

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
Countywide Planning Division
301-952-3650



Note: Staff reports can be accessed at www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm

Mandatory Referral

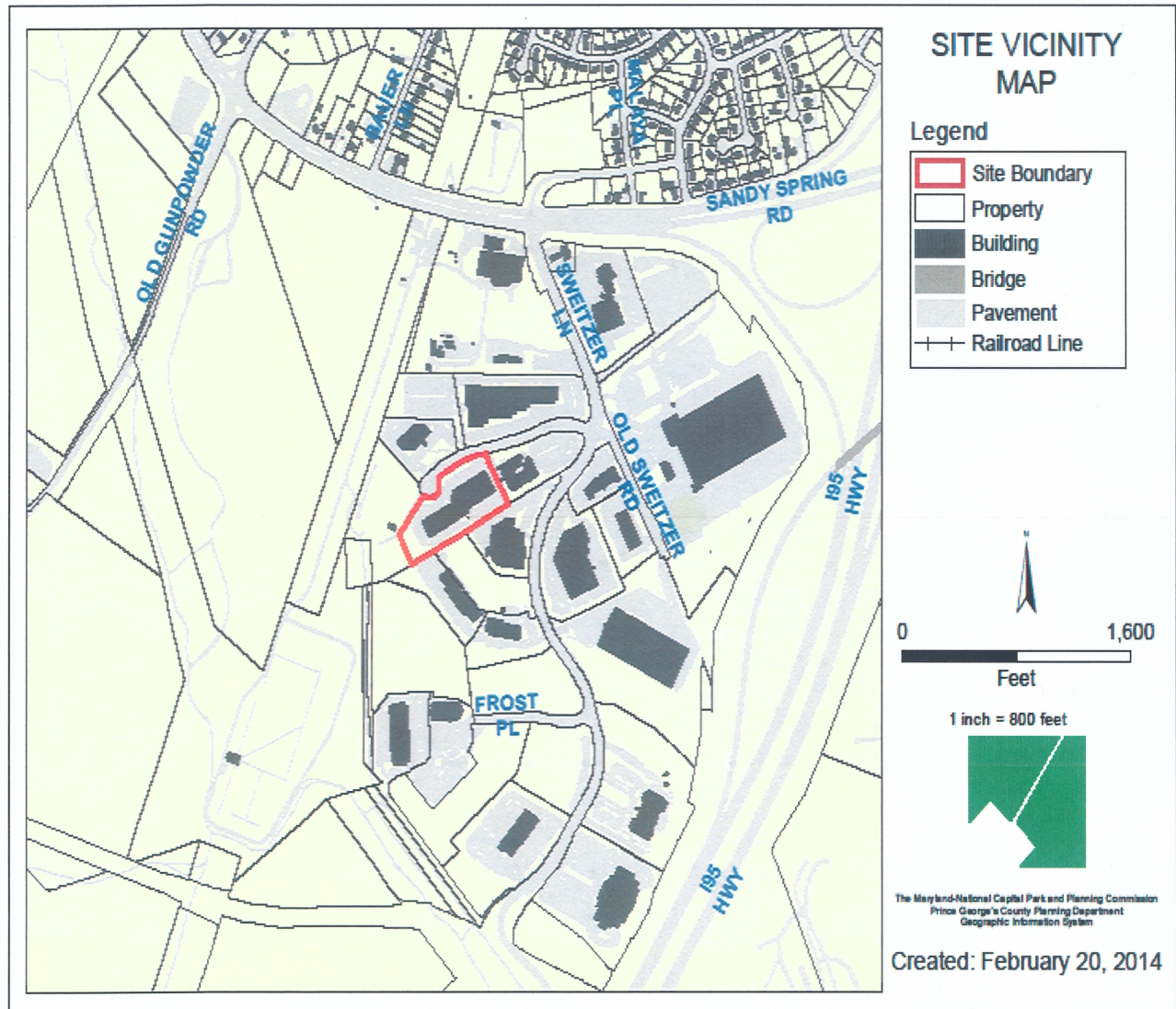
MR-1405F

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation – Proposed Laurel Elementary Public Charter School Location: 6151 Chevy Chase Drive, Laurel, MD 20785 Applicant/Address: 6100 Frost Place, Laurel, MD 20707 Property Owner: Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation	Planning Board Hearing Date:	05/1/14
	Date Accepted:	03/18/14
	Mandatory Action Timeframe:	60-Day Review
	Acreage:	5.66 acres
	Zone:	E-I-A
	Planning Area:	66
	General Plan Tier:	Developing Tier
	Council District:	District 1
	Adjacent Municipality:	Laurel

Purpose of Application	Notice Date
Proposed Laurel Elementary Public Charter School at 6151 Chevy Chase Drive, Laurel, MD 20707	Acceptance Mailing: March 18, 2014

Staff Recommendation	Staff Reviewer:
Transmit Staff Report to: Mr. Omer Ozmeral, Director Curriculum and Instruction Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation 6100 Frost Place Laurel, MD 20707	Christine A. Osei, Project Manager
	Phone Number: 301-952-3313
	Email: Christine.Osei@ppd.mncppc.org

Map 1 - Project Site



MR-1405F Staff Report – Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation Proposed Laurel Elementary Public Charter School

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Land Use Article §20-301 through 305 of the Maryland Annotated Code requires the Planning Board to review public construction projects for all federal, state, county and municipal governments, and publicly and privately owned utilities through the Mandatory Referral (MR) review process. The charter school application is being reviewed as part of the MR review process pursuant to Maryland Annotated Code, and Section 27-294 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. Though the proposed charter school property is not owned by the Board of Education (BOE), the use of the education facility as a public charter school must be approved by BOE, and the public body may not authorize its use as a charter school unless it is referred to and approved by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Pursuant to Title 9, Maryland Public Charter School Program, Sections 9-101-112 of the Education Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, the applicant has entered into an agreement with BOE of Prince George's County, to provide a public charter school for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year. Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation (CLF) is proposing to convert an existing vacant office building within the existing Laurel Employment Park for a mathematics and information technology (MIT) elementary public charter school (Laurel Elementary School) for 450 students, which range from kindergarten through 5th grade. The existing building is 71,067 square feet. No additional building footprint expansion is proposed. The overall site consists of approximately 5.66 acres of land, located at 6151 Chevy Chase Drive, Laurel, MD 20707.

Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 2004 to establish charter schools. CLF currently operates two charter schools in Maryland: Chesapeake Science Point (CSP) in Hanover and Chesapeake Mathematics and Information Technology (CMIT) in Laurel. The two existing schools serve students in grades 6 through 12 in academic programs that focus on mathematics, science and information technology.

Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation plans to renovate the interior of the existing office building without any expansion of the building footprint. Though most of the work is in the interior of the existing office building, initial staff review generated a number of concerns that warranted a full MR review, as opposed to an administrative review. Some of the issues include: provision of a safe and functional play area, adequate landscaping, buffering between incompatible adjacent uses, circulation and the existing surface parking lot. CLF attempted to address many of the concerns raised; however, additional suggestions to improve the overall site design by providing a more campus-like setting for the school are identified in the staff memos attached to this staff report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposed charter school site is in the existing Laurel Employment Park with very little tree cover. The site is surrounded by various uses, such as a Baltimore Gas and Electric substation, various offices, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) Patuxent Water Treatment Plant. After a careful review of the proposed site for a Public Charter School for 450 students, which range from kindergarten through 5th grade, staff makes the following recommendations:

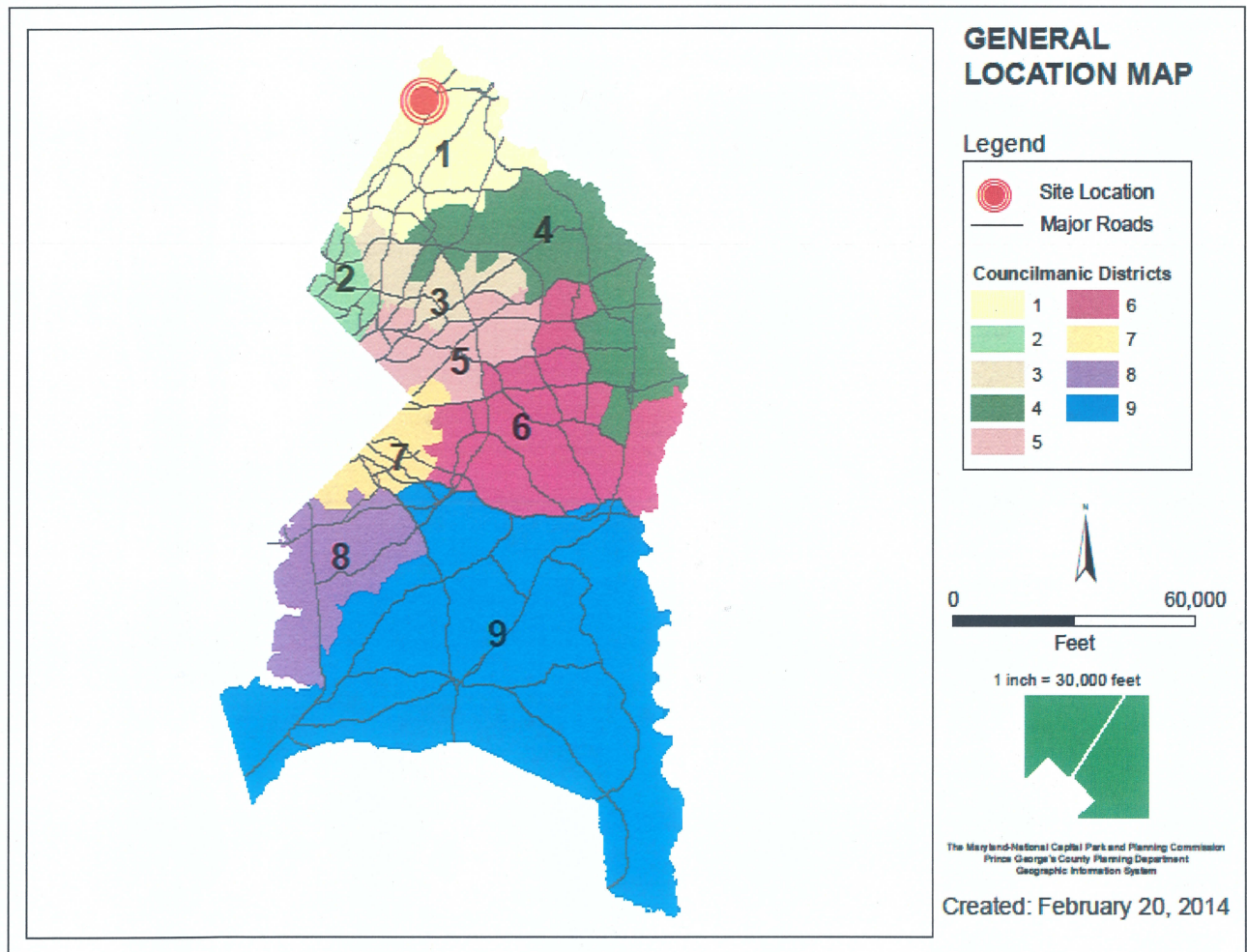
- The school's presence within an employment park could create issues of compatibility with surrounding uses. The applicant is encouraged to take additional steps to buffer students from industrial and commercial uses, as described below.
- The applicant should explore the feasibility of providing two-way access along the east side of the building that could lead to a circular turn-around at the pick-up and drop-off area.

- Safe pedestrian access should be provided to the school entrance from all parking areas via sidewalks.
- The play area should be increased to adequately accommodate the proposed enrollment of 450 children, and the applicant should replace the proposed wood fiber in the play area with a more resilient, durable and impact-absorbent material that would ensure proper drainage and a safer play surface for the children. Utilizing a durable, protective and impact-absorbent material, readily available in both tile and roll formats, would provide a safer play surface for the children.
- The applicant should reduce the excess surface parking spaces for additional play area, improved circulation, and to enhance landscaping.
- The applicant should provide additional plantings along the southern property line to enhance screening of the subject site from the existing Baltimore Gas and Electric Substation facility adjacent to the proposed school.
- The applicant should use native plant species for landscaping for minimal maintenance and maximum durability.
- The applicant should work with the Prince George's County Health Department to assess whether the proposed site's proximity to the existing gas and electric substation may have any negative long-term health impacts on the students attending the school.
- The applicant should consider seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the building to reduce the project's carbon footprint and provide an educational opportunity for students and the public.

