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## STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY PLAN OF SUBDIVISION 4-23042

The property forming the subject matter of this Preliminary Plan of Subdivision application consists of 43.73 acres located at 6505 and 6520 Johensu Drive in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. More particularly, it is identified as Parcels 22 and 83 on Tax Map 109, Grids A-1, B-1 and B-2 (the "Property"). The owner of the Property and applicant in this case are Meridian Hill Baptist Church ("Applicants"). The Property was conveyed to the Applicant by deed dated September 26, 2008 and recorded among the Land Records of Prince George's County in Liber 30306 Folio 605.

## PROPERTY ORIENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The Property is presently zoned AR (formerly R-A) and has located at the terminus of Johensu Drive, approximately 1775 feet east of its intersection with Woodyard Road. It is mostly wooded, but is improved with two existing tobacco barns, which appear to have been built between 1938 and 1965. The Property is bound to the north and west by existing single family detached homes in the AR zone north by a church in the AG Zone. To the east, the Property is abutted by a 250-foot wide high energy transmission line owned by PEPCO. To the south is open space land in the RR zone owned by the Melwood Springs Homeowners Association.

The Applicant proposes to develop the Property with a Planned Retirement Community consisting of up to 176 single family attached villas, including a community center. A Planned Retirement Community is a permitted use in both the existing AR zone as well as in the former R-A zone subject to approval of a special exception. The Applicant is submitting this preliminary plan of subdivision as the first application for this development proposal. In addition, a special exception application under the provisions of the prior subdivision and zoning ordinances will be filed. Pursuant to conversations with the Subdivision Review Division, the preliminary plan is

filed first to address issues related to Subtitle 24, with the special exception to be filed thereafter. A Pre-Application Meeting was held on November 3, 2023 for this application and the future special exception application, which has been assigned Application Number SE-23003. One of the comments we received in pre-application comments was to address the requirements of Section 24-121(a)(5), related to Master Plan conformance. This Statement of Justification addresses tis requirement.

## **CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 24-121(a)(5)**

Section 24-121(a)(5) provides that the preliminary plan and final plat shall conform to the area master plan, including maps and text, unless the Planning Board finds that events have occurred to render the relevant recommendations within the comprehensive plan no longer appropriate, is no longer applicable, or the District Council has not imposed the recommended zoning. The Subject Property was placed in the Developing Tier with the adoption of the 2002 General Plan. In 2013, the Subject Property was retained in the R-A zone with the adoption of the Subregion 6 Mater Plan and Sectional Map Amendment. The Master Plan land use recommendation was for Low Residential development. Plan Prince George's 2035, adopted in 2014, has designated the Property in Sustainable Growth Act Tier 2. The Growth Policy Map also shows the Property within the "Established Communities" areas. Plan Prince George's 2035 did not change the land use recommendation but did identify County priorities. Among the challenges in the General Plan was providing housing for vulnerable populations, including the elderly. Further, Policy 5 in the General Plan recommends increasing the supply of housing types that are suitable for and attractive to the County's growing vulnerable populations, including the elderly. Policy HN5.1 specifically states "Expand housing options by eliminating regulatory barriers to the construction of elderly accessible housing, accessory apartments and assisted living facilities.

Revise the zoning ordinance to encourage a variety of housing types." For the Subject Property, the Applicant proposes to establish a Planned Retirement Community on the Subject Property, which will also require approval of a Special Exception. The Applicant was encouraged to commence the project with the filing of a subdivision application in order to address subdivision and adequacy issues prior to approval of a Special Exception. Thus, the implementation of this preliminary plan will be subject to, and contingent on, the approval of a special exception. A Planned Retirement Community is a permitted use in the R-A Zone by special exception. As a permitted use, the proposed subdivision conforms to the Master Plan and assists in implementing the policies of the General Plan to expand housing opportunities for seniors. In addition, the proposed development retains a residential use of the Subject Property as recommended by the Master Plan. It is noted that several properties on the south and east side of Woodyard Road are owned by churches and have been proposed for development to expand housing opportunities for the elderly and for the establishment of religious institutions. The land in the Woodyard Road Corridor between Marlboro Pike and the Subject Property is predominantly recommended as Residential Low on the Future Land Use Map, and the majority of the developed land is improved with single family detached residential subdivisions and townhouses. The Subject Property is uniquely situated in an area isolated by environmental features that allows it to be a residential enclave, perfect for a senior community. The access is proposed from Arethusa Lane, which, as platted, extends to the property line to accommodate an extension into the Subject Property. In conclusion, the use proposed is permitted in the zone and is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan, the property is well suited to accommodate the proposed use, and the existing land use pattern in the vicinity of the Subject Property is consistent with the proposed development.

## CONCLUSION

For these reasons, the Applicant submits that the proposed subdivision conforms to the area master plan.

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