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Special Exception Meridian Hill

SE-23003

REQUEST	STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Special exception for a planned retirement community use.	With the conditions recommended herein: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of Special Exception SE-23003• Approval of Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan TCP2-2025-0051

Location: At the southern terminus of Johensu Drive, approximately 1,015 feet south of its intersection with Woodyard Road, and at the eastern terminus of Arethusa Lane.

Gross Acreage: 43.73

Zone: AR/MIO

Zone Prior: R-A/MIO

Reviewed per prior Zoning Ordinance: Section 27-1704(b)

Dwelling Units: 126

Gross Floor Area: N/A

Lots: 126

Parcels: 14

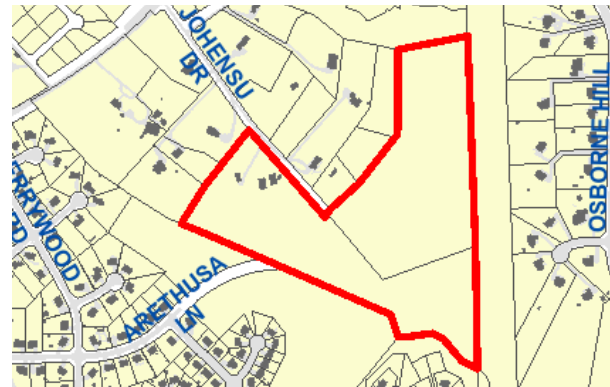
Planning Area: 82A

Council District: 09

Municipality: N/A

Applicant/Address:
NVR, Inc.
5265 Westview Drive, Suite 210
Frederick, MD 21703

Staff Reviewer: Candra Teshome
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Planning Board Date: 11/06/2025

Planning Board Action Limit: N/A

Staff Report Date: 11/04/2025

Date Accepted: 08/11/2025

Informational Mailing: 03/10/2025

Acceptance Mailing: 07/31/2025

Sign Posting Deadline: N/A

The Planning Board encourages all interested persons to request to become a person of record for this application. Requests to become a person of record may be made online at

http://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/Person_of_Record/.

Please call 301 952 3530 for additional information.

Table of Contents

I.	EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	4
A.	Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance.....	4
B.	Prince George’s County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance	5
C.	Prince George’s County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance	5
II.	BACKGROUND.....	5
III.	COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE.....	10
IV.	COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE 2010 PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY LANDSCAPE MANUAL.....	20
V.	COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE 2024 PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY WOODLAND AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION ORDINANCE.....	22
VI.	COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY TREE CANOPY COVERAGE ORDINANCE.....	23
VII.	REFERRAL COMMENTS.....	23
VIII.	COMMUNITY FEEDBACK.....	24
IX.	RECOMMENDATION	24

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT:

TO: The Prince George's County Planning Board
The Prince George's County District Council

VIA: Jeremy Hurlbutt, Supervisor, Zoning Section, Development Review Division
Lakisha Hull, Planning Director

FROM: Candra Teshome, Planner III, Zoning Section, Development Review Division

SUBJECT: Special Exception SE-23003
Meridian Hill

REQUEST: **SE-23003:** Special exception for a planned retirement community use.

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL, with conditions**

NOTE:

Per Section 27-296(a)(1) of the prior Prince George's County adopted Zoning Ordinance, which is applicable to the review of this project, the Planning Board has received a special exception application for this project. The technical staff report has been prepared in accordance with Section 27-311 of the prior Zoning Ordinance. Per Section 27-307 of the prior Prince George's County adopted Zoning Ordinance, at least thirty days prior to a hearing by the Zoning Hearing Examiner, the application, plans, maps, specifications, technical staff report, and all other data, materials, or record evidence (to date) pertaining to the requested special exception shall be sent by the Planning Board to the District Council.

The Prince George's County Planning Board has scheduled this application on the consent agenda, for transmittal to the Zoning Hearing Examiner, on the agenda date of November 6, 2025.

You are encouraged to become a person of record in this application. Requests to become Persons of Record should be submitted electronically, by email to: ZHE@co.pg.md.us. Questions about becoming a person of record should be directed to the Hearing Examiner at 301-952-3644. All other questions should be directed to the Development Review Division at 301-952-3530.

The Zoning staff has reviewed the subject application and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL, with conditions, as described in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

I. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- A. Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance.** This property is located within the Agricultural-Residential (AR) Zone. However, this application has been submitted and reviewed under the applicable provisions of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance effective prior to April 1, 2022 (prior Zoning Ordinance), pursuant to Section 24-1704(b) of the Subdivision Regulations.

Under the prior Zoning Ordinance, the site was in the R-A (Residential-Agricultural) Zone, which was effective prior to April 1, 2022. This application has a companion case, Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-24028, which was approved pursuant to the prior Zoning ordinance and prior Prince George's County Subdivision Regulations and, pursuant to Section 27-1704(b) of the current Zoning Ordinance, development may proceed to the next steps in the approval process and continue to be reviewed and decided under the prior Zoning Ordinance.

A special exception (SE) is reviewed and decided by the Prince George's County Zoning Hearing Examiner. Pursuant to Section 27-317(a) of the prior Zoning Ordinance, an SE may only be approved upon a finding that all the following standards are met:

Section 27-317(a)

- (1) The proposed use and site plan are in harmony with the purpose of this Subtitle;**
- (2) The proposed use is in conformance with all the applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle;**
- (3) The proposed use will not substantially impair the integrity of any validly approved Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, or, in the absence of a Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, the General Plan;**
- (4) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area;**
- (5) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood; and**
- (6) The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan; and**

(7) **The proposed site plan demonstrates the preservation and/or restoration of the regulated environmental features in a natural state to the fullest extent possible in accordance with the requirements of Subtitle 24-130(b)(5).**

B. Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance. Pursuant to Section 25-119(a)(2)(B) of the Prince George's County Code, SE applications shall include a Type 2 tree conservation plan (TCP2) or a standard letter of exemption.

C. Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance. The property is subject to a minimum tree canopy coverage (TCC), per requirements set forth in Section 25-128 of the Prince George's County Code.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Summary and Request: Special exception for a planned retirement community use.

B. Development Data Summary:

	EXISTING	EVALUATED
Zone(s)	AR (prior R-A)	R-A
Use	Agricultural	Planned Retirement Community
Gross Acreage	43.73	43.73
100-Year Floodplain (acres)	13.36	13.36
Net Lot (acres)	30.37	30.37
Lot(s)	0	126
Parcel(s)	2	15
Dwelling Units	0	126
Gross Floor Area (square feet)	N/A	N/A

C. Location and Site Description: The subject property is located at the southern terminus of Johensu Drive, approximately 1,015 feet south of its intersection with Woodyard Road, and at the eastern terminus of Arethusa Lane. The 43.73-acre property is described as Parcels 22 and 83 on Tax Map 109.

D. Proposed Use(s): The subject application is to permit a planned retirement community use.

E. Neighborhood and Surrounding Uses: The general neighborhood is bordered by Joint Base Andrews to the west; MD 4 (Pennsylvania Avenue) to the north; US 301 (Robert Crain Highway) to the east and south, where it converges with MD 5 (Branch Avenue) to the south. The neighborhood is primarily residential in character, including single-family detached, mobile home dwellings, and multifamily development. The immediate uses surrounding the subject property are as follows:

North— Single-family residential dwellings in the AR Zone (prior R-A Zone).

West— Single-family residential dwellings in the AR Zone (prior R-A Zone).

South— Terminus of Arethusa Lane, with vacant land in the RR Zone (previous R-R Zone) and a single-family detached residential subdivision in the RR Zone (prior R-R Zone) beyond.

East— Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) high energy transmission line right-of-way (ROW) in the AR Zone (prior R-A Zone).

F. History and Previous Approvals: A Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) 4-24028 was approved by the Prince George’s County Planning Board at its hearing on April 3, 2025 (PGCPB Resolution No. 2025-029) subject to 15 conditions, of which the following conditions are applicable to this application as provided in **bold** text below, with staff responses following in plain text:

3. **Development of this site shall be in conformance with the stormwater Management Concept Plan (42219-2024-SDC), once approved, and any subsequent revisions.**

The applicant provided a copy of the approved Stormwater Management (SWM) Concept Plan (42219-2024-SDC) and approval letter with this application. According to the proposed plan, 19 micro-bioretention facilities and one wet pond are proposed to provide stormwater retention and attenuation on-site before discharging into the Charles Branch, a tributary of the Western Branch of the Patuxent River. The SWM concept plan was approved on April 23, 2025, and expires on April 23, 2028.

4. **Prior to approval, in accordance with Section 24-122(a) and Section 24-128(b)(12) of the prior Prince George’s County Subdivision Regulations, the final plat of subdivision shall include the granting of a public utility easement along the subject property’s frontage on Johensu Drive and Arethusa Lane, and public utility easements along at least one side of all private streets, in accordance with the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.**

Public utility easements are shown and labeled on the SE site plan, in accordance with this condition and the approved PPS. This condition will be further evaluated with future final plats for the project.

5. **Prior to approval, the final plat of subdivision shall include the granting of right-of-way dedication of Arethusa Lane, in accordance with the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.**

The proposed public ROW for Arethusa Lane is shown and labeled on the SE site plan, in accordance with this condition and the approved PPS. However, the ROW width should be labeled on the

site plan, in accordance with the approved PPS. This condition will be evaluated with future final plats for the project.

6. **At the time of final plat, in accordance with Section 24-134(a)(4) of the prior Prince George's County Subdivision Regulations, approximately ±20.51 acres of parkland (as shown on the preliminary plan of subdivision (Parcels G and H)) shall be conveyed to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). The land to be conveyed shall be subject to the following conditions:**

Parcels G and H are correctly labeled to be conveyed to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), in accordance with this condition and the approved PPS. This condition will be evaluated with future final plats for the project.

7. **In conformance with the 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* and the 2013 *Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan*, the applicant shall provide the following facilities, and show the following facilities on the special exception site plan, prior to its acceptance:**

- a. **A minimum 5-foot-wide sidewalk along both sides of all internal private roadways.**

Five-foot-wide sidewalks are shown along both sides of all internal private roadways, as required by the above condition.

- b. **A minimum 5-foot-wide sidewalk along both sides of Arethusa Lane, including its off-site extension, unless modified by the operating agency with written correspondence in accordance with a Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation adopted standard.**

The approved site development concept plan shows a 6-foot-wide shoulder along Arethusa Lane, which connects to the internal sidewalk network. With the approval of the site development concept, the Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) has modified this condition. As the permitting agency, DPIE has the ultimate authority to require improvements within the ROW; therefore, this condition has been met, and staff concur with DPIE regarding improvements along Arethusa Lane. Condition 7 has been met, subject to the modifications approved by DPIE as demonstrated on the approved site development concept plan.

- c. **Crosswalks and associated Americans with Disabilities Act curb ramps at all road crossings.**

The plan shows a 5-foot-wide sidewalk along both sides of all internal roadways. Crosswalks and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramps are provided throughout the site for a continuous and comprehensive pedestrian network.