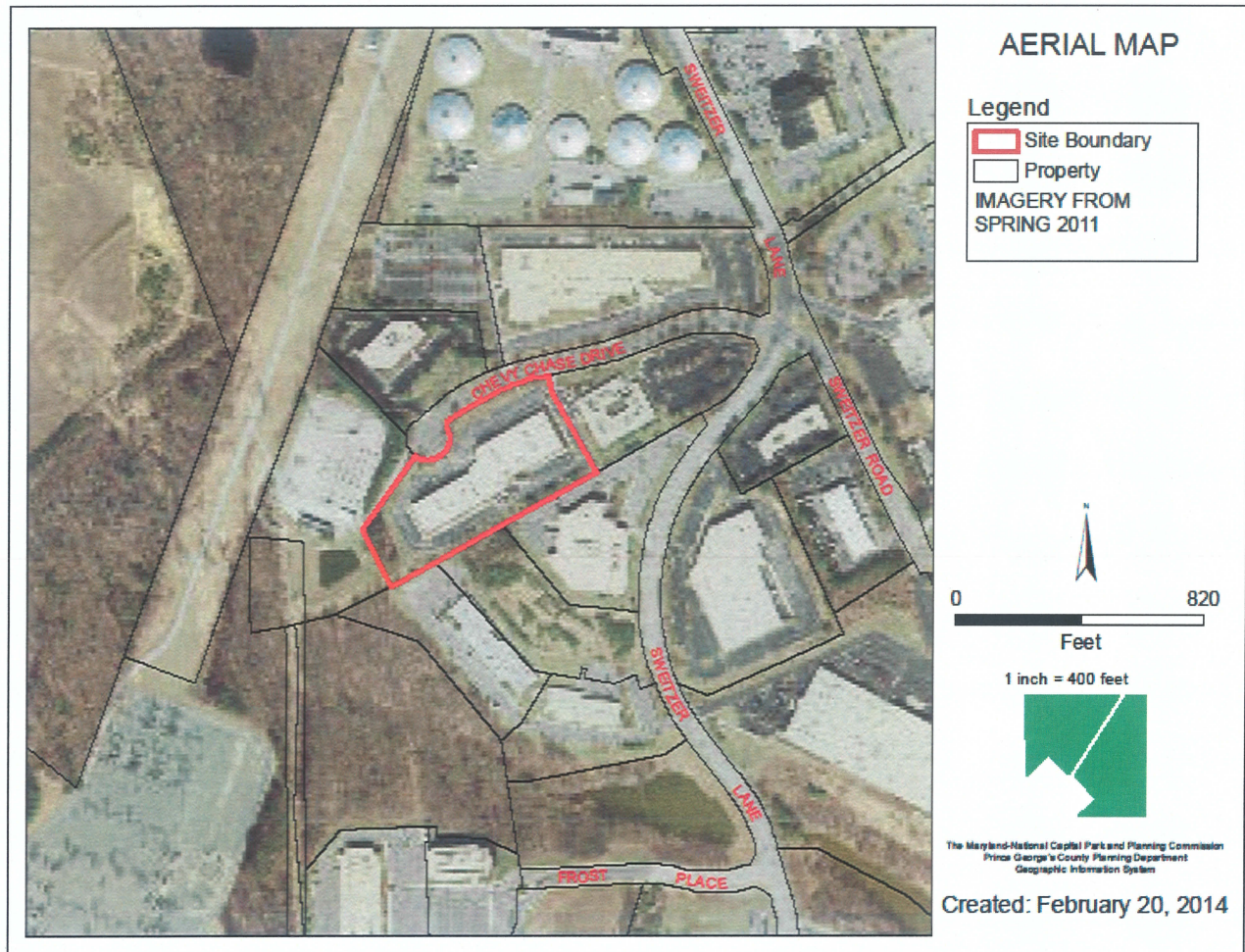
PROJECT LOCATION

The property is located west of Sweitzer Road and Sweitzer Lane, south of Sandy Spring Road, north of Van Dusen Road and west of Gunpower Road, with frontage on Chevy Chase Drive. Access to the property is via Chevy Chase Drive, which has a right-of-way of 70 feet. The property is zoned Employment and Industrial Area (E-I-A) as noted in the 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and it is the subject of a previously approved Specific Design Plan, SDP-9105. The neighboring properties surrounding the site are also within the E-I-A and Planned Industrial/Employment Park (I-3) zones. The property is approximately 5.663 acres in size and it is already developed with a one-story brick structure consisting of 71,067 square feet.

Map 2 – Proposed Laurel Elementary Public Charter School – General Location Map



Map 3 – Laurel Employment Park Aerial View



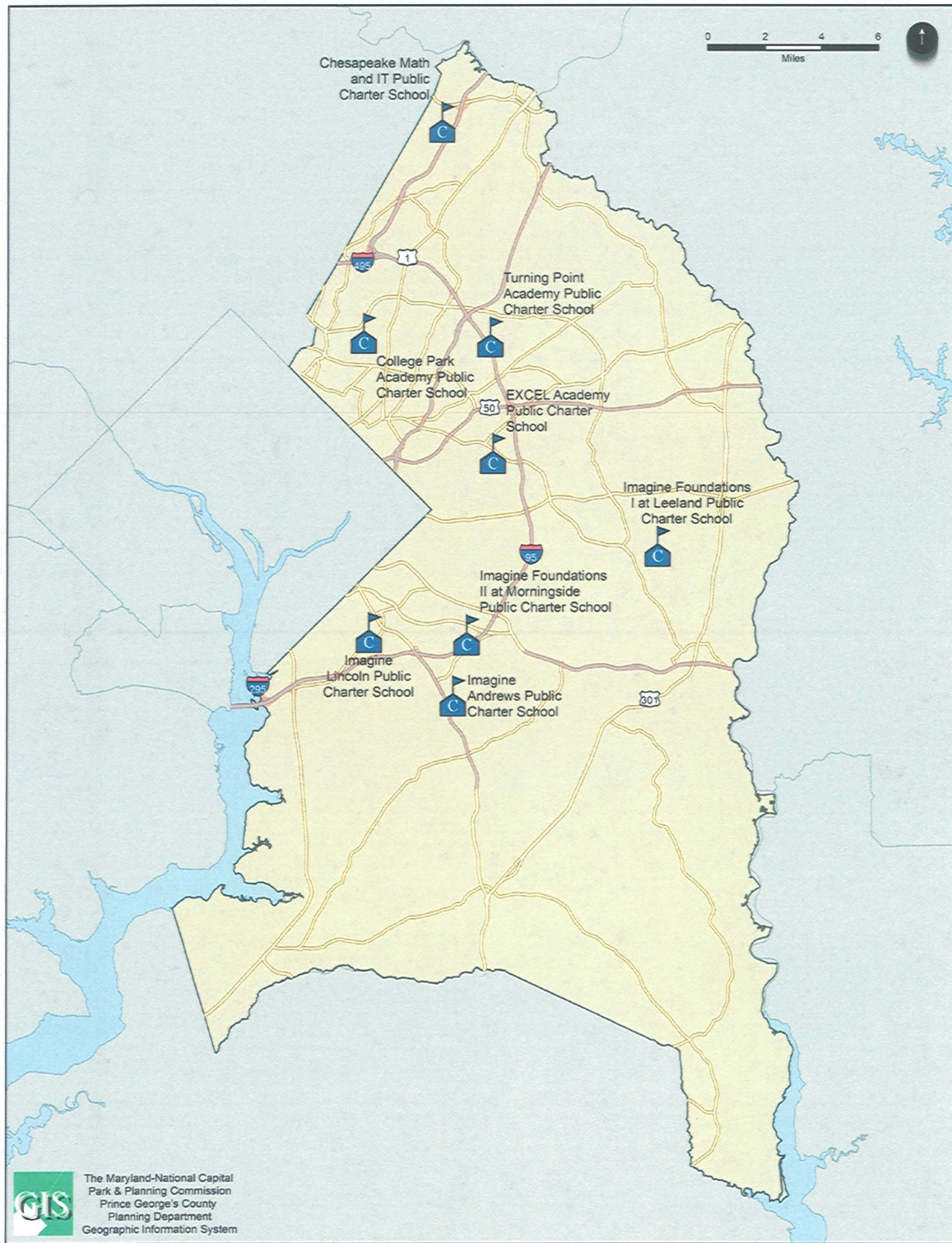
PROJECT DESCRIPTION, SCHEDULE AND FUNDING

