated June 28, 2005 (Morales to Wagner), the Prince George's County Public Schools offered the following comments:

“Please be advised that the Prince George's County Public School System has reviewed the Conceptual Site Plan for the redevelopment of the Springhill Lake redevelopment as reflected in the plan that was proposed at the January 2004 community charrette.

“There are several questions that remain to be resolved regarding the demolition of the existing Springhill Lake Elementary School. Obviously, the Board of Education is not in a position to allow the demolition of an existing school from the facility inventory without a new facility being in place to satisfy the enrollment requirements for the Greenbelt community. Recognizing that the AIMCO proposal includes the proposed construction of a lake where the current elementary school is located, we cannot fully endorse the plan until all pending concerns regarding funding, scheduling and enrollment capacities are reviewed and resolved.

“I am confident that dialog will continue with AIMCO and a resolution to the disposition of the existing Springhill Lake Elementary School will be reached in the near future.”

9. In a memorandum dated June 30, 2005 (Metzger to Wagner), the Environmental Planning Section offered the following comments:

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the conceptual site plan for Springhill Lake, CSP-05001, stamped as received by the Environmental Planning Section on May 11, 2005. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of CSP-05001 and TCPI/20/05 subject to conditions.

Background

The Environmental Planning Section previously reviewed this site in the 1960s, years before the construction of the Greenbelt Metro Station in the 1990s. The subject property is predominantly developed except to the extreme northwest corner, which is largely in flood-prone areas and owned by the City of Greenbelt. In 2003, this portion of the site was reviewed in conjunction with Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/88/03 that provides off-site mitigation for the Golden Triangle project.

Site Description

This 174.81-acre site in the R-18, C-A and O-S Zones is located southeast of Cherrywood Lane, southwest of the Capitol Beltway, northwest of Edmonston Road, and north of Breezeway Drive. A review of the available information indicates that streams, wetlands, 100-year floodplain, severe slopes, and areas of steep slopes on highly erodible soils are found to occur on the subject property. Transportation-related noise impact is a major consideration at this time and needs to be regulated. The soils found to occur according to the Prince George's County Soil Survey include Bibb, Christiana, Elkton, Galestown, Sassafra, Sunny side, and Muirkirk series. These soil series generally exhibit moderate and severe limitations to developments due to high shrink-swell potential, poor stability, steep slopes, and slow permeability. 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 publication titled “Ecologically Significant Areas in Anne Arundel and Prince George's

Counties” December 1997, 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 adjacent to this property. This property is located in the Indian Creek and Northeast Branch watersheds of the Anacostia River basin, in the Developed Tier as reflected in the adopted General Plan, and in the Greenbelt Metro area sector plan.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE GREENBELT METRO AREA SECTOR PLAN

The subject property is substantially developed at this time; however, opportunities exist for restoration of the existing stream systems and 100-year floodplain. The sector plan recommendations delineate the stream and floodplain systems on the site as a “restoration area” (see Map 14 on page 77). While the plan focuses on environmentally sensitive areas closer to the Metro station, the text states that “Preservation areas, where little or no disturbance is permitted, shall be established to protect the Sector Plan Area’s most environmentally sensitive features, such as Hollywood Swamp, wooded floodplain, wetlands, priority woodlands, and special habitat.” The subject property contains wooded floodplain, wetlands and some limited areas of special habitat.

The following text is contained in the Recommendations section of the Sector Plan. The application submission did not state how these recommendations were met by the subject application. The text from the Sector Plan is in BOLD.

- **Implement the Environmental Envelope.**

Preservation, conservation and restoration areas shall be established in the Environmental Envelope. Map 14 illustrates the general location recommended for these elements:

1. **Preservation areas, where little or no disturbance is permitted, shall be established to protect the Sector Plan Area’s most environmentally sensitive features, such as Hollywood Swamp, wooded floodplain, wetlands, priority woodlands, and special habitat.**

A Preservation and Conservation Management Area (PCMA) (in the Central Core Area) should be established. This portion of Indian Creek Stream Valley has a special designation to protect its unique ecosystem while allowing public access and enjoyment. In the PCMA, preservation of the most sensitive features such as wetlands, streams, special habitat and exemplary forests shall occur. Passive recreation opportunities, such as trails and interpretive stations, shall occur around the edges of the preserved features. The PCMA shall be managed in such a way to allow public use and appreciation of its features, without degrading the features in the process.

2. **Conservation areas shall protect environmental features in a multiple use situation, allowing certain types of disturbance, such as active or passive recreation, transit activities, public gathering spaces, interpretive facilities and nonmotorized commuter facilities. However, active recreational uses should not be allowed in the WMATA wetland mitigation area.**
3. **Environmental restoration sites will improve degraded stream sections, dumping sites and stream/fish blockages. These sites shall include the**

stream section in the South Core Area, the areas where Indian Creek passes under the Beltway and Greenbelt Road, the stream section in Springhill Lake, and the concrete/cement dumping site.

As illustrated on the Land Use Concept, the areas outside the Environmental Envelope are recommended for new development, or redevelopment. The sector plan recommends high-density development in those areas to limit sprawl, and minimize environmental impacts. Marginal areas could be used for either development or environmental mitigation.

Discussion: As noted above, Map 14 shows the floodplain and stream systems on the subject property as being designated for restoration. It should be noted that the site does not contain the area referred to as “Preservation and Conservation Management Area” in the plan text. While it is not clear at this conceptual level of review whether trails are proposed through this area, it would be appropriate for trails to be located within the 100-year floodplain and stream system; however, their primary placement should be outside this area, with trail crossings placed only as necessary to make vital connections. A detailed analysis is needed of the existing conditions of the stream system on the Springhill Lake site, so that restoration efforts can be focused on the areas in need of restoration.

Recommended Condition: Prior to the submission of the preliminary plan, a stream corridor assessment (SCA) shall be performed on all sections of streams that exist within the subject application. This assessment shall be performed using the Maryland Department of Natural Resources SCA protocol. The applicant shall use the results of the SCA to propose a comprehensive stream restoration plan with the preliminary plan.

Recommended Condition: The 100-year floodplain, stream and wetland system present on the site shall be preserved to the fullest extent possible. Any proposed impacts to these features shall be limited to those essential to the proposed development. The applicant shall submit justification statements for any impact proposed and the justification shall include discussions of alternative designs and shall discuss the necessity of each impact individually. Trails shall be primarily located outside the regulated areas, with crossings placed only as necessary.