- d. **Short-term bicycle racks (inverted U-style or a similar model that provides two points of contact for a parked bicycle) at the recreation area.**

Short-term bicycle parking is provided at the recreational area, which provides parking for six bicycles.

10. **Development of this subdivision shall be in conformance with an approved Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan, TCP1-014-2024, in conformance with Section 24-132 of the prior Prince George's County Subdivision Regulations. The following note shall be placed on the final plat of subdivision:**

"This development is subject to restrictions shown on the approved Type 1 Tree Conservation Plan (TCP1-014-2024 or most recent revision), or as modified by the Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan and precludes any disturbance or installation of any structure within specific areas. Failure to comply will mean a violation of an approved Tree Conservation Plan and will make the owner subject to mitigation under the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO). This property is subject to the notification provisions of CB-60-2005. Copies of all approved Tree Conservation Plans for the subject property are available in the offices of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Prince George's County Planning Department."

A Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan, TCP2-2025-0051, was submitted with this application. This condition will be addressed with the final plat, when approved.

11. **Prior to issuance of permits for this subdivision, in conformance with Section 25-119(a)(3) of the County Code, a Type 2 tree conservation plan shall be approved. The following note shall be placed on the final plat of subdivision:**

"This plat is subject to the recordation of a woodland and wildlife habitat conservation easement pursuant to Section 25-122(d)(1)(B) with the Liber and folio

reflected on the Type 2 tree conservation plan, when approved.”

A Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan, TCP2-2025-0051, was submitted with this application. This condition will be addressed with the final plat, when approved.

- 13. A specimen tree maintenance plan shall be included with the Type 2 tree conservation plan in conformance with Section 25-122(d)(2)(B) of the County Code, for any tree with critical root zone impacts. The specimen tree maintenance plan shall include specimen tree protection measures, such as root pruning, to protect both on- and off-site specimen trees.**

Revisions are needed to the specimen tree table to accurately reflect the proposed impacts. A specimen tree maintenance plan shall be provided on the TCP2, to further protect those trees listed to remain with proposed impacts from this development, which has been conditioned herein.

- 14. In accordance with the historic preservation goals of the 2013 *Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, prior to the approval of the special exception for the subject property, all existing structures at 6505 Johensu Drive (Parcel 22, Tax Account No. 1766443), shall be thoroughly documented on a Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form by a 36CFR61-certified consultant. The form shall be submitted in draft to the Prince George’s County Planning Department’s Historic Preservation staff for review and approval, and the final form shall be submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust.**

A draft Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form was submitted to staff for review with the subject application. The draft was deemed sufficient by staff and the final Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form can be completed. When the final Maryland Inventory of Historical Properties form is submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust, this condition will be satisfied.

- 15. In accordance with the 2013 *Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the 2018 *Environmental Technical Manual*, a stream corridor assessment for the portion of Charles Branch within the boundaries of the property, shall be submitted with the Type 2 tree conservation plan.**

A stream assessment dated June 2025 was submitted by the applicant. Charles Branch is listed in the 2010 *Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan* (master plan) as a secondary stream corridor and is mentioned within several policies, specifically calling it out as an area needing additional protection and development

limitations. The Charles Branch is a key part, as a secondary corridor of the Western Branch of the Patuxent River, and should be further protected in this proposal with additional woodland buffering. Conditions are contained herein.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE

This application, to permit the planned retirement community use through an SE, is being reviewed in accordance with the prior Zoning Ordinance. The analysis of all required findings for approval are provided below.

Required Findings—Section 27-317 of the prior Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance provides the following applicable findings:

(a) A Special Exception may be approved if:

(1) The proposed use and site plan are in harmony with the purpose of this Subtitle.

The purposes of Subtitle 27 of the Prince George’s County Code, as set forth in Section 27-102(a)(1–15) of the prior Zoning Ordinance, are generally to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public; to promote compatible relationships between various land uses; to guide orderly development; and, to ensure adequate public facilities and services.

Staff find that the proposed use is in harmony with the purposes of this subtitle, and will not negatively impact the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The proposed planned retirement community will be adequately buffered from surrounding residential uses in accordance with the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual), which is evaluated further below.

The proposed use will provide housing options for people aged 55 and older in a market area that is projected to see sustained growth in this demographic over the next five years. The residential strategy, HN 5.1 of the *Plan Prince George’s 2035 Approved General Plan* encourages the expansion of housing options suitable for vulnerable populations, including the elderly.

(2) The proposed use is in conformance with all the applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle;

The proposed project is in conformance with the requirements and regulations set forth in prior Subtitle 27.

The proposed use is evaluated according to the general required findings of approval for all SEs, requirements specific to a planned retirement community, and requirements of the R-A Zone contained

in Sections 27-317, 27-395, and 27-442 of the prior Zoning Ordinance, as discussed below.

(3) The proposed use will not substantially impair the integrity of any validly approved Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, or, in the absence of a Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, the General Plan;

Staff find that the proposed project will not substantially impair the integrity of the master plan.

The master plan recommends residential low land uses on the subject property, which are defined as residential areas of up to 3.5 dwelling units per acre. The application proposes a density of 2.88 dwelling units per acre based on the gross tract area, which is within the recommended density in the master plan. Section 27-395(a)(3)(C) of the prior Zoning Ordinance allows a density of up to 8 dwelling units per gross acre for a planned retirement community. Therefore, the density does not substantially impair the integrity of the master plan.

The master plan encourages the maintenance of low- to moderate-density land uses except as part of mixed-use development and planned communities (page 58). The master plan recommends residential land uses in this area and the application conforms to this strategy by proposing a use with a density that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and by proposing buildings with architectural elements and characteristics that will blend with the surrounding neighborhood.

