




MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 2008

TO: Neil Braunstein, Planner Coordinator, Development Review Division
Joshua Sloan, Planner Coordinator, Development Review Division

FROM: Candy Bunnag,  Planner Coordinator, Environmental Planning,
Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: Preliminary Plan 120070580 and Site Plan 820080130, Chevy Chase Bank
at Ashton

RECOMMENDATION:

The Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the preliminary plan and site plan referenced above. Staff recommends approval of the preliminary plan of subdivision and site plan with the following conditions:

1. The proposed development shall comply with the conditions of the preliminary forest conservation plan. The applicant shall satisfy all conditions prior to recording of plat(s) or Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS) issuance of sediment and erosion control permits. Conditions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. A certified arborist must be present at the pre-construction meeting, during construction, and after construction to implement specific tree protection measures as identified in the "Tree Preservation Report" prepared by Christopher Erb of Bartlett Tree Experts.
 - b. Specific location of tree protection fencing may be adjusted in the field by the M-NCPPC inspector, in coordination with the certified arborist, at the pre-construction meeting.
 - c. Forest conservation worksheet on the Preliminary and Final Forest Conservation Plans must be revised to show the afforestation and conservation thresholds and the afforestation requirement to be 0.17 acre.
 - d. Revise the Landscape Plan and Preliminary and Final Forest Conservation Plans to include native, shade trees as landscape trees that will create a total of 7405 square feet (0.17 acre) of tree canopy coverage at 20 years. These trees must be located outside of the stormwater management easement.

BACKGROUND

The 1.1-acre site is zoned C-1 and contains an existing restaurant structure, greenhouse, one-story dwelling, an asphalt parking lot, and an area of concrete and gravel. There are individual trees along the eastern property line and on the southern edge of the site. A 34-inch white ash, which is of specimen size, is located along the northeastern property boundary.

The site lies within the Northwest Branch (Use IV waters) watershed. There are no streams, wetlands, floodplains, environmental buffers, or forest on the site.

Forest Conservation

The applicant proposes to protect the specimen white ash at the northeastern edge of the property. A tree protection plan proposed by a certified arborist identifies specific protection measures that should be implemented to save the ash. The tree protection plan has been incorporated into the Final Forest Conservation Plan.

Under the Forest Conservation Law, the proposed project is required to afforest 0.17 acre. The Final Forest Conservation Plan proposes to meet the afforestation requirement by planting nine red maples as credit for tree cover. Staff recommends that only five of these maples may be given afforestation credit. Staff does not recommend four maples to be given afforestation credit because these maples will be planted within the proposed stormwater management (SWM) facility. Trees and any other vegetation planted in SWM facilities are subject to a SWM easement which allow for the removal and replacement of vegetation within the SWM facility for the purposes of any maintenance measures required by the County. Staff recommends that more native, shade trees are planted on the outside of the SWM facility for landscaping purposes on the site and that such trees may be given afforestation credit. The total afforestation credit that is required for the site is 7405 square feet. Based on the current forest conservation plan, the project has 4535 square feet of afforestation credit for native, landscaped trees that are outside the SWM facility. An additional 2870 square feet of afforestation credit is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Environmental Planning staff recommends approval of the preliminary plan of subdivision, site plan, and forest conservation plan with conditions.