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## Detailed Site Plan

**DSP-05039/01**

Application	General Data	
<b>Project Name:</b> Oaklawn Knolls  <b>Location:</b> Located on the north side of Oaklawn Drive, between its intersections with Allentown and Sleepy Hollow Roads.  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> VDB II, Inc. 16000 Trade Zone Avenue, Suite 401B Upper Marlboro, MD 20774	Planning Board Hearing Date:	03/25/10
	Staff Report Date:	03/08/10
	Date Accepted:	09/23/09
	Planning Board Action Limit:	Waived
	Plan Acreage:	9.247
	Zone:	R-R
	Dwelling Units:	12
	Gross Floor Area:	N/A
	Planning Area:	76B
	Tier:	Developing
	Council District:	08
	Election District:	09
	Municipality:	N/A
200-Scale Base Map:	211SE03	

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Revision to add six new house types to the approved architecture for the project.	Informational Mailing:	04/22/09
	Acceptance Mailing:	09/22/09
	Sign Posting Deadline:	10/20/09

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Ruth Grover, A.I.C.P.	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan DSP-05039-01  
Oaklawn Knolls

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the detailed site plan for the subject property and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions as described in the recommendation section of this report.

EVALUATION

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

- a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the Rural Residential (R-R) Zone.
- b. The requirements of Final Plat 184-019.
- c. The requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.
- d. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance and Tree Preservation Ordinance.
- e. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** This application requests the addition of the following six architectural models to the architecture approved for the subdivision: The Cottonwood, The Maple, The Ironwood, The Walnut, The Yellowwood, and The Willow.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	<b>EXISTING</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
Zone	R-R	R-R
Use(s)	Single-family detached residential and vacant land	Single-family detached
Acreage	9.247	9.247
Lots	12	12

3. **Location:** The site is in Planning Area 76B, Council District 8. More specifically, it is located on the north side of Oaklawn Drive between its intersections with Allentown and Sleepy Hollow Roads.

4. **Surroundings and Use:** The subject property is bounded in all directions by single-family detached residential development.

5. **Previous Approvals:** The property is subject to Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-94142, which was approved by the Planning Board on May 1, 1995 and was subsequently formalized by the adoption of PGCPB Resolution No. 95-107. Detailed Site Plan DSP-05039 was approved by the Planning Board on November 3, 2005 and its approval was then formalized by the Planning Board in PGCPB Resolution No. 05-234. The property is also subject to Final Plat 184-092 and approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 958002020.

6. **Design Features:** The subject application requests approval of the following six additional architectural models of the indicated base square footage:

The Cottonwood	2,070
The Maple	3,004
The Ironwood	2,747
The Walnut	2,497
The Yellowwood	2,741
The Willow	2,689

(Base square footage does not include any space in the basement or garage.)

The Cottonwood—The Cottonwood’s front façade presents a modest aspect. Though primarily one story, the model offers a bonus room over the two, single garages on the left portion of the façade. The garage to the far left is designed in stone and the other utilizes brick and nests the smaller roof. A three-columned portico defines the front entranceway, and an entrance door together with a shuttered window to its left help define the space. Both the window and door have lintels with a keystone. The right portion of the model hosts a single shuttered window, with keystone arch lintel. The rear elevation is of a simple design with three sets of sliding glass doors and two windows, one on the far right of the façade and one flanking the middle set of sliding glass doors. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required number of architectural features and balanced fenestration. The rear elevation would benefit from the continuation of the brick material from the front and sides to its watertable.

The Maple—The front two-story primarily brick façade of the Maple is well balanced with the house visually bifurcated into the two-car garage left portion and the main living space on the right side. A pedimented roofline, one on each section, encapsulates a Palladian style window, with a keystone lintel design, mimicked on the two central upper-story rectilinear windows. The front entry door has sidelights and the two first-story windows are ornamented with transoms. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required architectural features and balanced fenestration. The rear elevation mimics the bifurcation of the front, but is much less ornamented. The fenestration is adequately balanced, but the design would benefit from the continuation of brick material from the front and sides to its watertable.