The master plan's policy for this living area continuing, "...to build high-quality, suburban development organized around a network of open space and community facilities with attention to site design" (page 179), and through the provision of a community center to serve residents, this application is in conformance.

The master plan also recommends the development of "...a comprehensive trail/sidewalk system to connect the community" (page 179), and the SE site plan proposes the extension of Arethusa Lane, including the construction of sidewalks along the ROW.

The proposed construction of a planned retirement community responds to a growing need in this area and in a manner which respects the current character of the surrounding low-density residential neighborhood.

(4) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area;

Staff find that the proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area.

The application proposes extending Arethusa Lane, which has access to an interconnected road network, which avoids straining the substandard Johensu Drive ROW. The plan demonstrates a 5-foot-wide sidewalk along both sides of each internal roadway. Crosswalks and ADA curb ramps are provided throughout the site, for a continuous and comprehensive pedestrian network. The proposed development was tested for transportation adequacy under file number ADQ-2024-056, which found that access to the site will operate acceptably now, and in the future, and will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of residents or workers in the area.

The subject property has significant natural buffering from the surrounding residential neighborhoods, including a 250 feet PEPCO ROW along the subject property's eastern lot line, which separates the property from existing residential development to the east. In addition, the applicant proposes adequate landscaping which is discussed in further detail below. This combination of existing and proposed buffering provides privacy, reduces light pollution, and enhances the community's visual character. In addition, the proposed improvements include SWM controls.

The project's proximity of the Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital Center provides the required medical access for an influx of retirement-aged residents.

(5) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood; and

Staff find that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood.

The general neighborhood is residential and developed primarily at a low density. As previously noted, the subject property is surrounded by residential uses in the AR and RR Zones. Some properties are large lots with single-family dwelling units, while others are smaller lots containing single-family dwelling units. The proposed development is not of a magnitude significant enough to substantially impact roadway service. The development will be accessed exclusively from an extension of Arethusa Lane, which helps to minimize any potential traffic or character impacts on the residential properties along the substandard Johensu Drive. The use is adequately buffered from bordering residential lots.

(6) The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan; and

TCP2-2025-0051 was submitted with this SE application and is recommended for approval with the conditions contained below. Minor revisions to the TCP2 are required for conformance and are included in the Recommendation section of this report.

Specimen Trees

With PPS 4-24028, the applicant requested to remove Specimen Trees ST-1 through ST-5, ST-8, ST-10, ST-11, ST-15, ST-16, ST-24, ST-27 through ST-30, ST-32, ST-39 through ST-45, and ST-58 through ST-63, for a total of 29 specimen trees for grading, roadways, and stormwater. The Planning Board granted the variance to remove 22 specimen trees, specifically Specimen Trees ST-1 through ST-5, ST-8, ST-10, ST-11, ST-15, ST-16, ST-24, ST-27 through ST-30, ST-32, ST-42, and ST-59 through ST-63. Further revisions are needed to the specimen tree table to accurately reflect the proposed impacts. A specimen tree maintenance plan shall be provided on the TCP2 to further protect those trees listed to remain with proposed impacts from this development.

- (7) The proposed site plan demonstrates the preservation and/or restoration of the regulated environmental features in a natural state to the fullest extent possible in accordance with the requirements of Subtitle 24-130(b)(5).**

The site contains regulated environmental features (REF) including streams, stream buffers, and steep slopes which comprise the primary management area (PMA). Three PMA impacts are proposed with this application. Each impact is associated with the site's SWM and utilities. Three impact requests were proposed to the PMA area with the PPS totaling 22,116 square feet (0.51 acre) or three percent of the total PMA. Impacts 1 and 3 were approved as proposed with the PPS and Impact 2, for stormwater, was to be evaluated with the TCP2 and the approved stormwater concept plan.

With SE-23003 the applicant proposes modifying Impacts 1, 2 and 3 for a total of 23,245 square feet (0.53 acre) of PMA impacts for grading and the installation of stormwater and utilities. It should be noted that Impact 1, which was originally approved by the Planning Board, was for a sewer connection only and not for grading associated with the wet pond. With this application, the applicant has relabeled a portion of this impact as grading for the stormwater facility.

Staff did not find that the statement of justification (SOJ) substantiated the request for the increases to Impact 3, as this reasoning was the same as was approved with the PPS, yet the impact was nearly doubled; however, staff find that this impact has not expanded lengthwise, and the additional impact comes from

expanding the width of the sewer easement. While this impact is doubling in size, the PMA impacted primarily consists of steep slopes, with minimal impacts to the stream buffer and floodplain.

Staff find that Impact 1, as approved with the PPS, is no longer requested, but the new Impact 1, provided with this SE, and Impacts 2 and 3 are supported as proposed.

Impact 1 – 0.15 acres (6,596 square feet)

The PPS approved Impact 1 for 6,596 square feet (0.15 acre) of disturbance to wetlands, wetland buffers, and floodplain for the construction of a sewer connection. With the submission of this SE application, Impact 1 is no longer associated with a sewer connection, and is now associated with stormwater. In the SE application, this impact is proposed for grading associated with the proposed wet pond, resulting in 3,371 square feet (0.08 acre) of impact to the PMA. Thus, Impact 1 is no longer requested for sewer connection and shall be considered Impact 1 for SWM, which is a new impact with this application. This impact is not for the non-woody buffer and could be supported if the applicant proposed reforestation in the disturbed area. The applicant's engineer has indicated that this area can be reforested, unless a stormwater easement is required to encumber the impact area.