- **Facilitate a green network composed of:**
 1. **The Environmental Envelope, including the central stream valley greenway, and PCMA.**
 2. **Connections to other environmental and recreational areas, such as Lake Artemesia, parks and open spaces via trails and paths.**
 3. **Environmental connections within and beyond the Sector Plan Area via forest canopy, streams and riparian corridors.**

Discussion: Most of the regulated areas are proposed for reforestation on the plans submitted. The plan shows a proposed stream crossing where one does not currently exist. It is not clear from the information submitted why this crossing is necessary, because this portion of the site is currently accessed from the south by an existing roadway. It is possible that emergency services personnel have made a requirement that there be more than one access point to this area, in case one of the access points becomes blocked.

As stated above, the applicant should be required to justify all proposed impacts during the review of the preliminary plan application. This will be one of the impacts that will be required to have a justification. If sufficient justification is provided for this stream crossing, it must be done in the least disruptive manner, through the use of a bridge or open-bottomed culverts in order to maintain the current connection to the large area of land zoned O-S.

Recommended Condition: If sufficient justification is provided that the proposed new crossing of the floodplain and stream system is essential to the redevelopment of the site because of some requirement of county ordinances or an emergency services agency, the crossing shall be built as a bridge or with the use of bottomless culverts to allow the movement of wildlife between the stream and wetland areas to the north and south of the proposed crossing.

Recommended Condition: All regulated areas shall be reforested or restored as appropriate and shall be shown on the Type I tree conservation plan as being part of the overall conservation easement. Wherever possible, additional areas adjacent to the regulated areas shall be reforested to provide additional buffering for the floodplain and stream system and these areas shall also be included in the conservation easement.

- **Concentrate development in previously disturbed and previously developed areas to protect, conserve, and restore environmental features while respecting development rights.**

Discussion: The plan proposes concentrating development within the areas of the site already developed. As discussed above, a new crossing of the floodplain and stream system is proposed that does not meet the intent of the sector plan text. This crossing will be required to be fully justified. Also as discussed above, the floodplain and stream system will be required to be fully evaluated for opportunities for restoration. As discussed below, areas of existing trees that provide much-needed open space will be evaluated fully to determine their condition and the feasibility for preservation.

- **Preserve and improve the watershed's natural hydrologic features by maintaining an awareness of existing storm water quantity and quality problems and analyzing the effects of new development.**
 1. **Further channelization of Indian Creek should not be permitted within the Sector Plan Area.**
 2. **Wetlands shall be preserved to the highest extent possible.**
 3. **Creation of new areas of open water, such as a lake, is not recommended, especially if natural stream sections and other environmental features would be destroyed by their construction.**
 4. **Low-impact development (LID) techniques should be considered and used wherever possible for each development proposal to address water quantity and quality control, including a wooded buffer between all impervious surfaces and streams or open water. These techniques control storm water at the source by creating a hydrological functioning landscape that mimics natural watershed hydrology.**

Discussion: Although the subject property does not contain the main stem of Indian Creek, the site contains unnamed tributaries that flow into Indian Creek. The issue of channelization could be addressed by the implementation of stream restoration within the existing stream system and through the use of low impact development micro-management techniques. The proposed concept appears to preserve the existing wetlands on the site, with the exception being the proposed new stream crossing.

The plan does propose the construction of a new “water feature” of considerable size. Because a copy of the stormwater concept plan was not submitted and no other information was provided regarding the purpose of the water feature, it is not clear whether this is strictly an amenity or if it is intended to be used as a stormwater management facility. The stormwater concept approval letter submitted with the package makes no mention of low impact development techniques and the plans submitted show no provisions for any type of bioretention on-site. Because the entire site is being redeveloped, there is an opportunity to change how stormwater is being handled on the site. In keeping with the recommendations of the sector plan and in order to reduce the impacts on the existing floodplain and stream systems, the stormwater concept should be re-evaluated to determine all possible opportunities for the use of low impact development techniques.

Recommended Condition: During the review of the preliminary plan, the site shall be evaluated for all opportunities to implement low impact development techniques including, but not limited to, bioretention, dry wells, and rainwater recycling. The detailed site plan shall show the use of all applicable low impact development techniques.

- **Avoid disturbance to wetlands, streams, open water, floodplain and woodlands.**
 1. **Mitigation of all of these features shall only be allowed when other alternatives are exhausted and the appropriate permits are obtained. If floodplain and wetland mitigation is approved by applicable agencies, it shall occur within the subject property, Sector Plan Area, or Indian Creek Watershed, in that order of priority. On-site mitigation of wetlands and floodplain would minimize the negative effects of watershed as a whole.**
 2. **Certain structures and improvements are allowed within the floodplain, and development shall exhaust these options before proposing floodplain compensation.**
 3. **Within the Sector Plan Area, development features such as roads, parking lots, green space, landscaping and buildings shall be planned and designed to reduce environmental impacts and to provide and maintain beneficial hydrologic functions.**

Discussion: As noted above, the new stream crossing has yet to be justified by the applicant. The mitigation provisions should be part of a recommended condition. In some areas the existing impacts are proposed to be reduced.

Recommended Condition: Floodplain and wetland mitigation shall occur on the subject property, sector plan area, or Indian Creek Watershed in that order of priority.

- **Preserve and protect woodlands and trees to the greatest extent possible and integrate with future development. This includes the trees in the Environmental**

Envelope, stands of trees in North College Park, Springhill Lake, Berwyn Heights and street trees.

- 1. Woodland conservation requirements, as outlined in the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance, should be met on site or within the Environmental Envelope for any development proposed within the Sector Plan Area. Afforestation and reforestation requirements will be strategically placed to reconnect forest canopy, reduce forest fragmentation or to expand the riparian zone and other buffers.**
- 2. To protect the woodlands during development, Tree Protective Devices (TPDs) shall be required at the drip line of trees and woodlands.**
- 3. Street tree programs should be supported in all communities. Street tree programs in Greenbelt, College Park and Berwyn Heights should be continued, and integrated with development or redevelopment within the Sector Plan Area. New programs should be implemented in those neighborhoods that do not have them, such as Springhill Lake.**

Discussion: The subject property is substantially developed and cleared, except to the north where woodlands and other environmental constraints exist. The TCPI currently under review shows the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance being met through the provision of some preservation on-site, several areas of reforestation on-site, and approximately half of the requirement being met through off-site mitigation. Because there is a limited amount of woodland present on the site, it is appropriate for some of the mitigation to be provided through off-site mitigation; however, there could be more reforestation adjacent to the floodplain and stream system on-site.

