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Preliminary Plan 4-04184

Application	General Data
Project Name: RITCHIE HILL CENTER Location: Southwest quadrant of Ritchie-Marlboro Road and the Capital Beltway. Applicant/Address: Ritchie Hill, LLC. 4640 Forbes Blvd. Lanham, MD. 20706-4323	Date Accepted: 12/10/04
	Planning Board Action Limit: 5/13/05
	Plan Acreage: 101.83
	Zone: I-3 & R-R
	Lots: 0
	Parcels: 6
	Planning Area: 75A
	Tier: Developed
	Council District: 06
	Municipality: N/A
	200-Scale Base Map: 203SE08

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
COMMERCIAL SUBDIVISION	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 10/21/04 (CB-58-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed: 2/01/05

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Tom Lockard	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
		X	

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-04184
Ritchie Hill Center, Parcels A-F

OVERVIEW

The site contains approximately 101.83 acres of I-3 and R-R-zoned land, being ten deed parcels (Parcels 115-120, 172, 177, 228 and 229, Tax Map 74, Grid C-4). The applicant is proposing to combine these ten properties into six parcels in order to construct up to 1,000,000 square feet of retail-commercial space. Access to the site is proposed from Ritchie-Marlboro Road via an extension of Hampton Park Boulevard, which would terminate as a cul-de-sac.

On November 25, 2003, the District Council adopted CB-65-2003, which permits all uses allowed in the C-S-C Zone for certain properties in the I-3 and R-R Zones, if certain criterion are met:

- 1. The property is located on and inside the Capital Beltway at an existing interchange with said Beltway;**
- 2. The site contains a minimum of 80 acres that is split-zoned, I-3 and R-R, with not more than 20% zoned R-R;**
- 3. The property is proposed for employment uses in the most recently approved applicable Master Plan;**
- 4. A Detailed Site Plan shall be approved in accordance with Part 3, Division 9, of this Subtitle; and**
- 5. The site plan shall include at least two stores containing 100,000 square feet or more of gross floor area.**

The subject property meets these criteria.

SETTING

The subject property is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Ritchie-Marlboro Road and the Capital Beltway. The site contains numerous abandoned dwellings and outbuildings, but does not appear to have any currently occupied. Much of the site has recently been cleared pursuant to a timber harvest permit. Most of the remaining residential properties to the north of the site are owned by the applicant and have been abandoned. One occupied single-family residence remains. To the south is a townhouse development (Forestville Park) in the R-T Zone.

FINDINGS AND REASONS FOR STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. **Development Data Summary**—The following information relates to the subject preliminary plan application and the proposed development.

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone	I-3, R-R	I-3, R-R
Uses	Abandoned Residences	Commercial Retail
Acreage	94.33 (I-3) 7.5 (R-R) 101.83 (total)	94.33 (I-3) 7.5 (R-R) 101.83 (total)
Lots	0	0
Parcels	10	6
Square Footage/GFA	0	1,000,000

2. **Environmental**—The site is characterized by terrain sloping toward the west and south of the subject property and drains into unnamed tributaries of the Southwest Branch watershed in the Patuxent River basin. The predominant soil types on the site are Adelphia, Beltsville, Bibb, Collington, Chillum, Galestown, Sassafra, Shrewsbury and Westphalia. These soil series generally exhibit moderate to severe limitations to development due to steep slopes, high water table, poor and impeded drainage, seasonally high water table, and flood hazard. The site is largely undeveloped and partially wooded. Based on 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 site. There are streams, floodplain and wetlands associated with the site. There are no Marlboro clays or scenic or historic roads located on or adjacent to the subject property. The subject property is located adjacent to I-95, a freeway and major noise generator. Because the site is zoned I-1 and the uses proposed are not residential in nature, it is not likely that the noise levels generated will be above the state noise standards for these uses. This property is located in the Developed Tier as delineated on the adopted General Plan.

