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## SPECIFIC DESIGN PLAN

**SDP-9005/03**

Application	General Data
<b>Project Name:</b> WATKINS PLACE (formerly HORIZON HOUSE)  <b>Location:</b> On the northeast side of Largo Road (MD 202), Approximately 2,500 feet northwest of the intersection of Largo Road and Watkins Park Drive (MD 193)  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> The Ryland Group, Inc. Washington Division 4100 Monument Corner Drive, #300 Fairfax, VA 22030	Date Accepted: 3/22/2004
	Planning Board Action Limit: N/A
	Plan Acreage: 25.32
	Zone: R-M
	Dwelling Units: 260
	Square Footage: NA
	Planning Area: 73
	Tier: DEVELOPING
	Council District: 06
	Municipality: N/A
	200-Scale Base Map: 202SE11

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
Construction of 260 multifamily Condominium Units	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 2/12/2004 (CB-12-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site: 5/20/2004

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: H. ZHANG, AICP	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

June 2, 2004

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Henry Zhang, Senior Planner, Urban Design Section, Development Review Division

SUBJECT: Specific Design Plan, SDP-9005/03, Watkins Place (formerly Horizon House)  
Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/121/97-01

The Urban Design staff has completed its review of the subject application and appropriate referrals. The following evaluation and findings lead to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions, as described in the recommendation section of this report.

## EVALUATION

This specific design plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

- a. Zoning Map Amendment A-9550 and the accompanying Basic Plan and two amendments.
- b. Comprehensive Design Plans CDP-0202 and CDP-8707.
- c. Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039.
- d. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically,
  - Subdivision 5, R-M Zone (Residential Medium Development) of the Zoning Ordinance governing development in the R-M Zone.
- e. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
- f. The requirements of the Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance.
- g. Referral comments.

## FINDINGS

Based upon the evaluation and analysis of the subject Specific Design Plan, the Urban Design Review staff recommends the following findings:

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a specific design plan for 260 residential (multifamily) condominium units in the R-M Zone.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	Existing	Proposed
Zones	R-M	R-M
Uses	Vacant	Multifamily Condominium
Acreage	25.32	25.32
Parcel	2	2
Dwelling Units	Allowed*	Proposed
Stacked Condominium Units	261	260

**Other Development Data**

Total Parking Spaces Required	585 spaces
of which 1 Bedroom (130 units)	2 x 130 = 260 spaces
2 Bedroom (130 units)	2.5 x 130 = 325 spaces
Total Parking Space Provided	728 spaces
of which Garage	260 spaces
Driveways	260 spaces
Regular (19 x 9.5)	37 spaces
Compact (16.5 x 8)	9 spaces
Parallel (22 x 8)	156 spaces
Handicapped (13 x 19)	6 spaces
Unit Type	Square footage
Annapolis (two bedroom)	1,214
Arlington (three bedroom)	1,901

\*The maximum density of 261 units was approved at the time of the CDP-8708, and was calculated on 5.8 DUs per acre in the zone plus a density increment of 70 units. See Page 11 of the CDP-8708 staff report and Finding 7 below regarding Condition 8 of A-9555 for a detailed calculation based on the proposed three public benefit features.

3. **Location:** The subject site is located on the north side of Largo Road (MD 202), approximately 2,500 feet northwest of the intersection of Largo Road and Watkins Park Drive (MD 193).
4. **Surroundings and Use:** The site is bounded to the north and east by open space (zoned R-O-S) and farther to the east by a single-family detached residential use in the R-S Zone; to the west by a 250-foot-wide swath of PEPCO property; and to the south by the right-of-way of Largo Road. The site has approximately 1,600 linear feet of frontage along Largo Road. An existing senior center, the Largo Fellowship House (zoned R-10) is located opposite the subject property immediately across Largo Road and is surrounded by open space zoned R-E.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The subject site was originally included in a larger project known as Tuck Farm, which consisted of three separate applications for the Comprehensive Design Zone. All three applications were approved by the District Council on June 23, 1986. Application A-9550 rezoned approximately 34.8 acres from the R-E Zone to the R-M 5.8 Zone. A-9550 was amended in 1987 to allow mid-rise multifamily housing for the elderly and physically handicapped with a

maximum of 261 units. The list of proposed uses was amended again in 2002 to permit senior citizen housing and/or mid-rise (3- to 4-story) residential condominiums with the number of dwelling units not exceeding 261 units.