There are several problems with the TCPI that are discussed in the Environmental Review section below, such as double counting of woodland that is already being counted for another site and the use of areas of existing trees to meet the requirements through reforestation.

Tree protection devices will be required during subsequent reviews of tree conservation plans.

The design of street tree landscaping will be addressed during the review of the detailed site plan.

Recommended Condition: At time of detailed site plan review, the plans shall show a comprehensive street tree planting program that includes a variety of species throughout the site.

Recommended Condition: The TCPI submitted with the preliminary plan application shall show expanded areas of reforestation adjacent to the floodplain and stream systems on the site.

- **Reconnect the forest canopy within and across sector plan boundaries. Afforestation, reforestation and tree planting will be encouraged in strategic areas where the canopy is now interrupted, such as along Indian Creek in the South Core Area.**

Discussion: Afforestation and reforestation are planned for areas adjacent to the floodplain and these areas are recommended for expansion.

- **Protect native RTE (rare, threatened and endangered) species.**

1. **Use native species for restoration, afforestation, reforestation and mitigation areas and landscape areas adjacent to the Environmental Envelope. See the Prince George's County Native Plant List.**
2. **Require an inventory of RTE plant and animal species for selected properties within the Sector Plan Area as development proposals are submitted during conceptual site plan review. This biological survey should be conducted both in the spring and summer seasons.**
3. **Use preservation and conservation techniques to protect native and RTE habitat within the proposed Environmental Envelope. In the areas that are ecologically degraded, the native populations should be restored to maintain and strengthen the ecosystem, and improve ecological integrity. Nonnative species especially those classified as invasive exotics, should be prohibited from new planting projects, and should be removed from the existing ecosystem so they do not compete with native species. The application of these ideas will occur during the development review process by appropriate agencies and staff.**

Discussion: In a letter dated June 29, 2005, the applicant's engineer states that a survey was conducted for three plants species identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service. The letter does not state when the survey was done and does not appear to indicate that other rare, threatened or endangered species were surveyed. The letter also states that: "The natural areas were significantly overgrown with Mile-A-Minute and Multi-Flora Rose." These plants are not mentioned in the forest stand delineation text.

The survey conducted does not meet the parameters outlined in the sector plan text. A survey needs to be performed that is focused on looking for all possible rare, threatened and endangered plants.

Recommended Condition: As part of the preparation of a Natural Resources Inventory for the subject property, a survey for the presence of rare, threatened and endangered species shall be conducted.

Recommended Condition: The Type II tree conservation plan shall contain a comprehensive plan for the removal of all invasive plant species on the site. It shall include, but not be limited to, methods of removal proposed, timing of removals, and methods to prevent future infestations.

Recommended Condition: The landscape plan associated with the detailed site plan and the TCPII shall show the exclusive use of native plants throughout the site. Large diameter trees that exist within the treed areas to be preserved shall be excluded unless they have invasive tendencies.

- **Require a detailed Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) for development proposals in the Sector Plan Area during conceptual site plan review. The NRI will include but not be limited to floodplain, wetland, forest stands, RTE species, and a general assessment of biodiversity and habitat gaps. The NRI requirements may be modified during the development review process for properties that do not contain many environmental features.**

Discussion: A detailed Natural Resources Inventory was not submitted with the subject application. Because the plans submitted are conceptual, and because an NRI is required prior to the submission of a preliminary plan, this element of the sector plan text will be addressed as part of the preliminary plan application package.

- **Minimize new impervious surfaces, turf areas, and situations that will require extensive use of pesticides and herbicides. This will improve the water quality and reduce maintenance costs in both the public and private sector.**

Discussion: The amount of impervious surfaces on the site will likely be similar to the amount that currently exists. The recommended condition regarding the use of low impact development techniques should result in some additional areas of pervious surfaces.

- **Use preservation, conservation, restoration and greenways to buffer unsightly uses, and to enhance gateways leading into the Sector Plan Area.**

Discussion: The site does not contain areas of preservation at the gateway to the project. The greenways on-site will be restored and enhanced as part of the proposed development.

- **Require soils studies for proposed development within areas of slopes exceeding 15 percent on erodible soils, or where hydric soils occur. The studies will assess the extent and characteristics of the soils on the site and recommend sound construction techniques. Construction on sites containing problematic clays, fill sites or old settling or wash ponds shall occur only after a thorough geotechnical evaluation has been performed by a qualified professional to address issues of drainage, stability and evacuation/ replacement of fill.**

Discussion: Soils studies will be required as part of the preliminary plan review.

Recommended Condition: At time of preliminary plan submission, a soils study shall be submitted that generally describes the existing soils on-site and provides more detailed information where erodible or hydric soils are to be disturbed.

- **Require noise mitigation for residential areas near the Beltway and the CSX railroad/Metrorail tracks.**
 1. **Location and specification of noise mitigation techniques shall be based on noise studies. These techniques will be requested during conceptual site plan review for any development proposals within the Sector Plan Area containing residential components, or for proposals that will adversely affect adjacent residential areas with increased noise levels.**
 2. **Mitigation measures may include shielding buffers, vegetation, sound deadening barriers, setbacks or other sound attenuation features placed within the noise transmission path.**
 3. **Minimum removal of woodlands is a key element in noise attenuation. Strategic planting of trees and other vegetation shall also be pursued.**

4. **Topographic features within the Sector Plan Area can also shield noise. Additional berms or sound deadening walls at strategic locations can attenuate noise for residential areas.**
5. **Structures located within designated noise corridors will require acceptable attenuation measures and design guidelines to comply with State and County standards. Use of certain construction materials can attenuate exterior noise to acceptable interior levels. Orientation of buildings can also attenuate noise to acceptable levels. Special consideration should be given to the orientation of structures in the development areas of the Core Area. Noise from the Beltway and trains will ricochet off these building surfaces. This phenomenon shall be evaluated during the site planning process so as to protect residential areas from undesirable noise levels.**
6. **For precautionary measures, vibration from the freight trains and Metrorail trains should be addressed by requiring that residential structures be located at least 200 feet from the tracks. For other types of proposed structures, further studies may be required to ascertain impacts within 200 feet of tracks.**

Discussion: The subject property abuts the Capital Beltway to the north and Kenilworth Avenue to the east. These highways are major noise generators and generally regulated for noise. The plans do not conceptually show any noise mitigation measures or show the unmitigated noise contours. A noise study was not submitted with the application. A noise study is required as part of the preliminary plan submission. The Environmental Planning Section's noise model cannot be used to prepare this information because it is not able to combine two roadways, as is the case on this site.