As noted above, the projected enrollment for the proposed public charter school is expected to be 450 students. Initially, the applicant is expecting to enroll 300 students within the first year (2014-2015 school year), with fifty students in each class, ranging from kindergarten through 5th grade. In the 2015-2016 school year, an additional 100 students are expected to be enrolled, with the remaining increases of 25 students coming in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, respectively, for a total enrollment of 450 students.

The proposed public charter school is expected to be open and operational by July 2014. The project schedule outlined is as follows:

Internal Construction/Bidding:	January 31, 2014 – March 2014
Approval of Building Permit:	April 18, 2014
Use and Occupancy Certification:	July 18, 2014
School Year 2014/2015 Begins:	August 18, 2014

EXISTING CHARTER SCHOOLS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY



**[The following pages contain
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
staff comments on the above project description]**

ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACT AREAS

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department staff has reviewed the proposed Laurel Elementary Public Charter School and provided the following comments:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The site contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland on-site, has no previous Tree Conservation Plan (CTP) approvals, and would be eligible for a standard letter of exemption.

2. TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT

No traffic impact study was provided as part of this review. The following table is provided as a means of comparison of the traffic impact of the existing office use with the proposed private school. Although the school is being operated as a public charter school, it will not be served by school buses; therefore, from the standpoint of traffic impact it is analyzed as a private school because all students are delivered to and collected from the school by means of private automobiles:

Proposed Laurel Elementary School Public Charter School Comparison of Estimated Trip Generation								
Zoning or Use	Units or Square Feet	AM Pk. Hr. Trips			PM Pk. Hr. Trips			Daily Trips
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Existing Use Office	71,067 square feet	128	14	142	25	107	132	995
Proposed Use School	450 students	223	182	405	99	149	248	1,305
Difference		+95	+168	+263	+74	+42	+116	+310

The operation of a school at this location will affect traffic at nearby intersections. However, the additional traffic will not require a traffic study under the adopted Transportation Review Guidelines.

In regard to issues of adequacy, this site is controlled by adequacy findings developed under Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-8503 and Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-91093. It appears that the only development cap that is in force is a square footage cap for Lots 1-6, and Block A of Laurel Employment Park (subject site is Lot 6, Block A) on the resolution approving the preliminary plan. Given that the applicant is not proposing an increase in square footage, the use would not in any way affect any vested rights related to traffic of the other lots in the development.

3. HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ARCHEOLOGY

The proposed project is located within 0.5 miles from an environmental easement and Fairland Regional Park (13950 Old Gunpowder Road) and within 0.5 miles of a scenic and historic road (Gunpowder Road). The historic landscape and context of both areas was previously altered, and will not be impacted by the proposed charter school.

4. ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Based on limited information provided by the applicant, staff cannot comment specifically on economic impacts of the proposed project in the immediate neighborhood and the county as a whole.

5. CONSISTENCY WITH DEVELOPMENT/REGULATORY STANDARDS

The proposed charter school site is in the existing Laurel Employment Park with very little tree cover. The proposed site is surrounded by various uses, such as a Baltimore Gas and Electric substation, various offices, and a Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) Patuxent Water Treatment Plant. The Urban Design Section offers the following recommendations for the proposed project:

Location, Access, and Internal Circulation

- The applicant should make every effort to buffer students from commercial and industrial traffic generated by the surrounding uses.
- The location of the student entrance at the rear of the building should be reconsidered in light of access concerns.
- If the proposed student entrance is to remain at the rear of the building, the applicant should explore the feasibility of providing two-way access along the east side of the building that could lead to a circular turn-around at the pick-up and drop-off area.
- Safe pedestrian access should be provided to the school entrance from all parking areas via sidewalks.

Outdoor Play Area

- The size of the play area should be increased to adequately accommodate the proposed enrollment of 450 children and replacing the wood fiber with a more resilient, durable and impact-absorbent material would ensure both proper drainage and a safer play surface for the children.

Parking

- The number of parking spaces appears excessive and should be decreased to what would reasonably be necessary to accommodate special events. The area regained by the elimination of excess parking could be utilized for an additional play area, improved circulation, and enhanced landscaping.

Landscaping

- The provision of additional plantings along the southern property line should also be considered to enhance screening of the subject site from the adjacent properties.
- All landscaping materials should be native species for minimal maintenance and maximum durability.

Other

- The Prince George's County Health Department should assess whether the subject site's proximity to an electric substation and I-95 will have any negative impacts on the proposed student population.
- Strong consideration should be given to seeking LEED certification to reduce the project's carbon footprint and provide an educational opportunity for students and the public.

6. CONSISTENCY WITH APPROVED PLANS

The application is consistent with the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* Developing Tier policies for institutional uses, and conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* as a permitted use in the E-I-A zone. The 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* retained the subject property in the E-I-A zone.

7. EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES

The proposed charter school will be served by the Prince George's County Police Department, District VI, located at 431 Sellman Road, Beltsville. Fire protection services will be provided by the existing Laurel Fire,

Emergency Services Company 10. The station is equipped with three engines, one tower and one ambulance. The 2008 *Approved Water and Sewer Plan* places this property in Water and Sewer Category 3, Community System.