The original Comprehensive Design Plan (CDP-8708) for Tuck Farm, which included the subject site, was approved by the Planning Board on April 14, 1988 (PGCPB No. 88-157). On December 7, 1989, the Planning Board approved the second Comprehensive Design Plan (CDP-8908) to modify the building setbacks and lot coverage approved in CDP-8708. Subsequently, CDP-8908 was revised two times for the purposes of modifying the timing schedule for the payment of a fee-in-lieu for public benefit features and of providing a design concept for 325 single-family attached and detached units on the land previously approved as a life-care facility. On June 20, 2002, the Planning Board approved Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-0202 to add a new use of mid-rise (3- to 4-story) residential condominiums to the allowed use list. According to CDP-0202, the proposed use, mid-rise residential condominiums, and the approved use, mid-rise multifamily housing for the elderly and physically handicapped, may be placed within the proposed envelope shown in any combination, ratio or percentage, including up to 100 percent of one proposed use or the other.

Following the various comprehensive design plan approvals, there were several Preliminary Plans (4-88020, 4-02007 and 4-03039) and Specific Design Plans (SDP-9005, SDP-9005/01, SDP-9005/02) approved for this site or the larger site including the subject property. Included with each preliminary plan and each specific design plan there were Type I and Type II tree conservation plans as well. The subject specific design plan is the third revision to SDP-9005 and the proposed residential condominium units are allowed by the approvals of the third amendment to A-9550 (Zoning Ordinance No. 4-2002), Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-0202 (PGCPB No. 02-127) and Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039 (PGCPB No. 03-150).

6. **Design Features:** The subject site is in a rectangular form with its long side along Largo Road. The presence of streams, wetlands, 100-year floodplain, and severe slopes in the northwest of the site limits the buildable envelope to a triangularly shaped land tract with frontage on Largo Road. The site has one access point onto Largo Road across the street from the existing Largo Landing Senior Citizen Apartments. Another temporary access point for construction purposes is located close to the eastern boundary line.

Two types of condominium units, Annapolis and Arlington, in a stacked townhouse design, have been proposed for this development. Two unit types in 22 building sticks, of which 11 building sticks are oriented parallel to Largo Road and the other 11 building sticks oriented perpendicularly to Largo Road, are located along the internal linear streets with alleys. Because of the stacked design, each building will look like a three-story building from the front and a four-story building from the rear.

The main entrance, which is close to the western boundary of the site, ends at a semicircular pergola that overlooks the streams and 100-year floodplain. From the entrance driveway toward the eastern end of the site, 11 building sticks generally in two rows parallel to Largo Road repeat five times, forming a long street wall fronting Largo Road and presenting a very strong urban streetscape image. A stormwater management pond is located in the middle of the site surrounded by the building sticks along three sides and make it a strong visual focus of the development. A small rectangular open space is located adjacent to the stormwater management pond. Sidewalks have been provided along both sides of almost all internal streets. Special pavement has been provided at the pedestrian crossings.

The landscape plan shows a heavily landscaped entrance point with a center median and street trees along both sides of the driveway as well as in the median. A standard landscape module has also been proposed for each unit. Since the proposed development is residential condominiums, a property management group will be contracted by the homeowners association to maintain all the public areas.

7. **Recreation Facility:** The subject subdivision was exempt from mandatory dedication of parkland requirements at the time of subdivision review because the Commission accepted the conveyance of 10.02 acres of parkland for Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-88020, which was the first subdivision covering the subject site.

During the review of this SDP, the applicant submitted demographic data collected from two previous projects with the same housing products and claimed that this project will be targeting potential residents who prefer passive on-site recreational facilities. The proposed on-site amenities consist of an interconnected sidewalk and walking trail system, picnic areas, and places for informal gathering and socializing. In addition, the site is adjacent to Watkins Regional Park, which will provide residents with multiple options for active recreation. A trail connection was originally proposed to provide access to the future trail system in Watkins Park. Because of opposition from the Department of Parks and Recreation, the pedestrian connection has been deleted. The Urban Design staff is in general agreement with the applicant's approach to recreational facilities on the site. However, the Urban Design staff believes that given the number of condominium units proposed, the number of children expected to live in the development, and the fact that no pedestrian connection will be provided between the subdivision and Watkins Park, a tot lot with one multiple function play structure along with other features should be provided in addition to the proposed amenities package. Because of its prominent location in the SDP layout, the proposed SWM pond should be treated as an amenity to this SDP and be included in the recreational facility package.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