Recommended Condition: A Phase I noise study shall be submitted as part of the preliminary plan submission. Noise levels shall be projected 10 years in the future. The unmitigated 65 dBA Ldn and other relevant noise contours shall be shown on the preliminary plan. All proposed conceptual noise mitigation measures shall be shown on the preliminary plan and TCPI.

- **Develop an environmentally sensitive transportation network. As the Sector Plan Area develops, the transportation network will also expand in physical dimensions and number of users. It will be a challenge to accommodate this increased demand in a way that will not degrade the environment. This may best be accomplished by:**
 1. **Utilizing areas already developed or disturbed, whenever possible, for transportation improvements. Where this is not possible, minimization of disturbance to natural features is essential. Techniques such as raised roadways to span wetlands and floodplain shall be used.**
 2. **Minimizing automobile traffic, by limiting parking and encouraging travel by bike, walking and public transportation. This will decrease the need for expansive road networks, and improve air quality by reducing emissions.**

Discussion: The only change to the transportation network that appears to impact the environmental features is the new crossing of the floodplain proposed. This issue has been addressed above, and a condition is recommended with regard to the use of a bridge or bottomless culverts to reduce the impacts on the resource.

- **The principles of “green development” should be considered and applied. Green development is defined as the application of ecological thinking to creation of development in which the product, service or underlying philosophy places some emphasis on protecting the indoor and outdoor environment, resulting in better places to work and live. Green Development is environmentally responsive, efficient in its use of resources, and sensitive to cultural and community needs, connecting “people to place.”**
 1. **Building designs should incorporate energy and water saving features and with health conscious interior environments.**
 2. **The long term economic advantages of environmentally responsive development should be considered the applicant during he initial planning phase of development projects.**

Discussion: The plans submitted do not contain information regarding how the plan proposes to meet this recommendation of the sector plan. It should be addressed with the preliminary plan.

Recommended Condition: At the time of preliminary plan application, information shall be submitted regarding how the green development provisions of the sector plan are to be addressed.

Environmental Review

1. A detailed forest stand delineation (FSD) was submitted with the application and was found to generally address the criteria for an FSD in accordance with the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance. Information submitted subsequent to the original application states that there are a significant number of invasive species on the subject property. As part of the preparation of the Natural Resources Inventory, this issue must be addressed in the FSD text.

Recommended Condition: As part of the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) submission, the FSD text shall be revised to address the presence of invasive plant species on the site.

2. This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the gross tract area is in excess of 40,000 square feet and there are more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland on-site. A Type I tree conservation plan was submitted with the review package and was found to require additional information and revisions.

A portion of the subject property has an approved Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/88/03, which is an off-site woodland conservation mitigation area for the Golden Triangle project. This results in this area (located in the northern portion of the site) being double counted for woodland conservation. Either the TCPII must be revised to show the provision of the off-site mitigation on another property, or this TCPI must show the woodland conservation as being committed to another site and not being used to meet the requirements of this site.

The Type I tree conservation plan has many technical errors. Several of the areas shown on the plan as reforestation areas are actually existing woodland and are not shown on the CSP to be cleared. It appears that the intent is to plant understory vegetation to bring

these areas into conformance with the requirements of the ordinance. However, when trees have been growing for an extended period of time with no understory, it is very difficult if not impossible to re-establish understory in these areas, and the planting of the new vegetation is detrimental to the health of the existing trees. In addition, these areas provide much-needed open space for use by future residents, and as such should be allowed to continue in their present condition. At the time of detailed site plan submission, a detailed analysis of the condition of the trees in these areas should be conducted to ensure that only those trees in the best condition to survive construction will be preserved.

The gross tract area is incorrect in that it includes the entirety of the O-S-zoned property, some of which is outside the subject application.

The worksheet shows the use of fee-in-lieu for 13.10 acres of the requirement. Fee-in-lieu is the last possible option and is not appropriate for the subject property. The worksheet shall be revised to eliminate the use of fee-in-lieu.

The TCPI notes need to be revised to note that this plan is conceptual and will be revised at the time of preliminary plan review, and Note 6 needs to be revised.

Recommended Condition: Prior to certification of the CSP, the Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/20/05) shall be revised as follows:

- a. Add the following note to the plan: “This plan is conceptual in nature, was prepared for the review of the Conceptual Site Plan, and will be revised with the submission of a TCPI with the preliminary plan.”
- b. Revise Note 6 as follows: “Plans for stormwater management are contained in conceptual stormdrain plan 4334-2005-00.”
- c. Eliminate existing treed areas from being labeled as reforestation areas.
- d. Correct the worksheet to show the right amount of gross and net tract areas.
- e. Revise the worksheet to eliminate the use of fee-in-lieu.
- f. Revise the plan to provide additional reforestation adjacent to the floodplain and stream systems.
- g. Eliminate the use of the woodland already committed for another site or provide detailed notes regarding how this woodland conservation is being provided.
- h. Eliminate the use of existing forested areas as reforestation.
- i. Revise the plan to address all other conditions of approval as necessary.
- j. Revise the plan to use the same symbols for preservation and reforestation on the cover sheet and the individual sheets.
- k. When all revisions have been completed, have the revised plan signed and dated by the qualified professional who prepared the plan.

Recommended Condition: The existing scattered treed areas identified on the FSD shall be evaluated prior to submission of the Type II tree conservation plan, and recommendations regarding the treatment of these areas shall be provided. These areas shall be maintained as open space and shall not be used as reforestation sites. All of the existing trees shall receive a condition analysis using the methodology of the Council of Landscape Appraisers, so that it can be determined which trees will be preserved in place and which trees will be removed. These treed areas shall be maintained as open space with the addition of limited areas of trails and benches. If additional space becomes available due to removal of trees in poor condition, these areas may be used for active or passive recreation. All treed areas shall be provided tree protection devices that are semi-permanent for the duration of construction. The turf areas under the trees shall be maintained during construction.

10. In a memorandum dated July 18, 2005 (Masog to Wagner), the Transportation Planning Section offered the following comments:

The Transportation Planning Division has reviewed the conceptual site plan application referenced above. The subject property consists of approximately 174.81 acres of land in the R-18 Zone. The property is located generally between I-95/I-495, Cherrywood Drive, and Breezewood Drive. The site currently contains about 2,900 apartments. The applicant proposes to develop the property under the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) with 5,800 residences in townhouse, garden apartment, and mid- to high-rise apartment configurations.