8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Notification letters were mailed to adjoining property owners and civic associations informing them of the project and Planning Board hearing date. Staff did not receive any inquiries from any adjacent property owners inquiring about impacts on their properties.

9. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed charter school site is in the existing Laurel Employment Park with very little tree cover. The site is surrounded by various uses, such as a Baltimore Gas and Electric substation, various offices, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) Patuxent Water Treatment Plant. After a careful review of the proposed site for a Public Charter School for 450 students, which range from kindergarten through 5th grade, staff makes the following recommendations:

- The school's presence within an employment park could create issues of compatibility with surrounding uses. The applicant is encouraged to take additional steps to buffer students from industrial and commercial uses, as described below.
- The applicant should explore the feasibility of providing two-way access along the east side of the building that could lead to a circular turn-around at the pick-up and drop-off area.
- Safe pedestrian access should be provided to the school entrance from all parking areas via sidewalks.
- The play area should be increased to adequately accommodate the proposed enrollment of 450 children, and the applicant should replace the proposed wood fiber in the play area with a more resilient, durable and impact-absorbent material that would ensure both proper drainage and a safer play surface for the children. Utilizing a durable, protective and impact-absorbent material, readily available in both tile and roll formats, would provide a safer play surface for the children.
- The applicant should reduce the excess surface parking spaces for additional play area, improved circulation, and to enhance landscaping.
- The applicant should provide additional plantings along the southern property line to enhance screening of the subject site from the existing Baltimore Gas and Electric Substation facility adjacent to the proposed school.
- The applicant should use native plant species for landscaping for minimal maintenance and maximum durability.
- The applicant should work with the Prince George's County Health Department to assess whether the proposed site's proximity to the existing gas and electric substation, may have any negative long-term health impacts on the proposed students attending the school.
- The applicant should consider seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the building to reduce the project's carbon footprint and provide an educational opportunity for students and the public.

STAFF COMMENTS

March 27, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Christine Osei, Mandatory Referral Project Manager
Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning

VIA: Ruth Grover, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section

FROM: Cynthia Fenton, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral MR-1405F
Laurel Elementary Public Charter School

The Urban Design Section has reviewed materials provided in support of MR-1405F, Laurel Elementary Public Charter School, which includes full internal renovation of an existing 71,067 square foot office building to accommodate a projected total enrollment of 450 students in kindergarten through 5th grade. The subject property measures approximately 5.6 acres, located on the south side of Chevy Chase Drive at its terminus and west of its intersection with Sweitzer Lane, within the Laurel Employment Park. The application is being reviewed as part of the Mandatory Referral review process pursuant to The Land Use Article §20-301 through 305 and pursuant to Maryland Annotated Code, and Section 27-294 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. The comments below are in response to site plan revisions dated March 21, 2014. The applicant has attempted to address many of the concerns raised in earlier discussions. However, additional suggestions to improve the overall site design by providing a more campus-like setting for the school are identified below. The subject project is located in a generally developed industrial/employment park. No bus service is proposed for the school.

The Urban Design Section offers the following recommendations for the Special Projects Section to consider in regard to the proposed project:

Location, Access, and Internal Circulation

- 1) The school would be more appropriately located in a residential neighborhood where it would not conflict with the surrounding uses, where the children could walk to school and not be subjected to potentially harmful environmental impacts from adjacent uses.
- 2) The location of the student entrance at the rear of the building should be reconsidered in light of access concerns.
- 3) If the proposed student entrance is to remain at the rear of the building, the applicant should explore the feasibility of providing two-way access along the east side of the building that could lead to a circular turn-around at the pick-up and drop-off area.
- 4) Safe pedestrian access should be provided to the school entrance from all parking areas via sidewalks.

Outdoor Play Area

- 5) The size of the play area should be increased to adequately accommodate the proposed enrollment of 450 children.
- 6) The proposed wood fiber in the play area should be replaced with a more resilient, durable and impact-absorbent material that will ensure both proper drainage and a safer play surface for the children.

Parking

- 7) The number of parking spaces appears excessive and should be decreased to what would reasonably be necessary to accommodate special events. The area regained by the elimination of excess parking could be utilized for an additional play area, improved circulation, and enhanced landscaping.

Landscaping

- 8) The provision of additional plantings along the southern property line should also be considered to enhance screening of the subject site from the adjacent properties.
- 9) All landscaping materials should be native species for minimal maintenance and maximum durability.

Other

- 10) The Prince George's County Health Department should assess whether the subject site's proximity to an electric substation and I-95 will have any negative impacts on the proposed student population.
- 11) Strong consideration should be given to seeking LEED certification to reduce the project's carbon footprint and provide an educational opportunity for students and the public.

The Urban Design Section offers the following as background for our recommendations:

Location

The location of a school in an industrially-zoned area, such as Laurel Employment Park, is not necessarily compatible with the surrounding industrial uses and may create traffic and other conflicts with nearby operations. The school would be more appropriately located in a residential neighborhood where it could serve as a focal point and allow the children to walk to school. It is noted the electric substation located directly north of the subject site may produce an undesirable electromagnetic field (EMF). The Prince George's County Health Department has determined that EMFs may result in negative health impacts, particularly in children. In addition, the site is within approximately 2,500 feet of I-95, a high-speed, high-volume roadway that raises concerns regarding noise levels and unhealthy air quality. The Health Department should determine the extent of any negative impacts resulting from the substation and I-95.

Circulation

The applicant emphasized the necessity of retaining the proposed drop-off/pick-up area at the rear of the building rather than relocating it to the front of the building. In light of this, it is suggested the applicant explore the feasibility of providing two-way access along the east side of the building that could lead to a circular turn-around at the pick-up and drop-off area at the student entrance. (It is noted that such a major change to the site plan may require a revision to the approved Specific Design Plan SDP- 9105). Safe

access should be provided to the school entrance from all parking areas via sidewalks, rather than anticipating visitors and students will take a more circuitous route to access the building.

Outdoor Play Area

In response to previous comments, the applicant has provided four shade trees for the proposed outdoor play area (Willow Oak) which will provide relief from the sun for the children using the facility. It is suggested that the proposed wood fiber not be placed directly over the existing asphalt. The former is not a protective material; the latter is not a pervious material and inadequate drainage could result in the wood fiber spreading beyond the timbers containing it. If material is to be placed directly over the asphalt, a more resilient, durable and impact resistant surface for the play area should be used to ensure proper drainage and a safer play surface.

