

Prince George's County Planning Department  
Community Planning Division

301-952-3573

April 24, 2000

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Development Review Division

VIA: Steve Fisher, Planner Coordinator

FROM: Dineene O'Connor, Community Planning Division

SUBJECT: **4-99067 First Baptist Church of North Brentwood**

**BACKGROUND**

Location: Parcels A and B between 40th Street to the west, Church Street and Windom Street on the east, and north of Wallace Road.

Acreage: This subdivision involves Parcels A and B which consists of 2.15 acres of developed residentially-zoned property.

Existing Uses: Parcel A is developed as a parking lot and contains R-55 residential lots that were developed with single-family detached houses which have been razed and are now undeveloped property. Parcel B is developed with the existing church building and a parking lot.

1982 General Plan: Policy Category Area 1

Proposal: The subdivision proposes a new 23,475 sf. church building which will seat 850 persons.

**MASTER PLAN AND SMA**

- Master Plan: *1994 Planning Area 68 Master Plan*
- PA 68/Community: Municipality of North Brentwood

- Land Use Recommendations: The master plan retained the medium suburban single-family detached residential land use recommendation for this property.
  
- Environmental Features: The property is flat and lies within the IDO of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Overlay Zone. It is essentially developed with a parking lot on Parcel A and a vacant lot where several houses (4502, 4504, 4506 Church Street) which existed at the time the Master Plan was being prepared have been razed.  
  
Although the IDO generally acknowledges that significant and intense development has occurred in this part of the CBCA, the residential development in this area on Alison Street suffers routinely from flooding. Consequently, development which will cause more runoff will exacerbate this situation.
  
- Historic Resources: North Brentwood is an historic African-American community. It has the distinction of being the first African-American incorporated municipality in Prince George's County. However, only two buildings in the town are listed in the County's Historic Sites and Districts Plan.
  
- Transportation: None
  
- Parks and Trails: The Master Plan shows park property (the North Brentwood Community Center) directly across the street from the subject site. The community's northern boundary abuts M-NCPPC parkland of the Northwest Branch Stream Valley. The Master Plan also shows park property at 39th Street and Windom Road.
  
- SMA/Zoning: The 1994 Sectional Map Amendment retained the R-55 Zone for this property.

## **PLANNING ISSUES**

1. The Master Plan recognizes the neighborhoods of PA 68 as one of the community's best-

kept secrets. Hidden off major roadways, they are best described as thriving, stable enclaves of tree-lined streets with an architecturally diverse housing stock. Some people call them front-porch communities having a ■small-town atmosphere• where longstanding neighbors know one another yet welcome new faces. (Pg. 15). North Brentwood has always been a residential community. For that reason, the SMA rezoned commercial properties interior to the community to appropriate residential zones. The intent was to reinforce the residential community as opposed to commercializing the residential neighborhood.

2. The Master Plan also identifies on pages 15 and 16 ■prominent concerns common to many neighborhoods• in the Planning Area such as: 1) •incompatible land uses within or adjacent to neighborhoods that lack adequate buffering or mitigation measures,• 2) ■churches in residential areas that can impact the neighborhood with alterations to former residential structures, increased traffic, parking and noise.•
3. The proposed church poses some of the concerns identified in the Master Plan. For example, the relative importance of the scale of the proposed development needs to be considered in the context of the community where the development is proposed. The proposed church would seat 850 people and require 213 parking spaces in a community of only 528 persons. The scale of this development will have an impact on the circulation patterns, parking, storm water runoff and architectural integrity of the community in which it is built.
4. Although there are no specific recommendations in the Master Plan for this property, the Plan provides guidance for residential neighborhoods. The following ■goal and objective• are found on page 16 of the Plan. The *goal* is to ■protect, maintain and enhance area neighborhoods to further safe and stable residential environments.• One *objective* to achieve the goal is that ■all land uses within residential areas shall be physically and visually compatible with the neighborhood character.•
5. Since site plan review is required by the Zoning Ordinance and for all the reasons cited, it is recommended that site plan review address the concerns of circulation, ingress, egress, parking, and whether increased impervious surface will exacerbate flooding of residential areas, and what if any mitigating measures should be implemented to address potential increased flooding. The site plan review process should also address the scale of this structure and consider how the church structure blends with the existing residential community which is essentially small scale, wood frame, two story or two and a half story houses built on narrow lots between 1900 and 1924. Site Plan review in this case is the appropriate mechanism to ensure implementation of the goals and objectives of the Master Plan to protect the area's neighborhoods as safe and stable residential environments.

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