The DDOZ is implemented through the sector plan and sectional map amendment for the Greenbelt Metro area. The purpose of the conceptual site plan in this process is to allow review of the preliminary site plan for conformance with concepts in the sector plan. As such, the adequacy of transportation facilities is not an issue in the review of the conceptual site plan. Adequacy findings and off-site transportation conditions will be considered as a part of a new preliminary plan of subdivision. Nonetheless, a traffic study has been provided, but this study has not been given a detailed review by transportation staff, nor has it been referred for agency comment as this time. For purposes of establishing a record and gaining general concurrence with the scope of this study, the scope of the study and its recommendations will be highlighted herein, but these elements will not form a basis for the transportation staff's recommendation.

Review Comments—Conceptual Plan

The current plan has been reviewed extensively by the transportation staff, and we would offer the following comments:

- a. The proposed access and circulation plan is satisfactory. Most of the development is arrayed around a grid-like street pattern. It appears that the streets incorporate vehicular and nonvehicular access.
- b. The streets appear to be adequately sized to handle the quantity of development proposed. All public streets within and adjacent to this development are within the City of Greenbelt and will be maintained by the city. Therefore, all cross-sections must have approval of the City of Greenbelt prior to detailed site plan approval.
- c. The standards in the sector plan contain considerable recommendations regarding pedestrian facilities, traffic calming, intersection design, and other elements that are better reviewed in more detail at the detailed site plan stage. In general, it is anticipated

that the City of Greenbelt should approve most of these elements prior to approval of the detailed site plan.

The subject property is affected by two master plan roadway facilities. I-95/I-495 is a master plan freeway, and Cherrywood Lane is a master plan collector facility. In both cases, sufficient right-of-way exists consistent with master plan recommendations, and no further dedication need be reflected on this or any future plan.

Review Summary—Traffic Impact Study

The traffic study for this site examines the site impact at five intersections; these intersections are listed below:

MD 193 and Cherrywood Lane/60th Avenue (signalized)
Cherrywood Lane and Breezewood Drive (unsignalized)
Cherrywood Lane and Cherrywood Court (unsignalized)
Cherrywood Lane and Springhill Drive (unsignalized)
Cherrywood Lane and Greenbelt Metro Drive (unsignalized)

The traffic counts were completed in August 2004. The area of background development includes only one nearby site, the Greenbelt Station development. It should be noted that the development quantities assumed for that development differ somewhat from the quantities that were assumed when the preliminary plan for that case was approved. It should also be noted that Parcels I-1, J, K, and L of Capital Office Park were not included as background development although these parcels are recorded but undeveloped. Together these parcels are approved for 602,000 square feet of general office uses.

The traffic study assumes development under the DDOZ of 5,800 residences. A total of 2,995 residences are assumed to be garden or mid-rise apartments that will be replaced. New garden/mid-rise apartments totaling 2,540 are assumed, as well as 265 townhouses. The proposal (net of the existing apartments) would generate 1,627 AM and 1,495 PM peak-hour vehicle trips. Under total traffic, the MD 193/Cherrywood Lane intersection is shown to operate unacceptably, and the applicant has proffered improvements that would provide LOS D in both peak hours. Three of the four unsignalized intersections studied are recommended to have possible signalization studied.

It is noted that approximately seven percent of site traffic would continue north on Cherrywood Lane toward MD 201. As such, the MD 201/Cherrywood Lane intersection is not studied, and it would not meet the criteria for study under the Planning Board's guidelines.

This synopsis of the traffic study is provided solely for purposes of establishing a record and allowing comment upon the scope of this study as a part of this process. However, the traffic study may need to be revised if the preliminary plan application is significantly delayed, as the traffic counts that form the basis of the study will become out of date (i.e., more than one year in age) very shortly.

Conclusion

In consideration of these findings, the Transportation Planning Section determines that the plan conforms to the required findings for approval of the conceptual site plan from the standpoint of transportation.

11. In a memorandum dated May 31, 2005 (Bailey to Wagner), the State Highway Administration (SHA) indicated support for the conceptual site plan.
12. In a memorandum dated July 14, 2005 (Bienenfeld to Wagner), the Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section has indicated that a Phase I archeological study is not recommended for the referenced property. Section 106 review may require archeological survey for state or federal agencies, however.
13. In a memorandum dated July 8, 2005 (Shaffer to Wagner), the Trails Planner offered the following comments:

The Greenbelt Metro area sector plan recommends extensive pedestrian facilities and bicycle-compatible roads within the study area and the area around the Greenbelt Metro. It is necessary to “integrate pedestrian walks, bicycle lanes, and multiuse trails into existing communities, commercial centers, and new developments within the entire Sector Plan Area to provide a viable transportation mode that is a cost-effective, energy-efficient, and environmentally sensitive alternative to the automobile” (sector plan, page 56). These facilities should accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists on the site and those traveling to the nearby Greenbelt Metro.

The Illustrative Streetscape Sectional Profiles (sector plan, page 55) include wide and inviting streetscapes and sidewalks along each type of road. The recommended pedestrian/bicycle facilities for each road category include:

- 12- to 20-foot-wide sidewalks along both sides of boulevards with bike lanes (104- to 120-foot right-of-way)
- 12- to 16-foot-wide sidewalks along both sides of all commercial streets with optional bike lanes (74- to 90-foot right-of-way)
- 6- to 10-foot-wide sidewalks along both sides of residential main streets with optional bike lanes (74- to 90-foot right-of-way)
- 11-foot-wide sidewalk/planting strip along residential streets (60-foot right-of-way). Ideally, this would include a five-foot wide sidewalk with a six-foot wide planting strip.

The streetscapes shown in the submitted site plan differ from the illustrative streetscape profiles in the sector plan in several ways. Extremely narrow street cross-sections are proposed, with minimal sidewalk accommodations. The street cross-sections submitted included four or five-foot-wide sidewalks along the two lane roads (ST-60-34 and ST-54-34), and six-foot sidewalks along both sides of the proposed avenues (AV-71-50). While standard sidewalks may be adequate along the secondary residential roads, the major roads within the site should have wider sidewalks to provide an attractive and inviting pedestrian streetscape. The wider sidewalks will be necessary to accommodate the higher levels of pedestrians likely from the increased densities shown for the site and will provide for an inviting streetscape for pedestrians walking to the nearby Metro.