In previous discussions with the applicant it was noted between 100 and 150 square feet should be provided for each child using the outdoor play area at one time. The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance requires 100 square feet per child for private schools; the Maryland State Department of Physical Education Facilities Guidelines recommends between 110 and 150 square foot per child. Although reductions are allowed for daycare facilities, the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance does not allow private schools to reduce the size of the required outdoor play area (even based on the number of children using it at one time) without a departure. This is to ensure that the students have an adequate area for outdoor activities.

In response to earlier suggestions, the applicant increased the play area from 4,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet though, due to its configuration, a portion of this area is not really useable. Based on the square footage figures recommended above, the outdoor play area is still insufficient for the proposed student enrollment. The applicant should consider providing an outdoor play area between 45,000 and 67,500 square feet to allow ample room for recreational activities, which is particularly important for the older children attending the school. An adequate play area could potentially be provided along the southern side of the site, opposite the suggested circular drive.

Screening, Buffering and Green Area

Proposed compact parking along the eastern drive aisle could be replaced to accommodate a two-way drive aisle and planted landscape yard that would reduce impervious surface and enhance circulation, visual appeal and compatibility with the adjoining property. Provision of additional plantings along the southern property line should also be considered to enhance screening of the subject site from the adjacent properties. New plant materials should consist of a variety of native species for minimal maintenance and maximum durability.

In general, parking in excess of what would reasonably be necessary to accommodate special events should be replaced with green area to reduce impervious surface and enhance visual appeal. If the applicant removes the 19 compact spaces on the eastern side of the site as suggested, the remaining parking (150 spaces) is still double what would typically be considered adequate. The Urban Design Section suggests that consideration be given to seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver or higher certification even though the applicant has indicated they will not be pursuing certification at this time. It is particularly desirable for a public education facility such as this to become LEED certified to set both a precedent for similar development projects and to provide an educational opportunity for students and the public.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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Prince George's County Planning Department
Community Planning Division

301-952-3972

April 1, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Christine Osei, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section
VIA: Teri Bond, Planning Supervisor, Community Planning Division
FROM: Tamara Jovovic, Senior Planner, Community Planning Division
SUBJECT: MR #1405F (Laurel Elementary Charter School)

DETERMINATIONS

General Plan: This application is consistent with the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan Development Pattern* policies for the Developing Tier.

Master Plan: This application does not conform with the industrial land use recommendations of the 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*. However, the proposed use is permitted in the E-I-A Zone.

BACKGROUND

Location: The subject property is located on the southwestern end of Chevy Chase Drive.
Size: 5.66 acres
Existing Use: 71,067 square foot building, formerly used as an office building
Proposal: Retrofit an office building in the Laurel Employment Park to accommodate a new elementary 450 student charter school.

GENERAL PLAN, MASTER PLAN AND SMA

2002 General Plan: This application is located in the Developing Tier. The vision for the Developing Tier is to maintain a pattern of low- to moderate-density suburban residential communities, distinct commercial centers, and employment areas that are increasingly transit serviceable.

Planning Area/ Community:	60/Northwestern Area
Land Use:	Industrial
Environmental:	Refer to the Environmental Planning Section referral for conformance with the Environmental chapter of the 2010 <i>Approved Master Plan for Subregion 1</i> and the 2005 <i>Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan</i> .
Historic Resources:	No historic resources are identified on the subject property.
Transportation:	Direct vehicular access is provided via Chevy Chase Drive.
Public Facilities:	An electrical substation is adjacent to the subject property. A WSSC water treatment facility is located approximately one-tenth of a mile north of the subject property.
Parks & Trails:	No parks or trails are identified on or adjacent to the subject property.
Aviation:	The subject property is not located in a Joint Base Andrews ILUC impact area.
SMA/Zoning:	The 2010 <i>Approved Master Plan for Subregion 1</i> retained this property in the E-I-A Zone.

PLANNING ISSUES

Two policies in 2010 *Approved Master Plan for Subregion 1* are of particular importance to the proposed charter school.

Page 74 (of the Master Plan)

Policy 1: Construct new public schools in accordance with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver rating or an equivalent rating under a comparable green building performance measure.

Strategy 1.2: Construct a new K-8th grade school in the Subregion 1 area. This K-8 school is proposed in the vicinity of the Konterra Town Center development.

Strategy 1.3: Co-locate new schools with public facilities/parks where appropriate.

Page 74 (of the Master Plan)

Policy 3: Provide safe connections to schools within the subregion.

Strategy 3.1: Provide continuous safe sidewalks around schools.

Strategy 3.2: Improve pedestrian crossings to ensure better visibility, especially around schools.

Five policies in the recently adopted *Plan Prince George's 2035* are also relevant to the proposed charter school.

Page 166 (of the Preliminary Plan)

- Policy 1: Integrate community health into the master plan and development review processes.*
- HC1.1: Assess the impact the proposed development pattern has on community health and wellness and identify strategies to enhance access to healthy food and recreational opportunities, improve connectivity between communities and residential and commercial areas, and address gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Coordinate with the Health Department, the Food Equity Council, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and local and regional nonprofits.

Pages 177-179 (of the Preliminary Plan)

- Policy 2: Use investment in public facilities to catalyze economic development and revitalization, stimulate employment growth, and strengthen neighborhoods.*
- PF2.1: Utilize public facilities, such as urban parks and libraries, as development anchors.
- PF2.2: Consider the acquisition and reuse of existing vacant or underutilized malls and shopping centers for public facilities, such as police substations, libraries, community centers, and schools.
- Provide and maintain multimodal access to existing public facilities.
- PF3.1: Coordinate the county complete streets policy with school route analysis, planning, and implementation by the Prince George's County Planning Department, the Board of Education, Department of Public Works and Transportation, and municipalities.
- PF3.2: Incorporate Safe Routes to Schools principles when building and renovating school facilities, school sites, and associated infrastructure.
- Policy 4: Locate new facilities in transit-serviceable locations to promote public safety and wellness and maximize facility use by all Prince Georgians, in particular its youth, seniors, and vulnerable populations.*
- PF4.1: Coordinate public facilities investments with planned transportation improvements.
- Policy 5: Require the use of sustainable development practices in the construction, renovation, and expansion of public facilities to reduce operational and maintenance costs, environmental impacts, and enhance occupant health and productivity.*
- PF5.1: Require public buildings to be constructed to LEED or equivalent standards.
- PF5.2: Monitor the use of, and report on, sustainable practices in public facilities in order to document environment, health, and safety benefits, as well as cost-effectiveness.
- Consistent with the policies and strategies listed above and planning best practices, Community Planning has identified three planning issues specific to this application.