Woodland Conservation

The subject property was harvested using a clear-cut method within the last year. The forest stand delineation (FSD) submitted covers 120.55 acres. The current application covers only 101.83 acres as stated on the preliminary plan application. In a letter dated February 1, 2005, the applicant’s engineer states that as a result of new computations, the amount of woodland that existed prior to the timber harvest is 93.11 acres and not 85.65 acres as stated on the previously approved TCPII. The letter goes on to state that the FSD plan has been revised. A copy of the revised FSD plan was not submitted with the revised package. If the revised FSD contains the same table that was added to the TCP, the table needs extensive revisions to reflect the conditions on-site. The property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the site has a previously approved TCP. A Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/100/04) was submitted and was found to require revisions. The TCPI currently under review has a revision date of February 10, 2005, in the revision box. Revised plans were previously requested and were not received.

The most recent revision contains new information in the form of a table that provides figures for the woodland acreages, pre- and post-harvesting. The figures and the plan, however, are not complementary. Under “entire site” existing woodlands prior to timber harvest, the figure 93.11

acres is provided. The TCPII for the timber harvest, which included the entire site, states that the existing woodland was 85.65 acres. Both figures are based on the “entire site” (FSD and TCPII say it is 120.57 acres and the TCPI says it is 120.55 acres). In a recent letter from the applicant’s engineer, the figure 93.11 acres is stated to be the accurate figure for the amount of woodland that existed. Staff will accept this figure as a revision to the figure provided on the approved TCPII.

The table also states that there are 13.06 acres of woodland outside of the floodplain that were not harvested that would be eligible for woodland conservation credit. The plan shows 5.74 acres of woodland within the PMA that were not harvested and that are outside the floodplain and thus eligible for woodland conservation. The location of the remaining 7.32 acres is not clear. Furthermore, in a letter from the applicant dated February 1, 2005, the amount of Woodland eligible for preservation is 9.13 acres. These discrepancies need to be resolved. There appears to be an area of woodland that remained after the timber harvest around the parcel that is not part of the application; however, the area is at best less than 2 acres (clearly not 7.32 acres) and much of it was harvested during the timber operation. There are no other areas of woodland that remain that are eligible to meet the woodland conservation requirements.

The other new information provided is that the project is planned to be phased. If this is the case, a phased worksheet is required and must replace the present worksheet.

There are several revisions that are needed to the plan. There is a note that states that there is one acre of off-site clearing proposed, but the off-site clearing is not identified. It could either be in the area along the western property line that appears to be needed for a utility connection or it could be in the area of the stormwater management pond to the east of the site, but this area is not identified. Also, there is a note near the stormwater pond that says: “Clearing Subject to State Highway and Maryland Department of Natural Resources Reforestation Requirement.” Clarity is needed to determine what is off-site clearing and what will be covered under a DNR Forest Conservation Plan. A copy of the approved FCP will be required prior to issuance of any permits.

Other revisions required include revise the plan to provide for replanting of areas of timber harvest that are proposed for reforestation—use of natural regeneration can only be used in areas that were not clear cut; revise the plan to provide reforestation in the areas of cleared areas #5, #6 and #7; revise the “existing treeline after timber harvest” to accurately reflect what occurred around the parcel to remain; and show any and all proposed stormwater management pond outfalls that will result in impacts to the PMA.

Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains

The Subdivision Ordinance requires the protection of streams, 50-foot stream buffers, wetlands, 25-foot wetland buffers, 100-year floodplain, adjacent areas of slopes in excess of 25 percent, and adjacent areas of slopes between 15 and 25 percent with highly erodible soils. When a property is located within the Patuxent River watershed these features compose the Patuxent River Primary Management Area (PMA), which is to be protected to the fullest extent possible.

The revised TCPII, stamped as received on March 17, 2005, contains the following note: “An updated wetland delineation was prepared by McCarthy & Associates, Inc., in February 2005. The limits of this jurisdictional determination, including waters of the U.S. and wetlands, were GPS located and are depicted on this plan. The associated PMA has also been slightly adjusted.” The PMA delineation on the TCPII is different from the delineation on the TCPI, and areas that are depicted on the TCPI as being harvested are now not shown as harvested on the TCPII. This

affects the overall calculations on the plans. The changes to the PMA do not appear to affect the proposed impacts to the PMA.

