

March 16, 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Acting Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Elizabeth Whitmore, Urban Planner

SUBJECT: Knotts Addition to Ammendale (Lot 67, Block A)  
Preliminary and Conceptual Site Plan 4-00009

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The Urban Design staff has completed its review of the subject application. This report represents a summary of the plan, analysis, evaluation and findings required for action on the plan, and a recommendation of APPROVAL.

CLUSTER SUBDIVISION

A cluster subdivision is basically one in which a number of residential lots are grouped or clustered, leaving some land undivided for common use. Generally the same number of lots or dwelling units permitted under conventional subdivision procedure are clustered on smaller than usual lots. The land remaining from lot reduction is left undivided and available as common area. The cluster open space or common area might include land with interesting natural features such as a creek, wooded hillside, or unique tree stand. The cluster open space may be preserved for its scenic value and conservation. It may be used for active recreation, for a school, or for community buildings.

The cluster provisions of the subdivision regulations of Prince George's County are intended to promote more economic subdivision and site design provide a variety of types of residential dwellings, and preserve open space. In short, the cluster provisions are intended to provide a procedure for development which will result in a total environment better than that which could be achieved under standard regulations.

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the cluster provisions of the Subdivision Regulations of the Prince George's County Code, a public hearing was scheduled before the Prince George's County Planning Board at 9:00 a. m. on April 6, 2000. The site was posted for this public hearing in accordance with the regulations.

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

The subject property is approximately 600 feet north of the intersection of Ammendale Road and Gordon Avenue. The subject lot is part of a preliminary plat of development for a cluster development that was approved in 1995. The existing structure was constructed in violation of the front building restriction line. The subject application is for the purpose of granting a modification of 1.5 feet to the front building restriction line (BRL), thereby reducing the BRL from 25 feet to 23.5 feet.

## FINDINGS

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

1. The sole purpose of the subject preliminary plan is to grant a modification to the front building restriction line from 25 feet to 23.5 feet for Lot 67, Block A of Knotts Addition to Ammendale.

The original Preliminary Plan 4-00009 (PGCPB No. 95-39) for the subject application was approved in 1995 and went to Final Plat in 1998 (VJ 184@11).

The purpose of this resubdivision is to grant a modification to the development regulations for Lot 67, Block A. The modification is necessary because the house was constructed 1.5 feet closer to the street than was allowed. The required front building restriction line is 25 feet. The subject application will modify the front building restriction line from 25 feet to 23.5 feet for this lot only.

2. Modification of the Subdivision Regulations is justified because (1) the strict application of Subtitle 24 will result in undue hardship upon the owner of the property; and (2) the variation will not substantially impair the intent, purpose, or integrity of the General Plan or Master Plan.
3. The reduction in front yard setback will not negatively affect the development since the difference of 1.5 feet is not visually perceptible.
4. The Planning Board can grant modification and variations to cluster regulations as stated in Subtitle 24.

■Criteria for approval. An approved cluster development shall, through creative design and variety of one-family detached dwelling styles, provide for a total development better than that which would normally be achieved under standard regulations. If, in the opinion of the Planning Board, the proposed Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, Conceptual Site Plan, Detailed Site Plan, or architectural drawings could be improved with respect to the criteria listed below by the reasonable modification of the purpose, configuration, location, or design of cluster open space or buildings, or the location or configuration of lots, streets, parking areas, or other features of the development, the proposed Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, Conceptual Site Plan, Detailed Site Plan, or architectural drawings shall be so modified or disapproved.●

5. The Board of Zoning Appeals is specifically prohibited from granting variances to any requirements applicable to cluster developments with the exception of granting variances for

homeowners improvements.

6. The findings and conditions of approval of Preliminary Plan 4-00009 (PGCPB No. 95-39) are adopted by reference for the resubdivision of Lot 67, Block A.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis of this report, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Preliminary Plat and Conceptual Site Plan 4-00009.

STAFF SUPPORTS THE GRANTING OF MODIFICATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS AS PERMITTED BY THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE.