

September 27, 2000

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT:

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

VIA: Arie Stouten, Zoning Supervisor

FROM: Whitney Chellis, Planner

SUBJECT: **Special Exception Application No. 4382**

REQUEST: **Animal Hospital in the O-S Zone**

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL with conditions**

NOTE:

This application is on the agenda for the Planning Board to decide whether or not to schedule a public hearing. If the Planning Board decides to hear the application, it will be placed on a future agenda.

Any person may request the Planning Board to schedule a public hearing. The request may be made in writing prior to the agenda date or in person on the agenda date. All requests must specify the reasons for the public hearing. All parties will be notified of the Planning Board's decision.

You are encouraged to become a person of record in this application. The request must be made in writing and sent to the Office of the Zoning Hearing Examiner at the address indicated above. 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 301-952-3280.

FINDINGS:

- A. Location and Field Inspection: The property is located on the north side of Candy Hill Road approximately 1.5 miles east of its intersection with Croom Road (MD 382). It is comprised of approximately 10.19 acres of land and is improved with a single-family dwelling, two stables, a barn and several sheds. The property is comprised of Parcels 27 and 28 and is zoned O-S. The property is L-shaped and has approximately 531.12 linear feet of frontage on Candy Hill Road. The site has existing access via Candy Hill Road. No alteration is proposed to the existing access location.
- B. History: The subject property was rezoned on July 12, 1977, from the R-R to the O-S Zone by Sectional Map amendment. The applicant currently lives on the property and has several horses. The existing pastures, barns and storage sheds will be used for the same and similar purposes if this application is approved. In the O-S Zone, agricultural uses including the keeping of horses, ponies, and animal husbandry are permitted uses. The American Heritage Dictionary (third addition) defines animal husbandry as the care and breeding of domestic animals. On the subject property the applicant currently performs animal husbandry services, primarily for horses.
- C. Master Plan Recommendation: The 1993 Subregion VI Area Master Plan recommends this property for a Low Rural Residential use. The applicant's proposal to provide veterinary services for horses is compatible with the character and needs of the surrounding rural area. There are no master plan issues arising in the consideration of this application.
- D. Request: The applicant proposes to construct a 7,262-square-foot building to house an equine veterinary clinic. One of the existing stables and one of the existing sheds on site will be used to serve the proposed veterinary clinic, along with a portion of the existing pastures. The total gross floor area for the veterinary clinic is 9,092 square feet. The existing dwelling, two existing stables, a barn and a shed are to remain and be used for residential purposes.
- E. Neighborhood and Surrounding Uses: The neighborhood for the subject property is defined by Candy Hill Road to the south, Croom Road to the west, Mattaponi Road and Saint Thomas Church Road to the north and Fenno Road to the east. This neighborhood is generally rural in character and zoned O-S. Customary to these properties is the keeping of horses and ponies.
- F. Specific Special Exception Requirements: An animal hospital is permitted in the O-S Zone as a special exception use with no additional specific requirements. The application must comply with the general requirements of Section 27-317(a) of the Zoning Ordinance which are assessed in Section 1.1 of this report.
- G. Parking and Loading Regulations: **Section 27-568 of the Zoning Ordinance requires, one parking space for every 200 square feet of gross floor area plus one parking space for every 500 square feet of barns, stables and other accessory structures for a veterinarian hospital.**

The proposed new building for the veterinarian use consists of 7,262 square feet (7,262/200=36.3 or 37 spaces required). The existing accessory structures which will serve the veterinary clinic total 1,830 square feet (1,830/500=3.6 or 4 spaces required). The existing dwelling on site, constructed in 1970, requires one parking space. A total of 41 parking spaces are required on site. The applicant is

providing 44 parking spaces, which includes two parking spaces for the handicapped as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Section 27-582 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a loading space for hospitals or other institutional uses in excess of 10,000 square feet. The total gross floor area serving the veterinary hospital is 9,092. Therefore, a loading space is not required.

- H. **Landscape Manual Requirements:** **The site is subject to the Prince Georges County Landscape Manual for the construction of more than 5,000 square feet of gross floor area. The subject property is a mixed-use facility as provided for in Section 4.7(b)(2) of the Landscape Manual.** The residential use is located on Parcel 28 and the veterinarian equine use is located on Parcel 27. Access to parcel 27 is considered part of the veterinarian use and is subject to the *Landscape Manual* for impact standards. The remainder of Parcel 27 is a single-family residential use.

An equine veterinarian office is a medium impact use for purposes of determining compliance with Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual for bufferyard requirements. Several of the adjoining properties are agricultural uses for the keeping of horses and ponies and are compatible as determined by the Landscape Manual. Several abutting properties are vacant and require the applicant to provide a ■B• Bufferyard (30-foot building setback with a 20-foot landscape yard). The applicant is proposing to fulfill the requirements of 4.7 with existing plant units. The residential portion of this property, Parcel 27 is compatible with the abutting properties.

A 4.2 Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip, 10 feet wide, is required along the entire frontage of Candy Hill Road. The revised plan submitted September 20, 2000 should be revised to provide for the 4.2 Commercial/Industrial Landscape Strip to include the road frontage to the west of the existing access drive. The landscape plan currently reflects a 5-foot wide 4.3.b Perimeter Landscape Strip at this location. A 4.3.b. landscape strip is required and provided along the west property line where the parking compound and its access driveway are within 30 feet of the adjoining compatible use. The applicant is providing a dumpster on site and proposes screening in accordance with Section 4.4 of the Landscape Manual.