The TCPI shows a proposed outfall, but the limit of disturbance does not reflect the area of impact to the PMA. An amended PMA impact request, dated February 8, 2005, only requests an impact for the construction of a water line. The two impacts noted, one for a stormwater management outfall and one for the water line crossing, are appropriate because they directly relate to other requirements for infrastructure. As such, staff recommends that the Planning Board find that the PMA is being preserved to the fullest extent possible.

There are still outstanding questions at the time of writing of this referral regarding the construction of Hampton Park Boulevard. If the preliminary plan changes with respect to this master-planned roadway, the impacts to the PMA will need to be reevaluated.

A stormwater management concept approval letter dated July 22, 2004, was submitted with the application. A copy of the signed plan associated with that letter has not been submitted. The plan submitted is not signed and shows two ponds, one with an outfall into the PMA. A plan stamped as received February 3, 2005, shows only one pond, off-site to the east, and no ponds on-site. This plan is also not an approved plan and shows one outfall into the PMA behind the conceptual footprint of the Kohl's building.

A copy of the plan that was approved with the July 22, 2004, letter is required for the file. As the concept evolves, it is likely that there will be at least one outfall into the PMA on the western side of the property. The TCPI must show conceptual limits of disturbance that account for all future outfalls so that the Planning Board can approve proposed impacts, even if it is determined later that the outfall is not needed.

Noise

Noise is a consideration in the review of this proposal due to proximity of the subject property to I-95. Because the site is zoned I-1 and the uses proposed are not residential in nature, it is not likely that the noise levels generated will be above the state noise standards for these uses. Based on projected traffic (average daily traffic, or ADT, projected 10 years) data supplied by the State of Maryland, the Environmental Planning Section Noise Model has projected that the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour is located 1,199 feet from the centerline of the roadway.

The plans as submitted shows the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour as required. No further action is required at this time with regard to noise contour delineation.

Water and Sewer Categories

The property is in water category W-3 and sewer category S-3 according to water and sewer maps dated June 2003 obtained from the Department of Environmental Resources. This development will utilize these public facilities.

3. **Community Planning**—The property is in Planning Area 75A/Beltway Employment Area. The 2002 General Plan places the property in the Developed Tier. The vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable, transit supporting, mixed-use pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density neighborhoods. This application is not inconsistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Developing Tier. The 1986 *Approved Master Plan and Adopted Sectional Map Amendment for Suitland-District Heights and Vicinity, Planning Areas*

75A and 75B recommends an employment use for the site. As stated earlier in this report, the District Council, through CB-65-2003, allows for commercial-retail uses on split-zoned properties such as this site. This application does not impair the master plan recommendation.

Planning Issues

Due to the site's regionally accessible location on the Capital Beltway and Walker Mill Road extended (Ritchie-Marlboro Road) and the proximity of the ramps to the proposed north-south Industrial Road, proposed development should receive careful attention during the design stage.

Given the site's proposed use as a commercial shopping center within the Hampton Business Park and in accordance with the requirements promulgated by CB-65-2003, site plan review is encouraged to create consistency in this area and to eliminate the deficiencies already present in existing commercial development. Specifically, "the design of renewed commercial areas should be subject to aesthetic as well as functional design criteria and, where possible should include such open space as parks, malls, plazas and similar areas." Moreover, "... as part of the approval of commercial development, space must be provided for appropriate public and quasi-public uses—including landscaping, open space (plazas), and indoor space (meeting rooms)—which will transform the commercial shopping center into a genuine center of commercial activity."

According to page 155 of the master plan, "...site plan approval and architectural review should be required for all new development, in order to ascertain that it will be architecturally, environmentally, and socially compatible with the adjoining residential community. Such factors as building size, siting, height, façade treatment, landscaping and screening, points of vehicle access, and proximity of residential development on abutting properties should be evaluated."