Impact 2 – 0.40 acres (17,273 square feet)

With this SE application, Impact 2 was extended and relocated. This requested impact has expanded from 14,145 square feet (0.32 acre) to 17,273 (0.40 acre rounded) of impact, an increase of 3,128 square feet (0.07 acre). While this impact was not approved with the PPS and deferred to the SE, this impact has expanded from the previous request due to being relocated to the north. Modifications to proposed Impact 2 have resulted in increased clearing within the PMA and floodplain; however, this impact is reflective of the approved SWM concept plan and is therefore supported as proposed.

Impact 3 – 0.06 acres (2,601 square feet)

The PPS approved Impact 3 for 1,375 square feet (0.03 acre) of disturbance to wetlands, wetland buffers, and floodplain for a sewer connection. This laterally connects to the existing sewer line that follows the stream valley to the south of the site. This connection was located to avoid specimen trees and primarily impacts steep slope PMA. This impact was approved with the PPS as proposed, as utility connections to existing lines are considered allowable impacts.

With the SE, Impact 3 has expanded from 1,375 square feet (0.03 acre) to 2,601 square feet (0.06 acre), for an increase of 1,226 square feet (0.03 acre); however, the SOJ is unchanged from the original impact approval from the PPS, stating that this impact is

the shortest distance for the construction of the lateral sewer connection.

The justification provided does not substantiate the impact, as this impact has doubled from the PPS, despite the impact requested at that time being the shortest distance; however, staff find that based on the plans provided, this impact has been minimized to the extent practicable and has not expanded lengthwise. The additional impact requested with SE-23003 is to widen the approved sewer easement area. There are no impacts to specimen trees or wetlands associated with this request. The majority of this PMA impact is to steep slopes, with a portion of the connection impacting the stream buffer and floodplain. In addition, Impact 3 is for a utility connection, which is generally supported in accordance with the guidance from the 2018 Environmental Technical Manual, Part C - 2.0, page C-3.

Staff find that Impact 1 as approved with the PPS is no longer requested for a sewer connection, but the revised Impact 1 in the same location for the purpose of SWM, as provided with this SE, and Impacts 2 and 3 are supported as proposed.

Additional Requirements for Specific Special Exceptions—Section 27-395 planned retirement community, of the prior Zoning Ordinance provides the following applicable requirements:

(a) A planned retirement community may be permitted, subject to the following criteria:

(1) Findings for approval.

(A) The District Council shall find that:

(i) The proposed use will serve the needs of the retirement-aged community;

Staff find that the proposed use will serve the needs of the retirement-aged community. Per Section 27-395(5)(A), age restrictions in conformance with the Federal Fair Housing Act shall be set forth in covenants submitted with the application and shall be approved by the Prince George's County District Council, and filed in the land records at the time the final subdivision plat is recorded. The applicant filed a declaration of covenants with this application, which states that the subject property shall be housing for elderly persons, in accordance with Section 27-395 of the prior Zoning Ordinance and as provided for in 42 U.S.C. Section 3607(b)(2)(c). The declaration states that

each dwelling unit shall be occupied by at least one person 55 years of age.

(ii) The proposed use will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding residential community; and

Staff find that the proposed use will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding residential community.

The subject property is located within an area designated for residential low development by the master plan, which is up to 3.5 dwelling units per acre. The proposed 126 townhouses represent 4.15 dwelling units per net acre and 2.88 dwelling units per gross acre. Per the master plan, density is defined as the number of persons or units per acre of land, typically expressed in units per gross acre (page 261). Therefore, the proposed density does not impair the master plan.

The surrounding residential community consists primarily of single-family detached homes, the proposed townhouses are consistent with the residential low intent serving a specific demographic, without creating a high-density intrusion. The subject property benefits from significant natural buffering and the PEPCO ROW that ensure its physical isolation from adjacent developments. An expanse of woodlands to the north and east; a stream valley and floodplain to the east of the development property, adjacent to the stream valley of the Charles Branch; and a large 250-foot-wide PEPCO high energy transmission line ROW further to the east provide a substantial buffer against potential adverse effects on the surrounding community. In addition, the applicant's landscaping plan provides additional buffer and is in conformance with the Landscape Manual, as discussed in detail below.

Finally, staff find that with the incorporation of varied rooflines and enhanced articulation on the end units, the proposed development will complement the aesthetic and residential feel of the surrounding neighborhood, ensuring a consistent quality of design. Conditions recommended include the extension of roof eaves, the incorporation of windows and expression lines on the side elevations, and the requirement that the rear elevations include

porches or cross gables on every other unit. In addition, staff find that the mechanical equipment associated with the community building shall be screened from view. The applicant noted in meetings that the proposed architecture was consistent with other projects around the Washington metro area. Staff found that the proposed architecture, with the above modifications, would be more consistent with the similar architecture approved in SE-22002 for Stewart Property.

Side Elevation Sample Renderings



Low Visibility Side (Walkout)



Low Visibility Side (In-Ground)



High-Visibility Side (Walkout)



High Visibility Side (In-Ground)

Rear Elevation Sample Renderings



In-Ground Basement Condition*



Walkout Basement Condition

- (iii) **In the R-A Zone, there shall be a demonstrated need for the facility and an existing medical facility within the defined market area of the subject property.**

The applicant's submission contains a need analysis conducted by Polestar Analysis. The analysis states that the market area has projected growth of 2.3 percent each year in 55+ households for the upcoming five years, which outpaces the overall household growth rate of 1.9 percent. In addition, the analysis states that Marwood is the only age-restricted community within the market area, which contains townhomes and rental apartments that are fully occupied, and other existing active adult units which are up to 20 years old and well-stabilized. More than half of the households in the primary market area (50.2 percent) are age 55+, representing a larger share than the county average, which emphasizes the need for age-restricted housing options.

The Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital Center (a full-service, 182-bed acute-care facility) is located approximately 4.0 miles southwest of the site, placing it within the defined market area.

Staff find that demographic trends, market void, and demand pool for age-restricted housing illustrated in the need analysis demonstrate a need for the facility. In addition, the existing medical facility is within the defined market area of the subject property.

Regulations of the R-A Zone: The following regulations of the R-A Zone are applicable to the proposed project.

Section 27-421.01 – Frontage

Each lot shall have frontage on, and direct vehicular access to, a public street, except lots for which private streets or other access rights-of-way have been authorized pursuant to Subtitle 24 of this Code. Additional provisions are contained in Sections 27-431(d) and (e) and 27-433(e) and (f).

The project proposes frontage on and direct vehicular access to Arethusa Lane, which is an 80-foot ROW extending to the southern property line of the subject property. Arethusa Lane is currently improved up to approximately 675 feet from the subject property. The applicant proposes extending Arethusa Lane from its terminus into the subject property, where it will transition into a series of private roadways, as approved pursuant to Subtitle 24 with the PPS.

Section 27-568 – Schedule (number) of spaces required, generally.

The prior Zoning Ordinance is silent on the number of vehicle parking spaces required for a planned retirement community. For a townhouse or other one-family attached dwelling, the Zoning Ordinance requires 2.04 vehicle parking spaces per dwelling unit. Per Section 27-569, fractional totals shall be rounded up when calculating vehicle parking spaces; therefore, the project requires 258 vehicle parking spaces to demonstrate conformance for the townhouses.

The Zoning Ordinance does not provide the minimum number of off-street vehicle parking spaces for the principal use community building. It states that the number of required spaces is, “Determined by uses comprising the community building (such as office, auditorium, eating or drinking establishment, recreational area).” The applicant contends in their SOJ that an unrelated, previously approved, and certified site development plan (SDP-2301) established parking for a proposed community building by determining the uses contained in the community building.

The applicant contends that the 1,357-square-foot community building shall be used for a “game room” and a “great room,” which are not principal or accessory uses articulated in the prior Zoning Ordinance. The applicant proposes the provision of 15 vehicle parking spaces for the proposed community center, which is comprised

of two ADA-compliant parking spaces, eight standard parking spaces, and five parallel spaces.

In an email dated October 15, 2025, the applicant's attorney states that the applicant proposes that the parking calculation for the community building shall rely on a fixed capacity of 36 chairs. The applicant shall use the principal use classification theater, auditorium, or stadium, which requires one vehicle parking space per four seats. In addition, the applicant proposes to use the principal use classification tennis, racquetball to calculate the require parking for the pickle ball court. Therefore, the applicant contends that 15 vehicle parking spaces is sufficient. The applicant shall revise the parking schedule to reflect principal use classifications used to calculate the parking.

The prior Zoning Ordinance states that parking for the community building must be "determined by uses comprising the community building." The applicant has categorized the "great room" and "game room" as being functionally equivalent to a "theatre, auditorium, or stadium," which requires one space per four seats. Per the proposed seating configuration of 36 fixed seats, the minimum requirement for the community building is nine vehicle parking spaces. Furthermore, Section 27-568 requires four spaces per pickleball court, totaling four additional spaces, which establishes a minimum requirement of 13 vehicle parking spaces for the community building.

The applicant's proposal to provide 15 spaces (two ADA-compliant, eight standard, and five parallel) demonstrates a surplus of two spaces above the minimum code requirement, even when including the recreational amenity. Staff find that the proposed parking, as outlined in the applicant's email, is sufficient and in conformance with this subsection.

IV. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE 2010 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LANDSCAPE MANUAL

The proposed development is subject to the requirements of the Landscape Manual. Specifically, conformance is required to Section 4.1, Residential Requirements; Section 4.6, Buffering Development from Streets; Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses; Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements and Section 4.10 Street Trees Along Private Streets. Analysis of conformance with these sections is discussed below:

Section 4.1, Residential Requirements

The application proposes 126 single family-attached villas arranged horizontally which, per Section 27-1907 Figure 28, the correct principal use classification for the dwelling units is townhouse. Per Section 4.1(c)(2), townhouses arranged horizontally are required to provide "a minimum of one and one-half (1.5) major shade trees and one (1) ornamental or evergreen tree per dwelling unit located on individual lots and/or common open space."

The application proposes 126 lots, which requires a minimum of 189 major shade trees and 126 ornamental or evergreen trees. The landscape plan states that 191 major shade trees are provided and 126 ornamental or evergreen trees are provided, which meets the requirement.

Section 4.6, Buffering Development from Streets

The subject property abuts Johensu Drive on its northwest lot line for 397 linear feet. Johensu Drive is classified as a primary or lower roadway and requires a minimum 20-foot-wide buffer containing 2 shade trees, 8 evergreen trees, and 12 shrubs per 100 linear feet of the property line. The minimum buffer is provided and planted with a varying range of native shrubs and trees, and is in conformance with this section.

Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses

The site is bordered on four sides requiring four bufferyards for this section, which require any combination of trees and shrubs to achieve an appropriate buffering effect. The proposed use dwelling type is single-family attached (townhouse) and each required bufferyard is Type A.