Based on the revised plans received September 20, 2000, the landscape plan will conform to the Prince Georges County *Landscape Manual*, with the conditions as recommended in this report.

- I. **Zone Standards:** Based on the revised site and landscape plans submitted September 20, 2000, the proposed development will be in accordance with the Prince Georges County Zoning Ordinance, with the conditions as recommended in this staff report.
- J. **Sign Regulations:** The site plan does not include a freestanding sign. However, if the applicant proposes one the location must be illustrated on the site plan prior to final approval. Otherwise, a formal site plan revision will be required to add a sign at a later date.
- K. **Required Findings:**

Section 27-317(a) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that a special exception may be approved if:

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

Finding: The fundamental purposes of the Zoning Ordinance, as found in Section 27-102, are to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and promote compatible relationships between the various types of land use. With the recommended conditions, the applicant's site plan indicates no potential conflicts with these fundamental purposes. This use is compatible with the surrounding uses of farming, keeping of horses, ponies and animal husbandry. This use provides essential services to this existing rural community and provides it in an accessible manner.

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

Finding: The subject property is located in the O-S Zone which permits the proposed animal hospital as a special exception. With the recommended conditions, the use will conform to all 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 Map Plan, the General Plan.**

The approved master plan recommends a low rural residential use for the subject property and the neighborhood.

Staff of the Community Planning Division has offered the following comment regarding the subject proposal:

■ There are no master plan issues arising in the consideration of this application. The proposed use is compatible with the character and needs of the surrounding rural area. •

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

The applicant's statement of justification indicates that the animal hospital/veterinary office will be providing services almost exclusively to horses. Approximately 60 to 70 percent of the veterinary services will be provided off site on an outpatient basis. The majority of the on-site cases will be for emergency care. The proposed use is an extension of the existing activities currently operating and permitted on site to include animal husbandry. Providing veterinary services would benefit the residents in this rural area and not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of the community.

- (5) **The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood.**

The proposed use will be designed in a manner that will preserve the rural farm character of the subject property. The existing pastures used in the keeping of horses will be retained and a portion used in conjunction with the veterinary hospital. The proposed building would be located 500 feet from the street.

The Transportation Planning staff reviewed the proposed development and its impact on the existing road system and concluded the following:

The *Guidelines for the Analysis of the Traffic Impact of Development Proposals* do not contain trip rates for veterinary clinics. The Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Manual*, 6th edition, does not provide specific rates for a veterinary clinic. However, the *Manual* indicates that a medical clinic would generate a total of 28 AM (22 in, 6 out) and 38 PM (15 in, 23 out) peak-hour vehicle trips, based upon a very limited sample size. The applicant notes that the clinic would specialize in veterinary services for horses (and presumably other non-household animals), meaning that most services would be outpatient with few clients coming to the site. The transportation staff believes that this is reasonable and views the above trip generation numbers as a maximum impact for any given weekday.

The vehicle trips generated by the proposed use on the subject property would utilize Candy Hill Road and its intersection with MD 382. This intersection is unsignalized. There are no improvements which are programmed with 100 percent construction funding within the next six years in the current Maryland Department of Transportation *Consolidated Transportation Program* or the Prince George's County *Capital Improvement Program* in the immediate area.

The Prince George's County Planning Board, in the *Guidelines for the Analysis of the Traffic Impact of Development Proposals* has defined an average vehicle delay exceeding 45.0 seconds in any movement as an unacceptable operating condition for unsignalized intersections on the transportation system. The intersection of MD 382 and Candy Hill Road, when analyzed under existing and total future traffic as developed using the *Guidelines for the Analysis of the Traffic Impact of Development Proposals*, was found to be operating with vehicle delays far less than 45.0 seconds in all movements. Therefore, the traffic generated by the site is not sufficient to pose safety and capacity issues on surrounding roadways.

The transportation staff is satisfied with the on-site circulation plan and the proposed access for the proposed use. There are no Master Plan roadway facilities which are affected by this proposal. Candy Hill Road is a rural residential roadway, and provision should be made for dedication of 30 feet from center line at such time that the subject property requires preliminary and record plats.

The Transportation Planning Section finds that there are no significant transportation impacts which would result from the approval of the proposed Special Exception.

- (6) **The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Tree Conservation Plan.**
The site is exempt from the Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance because the applicant is not proposing to disturb any woodland.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the preceding analysis and findings, staff recommends APPROVAL, subject to the condition that the site plan/landscape plan shall be revised prior to the issuance of permits to include the following:

1. Prior to final approval of the Special Exception, the site/landscape plan shall be revised:
 - a. Revise the 4.2 Commercial/Industrial Landscape Strip to include the street frontage to the west of the entrance drive.
 - b. Relabel the ■Impermeable Areas• table on the Landscape Plan to ■Lot Coverage•.
 - c. Revise the required parking tabulation to accurately reflect that 41 parking spaces are required not 44. Parking for the handicapped is included in the number of spaces required on site, not in addition to that number.
 - d. Provide a loading schedule indicating that loading is not required.
 - e. Provide a note indicating that proposed parking spaces will meet the current minimum design standard.