4. **Parks and Recreation**—The proposed subdivision is exempt from the mandatory park dedication requirements of Section 24-134 of the Subdivision Regulations because no dwelling units are proposed.
5. **Trails**—Ritchie-Marlboro Road is designated as a master plan trail corridor in the 1985 Equestrian Addendum to the Adopted and Approved Countywide Trails Plan. More specifically, a Class II Trail is recommended along this section of Ritchie-Marlboro Road. As seen on the Equestrian Addendum, this planned trail will connect to the Chesapeake Beach Rail-Trail outside the Beltway and provide a trail connection to nearby Walker Mill Regional Park. Portions of the Chesapeake Beach Rail-Trail have been constructed in the Upper Marlboro area, and another segment is under construction in Seat Pleasant. A trail along Ritchie-Marlboro Road will provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access under the Capital Beltway, which would otherwise be a barrier to bicycle and pedestrian travel. The portion of the Ritchie-Marlboro Road constructed as part of the new interchange includes an eight-foot-wide sidewalk along the south side. The subject site's entire road frontage of Ritchie-Marlboro Road has been improved and includes this eight-foot-wide sidewalk. No additional improvements are recommended along this roadway.

Sidewalk Connectivity

The adjacent townhouse development includes sidewalks along both sides of most internal roads. As noted above, Ritchie-Marlboro Road includes an eight-foot-wide sidewalk along the frontage of the subject site. Ritchie Road Spur is open section with no sidewalk along the frontage of the subject site. Staff recommends the provision of a standard sidewalk along the subject site's frontage, if improvements are required by DPW&T. This is in keeping with improvements made

to the north side of Ritchie Road Spur. Similarly, staff recommends the provision of a standard sidewalk along both sides of Hampton Park Boulevard, unless modified by DPW&T.

6. **Transportation**—The applicant prepared a traffic impact study dated December 2004 and prepared in accordance with the methodologies in the *Guidelines for the Analysis of the Traffic Impact of Development Proposals*. Subsequently an addendum addressing specific State Highway Administration (SHA) concerns dated February 10, 2005, was provided to staff in mid-February. Both studies have been referred to the county Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) and SHA.

Growth Policy - Service Level Standards

The subject property is in the Developed Tier, as defined in the General Plan for Prince George's County. As such, the subject property is evaluated according to the following standards:

Links and signalized intersections: Level-of-service (LOS) E, with signalized intersections operating at a critical lane volume (CLV) of 1,600 or better, is required in the Developing Tier.

Unsignalized intersections: The Highway Capacity Manual procedure for unsignalized intersections is not a true test of adequacy but rather an indicator that further operational studies need to be conducted. Vehicle delay in any movement exceeding 50.0 seconds is deemed to be an unacceptable operating condition at unsignalized intersections. In response to such a finding, the Planning Board has generally recommended that the applicant provide a traffic signal warrant study and install the signal (or other less costly warranted traffic controls) if deemed warranted by the appropriate operating agency.

The original Planning Board hearing on March 3, 2005, was continued, in part due to the need to review additional information provided by the applicant. This information was provided in response to SHA comments at a meeting attended by representatives of SHA and the applicant on January 31, 2005. At a subsequent meeting at SHA on March 11, 2005, attended by representatives of the applicant, the issues of interstate access were raised, in part as a result of information provided by the applicant's traffic consultant that suggested that there could ultimately be queuing onto the Capital Beltway. SHA officials have indicated that they have requested further information from the applicant in order to discuss the matter with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) officials. To date, SHA has not received additional information pursuant to the March 11 request.

FHWA has the ultimate jurisdiction and approval authority for improvements to and operations along the interstate highway system. As such, SHA cannot provide assurances that the subject development proposal, with proffered transportation improvements, would result in adequate transportation facilities and adequate traffic operations at nearby critical intersections. Without those assurances, the Transportation Planning Section cannot recommend approval at this time.

Furthermore, the extension of Hampton Park Boulevard through the subject property remains a significant issue. On March 16, 2005, transportation staff received a statement of justification for not completing Hampton Park Boulevard. This information had been requested by both DPW&T and SHA for review on March 17, 2005, and has been forwarded to these agencies. Both operating agencies should have a chance for review and comment on these materials, as the status of Hampton Park Boulevard will have an impact upon traffic operations on surrounding facilities.