8. **Zoning Map Amendment A-9550 and the accompanying Basic Plan and the two amendments:** The proposed specific design plan is in general conformance with Zoning Map Amendment A-9550 and the accompanying Basic Plan as well as its amendments. A-9550 and its first amendment were approved with nine conditions and two considerations. The second amendment to A-9550 was approved with seven conditions, which carried all the applicable conditions that are still valid from the previous two approvals. The following discussion focuses on applicable conditions attached to the approval of the second amendment to A-9550 as stated in Zoning Ordinance No.4-2002.

1. **The list of proposed uses for the Basic Plan shall be amended to permit senior citizen housing and/or mid-rise (3 to 4-story) residential condominiums in the R-M Zone at 5.8 to 7.9 dwelling units pre acre. The number of dwelling units shall not exceed 261 units.**

**Comment:** The subject specific design plan proposes to construct 260 residential condominium units. The unit type for this SDP consists of a two-bedroom model and a three-bedroom model. The two models are designed to be stacked on top of each other in a way that the front elevation looks like a three-story building while the rear elevation shows four stories. The SDP fulfills this condition.

2. **An acoustical analysis shall be performed as part of the Specific Design Plan to determine whether any noise mitigation is needed as a result of the property's proximity to MD 202.**

**Comment:** A Phase II noise study has been submitted with this application. The review of the acoustical analysis provided with the Phase II noise study by the Environmental Planning Section indicates that the adverse noise impact associated with MD 202 has been mitigated. The areas that are designated for both active and passive outdoor use for this SDP are located beyond the limits of the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour line and will not be adversely affected by the transportation-related noise. In addition, an acoustical analysis has also been carried out to evaluate and recommend building treatments for each individual architectural model to ensure that the interior noise level is less than 45 dBA (Ldn). The SDP satisfies this condition.

3. **No living area of a residential structure may be placed to a depth below grade to where it would be reasonable to believe that the natural water table rises during occasional or seasonal extreme wet weather.**

**Comment:** The proposed residential structure shows no basement with the first floor above grade. There will be no living area below grade.

4. **There shall be a minimum of a 100-foot-wide buffer, as measured from the street line along MD 202. The buffer shall be covenanted in a manner to prevent any building or structure within its limits or removal of vegetation required as part of the buffer. The buffer shall include berms and plantings, including preservation of existing vegetation where appropriate, sufficient to filter the view of dwelling units from the road. The buffer shall vary in height and width and setback from the road right-of-way to provide visual variety and a more natural appearance.**

**Comment:** The SDP plans show the required 100-foot-wide buffer along the frontage of MD 202 and the proposed buildings also setback at an additional minimum 15 feet from the bufferyard. The majority of the buffer will be preserved in the existing vegetation and the rest of the area will be planted with larger-caliper trees in order to satisfying a portion of the woodland conservation requirements for this site. Due to the requirements of the construction sequence, the application has obtained a temporary construction access point from MD 202 approved by the State Highway Administration that will result in the clearing of a 60- by 100-foot portion of the buffer at the eastern frontage along MD 202. A condition of approval has been proposed to ensure that this portion of the buffer will be restored after the completion of the project.

5. **No incremental factor shall be permitted for any lands for facilities which are located in floodplains, which are part or all of a storm water management system or which are required in accordance with the legislative actions implementing the Patuxent River Policy Plan.**

**Comment:** Density bonus and increment analysis were approved at the time of CDP-8708. Three incremental factors that were considered and the corresponding increased density are as follows:

### Public Benefit Features and Density Increment Factors

Feature	Maximum Allowable Increment Factor	Requested Increment Factor	Increase Allowed in Base Density	Increase Allowed in Dwelling Units
For open space land at ratio of at least 3.5 acres per 100 dwelling units	25%	25%	1.45 du/ac	47.8
For pedestrian system separated from vehicular rights-of-way	5%	2%	0.12 du/ac	3.7
For recreational development of open space	10%	10%	0.58 du/ac	19.1
<b>DENSITY INCREMENT UTILIZED</b>		<b>37%</b>	<b>2.1 du/ac</b>	<b>70.6</b>

**Source:** Staff Report, Comprehensive Design Plan, CDP-8708, page 11.

Condition 5 was one of the original conditions of approval of A-9550. This condition had been carried forward in the subsequent two revisions to A-9550. Compliance with this condition had been fully addressed at the time of CDP-8708 approval.