Staff has identified several roads which may be appropriate for wider sidewalks to accommodate the increased pedestrian flow anticipated with the higher densities proposed. These wide sidewalks will make for a more inviting pedestrian environment and accommodate a higher volume of pedestrian traffic in the immediate vicinity of the Metro station. Staff believes that

Springhill Drive and Cherrywood Terrace are most appropriate for wider sidewalks and an attractive streetscape treatment. Springhill Drive is one of the primary east-to-west roadways in the site and will be a primary route for pedestrians traveling to Metro. Cherrywood Terrace makes the connection between Breezewood Drive and Springhill Drive. Staff believes that the wider sidewalks are warranted due to the density being proposed on the site and the proximity to Metro.

The sector plan also designates Cherrywood Lane, Breezewood Drive, and Springhill Drive as master plan bicycle routes. Bicycle-compatible road improvements should be incorporated into any road frontage improvements along these roads. The designated bike lanes on Cherrywood Lane should be retained, and bike lanes along Breezewood Drive, Cherrywood Terrace, and Springhill Drive should be considered at the time of detailed site plan. Further supporting this recommendation is the designation of Springhill Lake as a “bicycle friendly area,” or BFA, in the sector plan. This designation is highlighted in the bicycle section (sector plan, page 58) and also noted under Design Policy 7 of the Springhill Lake chapter (sector plan, page 115). This BFA can include bicycle-compatible road improvements such as designated bike lanes, bikeway signage, and traffic calming or other safety features.

Finally, the sector plan recommends a multiuse trail along the eastern and northern edge of the Springhill community (see Map 7, page 47). This appears to be most practical along Edmonston Road. An eight-foot-wide trail or wide sidewalk parallel to one side of Edmonston Road is recommended.

14. In a memorandum dated July 19, 2005 (Izzo to Wagner), the Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section offered the following comments:

The first due fire station that would serve the site is Company 14, Berwyn Heights, located at 8811 60th Street. The site is located in Police District VI.

The applicant is proposing to demolish the Springlake Elementary School and build a combined elementary school-middle school at the site of the Greenbelt Middle School. The new Springlake Elementary School will provide additional school capacity, which was the intent of the Greenbelt Metro sector plan. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section has asked the applicant to provide an estimate of school age children that will be generated from this high rise, condo type of development project. This information should be provided at the time of preliminary plan review.

We believe that applicant will have to reach substantial agreement with the Board of Education concerning the building of the new elementary-middle school complex, moving the existing bus lot and demolition of the existing Springlake Elementary School before the project can move beyond the conceptual site plan stage.

15. The City of Greenbelt held a public hearing on the conceptual site plan and recommends approval with conditions. Most of the conditions have been added to the recommendation section; however, those conditions that have been agreed to by the applicant, but are not applicable to the Planning Board’s approval, are included below as a finding.

“The zoning of the property shall be designated as M-U-I and total residential development within the subject property under this Conceptual Site Plan (CSP) shall not exceed 5,800 dwelling units and commercial retail and services uses shall include, at a minimum, 15,000 square feet.

The minimum commercial square footage shall be constructed prior to the issuance of building permits in excess of 5,000 dwelling units. All development shall conform to the traffic analysis.”

Comment: Staff is concerned that the number of dwelling units to be constructed before the commercial component is required to be built is excessive. Staff is of the opinion that the commercial should be constructed prior to the issuance of building permits in excess of 3,000 dwelling units.

“The traffic impact study has all traffic going to Cherrywood Lane and uses WMATA traffic volumes taken in 2000. The study also limited its evaluation to the intersections along the Cherrywood Lane corridor, between Greenbelt Metro Drive and Greenbelt Road (Route 193). At the time of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision the traffic study shall be revised to address these deficiencies, including expanding the study area to include additional routes (i.e., along the Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue corridor).”

Comment: A traffic study was submitted with the conceptual site plan; however, a finding of adequate public facilities is not required at this time. A new traffic study will be required at the time of preliminary plan review, consistent with Planning Board policies.

“The applicant agrees to provide \$500,000 to the city, to be used for the beautification and/or right-of-way improvements on Cherrywood Lane, as reflected in the Cherrywood Lane Corridor Plan. Timing for the payment of this amount shall be determined at the time of approval of the first DSP for the project. The City may proceed with construction of these improvements in advance of reimbursement/payment by the applicant, without relieving the applicant of this financial obligation.

“Upon completion, should total project costs (planning, engineering, administration and construction) be less than the total contributions provided by the applicant in combination with other contributions by private entities, the applicant shall be refunded (or the amount due reduced) by 50% of the total savings. In no case shall the applicant’s contribution be refunded or reduced, should project costs exceed \$1,000,000. This contribution does not address the applicant’s responsibility to undertake road and/or intersection improvements as specified under an APF finding.”

Comment: This is an agreement between the city and the applicant.

“All streets, roads, or other public roadways shall be dedicated as a City right-of-way, as shown on approved subdivision plans. All areas dedicated as City right-of-way shall be dedicated to standards as defined by the City. Right-of-way width and road cross-sections will be determined at the time of Detailed Site Plan. Design and construction details shall be to City standards, as may be modified from time to time. All City streets shall be constructed to City standards, permitted and inspected by City inspectors, and accepted upon completion.”

Comment: The preliminary plan will determine the appropriate dedication for public roadways.

“Prior to or concurrent with the first Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, the Applicant shall work with the City to address the impacts of the proposed redevelopment of Springhill Lake on public safety as it pertains to City services.”

Comment: This requirement is not applicable to the Planning Board’s approval of the subject conceptual site plan.

“The neighborhood commercial area (“Live Work Units”) shall have a civic open space designated similar in size and proportion as shown on the current CSP.”

Comment: The civic open space will be required to be provided on future plans as shown on the conceptual site plan.

“The City of Greenbelt shall engage Beltway Plaza to produce a vision and plan with regard to the rear of the Beltway Plaza property to allow the applicant to identify pedestrian and vehicular connections to the applicant’s property along Breezewood Drive.”

Comment: The City of Greenbelt’s future discussions with Beltway Plaza representatives require no action on the part of the Planning Board at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE CSP-05001, TCPI/20/05, and an amendment to increase the site density, subject to conditions. Staff further recommends that the Planning Board recommend APPROVAL to the District Council of an amendment to change the underlying zone from R-18 and C-A to M-U-I, with the exception of Parcel 20 (R-18 Zone), owned by the Prince George’s County Public Schools. Staff recommends denial of an amendment to waive the height restrictions of the sector plan.