The Ironwood—The front two-story primarily brick façade of the Ironwood is bifurcated into a garage element on the right and the main living quarters on the left. The garage element has a decorative louvered circular window in its pediment and a rowlock of brick with a keystone above its paneled double-garage door. The main living portion of the model on the left has a defined entranceway in a central element. The entrance door is paneled, has sidelights, is flanked by pilasters and has a rowlock of brick with a keystone element. A Palladian window is located directly above it in the upper story. The roofline of the entranceway has a louvered circular element in its pediment and nests a second roofline to the stone portion of this element. The stone portion has four six-over-six windows with straight lintels and a keystone element. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required architectural features and balanced fenestration. The rear elevation mimics the bifurcation of the front, but is much less ornamented. The fenestration is adequately balanced, but the design would benefit from the continuation of brick material from the front and sides to its watertable.

The Walnut—The Walnut's symmetrical aspect is offset by a two-car garage located on the left side of the front façade. The garage has a rowlock with a keystone element above a paneled door. The garage utilizes brick as the main architectural material as does the main living quarters located on the right side of the façade. The main house is entirely symmetrical unto itself with a two-story-high central element, which has a cross gable to the main roof at the top. The double-high entranceway includes a paneled entrance door with sidelights, a second-story window feature crowned by a semicircular window, and decorative stonework with a keystone arch. The central element is flanked on both sides by brick, with two windows on each level on either side of the stone entrance feature. The windows on the first story are shuttered, six-over-six, and have a semicircular element above with a rowlock and keystone element. The windows on the second story are similar in design, but without the crowning semicircular feature. They feature a straight rowlock and a keystone element. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required architectural features and balanced fenestration. The rear elevation mimics the bifurcation of the front, but is much less ornamented. The fenestration is adequately balanced, but the design would benefit from the continuation of brick material from the front and sides to its watertable.

The Yellowwood—The Yellowwood's front façade is constructed primarily of brick, although the entranceway element is composed primarily of stone. A two-car, paneled-door garage is included on the right side of the façade with a straight rowlock and keystone element across the top of the door. The main living block is on the left. The central entranceway block includes a pedimented front door with sidelights, pilasters, and a paneled door. A Palladian, shuttered window is included above with sidelights and a semicircular crown with a keystone feature. The fenestration on this side is perfectly symmetrical and the brick portions of the front façade on either side of the stone entrance feature are paired; the two shuttered sets of windows on the lower floor have nine lights in the lower portion of the windows and six lights above, and a straight rowlock lintel with a central keylock element. The two pairs directly above the first-story paired windows are

identical, except for their smaller six-over-six size. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required architectural features and balanced fenestration. The rear elevation mimics the bifurcation of the front, but is much less ornamented. The fenestration is adequately balanced, but the design would benefit from the continuation of brick material from the front and sides to its watertable.

The Willow—The Willow has a bifurcated front façade with the two-car garage portion on the right side. The door on the garage is paneled and has a string of windows on its upper third. A single-shuttered window with a keystone is located in the upper story above the garage door. Quoins run up and down the corner of this portion of the model. The massing of the left main living portion of the model includes a central stone entrance feature which includes a paneled entrance door with sidelights, a second-story window feature crowned by a semicircular window, and decorative stonework with a keystone arch. In the roofline, the entrance feature roof runs contiguous with the larger roof covering the remainder of the left portion. Two shuttered upper-story windows with keystone lintels sit above a single bay window. Quoins matching those on either side of the garage element decorate the far left corner of this façade. The side elevations indicate brick on the watertable, above the two required architectural features and balanced fenestration.

The prior architecture approved for the project included the following models:

	Square Footage
The Aspen Standard	3,775
The Hickory	3,762
The Redwood	3,222
The Juniper	4,020
The Sycamore	3,258
The Hemlock	4,076
The Neal Standard	3,640
The Sequoia Standard	3,406
The Mahogany	3,586

The subject models, The Cottonwood, The Maple, The Ironwood, The Walnut, The Yellowwood, and The Willow are intended to augment rather than replace the previously approved models.

In the statement of justification submitted for the project, the applicant quoted a January 24, 2009 Washington Post article by Elizabeth Razzi in support of the need for inclusion of the smaller models offered in the subject application, stating that “recession-chastened house hunters are looking for different things than the boom-era buyers who snapped up homes that grew bigger, fancier and pricier by the month.” They also quoted an area builder as stating that, “people aren’t buying big, huge homes with no yard.” As back-up to this assertion, they pointed to a survey of area home builders that indicated that 90 percent of those surveyed were building smaller homes, and to statistics reported by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) that the average size of homes under construction fell 7.3 percent from 2,629 to 2,438 square feet.