**6. No septic system may be permitted.**

**Comment:** This project will be connected to public sewer and water systems.

**7. In considering density increments, the Planning Board shall be guided by prior Comprehensive Design Plan and Specific Design Plan decisions.**

**Comment:** The density increments for this property were first approved by the Planning Board at the time of CDP-8708 approval. This approval had been carrying forward in the subsequent approvals ever since.

9. **Comprehensive Design Plans CDP-0202 and CDP-8707:** CDP-8707, which covers a larger area including the subject property, was approved by the Planning Board on April 14, 1998, subject to 14 conditions. CDP-0202 was approved on June 20, 2002, specifically for the subject property, subject to 13 conditions. The following conditions from both comprehensive design plans are applicable to this SDP review:

**CDP-8708**

2. **With the submission of Specific Design Plan, it shall be demonstrated that noise attenuation measures, such as screening, buffering, or adequate setbacks, have been utilized to reduce external noise to 65 dBA for all structures within 350 feet of the pavement of northbound Route 202 or southbound 556. This demonstration should take into account ultimate road design and projected level of service.**

**Comment:** As discussed in the above Finding 8 regarding Condition 2 of A-9555, the applicant has submitted a Phase II noise study for this project, which proposes specific noise attenuation measures to reduce external noise to be less than 65 dBA and interior noise level to be below 45 dBA. At the time of CDP-0202 approval, a Phase I noise study has also been submitted for review. The application satisfies the condition.

**3. Prior to submission of Specific Design Plan an approved 100-year floodplain shall be obtained from the Department of Environmental Resources.**

**Comment:** The Environmental Planning Section currently reviews the Patuxent River Primary Management Area (PMA), which is a more comprehensive concept including 100-year floodplain, for all development proposals. Section 24-101(b)(10) defines the Patuxent River PMA as including streams, a 50-foot stream buffer, the 100-year floodplain, adjacent wetlands, a 25-foot wetland buffer, adjacent slopes in excess of 25 percent, and adjacent slopes between 15 and 25 percent with highly erodible soils (soils having a K-factor greater than 0.35). As discussed in the following applicable conditions of CDP-0202, the applicant has provided a detailed calculation of the area of PMA and acreage of the impacted PMA with this application. This issue has also been addressed in other approvals such as Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039 as shown in Finding 10 below.

**4. Prior to submission of a Specific Design Plan a stormwater management concept plan shall be approved.**

**Comment:** The site has an approved stormwater management concept plan #98001290-05. In a memorandum dated May 19, 2004, the Department of Environmental Resources indicated that the site plan for Specific Design Plan SDP-9005/03 is consistent with the approval stormwater concept.

**CDP-0202**

**2. The Preliminary Plan of Subdivision shall be approved prior to the approval of the Specific Design Plan.**

**Comment:** Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039 was approved by the Planning Board on July 31, 2003 for this site.

**3. At time of Specific Design Plan, the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide the following:**

- a. The applicant shall ensure dry passage for all pathways and sidewalks. If wet areas must be traversed, suitable structures shall be constructed.**
- b. All landscape materials shall be at least five feet from the asphalt pathway, where feasible and practical.**
- c. All pathways and sidewalks shall be free of above-ground utilities and utility boxes.**
- d. All pathways and sidewalks shall be handicapped accessible. All walking surfaces shall be concrete or asphalt. Abrupt changes in grade that may create safety hazards should be avoided.**
- e. Trails shall be six feet wide to accommodate two people walking side-by-side, or a walker and a companion in a wheelchair.**
- f. If road frontage improvements are required along MD 202 (Largo Road), the existing wide shoulders shall be preserved to safely accommodate bicycle traffic.**



**Comment:** The SDP is in general compliance with the above trail-related conditions regarding design, material and width, except for subcondition f. A condition of approval recommended by the trails planner addressing the above concern has been incorporated in the recommendation section of this report.

In addition, Urban Design staff has identified two additional trail improvements that should be made to the on-site trails system. First, the SWM pond is a visual focus of the site and is also the largest open space within the buildable envelope. The SWM pond should be treated as an amenity and should be connected by the pedestrian pathway. The SDP plan shows a maintenance loop road around the pond. It is recommended that the proposed maintenance access be designed to accommodate a pedestrian trail and be further integrated into the on-site trails system. Two gaps in the trail system need to be filled in. A pedestrian walk should be provided on the west side of the entrance point, adjacent to the parking lot parallel to Largo Road. All pedestrian crosswalks should be treated with either bricks or raised pavement markings. A condition of approval has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report.