First, Community Planning is concerned with the facility's separation from (i.e., lack of integration with) the communities it will serve. Obesity has reached crisis proportions amongst the youth in Prince George's County with 64.1 percent of youth considered overweight or obese. The adopted *Plan Prince George's 2035* has reinforced this point. One way to help reverse this trend is to provide children with opportunities to safely walk and recreate. The proposed location of the charter school in an existing industrial park will effectively preclude children from walking to school. The closest residential subdivision is approximately one mile away on foot and is separated from the site by Sandy Spring Road, an eight-lane arterial, and Sweitzer Lane, a two-lane road without sidewalks.

Furthermore, while the revised site plan for the proposed charter school expanded the play area from approximately 4,000 square feet to 5,003 square feet, the play area does not meet the guidelines set forth by the Maryland Department of Education (see Table 1). It is trapezoidal in shape and narrows to the gate making part of the play area less usable and functional. Staff also notes limited landscaping buffers in the area from the drive aisle, and notes that no playing fields are provided.

Staff recommends the applicant consider the following:

- Modification of the proposed circulation pattern to expand the play area (while ensuring safe and efficient drop offs and pickups)
- Installation of landscaping to the west and east sides of the play area
- Incorporate outdoor (turf) playing fields or identify how school children will be provided access to an outdoor playing area.

TABLE 1

Proposed	Maryland State Department of Education Physical Education Facility Guidelines (June 2011)
5,003 square foot trapezoidal outdoor play area with 1,775 square foot playground	110-150 net square feet of hard surface area per child (Guideline 4.5)
Translates to 100 square feet per student (assuming 50 students use the play area at one time)	One hard surface play area recommended minimum of 4,000 (50' x 80') (Guideline 4.8)
	One turf playing field approximately 1.03 acres (Guideline 4.8)

Second, Community Planning is concerned with the facility's proximity to an electrical substation and water treatment facility. The proposed charter school building is within 200 feet of an electrical substation, and the outdoor play area is within 600 feet of the water treatment facility. Staff recommends this application be referred to the Department of Health to determine if there are health impacts associated with the substation and odor associated with the water treatment facility.

Third, Community Planning encourages the applicant, when retrofitting the office building, to incorporate green features to improve the air quality in the building, improve energy efficiency, reduce water use, and promote the use of recycled materials. LEED for Existing Buildings and LEED for Schools could serve as a useful reference.

Staff also notes that the proposed charter school is providing 125 percent more parking than is required for a 450-student private school and recommends the applicant consider retrofitting some of the excess parking spaces to green areas in order to reduce impervious surface and enhance visual appeal.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**Prince George's County Planning Department
Historic Preservation Section**

**(301) 952-3680
www.mncppc.org**

March 18, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Christine A. Osei, Planner Coordinator
Mandatory Referral Review Project Manager
Special Projects Section
Countywide Planning Division

VIA: Howard Berger, Supervisor
Historic Preservation Section
Countywide Planning Division

FROM: Robert Krause, Planner Coordinator
Jennifer Stabler, Planner Coordinator
Historic Preservation Section
Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: **Laurel Elementary Public Charter School, MR-1405F**

Historic Preservation Section Comments

The Historic Preservation Section reviewed materials provided in support of MR-1405F, Laurel Elementary Public Charter School. The Property is located at 6151 Chevy Chase Drive in Laurel, Maryland. The property of aforementioned proposed project is located west of Sweitzer Road and Sweitzer Lane, south of Sandy Spring Road, north of Van Dusen Road, and west of Gunpowder Road, with frontage on Chevy Chase Drive. Access to the property is via Chevy Chase Drive, which has a right-of-way width of 70 feet. The property is zoned Employment and Industrial Area (E-I-A) pursuant to the 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and is the subject of a previously adopted Specific Design Plan, SDP-9105. The neighboring properties surrounding the site are also within the E-I-A and Planned Industrial/Employment Park (I-3) zones. The proposed property is approximately 5.633 acres in size and is already developed with a one-story brick structure consisting of 71,067 square feet. The applicant's proposal to convert the existing building on the property for use as a public charter school is permitted in the E-I-A zone, and is consistent with the 2010 *Approved Subregion 1 Master Plan and Section Map Amendment*.

As the applicant is proposing to convert an existing building to house the proposed public charter school, the majority of the site work to be performed would be to the interior of the building. In that regard, pursuant to Section IV of the Uniform Guidelines, the applicant believes that its proposed project would qualify for an administrative review. In order to convert the existing building into a public charter school, proposed alterations to interior and exterior suites are contemplated and work will include demolition of existing partitions, lights, ceilings, electrical, and plumbing fixtures. New construction of classrooms, labs, library, offices, meeting rooms, a warming kitchen, gymnasium, and a cafeteria will be

required. New construction would call for new entry/egress doors to be installed, along with new concrete pads, stairs, and ramps with hand and guardrails on the exterior of the building. Electrical service equipment will be relocated and new electrical outlets and junction boxes will be installed in the walls and ceilings. New interior and exterior lights are proposed for installation and will comply with current standards. Mechanical and plumbing systems are slated for modification, as well.

Pursuant to Title 9, Maryland Public Charter School Program, Sections 9-101-9-112 of the Education Article of the Maryland Annotated Code (the "Act"), the applicant has entered into an agreement with the Board of Education of Prince George's County, Maryland ("School Board") to provide a public charter school for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year. Projected enrollment for the proposed public charter school is expected to be 450 students. The applicant is expecting only 300 students during the upcoming 2014-15 school year with 50 students expected in each class from kindergarten through grades five. An additional 100 students are expected to be enrolled in school year 2015-16.

Findings and Conclusions

The proposed project will not impact any Prince George's County historic resources or historic sites. However, the proposed project is within 0.5 miles from an environmental easement and Prince George's County Park at Fairland Regional Park (13950 Old Gunpowder Road) and within 0.5 miles of a scenic and historic road (Gunpowder Road). The historic landscape and context of both areas have been previously altered and will not be impacted by the proposed project.