The site's west lot line abuts property in the AR Zone containing single-family dwellings. This buffer, shown as Area "A" on the landscape plan, is 782 linear feet along the property boundary and requires 313 plant units. The plan proposes 315 plant units containing a range of native plant materials. Area "B" on the landscape plan is 456 linear feet requiring 183 plant units and the plan provides 185 plant units.

Area "C" on the landscape plan and along the site's southern boundary abuts vacant property. Per Section 4.7-5(c) of the Landscape Manual, if a developing property with a residential use is adjoining a vacant property zoned residential, 50 percent of the bufferyard is required to be provided on the developing lot. The plan shows a 5-foot bufferyard and a 10-foot building setback from the property line. The boundary is 704 linear feet according to the site plan measurement, but the landscape schedule states the boundary is 740 linear feet; however, staff measured 739 feet, 2.25 inches. Other measurements on the plan were accurate. Therefore, at 740 linear feet, reduced by 50 percent, this bufferyard requires 148 plant units. The plan states that 150 plant units are provided, and that there are 30 ornamental trees provided. Specifically, there is a combination of 30 *Amelanchier canadensis* and *Cercis canadensis*; however, there are 60 plants in Area "C." While this number of plants exceeds what is required, the applicant shall revise the landscape plan prior to certification to reflect accurate information.

Area "D" on the landscape plan and along the site's southern boundary also abuts vacant property and is subject to Section 4.7-5(c). The plan shows a 5-foot bufferyard and a 10-foot building setback from the property line. The boundary is 386 linear feet according to the site plan and measured by staff. This bufferyard requires 78 plant units, and the plan states that 80 plant units are provided. The plan also states that there are 16 ornamental trees provided. Specifically, it states there is a combination of 16 total *Amelanchier canadensis* and *Cercis canadensis*; however, there are 32 plants total in Area "D." As noted above, this exceeds the requirement, but shall be corrected prior to certification of the landscape plan.

Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements

Proposed trees and shrubs to be planted satisfy requirements for percentages of native species in all categories, with no invasive species existing or proposed for the site.

Section 4.10, Street Trees Along Private Roads

The applicant proposes five internal private roads that are subject to this section. Each street is proposed to be lined with shade trees of an acceptable caliper and height. The application proposes the following for each street:

Street Name	Linear Feet: Street	Linear Feet: Driveway	Total Linear Feet for Requirement	Soil Surface Required/Provided	Number of Trees Required	Number of Trees Provided
Road A	2,531	1,080	1,451	7,050/7,050	42	47
Road B	472	162	310	1,500/1,500	9	10
Road C	1,551	72	831	1,500/1,500	9	10
Road D	608	54	554	2,550/2,550	16	17
Road E	520	252	268	1,350/1,350	8	9

Staff find that the proposed street trees are in conformance with the Landscape Manual.

V. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE 2024 PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY WOODLAND AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION ORDINANCE

This property is subject to the provisions of the 2024 Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO) because the property is greater than 40,000 square feet in area and contains more than 10,000 square feet of woodland, and the application was accepted after June 30, 2024. Pursuant to Section 25-317(a)(6) of the prior Zoning Ordinance, the SE site plan shall be in conformance with a Type 2 tree conservation plan. The applicant submitted Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan TCP2-2025-0051.

According to the worksheets shown on the TCP2, the site is 43.73 acres in the R-A Zone. A total of 27.16 acres of existing woodlands are on the net tract, with 13.36 acres of woodland in the floodplain. The site has a total woodland conservation threshold (WCT) of 15.19 acres, or 50 percent of the net tract, as tabulated. The TCP2 shows a total woodland conservation requirement of 26.11 acres based on the proposed clearing of 19.46 acres in the net tract and 0.45 acre in the floodplain. The WCO requirement will be met by providing 7.70 acres of on-site woodland preservation, 0.17 acre of reforestation, and the remainder of the requirement of 18.24 acres with off-site woodland conservation credits.

The proposed use allows for a higher density on-site which has pushed the development envelope far closer to the PMA than would be necessary by other allowed uses in this zone. The current proposal clears most of the woodland within the net tract, proposing preservation within woodland adjacent to the floodplain where development potential is limited. The only site access comes from Arethusa Lane, which will require revisions to the adjacent TCP2, to allow for a stream crossing.

In addition to the woodland clearing, impacts to the PMA and numerous specimen tree removals are also proposed. Given the significant REF on-site, special care should be given in order to design a development that not only meets the vision of the area master plan, but also affords those environmental resources specifically called out in the master plan the proper protection and buffer enhancements recommended in the environmental policies. Establishing the woodland preservation area as a contiguous stretch providing adequate buffering to the Charles Branch should be considered a priority. Prior to certification of the SE, additional reforestation in the area between the proposed wet pond and Specimen Tree ST-36 shall be provided to reforest the PMA. Furthermore, this would establish a connected green corridor with the off-site portions of the Charles Branch.

VI. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY TREE CANOPY COVERAGE ORDINANCE

Prince George's County Council Bill CB-21-2024 for the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance became effective July 1, 2024. Subsequently, Subtitle 25, Division 3, the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, requires a minimum percentage of the site to be covered by tree canopy for any development projects that propose more than 2,500 square feet of gross floor area (GFA) or disturbance, and requires a grading permit. The subject site is being evaluated per the prior A-R Zone. The Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance is not subject to the current Zoning Ordinance grandfathering provisions and does not contain any grandfathering provision for using the prior zoning, except for specified legacy zones or developments that had a previously approved landscape plan demonstrating conformance to tree canopy coverage (TCC). Therefore, this application was reviewed for conformance with the TCC requirement for the current property zone which is AR.