- 6. No living area of a residential structure may be placed to a depth below grade to where it would be reasonable to believe the natural water table rises during occasional or seasonal extreme wet weather.**

**Comment:** See the above Finding 9 for more discussion.

- 7. The consideration and evaluation of the use of stormwater micro-management techniques shall be addressed during the review of the Specific Design Plan.**

**Comment:** The stormwater management plan provided with this SDP consists of a small bio-retention pond at the western end of the site and a large pond at the center of the buildable envelope close to the north central portion of the site. The proposed stormwater management plan is appropriate to the site layout. A review by the Department of Environmental Resources (Guzman to Zhang, May 19, 2004) indicates that the SDP is consistent with the approved stormwater concept plan # 988001290-05.

- 8. The Preliminary Plan of Subdivision and Specific Design Plan shall show either the approximated 65 dBA (Ldn) contour or a Phase I Noise Study shall be submitted that indicates the location of the 65 dBA (Ldn) contour for the master planned capacity of MD 202 and the resulting contour shall be shown on the plan.**

**Comment:** Both the subject specific design plan and the preliminary plan of subdivision have shown the 65 dBA (Ldn) contour line. An outdoor-to-indoor noise analysis (Phase II noise study) has also been undertaken for the SDP to ensure that the interior noise level is below 45 dBA (Ldn). This noise study also includes design modification and mitigation measures for different building components to achieve the required interior noise level.

- 9. An acoustical analysis shall be performed as part of the Specific Design Plan to determine whether any noise mitigation is needed as a result of the property's proximity to MD 202.**

**Comment:** See the above Finding 9 for more discussion.

10. **The Specific Design Plan shall include a calculation of the area of Patuxent River Primary Management Area Preservation Area, including the area of the 100-year floodplain, and all areas set aside for stormwater management facilities.**

**Comment:** The applicant has prepared a justification letter for the proposed disturbance (Morgan to Markovich, April 28, 2004). The letter provides a justification for each specific disturbance and a detailed calculation of the Patuxent River PMA, including the area of the 100-year floodplain, and all areas set aside for stormwater management facilities.

11. **The 100-foot-wide buffer shown on the Comprehensive Design Plan shall be covenanted in a manner to prevent any building or structure within its limits or removal of vegetation required as part of the buffer at time of Specific Design Plan application. The buffer shall include berms and plantings, including preservation of existing vegetation where appropriate, sufficient to filter the view of dwelling units from the road. The buffer shall vary in height and width and setback from the road right-of-way to provide visual variety and a more natural appearance.**

**Comment:** The SDP shows the required 100-foot-wide buffer along the frontage of MD 202 and the proposed buildings also have an additional setback 15 feet from the bufferyard. But no maintenance mechanism has been proposed with this application. A condition of approval which will ensure the perpetual maintenance of the bufferyard and will prevent any building or structure within its limits or removal of vegetation required as part of the buffer has been proposed in the Recommendation Section of this report.

12. **No septic system may be permitted on site of the Horizon House CDP.**

**Comment:** See above Finding 9 for more discussion.

10. **Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039:** Preliminary Plan 4-03039 was approved by the Planning Board on July 31, 2003, subject to 19 conditions, of which the following conditions are applicable to this specific design plan review:

2. **All internal pathways or trails shall be a minimum of six feet wide and asphalt and shall be handicapped accessible and free of above-ground utilities and utility boxes.**
3. **If road frontage improvements are required along MD 202 (Largo Road), the existing wide shoulders shall be preserved to safely accommodate bicycle traffic, per the concurrence of SHA.**

**Comment:** See the above Finding 9 for more discussion.

5. **The Specific Design Plan shall show the approximated 65 dBA (Ldn) contour shown on the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision.**

**Comment:** The specific design plan has shown both the ground and upper levels of the 65 dBA contour lines.

6. **A Phase II Noise Study shall be submitted with the Specific Design Plan. That study shall address the noise attenuation measures necessary to**

- a. **Reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA (Ldn) or less for the multifamily residential buildings located within the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour, and**
- b. **Reduce exterior noise levels to 65 dBA (Ldn) or less for the outdoor activity areas (meaning only the outdoor pool and common area) located within the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise countour [sic].**

**Comment:** A Phase II noise study has been submitted as required. See the above Finding 9 for more discussion on this issue.