1. The zoning of the property shall be designated as M-U-I and total residential development within the subject property under this conceptual site plan (CSP) shall not exceed 5,800 dwelling units and commercial retail and service uses shall include, at a minimum, 15,000 square feet. The minimum commercial square-footage shall be constructed prior to the issuance of building permits in excess of 3,000 dwelling units. The following uses are prohibited:

Drive-in restaurant

Fast-food restaurant that is not within a shopping mall or an integrated shopping center, an office building, or a hotel

Vehicle, boat, mobile home, camping trailer rental, repair, service station, storage and sales

Gas station

Animal hospital

Motorized bicycle repair shop

Funeral parlor

Lawn mower sales or repair shop

Limousine service

Massage establishment

Methadone treatment center

Printing shop exceeding 2,000 square feet of gross floor area

Pawnshop

Seafood market containing more than 3,000 square feet of gross retail space

Amusement park within a wholly enclosed shopping mall

Outdoor rifle, pistol, or skeet shooting range

Animal or poultry raising (other than customary household pets)

Sand and gravel wet-processing

Satellite dish antenna more than 10 feet in diameter, to serve only 1 dwelling unit, in accordance with Section 27-451.01

Taxicab dispatching station
Cemetery

2. At least 25 percent of the total dwelling units developed shall be for-sale units. For-sale units shall be distributed among the various housing types and income levels and, at a minimum, represent the land area designated as for-sale townhouses on the current CSP. For-rent units shall also include a variety of housing types and rent and income levels.
3. The preliminary plan of subdivision shall address mandatory parkland dedication requirements. At a minimum, mandatory dedication shall include a 20,000-square-foot recreation center with a competition-sized gym; three competition-sized and equipped ball fields; and on-site, private recreation facilities sufficient in number, variety and location to service the needs of the future population of Springhill Lake. Alternatively, the Planning Board may require the applicant to provide monetary contributions, land or a combination thereof to satisfy such requirements, if requested by the City of Greenbelt.
4. Breezewood Drive shall be retained between Cherrywood Lane and Edmonston Road.
5. The development proposal shall respect the current configuration of Cherrywood Lane, particularly with regard to retaining the existing designated bike lanes.
6. Prior to the approval of a detailed site plan, the Type II tree conservation plan, or the most appropriate plan, shall address any flooding concerns for the area along Edmonston Road, north of Springhill Drive.
7. Prior to the approval of the preliminary plan of subdivision, the applicant shall provide documentation from the Prince George's County Public Schools of their transfer or intent to transfer interest in the existing School Board property to the applicant.
8. At the time of preliminary plan of subdivision, the applicant shall not show a further division of the Springhill Lake Recreation parcel, absent an agreement with or consent by the City of Greenbelt.
9. Prior to detailed site plan approval, the applicant shall establish a continuing funding mechanism for a trolley/tram or similar light transit system to provide a mobile connection within the project area and shall explore with Metroland, Greenbelt Metropark and Beltway Plaza property owners the funding of a local shuttle system linking Greenbelt Metro Station developments, Beltway Plaza, and the project area. Efforts to provide improved transit opportunities shall include working with the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation on developing a revised TheBus route for Greenbelt West that serves the transit needs of the three existing/planned developments.
10. The CSP shall show a pedestrian connection from Cherrywood Lane, as referenced in the *Greenbelt Metro Area Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, to the Greenbelt station development. Timing of construction and cost sharing with the Greenbelt station development shall be determined at the time of preliminary plan.
11. Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII)—On-site woodland conservation is the first priority. The second priority is for off-site mitigation within the same watershed, with the city having rights of first refusal in terms of providing a county-approved mitigation site within the city.

12. The TCP II shall not include city parkland in satisfying woodland conservation requirements for the proposed project.
13. The development shall protect stands of mature trees as well as any signature trees, to the extent practical.
14. At the time of preliminary plan, the applicant shall provide evidence that there are adequate provisions to assure retention and a future maintenance of the proposed recreational facilities.
15. At the time of detailed site plan, the following issues shall be addressed:
 - a. The clubhouse building shall remain in the location designated on the CSP or be placed in a visually prominent location.
 - b. Rooflines for all dwelling types shall be varied and provide for appropriate interest to the streetscape.
 - c. Entrance features shall be submitted for review and shall be appropriately coordinated in design and location.
 - d. Lighting fixtures throughout the development shall be coordinated in design.
 - e. Special paving materials shall be provided in appropriate areas, such as the central recreation area and the entrance to retail/service development.
 - f. Multifamily pods within the development shall be reviewed to ensure adequate but not excessive parking areas in close proximity to all units.
 - g. The location of future bus stops/shelters, pedestrian connections, and crosswalks shall be shown on the plans. On-site maintenance facilities shall be identified.
 - h. Details (including consideration of waterfalls or fountains) shall be provided for the “proposed water feature” shown on the CSP.
 - i. Specific details applicable to the internal components of the clubhouse and the dimensions of the pool shall be provided.
 - j. Parking garages shall incorporate architectural design and/or landscape features to screen them from adjacent buildings, pedestrians and motorists. Parking garages shall be designed as part of other buildings where architecturally feasible with limited street frontage and integrated to blend into the building’s appearance.
 - k. The applicant shall provide additional open space, which may include reducing the number of buildings proposed, either through combining buildings and/or modifying building types proposed.
 - l. Buildings greater than six stories above grade shall be concentrated in the northwestern portion of the site along Springhill Drive as currently proposed on the CSP. Buildings shall be sited, to the extent practical, to minimize impacts on the surrounding proposed residential buildings with respect to views, vistas, light and shadow effects.

- m. Where appropriate, low impact development techniques shall be incorporated in the development by making design, materials and construction decisions based on environmental considerations. Green building technologies such as green roofs, bio-retention/rain gardens, etc., shall be incorporated where appropriate.
- n. The design and construction of buildings shall utilize a variety of building materials, elevations, roof lines, and design details appropriate to a high quality residential community and reflect a coherent thematic design approach.
- o. Determine the feasibility of designated bike lanes along Springhill Drive, Cherrywood Terrace, and Breezewood Drive, per the concurrence of the City of Greenbelt. Designated bike lanes are consistent with the sector plan’s identification of Springhill Lake as a “Bicycle Friendly Area” (sector plan, page 58). Other safety enhancements or traffic calming can be explored at the time of detailed site plan.
- p. Provide a minimum eight-foot-wide trail or sidewalk along one side of Edmonston Road to accommodate the multiuse trail facility shown on Map 7 of the sector plan. The extension of this trail/sidewalk to the Cherrywood Lane/Greenbelt Metro Drive intersection should be explored at the time of detailed site plan.
- q. Consider the provision of “Share the Road with a Bike” signage along primary roads, per the concurrence of the City of Greenbelt (sector plan, page 61).