Transportation Staff Conclusions

Based on the preceding findings, the Transportation Planning Section concludes that a finding of adequate transportation facilities as required under Section 24-124 of the Prince George's County Code cannot be made at this time. Planning staff has no assurances at this time that the subject development proposal, with proffered transportation improvements, would result in adequate transportation facilities and adequate traffic operations at nearby critical intersections. Materials needed for discussions between SHA and federal transportation officials have been requested by SHA and not yet received, and it is inconceivable that the materials could be received and reviewed, the necessary discussion could occur, and an appropriate transportation recommendation could be developed in time for the scheduled Planning Board hearing. These materials discuss the extension of Hampton Park Boulevard and have been requested by the operating agencies as well. The transportation staff would value the input of these agencies regarding Hampton Park Boulevard.

7. **Schools**—The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section has reviewed this subdivision plan for review of school facilities in accordance with Section 24-122.02 of the Subdivision Regulations and CB-30-2003 and CR-23-2003. The proposed subdivision is exempt from the review test for schools because it is a commercial use.
8. **Fire and Rescue**—The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section has reviewed this commercial subdivision (thus not subject to CB-89-2004) for adequacy of fire and rescue facilities.

The existing fire engine service at Ritchie Fire Station, Company 37, located at 1415 Ritchie-Marlboro Road, has a service travel time of 2.19 minutes, which is within the 3.25-minute travel time guideline.

The existing ambulance service at Forestville Fire Station, Company 23, located at 8321 Old Marlboro Pike, has a service travel time of 4.25 minutes, which is within the 4.25-minute travel time guideline for Parcels 1 and 6. All other parcels are beyond.

The existing paramedic service at Kentland Fire Station, Company 46, located at 10400 Campus Way South, has a service travel time of 6.76 minutes, which is within the 7.25-minute travel time guideline.

The existing ladder truck service at District Heights Fire Station, Company 26, located at 6208 Marlboro Pike, has a service travel time of 7.94 minutes, which is beyond the 4.25-minute travel time guideline.

In order to alleviate the negative impact on fire and rescue services due to the inadequate service discussed, an automatic fire suppression system shall be provided in all new buildings proposed in this subdivision, unless the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department determines that an alternative method of fire suppression is appropriate.

The existing ambulance service located at Forestville Station, Company 23, is beyond the recommended travel time guideline for Parcels 2, 3, 4 and 5. The nearest fire station, Ritchie Company 37, is located at 1415 Ritchie-Marlboro Road, which is 2.19 minutes from the development. This facility would be within the recommended travel time for ambulance service for Parcels 2, 3, 4 and 5 if an operational decision to locate this service at that facility is made by the county.

The above findings are in conformance with the standards and guidelines contained in the *Approved Public Safety Master Plan* (1990) and the “Guidelines for the Analysis of Development Impact on Fire and Rescue Facilities.”

9. **Police Facilities**—The proposed development is within the service area for Police District III-Landover. The Planning Board’s current test for police adequacy applicable to the subject application is based on a standard for square footage in police stations relative to the number of sworn duty staff assigned. The standard is 115 square feet per officer. As of January 2, 2004, the county had 823 sworn staff and a total of 101,303 square feet of station space. Based on available space, there is capacity for an additional 57 sworn personnel. Therefore, in accordance with Section 24-122.01(c) of the Subdivision Regulations, existing county police facilities will be adequate to serve the proposed development.
10. **Health Department**—The Health Department reviewed the application and has no comment.
11. **Stormwater Management**—The Department of Environmental Resources (DER), Development Services Division, has determined that on-site stormwater management is required. A Stormwater Management Concept Plan, 6076-2001-00, has been approved. Development must be in accordance with this approved plan or any revisions thereto.
12. **Historic/Cemeteries**—There are no known cemeteries on the subject property. However, this land was once part of a larger plantation landholding. The applicant submitted a Phase IA Assessment on March 17, 2005, which recommends further archeological investigation be undertaken. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section (M-NCPPC) agrees with that recommendation.
13. **Public Utility Easement**—The preliminary plan shows a ten-foot-wide public utility easement adjacent to all public rights-of-way. It is accurately reflected on the proposed preliminary plan and will be included on the final plat.

RECOMMENDATION

DISAPPROVAL, due to the inadequacy of transportation facilities.

STAFF RECOMMENDS DISAPPROVAL OF THE TYPE I TREE CONSERVATION PLAN, TCPI/100/04.