- 8. **A report regarding the local groundwater on the site shall be submitted with the Specific Design Plan. No living area of a residential structure may be placed to a depth below grade to where it would be reasonable to believe the natural water table rises during occasional or seasonally extreme wet weather.**

**Comment:** Since no residential structure below grade has been proposed with this application, no report regarding local groundwater on the site is required.

- 9. **The Specific Design Plan shall include a calculation of the area of Patuxent River Primary Management Area Preservation Area, including the area of the 100-year floodplain, all areas set aside for stormwater management facilities, and the area of any proposed impacts. This calculation will be used to ensure that no incremental factor is permitted for any lands or facilities which are located in floodplains, which are part or all of a stormwater management system, or which are areas required in accordance with the legislative actions implementing the Patuxent River Policy Plan.**

**Comment:** A detailed justification statement listing an area-by-area PMA impact has been provided with this application that shows a total of 0.96-acre of PMA-impacted areas. The proposed impacted areas are supported by the Environmental Planning Section. As discussed in the above Finding 8, the density bonus and increment analysis had been approved at the time of CDP-8708 approval. No incremental factor has been permitted for any lands or facilities that are located in floodplains, that are part or all of a stormwater management system, or that are areas required in accordance with the legislative actions implementing the Patuxent River Policy Plan

- 10. **Prior to approval of the Specific Design Plan, the design of the area along MD 202 shall be revised to result in the preservation of a 60-foot-wide buffer for its entirety (except for approved driveway entrances), and the clearing and grading on the property to the east shall be eliminated.**

**Comment:** With the exception of the clearing associated with the entrance to this site, a water connection and a temporary construction entrance, a 100-foot-wide buffer is being maintained along MD 202. All other grading and clearing are confined to the previously approved envelope on the site.

- 12. **Prior to the acceptance of the Specific Design Plan and the Type II Tree Conservation Plan, the applicant shall obtain written authorization from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for the proposed off-site clearing on the M-NCPPC land to the east of the subject property. In the event DPR does not grant permission for the proposed off-site clearing, the plans shall be revised accordingly.**

**Comment:** Since no off-site grading has been proposed on M-NCPPC land in this application, this condition is not applicable.

**14. At the time of Specific Design Plan, a Type II Tree Conservation shall be approved.**

**Comment:** A Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/121/97-01 has been submitted with this application. A review of the TCPII/121/97-01 by the Environmental Planning Section indicates that the plan in general meets the requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of TCPII/121/97-01 subject to conditions that have been incorporated into the recommendation section of this staff report.

**17. The layout shown on the TCPI is conceptual in nature and shall be evaluated further prior to the submittal of the Specific Design Plan. The SDP shall show the preservation of the PMA to the fullest extent possible by relocating buildings, parking areas, service structures, stormwater management facilities, and/or through the use of additional retaining walls.**

**Comment:** As discussed above, a Type II tree conservation plan has been submitted with this application. The plan and a letter dated April 28, 2004 (Morgan to Markovich, justification letter for disturbance in the PMA buffer) has shown and explained various components, the ultimate limit of, and the proposed impacted PMA areas. The location and extent of the proposed PMA impacts are generally the same or slightly reduced from those proposed and approved with Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039. Four of the six currently proposed PMA impacts are associated with the stormwater management pond, the sewer outfall, or road construction for access within this site. The other two impacts are associated with the construction of retaining walls to allow for several additional units to be constructed. The proposed PMA impacts by this application are supported by the Environmental Planning Section.

**11. Zoning Ordinance:** The subject SDP is in general compliance with the requirements of Zoning Ordinance.

- a. The proposed parking is consistent with the requirements of Sections 27-568, Off-Street Parking and Loading, of the Zoning Ordinance. But the SDP does not provide any loading space per Section 27-582. For the proposed 260 units, one loading space is required. A condition of approval has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report.
- b. Section 27-528, requires the following findings for approval of a Specific Design Plan

**(a) Prior to approving a Specific Design Plan, the Planning Board shall find that:**

**(1) The plan conforms to the approved Comprehensive Design Plan and the applicable standards of the Landscape Manual.**

**Comment:** As stated in Findings 9 and 12, the proposed Specific Design Plan conforms to the approved Comprehensive Design Plans and the applicable standards of the *Landscape Manual*.