If an amendment to the height requirements is requested, the applicant shall provide adequate information, such as model, architectural elevations, sections and renderings, to assess the building height’s impact on the immediate and surrounding development.

- 16. Prior to certification of the conceptual site plan, the following revisions shall be made, or information provided:
 - a. The CSP shall indicate the location of proposed maintenance facility(s)/yard(s).
 - b. As required by the development district standards and specified in the *Greenbelt Metro Area Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, the CSP shall show the location, quantity and dimensions of gateway signs. As delineated in the standards, pylon and pole mounted signs are not permitted.
 - c. The applicant shall submit a pedestrian/bicycle circulation plan that provides for a continuous and comprehensive pedestrian and bike network within the project area and vicinity to link residential, commercial, transit and civic uses, such as schools and community centers.
 - d. The CSP shall include an overall plan for the provision of private recreation facilities sufficient in number, variety and location to service the needs of the future population of Springhill Lake.
 - e. Open space (to include parks, plazas, sitting areas and gardens) shall be dispersed throughout the proposed development. The open space/park network shall (at a minimum) include informal play areas sufficient in size to accommodate informal play

activities (i.e., Frisbee, wiffle ball, etc.), plazas, tot lots, and opportunities for active and passive recreation for all ages.

17. Prior to the submission of the preliminary plan, a Stream Corridor Assessment (SCA) shall be performed on all sections of streams that exist within the subject application. This assessment shall be performed using the Maryland Department of Natural Resources SCA protocol. The applicant shall use the results of the SCA to propose a comprehensive stream restoration plan with the preliminary plan.
18. The 100-year floodplain, stream and wetland system present on the site shall be preserved to the fullest extent possible. Any proposed impacts to these features shall be limited to those essential to the proposed development. The applicant shall submit justification statements for any impact proposed and the justification shall include discussions of alternative designs and shall discuss the necessity of each impact individually. Trails shall be primarily located outside the regulated areas, with crossings placed only as necessary.
19. If sufficient justification is provided that the proposed new crossing of the floodplain and stream system is essential to the redevelopment of the site, because of some requirement of county ordinances or an emergency services agency, the crossing shall be built as a bridge or with the use of bottomless culverts to allow the movement of wildlife between the stream and wetland areas to the north and south or the proposed crossing.
20. All regulated areas shall be reforested or restored as appropriate and shall be shown on the Type I Tree Conservation Plan as being part of the overall conservation easement. Wherever possible, additional areas adjacent to the regulated areas shall be reforested to provide additional buffering for the floodplain and stream system and these areas shall also be included in the conservation easement.
21. During the review of the preliminary plan, the site shall be evaluated for all opportunities to implement low impact development techniques including but not limited to bioretention, dry wells, and rainwater recycling. The Detailed Site Plan shall show the use of all applicable low impact development techniques.
22. Floodplain and wetland mitigation shall occur on the subject property, Sector Plan Area, or Indian Creek Watershed in that order of priority.
23. At time of Detailed Site Plan review, the plans shall show a comprehensive street tree planting program that includes a variety of species throughout the site.
24. The TCPI submitted with the preliminary plan application shall show expanded areas of reforestation adjacent to the floodplain and stream systems on the site.
25. As part of the preparation of a Natural Resources Inventory for the subject property, a survey for the presence of rare, threatened and endangered species shall be conducted.
26. The Type II Tree Conservation Plan shall contain a comprehensive plan for the removal of all invasive plant species on the site. It shall include but not be limited to methods of removal proposed, timing of removals, and methods to prevent future infestations.

27. The landscape plan associated with the Detailed Site Plan and the TCPII shall show the exclusive use of native plants throughout the site. Large diameter trees that exist within the treed areas to be preserved shall be excluded unless they have invasive tendencies.
28. At time of preliminary plan submission, a soils study shall be submitted that generally describes the existing soils on-site and provides more detailed information where erodible or hydric soils are to be disturbed.
29. A Phase I Noise Study shall be submitted as part of the preliminary plan submission. Noise levels shall be projected 10 years in the future. The unmitigated 65 dBA Ldn and other relevant noise contours shall be shown on the preliminary plan. All proposed conceptual noise mitigation measures shall be shown on the preliminary plan and TCPI.
30. At time of preliminary plan application, information shall be submitted regarding how the green development provisions of the Sector Plan are to be addressed
31. As part of the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) submission, the FSD text shall be revised to address the presence of invasive plant species on the site.
32. Prior to certification of the CSP, the Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/20/05) shall be revised as follows:
 - a. Add the following note to the plan: “This plan is conceptual in nature, was prepared for the review of the Conceptual Site Plan, and will be revised with the submission of a TCPI with the preliminary plan.”
 - b. Revise note #6 as follows: “Plans for stormwater management are contained in Conceptual Stormdrain Plan 4334-2005-00.”
 - c. Eliminate existing treed areas from being labeled as reforestation areas.
 - d. Correct the worksheet to show the right amount of gross and net tract areas.
 - e. Revise the worksheet to eliminate the use of fee-in-lieu.
 - f. Revise the plan to provide additional reforestation adjacent to the floodplain and stream systems.
 - g. Eliminate the use of the woodland already committed for another site or provide detailed notes regarding how this woodland conservation is being provided.
 - h. Eliminate the use of existing forested areas as reforestation.
 - i. Revise the plan to address all other conditions of approval as necessary.
 - j. Revise the plan to use the same symbols for preservation and reforestation on the cover sheet and the individual sheets.
 - k. When all revisions have been completed, have the revised plan signed and dated by the qualified professional who prepared the plan.

33. The existing scattered treed areas identified on the FSD shall be evaluated prior to submission of the Type II tree Conservation Plan, and recommendations regarding the treatment of these areas shall be provided. These areas shall be maintained as open space and shall not be used as reforestation sites. All of the existing trees shall receive a condition analysis using the methodology of the Council of Landscape Appraisers, so that it can be determined which trees will be preserved in place and which trees will be removed. These treed areas shall be maintained as open space with the addition of limited areas of trails and benches. If additional space becomes available due to removal of trees in poor condition, these areas may be used for active or passive recreation. All treed areas shall be provided tree protection devices that are semi-permanent for the duration of construction. The turf areas under the trees shall be maintained during construction.