Archeology

All identified archeological resources have been impacted by previous construction on subject properties, and proposed construction will not impact any known Prince George's County archeological sites, historic sites, or historic resources. A Phase I archeological survey is not recommended on this project. A search of current and historic photographs, topographic and historic maps, and the locations of currently known archeological or historic sites indicates the probability of archeological within the subject property is low. This proposal will not impact any identified historic sites, historic resources, documented properties, or known archeological sites.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Prince George's County Planning Department
Countywide Planning Division, Transportation Planning Section

(301) 952-3680
www.mncppc.org

March 26, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Christine Osei, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division

FROM: Tom Masog, Planning Supervisor, Transportation Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: MR-1405F, Laurel Elementary Public Charter School

The Transportation Planning Section has reviewed the referral noted above. The referral involves a project to construct a public charter school as a reuse of an existing one-story office building. The overall site consists of approximately 5.66 acres of land. The property is located on the south side of Chevy Chase Drive approximately 1,000 feet west of Sweitzer Lane.

Review Comments

The project involves the construction of a public charter school as a reuse of an existing one-story office building. The existing building is 71,067 square feet. No new square footage is being added. The school would be a 450-student elementary school serving kindergarten through grades five.

No traffic impact study has been provided with the application. The following table is provided as a means of comparison of the traffic impact of the existing office use with the proposed private school. Although the school is being operated as a public charter school, it will not be served by school buses. Therefore, from the standpoint of traffic impact, it is analyzed as a private school because, like a private school, virtually all students are delivered to and collected from the school by means of private automobiles:

Comparison of Estimated Trip Generation, MR-1405F								
Zoning or Use	Units or Square Feet	AM Pk. Hr. Trips			PM Pk. Hr. Trips			Daily Trips
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Existing Use Office	71,067 square feet	128	14	142	25	107	132	995
Proposed Use School	450 students	223	182	405	99	149	248	1,305
Difference		+95	+168	+263	+74	+42	+116	+310

The operation of a school at this location will affect traffic at nearby intersections. However, the additional traffic will not require a traffic study under the adopted Transportation Review Guidelines.

With regard to issues of adequacy, this site has been controlled by adequacy findings developed under Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-8503 and Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-91093. It appears that the only development cap that is in force is a square footage cap for Lots 1-6, Block A of Laurel Employment Park (the subject site is Lot 6, Block A) on the resolution approving the preliminary plan. As such, given that the applicant is not proposing an increase in square footage, the use would not in any way affect any vested rights related to traffic of the other lots in the development.

Access and circulation are acceptable. In response to staff comments, the applicant has revised the site plans, and has included a narrative that includes two items that were requested. The first involves bollards around the play area. T bollards are requested to ensure that greater safety of the outdoor play area from moving vehicles circulating on the site, given that the play area is adjacent to a drive aisle. The second item concerns ensuring that all two-way drive aisles are a minimum of 22 feet in width. It is important to have this particular width along the eastern property line where the drive aisle is not a full 22 feet. The final site plan should incorporate these changes.

There are no master plan transportation facilities adjacent to or within this site.

Conclusion

The Transportation Planning Section has reviewed the referral, and determines that the proposed charter school is consistent with the area and functional master plans that govern transportation. The plan is acceptable provided that the site plan is revised to:

1. Include bollards around the outside of the play area.
2. Provide a minimum width of 22 feet for all two-way drive aisles, including the drive aisle along the eastern property line where the initial plan shows a drive aisle that is not a full 22 feet .



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**Prince George's County Planning Department
Countywide Planning Division**

**(301) 952-3650
www.mncppc.org**

March 13, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Christine Osei, Planner Coordinator, Countywide Planning Division
VIA: Maria Martin, Planning Supervisor, Countywide Planning Division
FROM: Jay Mangalvedhe, Senior Planner, Countywide Planning Division
SUBJECT: **MR-1405F Proposed Elementary Public Charter School**

Project Description

The proposed project is to convert an existing building to house the proposed public charter school. The majority of the site work to be performed would be to the interior of the building. Specifically, work will include demolition of existing partitions, lights, ceilings, electrical and plumbing fixtures. New construction of classrooms, ecology lab, library, offices, meeting rooms, warming kitchen (no cooking), gymnasium, and cafeteria will be required. New walls, doors, finishes, millwork and ceilings will be installed and the existing loading dock and main electrical room in the existing building will remain. Additionally, new ramps will be provided to replace the existing raised access flooring in cafeteria and gymnasium areas. Also, new entry/egress doors will be installed, as well as new concrete pads, stairs and ramps with hand and guardrails on the exterior of the building. Furthermore, mechanical and electrical systems are also slated for modification. The proposed public charter school is expected to initially enroll 300 students during 2014-2015 school year and end with 450 students in 2017-2018.

The project is located in Councilmanic District 1 and is in the area classified as Developing Tier in the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. The property is located west of Sweitzer Road and Sweitzer Lane, south of Sandy Spring Road, north of Van Dusen Road, and west of Gunpowder Road, with frontage on Chevy Chase Drive.

Evaluation of Existing Public Facilities

Police Facilities

The primary police service is provided by Prince George's County Police Department, District VI, located at 431 Sellman Road, Beltsville. District VI comprises the Laurel and Beltsville communities, located north of the Capital Beltway to the Howard County line.

The response time standard is 10 minutes for emergency calls and 25 minutes for nonemergency calls. The times are based on a rolling average for the preceding 12 months.

Based upon police response times, the response time standards of 10 minutes for emergency calls were met and the 25 minutes for non-emergency calls were met for the proposed elementary public charter school.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services Facilities

The proposed project is served by Laurel Fire/EMS Co. 10, a first due response station (a maximum of seven minutes travel time), located at 7411 Cherry Lane. The station is equipped with three engines, one tower and one ambulance.

Water and Sewer

The 2008 *Approved Water and Sewer Plan*, places this property in Water and Sewer Category 3, Community System.

Osei, Christine

From: Juba, Marc
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2014 2:30 PM
To: Osei, Christine
Subject: Mandatory Referral - Laurel Elementary Public Charter School

Dear Christine:

The Environmental Planning Section has completed its initial review for the Mandatory Referral of the Laurel Elementary Public Charter School located at 6151 Chevy Chase Drive, Laurel, MD 20707. After evaluating a site plan submitted by the applicant in a meeting on 2/24/13, the Environmental Planning Section has determined this site contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland on-site, has no previous Tree Conservation Plan (TCP) approvals, and would normally be eligible for a standard letter of exemption from the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO). Being a public project, the applicant does not need to apply for a standard letter of exemption from the WCO; however, the applicant will need to obtain a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) Equivalency letter in order to obtain a stormwater management concept approval from DPIE.

Please forward this information to the applicant.

Sincerely,

-Marc Juba



Marc Juba, Senior Planner

Environmental Planning Section
Prince George's Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
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