- (2) **The development will be adequately served within a reasonable period of time with existing or programmed facilities either shown in the appropriate Capital Improvement Program or provided as part of the private development.**

**Comment:** Findings for adequate public facilities including fire, rescue, police, public school and transportation were made in conjunction with the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03039 (see resolution PGCPB No. 03-150). The Transportation Planning Section (see Finding 14 below regarding a memorandum from the Transportation Section) has confirmed that the proposal is consistent with the previous transportation adequacy findings. The development will be adequately served within a reasonable period of time with existing or programmed facilities.

- (3) **Adequate provision has been made for draining surface water so that there are no adverse effects on either the subject property or adjacent properties.**

**Comment:** The Department of Environmental Resources has stated in their referral comments (Guzman to Zhang, May 19, 2004) that the SDP for Watkins Place is consistent with the approved stormwater concept # 988001290-05. Therefore, adequate provision has been made for draining surface water and ensuring that there are no adverse effects on the subject property or adjacent properties.

- (4) **The Plan is in conformance with an approved Tree Conservation Plan.**

**Comment:** A Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/121/97-01 has been submitted with this SDP. TCPII/121/97-01 has been found to meet the requirement of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance according to the comments of the Environmental Planning Section. The Environmental Planning Section concluded that the SDP is in conformance with TCPII/121/97-01 and recommended approval of the subject SDP and TCPII/121/97-01 subject to certain conditions.

12. ***Landscape Manual:*** The proposed construction of 260 condominium units is subject to Section 4.1, Residential Requirements, and Section 4.3(c), Interior Planting of the *Landscape Manual*.

- a. According to Section 4.1(g), for multifamily dwellings in any zone, a minimum of one major shade tree is required per 1,600 square feet or fraction of green area provided. The landscape plan shows a total of 581,090 square feet of green area that requires 363 shade trees. The landscape plan provides 54 shade trees, 86 ornamental trees, 17 evergreen trees, and 263 trees with a caliper greater than two and one-half inches in a forest conservation area that equals to 368 shade trees. The SDP complies with the requirements of Section 4.1.
- b. The SDP shows a total of 134,012 square feet of parking area, which requires eight percent of interior planting area. The landscape plan provides ten percent of interior planting area with 65 shade trees, which exceeds the requirements of Section 4.3(c).

13. **Woodland Conservation Ordinance:** This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the gross tract area is in excess of 40,000 square feet, there are more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland on site, and there are previously approved Tree Conservation Plans TCPI/5/02-01 and TCPII/121/97.

- a. The detailed forest stand delineation (FSD) was previously reviewed and found to address the criteria for an FSD in accordance with the Prince George's County Woodland

Conservation and Tree Preservation Technical Manual. No further information is required with respect to the forest stand delineation.

- b. The Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/121/97-01 submitted with this application has been reviewed and was found to be in compliance with the previously approved Type I tree conservation plan and to address the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

14. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:

- a. The Community Planning Division (Fields to Zhang, April 9, 2004) has stated that there are no master plan issues raised by this application.
- b. The Transportation Planning Section (Mokhtari to Zhang, April 28, 2004) has concluded that the subject plan is acceptable from the standpoint of access and internal circulation, except for the proposed relocation of the existing crosswalk across MD 202. A condition has been proposed by the transportation planner that requires a revision to the site plan to show a relocation of the existing crosswalk that is acceptable to both SHA and DPW&T.

**Comment:** The relocated crosswalk shown on the submitted SDP has been approved by the State Highway Administration.

In a separate memorandum (Shaffer to Zhang, April 27, 2004) on specific design plan review for master plan trail compliance, the Transportation Planning Section requires several trail improvements pursuant to the adopted and approved Largo-Lottsford master plan. Those requirements have been worded as conditions in the recommendation section of this report.

- c. The Environmental Planning Section generated two memoranda for this application. In a memorandum dated April 13, 2004, the Environmental Planning Section required revised plans and additional information before a complete review of the proposal could be conducted.

The Environmental Planning Section, in a second memorandum (Markovich to Zhang, May 14, 2004), has recommended approval of this specific design plan and TCPII/121/97-01 subject to three conditions. These conditions of approval for the SDP have been incorporated into the recommendation section of this report.