Staff, in researching the issue, found support for the applicant's assertion. Following is an excerpt from an article that appeared in the Kessler Housing Report in Housing Magazine on February 22, 2010 that sums up the issues:

"For years our country has been building bigger and bigger homes. The advent of the McMansion is the first thing that comes to mind. With all that is going on in the housing market and the economy overall this is a sign that households, while getting bigger in members are going to learn to live in smaller spaces.

"While the thought of a big house might be the dream of many, the dream forgets to remind people of the costs when you build bigger. You can start with taxes associated with the property and then go up and down the list of everything that it takes to run a house. The utilities as well as the maintenance increase with more square feet.

"The concern for a more stable financial future will weigh on the minds of many after living through this past recession and when these people look for their next house they will be more cognizant of the overall cost.

"There is also the green factor. More and more people are becoming aware of their footprint and are doing things to change it for the better. The smaller the house the less energy is needed to run it.

"It will be more efficiency than luxury. As the younger generations look for their first property, the need for abundant space might not be there. The idea of small is engrained in their culture. The iPod, the cell phone and the mini laptop and the Smart Car all focus on one thing: smaller is better.

"The cooler thing in the future might be to show off your smaller more efficient house than your gas guzzling McMansion."

The size differences between the models originally approved for the subdivision (3,222–4,076 square feet as opposed to 2,070–3,004 square feet) is obvious, but can be justified on many grounds. In terms of general planning procedures, the impact of a single-family unit is largely the same regardless of the size of the unit. The demand for school, fire, police, ambulance service, and other public facilities is likewise largely the same. In addition, there are many cost savings, general efficiencies, and environmentally sound design principles that are supported by the choice of a smaller unit size. The unit will utilize fewer materials to build, will be less expensive, and utilize less energy to heat and cool. With the recent downturn in the economy, potential home buyers have been seeking out smaller, more affordable homes. Unlike some other aspects of our general economy, home size does not necessarily lend itself to the adage that "bigger is better." If the same family can comfortably fit in a smaller house, many savings may be realized in terms of household economies and carbon footprint.

The reduction in the size of the architectural models is offset by the upgraded exterior design quality proffered by the applicant and memorialized in the proposed conditions below. More specifically, the applicant has agreed to indicate brick on the watertable of the rear façades of all models to be added in the subject revision to the detailed site plan, and to provide brick and/or stone on 100 percent of the front façades for the subject subdivision. In addition, due to its high visibility, staff recommends that brick for the model to be utilized on Lot 1 be wrapped to the right side of the house not only on its watertable, but on the entire façade.

## COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the R-R Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.
  - a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-441, which governs permitted uses in residential zones. The proposed single-family detached residential development is a permitted use in the R-R Zone.
  - b. The proposal is also in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-442, Regulations, regarding additional regulations for development in residential zones.
8. **Final Plat 184-019:** The subject project is in conformance with the requirements of Final Plan 184-019.
9. **Landscape Manual:** The proposed revision does not affect the previous findings of conformance with the requirements of the Landscape Manual.
10. **Woodland Conservation Ordinance:** The proposed revision does not affect the previous findings of conformance with the requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.
11. **Referral Comments:**

Permit Section—In a memorandum dated October 20, 2009, the Permit Review Section offered numerous comments that have either been addressed by revisions to the plans or in the recommended conditions below.
12. As required by Section 27-285(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, the detailed site plan represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

## 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 Detailed Site Plan DSP-05039/01, Oaklawn Knolls, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature approval of the plans, the applicant shall revise the plans for the project as follows:
  - a. Provide the dimensions of all improvements on the site plan, the total height of roofs over stoops (if any), setbacks and distances of dwellings to each property and right-of-way line, and the number of stories for all models on the template sheet.
  - b. Indicate brick on the watertable of the rear façades of all models to be added in the subject revision to the detailed site plan.

- c. Revise architectural elevations as necessary and add a note to the general notes of the detailed site plan to indicate that 100 percent of the front façades for the subject subdivision shall utilize a brick and/or stone combination as the primary construction material. Due to its high visibility, the model to be utilized on Lot 1 shall utilize brick or stone for 100 percent of the façade on the right side of the house.