Per Section 25-128, Table 1. Tree Canopy Requirements by Zone, staff find that the proposed project is exempt from the requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance because it is in the AR Zone.

VII. REFERRAL COMMENTS

The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are incorporated herein by reference, and major findings are summarized as follows:

- a. **Community Planning**—In a memorandum dated September 26, 2025 (Sams to Teshome), the Community Planning Division found that, pursuant to Section 27-317(a)(3) of the prior Zoning Ordinance, this SE application will not impair the integrity of the master plan.
- b. **Transportation Planning**—In a memorandum dated September 30, 2025 (Patrick to Teshome), the Transportation Planning Section concluded that the proposed vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access and circulation are acceptable.
- c. **Environmental Planning**—In a memorandum dated October 16, 2025 (Kirchhof to Teshome), the Environmental Planning Section provided an analysis of the subject application and recommended approval subject to six conditions, which have been included in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.
- d. **Subdivision**—The property subject to this Special Exception SE-23003 is known as Parcel 22 and Parcel 83, described in a deed recorded in the Prince George's County Land Records in Book 30306, page 605, and is dated 1985. The approximately 43.73-acre property is in Tax Map 109, Grid B1.

The property is subject to PPS 4-24028, which was approved by the Planning Board on April 3, 2025 (PGCPB Resolution No. 2025-029). The PPS approved 14 parcels and 126 lots on 43.73 acres of land for the development of a planned retirement community, including 126 single-family attached dwelling units. The Subdivision Section confirmed conformance with prior subdivision approvals and provided one

condition, which has been included in the recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- e. **Historic Preservation**—In a memorandum dated September 29, 2025 (Stabler, Chisholm, Smith to Teshome), the Historic Preservation Section discussed the Binger Tenant site (18PR1258) identified by a Phase I archaeology survey in 2023, which stated the site does not have the potential to contribute meaningful information regarding rural life in Prince George’s County and no further archaeological investigations were recommended.
- f. **Verizon Maryland, LLC**—In a letter dated September 23, 2025 (Petrosino to Teshome), Verizon provided the information required for the applicant to establish service to the proposed project, the applicant will address these items during the permitting process in consultation with Verizon.
- g. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—As of the writing of this technical staff report, WSSC did not offer any comments on this subject application.

VIII. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

As of the writing of this technical staff report, no correspondence has been received from the surrounding community.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the applicant’s SOJ, the analysis contained in the technical staff report, associated referrals, and materials in the record, the applicant has demonstrated conformance with the required SE findings, as set forth in the prior Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance. Staff find that the proposed application satisfies the requirements for approval, and that the application is in conformance with the prior Zoning Ordinance requirements. Therefore, staff recommend APPROVAL of Special Exception SE-23003 subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to signature approval of the special exception, the Type 2 tree conservation plan (TCP2) shall be revised to meet all the requirements of Subtitle 25 of the Prince George’s County Code.
 - a. Remove the TCP2 approval block and leave a 2-inch by 2-inch blank space on the bottom right of each plan sheet for the Environmental Planning Section TCP approval block to be added.
 - b. Revise the specimen tree table to correctly reflect the critical root zone impact to each specimen tree with this application.
 - c. Revise the specimen tree maintenance plan to include Specimen Tree ST-9.
 - d. Correct line 6 of the woodland conservation worksheet to reflect the correct TCP2 number, TCP2-2025-0051.
 - e. Remove the current application from the TCP history table.

- f. Additional reforestation shall be provided in the cleared area north of the proposed wet pond unless within a stormwater management easement.
- 2. Prior to signature approval, the special exception site plan shall be revised as follows:
 - a. Label the widths of the proposed public right-of-way for Arethusa Lane in accordance with the approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-24028.
 - b. Revise the parking schedule to include the names of the principal use classifications used to calculate the parking for the community building.
 - c. Demonstrate that exterior mechanical equipment for the community building, as shown on the architectural elevations, will be screened using decorative fencing or dense year-round landscaping.
- 3. Prior to signature approval of the special exception, the applicant shall:
 - a. Submit the final Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties to the Maryland Historical Trust.
 - b. Submit finalized floor plans for the community building that depict the furniture selection and equipment layout for the “game room,” “great room,” and exterior amenities illustrating the placement, type, estimated cost, and quantity of each.
- 4. Prior to signature approval of the special exception, the architectural plans shall be revised as follows:
 - a. Revise the architectural plans to indicate that a brick or stone water table is optional on all side elevations.
 - b. Revise the architectural plans to include porches or cross gables on every other unit.
 - c. Revise the exterior to show railings for doors where the back porch is an option or provide a window in place of the door.
 - d. Provide an expression line at the top of the side elevations to separate the top of the second-floor windows from the peak of the roof.
 - e. Extend roof eaves over the side elevation to provide an overhang and shadow line and provide an architectural feature below the peak of the roof.
 - f. Provide shutters for all windows on side elevations.
 - g. Provide brick on highly visible units, from the ground to the top of the main level.

- h. Revise the plans to indicate that brick or stone will be wrapped on all front façade projections.
 - i. Use colors and materials to differentiate each unit.
 - j. Replace the two proposed shutters on the second-floor side elevation with a window with shutters on each side.
- 4. Prior to certification of the special exception landscape plan, the applicant shall revise the landscape plan to reflect the correct number of plants to be installed and correct the plant schedule to reflect what is depicted on the plan.
- 5. Prior to recordation of the final plat, per Section 27-395(5)(A) of the prior Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, file the covenants submitted with this application in the Prince George's County Land Records and reflect the recording reference on the final plat of subdivision.