

July 30, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Elizabeth Whitmore, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Saddlebrook West, Lot 32 A
DSP-95078/10

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the Detailed Site Plan for Saddlebrook West, Lot 32A. Based on that review and the findings in this report, the Development Review Division recommends APPROVAL as stated in the Recommendation section of this report.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This Detailed Site Plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

1. Condition 12 of the approved Detailed Site Plan, Resolution No. PGCPB 96-64(c).
2. Referral from the City of Bowie.

FINDINGS

Based on evaluation and analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design Staff recommends the following findings:

1. The subject site is located on the west side of Race Track Road, west of the Patuxent River and the state-operated horse racing/training track. The site is zoned R-R (Rural-Residential) and is being developed as a cluster subdivision with 330 single-family detached units. The Detailed Site Plan was approved by the Planning Board on March 14, 1996 (PGCPB No. 96-64(c)).
2. The City of Bowie, in a memorandum dated March 7, 2001 (Deutsch to Piret), offered the following comment:

■The builder applied for a revision to a County-issued building permit for Lot 32 of Block A, based on specific changes to a proposed unit. The prospective buyers selected a unit with an optional side-entry garage elevation. Lot 32 A is a corner lot.

The original County building permit was for another type selected by other contract purchasers. In order to site the unit for the side-entry garage in the revised permit, the unit had to be slightly shifted from the front building restriction line (BRL) and angled in relation to the apex of the corner. As a result, the M-NCPPC Permits Section informed the builder that the permit revision could not be issued. By angling the unit, it was now in violation of Condition #12 of SP-95078. Condition # 12 reads:

■Except for those units located on Block A, Lot 1; Block L, Lot 1; Block F, Lot 19; Block G, Lot 1; Block U, Lot 11; Block E, Lot 4; Block F, Lot 36; Block T, Lot 14; Block K, Lot 1; Block E, Lot 5; Block C, Lot 27; and Block F, Lot 57, all corner lots shall have units placed on them so that the units are not angled toward the apex of the intersection, but rather so that front yards are smaller than the rear yards.▲

When SP-95078 was originally approved, the City of Bowie had concerns about corner lots not having usable backyards which could create a potential hardship for prospective homeowners, which may include, but not be limited to, the addition of decks, in-ground pools, play equipment and sheds. Therefore, corner lots encompassing less than 15,000 square feet were made subject to the above-referenced condition. It is staff's understanding that the builder has discussed with the potential homeowner the constraints that might arise with the house at this angle. It should also be noted that Lot 32A encompasses 14,068 square feet, only 932 fewer square feet than the threshold 15,000-square-foot lot size above which Condition 12 did not apply.

3. The house type on Lot 32 A is the Somerset by Mid-Atlantic Builders. The rear elevation indicates that French doors are located off the kitchen on the far right side of the unit, as well as most of the windows. The location of said doors and windows allows the homeowners a view of the widest part of the rear yard. It also appears that a deck of substantial size (12 feet x 35 feet) can be sited on the back of the unit and still provide a functional back yard. It should also be noted that having a side-entrance garage moves the curb cut several feet farther from the intersection of River Field Court and River Gate Lane, which results in a safer intersection for both pedestrians and motorists.
4. Given all of the above, the proposed layout of Lot 32, Block A, shown on DSP-95078/10 represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the Site Design Guidelines, without requiring unreasonable costs and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of the report and APPROVE DSP-95078/10 for Saddlebrook West, Lot 32A, as submitted. All conditions previously approved for DSP-95078 and subsequent revisions shall remain in full force and effect, and Condition 12 shall be revised as follows:

Except for those units located on Block A, Lot 32, Block A, Lot 1; Block L, Lot 1; Block F, Lot 19; Block G, Lot 1; Block U, Lot 11; Block E, Lot 4; Block F, Lot 36; Block T, Lot 14; Block K, Lot 1;

Block E, Lot 5; Block C, Lot 27; and Block F, Lot 57, all corner lots shall have units placed on them so that the units are not angled toward the apex of the intersection, but rather so that front yards are smaller than the rear yards.