- d. The Subdivision Section (Del Balzo to Zhang, April 20, 2004) has indicated that the proposed specific design plan is in substantial conformance with the approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03049. The subdivision reviewer has also summarized the conditions of preliminary plan approval that are applicable to the review of this specific design plan.
- e. The Permits Review Section (Windsor to Zhang, April 15, 2004) has identified various technical issues related to the Zoning Ordinance. The staff has requested minor changes to the site plan. Several conditions of approval have been added to the recommendation section of this report to require the changes.

- f. The Department of Environmental Resources (Guzman to Zhang, May 19, 2004) has stated that the site plan for Watkins Place SDP-9005/03 is consistent with approved stormwater concept #988001290-05.
- g. The State Highway Administration (SHA) (Bailey to Zhang, April 21, 2004) has stated that SHA has no objection to Specific Design Plan SDP-9005/03 approval, but indicates that the applicant has to provide the necessary transportation improvements consistent with the state road classification and functionality
- h. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) (Asan to Zhang, April 27, 2004) has offered no comments on this application.
- i. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) of Prince George's County had not responded to the referral request at the time the staff report was written.
- j. The Fire Department of Prince George's County had not responded to the referral request at the time the staff report was written.
- k. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section had not responded to the referral request at the time the staff report was written.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based upon the foregoing evaluation, analysis and findings, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Specific Design Plan SDP-9005/03 for Watkins Place (formerly Horizon House) and Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/121/97-01, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to certificate approval of this specific design plan, the applicant shall
  - a. Include a summary of the area of the existing PMA and the area of the stormwater management facilities.
  - b. Revise the trails network to connect the SWM pond to the network of internal sidewalks and fill the identified gaps within the on-site trails network.
  - c. Revise the landscape plan for the SWM pond to treat the pond as an amenity by providing generous amounts of ornamental trees and shrubs.
  - d. Provide one loading space on the SDP.
  - e. Revise the proposed development to add "multifamily dwellings" in front of condominiums.
  - f. Revise the plans to show depressed curbs and/or ramps at each parking space for the physically handicapped.
  - g. Provide accessible routes for the physically handicapped from the parking spaces to Building 16.

- h. Provide a full elevation of the proposed entrance feature with all the required information pursuant to Section 27-624, Gateway Signs.
  - i. Provide a tot lot design with appropriate play equipment and the cut sheet to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
2. Prior to certification of the Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/121/97-01, the applicant shall:
- a. In the approval block on each sheet, show the TCPII number as "TCPII/121/97," indicate the date of the original approval as "6/6/02," and indicate "Jim Stasz" as the person certifying the plan.
  - b. Revise the limit of disturbance near the end of Wood Branch Court to provide adequate clearance for the construction of the sewer outfall.
  - c. Revise Reforestation Area 6 to remove all reforestation from the stormdrain outfall near the southeastern corner.
  - d. Delete standard TCPII notes 6 and 7; these notes do not apply to this site.
  - e. Standard TCPII note 9 shall be revised as follows:  
"All tree planting for woodland replacement, reforestation or afforestation will be completed during the first planting season after the reforestation areas have been graded to final grade."
  - f. Revise the worksheet as necessary after the other revisions have been completed.
  - g. The revised plans shall be signed and dated by the qualified professional, licensed landscape architect, or licensed forester who prepared the plans.
3. At time of issuance of the first building permit for structures located within the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour, the architectural plans for that building shall be certified by a professional engineer with competency in acoustical analysis, stating that the structure is designed to reduce the interior noise level to 45 dBA (Ldn) or less.
4. The applicant shall be responsible for restoring the portion of the 100-foot-wide buffer that has been approved by SHA for construction access to the site 60 calendar days after the completion of construction of the project by using trees with a minimum of 2½-inch caliper.
5. Prior to final plat, an HOA covenant shall be recorded among the land records of Prince George's County with provisions that ensure perpetual maintenance of the bufferyard and prohibit the installation of structures and roads and the removal of vegetation without prior written consent from the M-NCPPC Planning Director or designee. The removal of hazardous trees, limbs, branches or trunks is permitted.
6. Prior to issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall either show evidence of approval of the frontage improvement along Largo Road (MD 202) or complete the required frontage improvement per the requirements of SHA.
7. If road frontage improvements are required along Largo Road (MD 202), the existing wide shoulders shall be preserved to safely accommodate bicycle traffic, per the concurrence of SHA.