




MEMORANDUM

January 6, 2017

TO: Mensch Capital Partners, LLC

FROM: Eric W. Gillert, AICP, Planning Director 

SUBJECT: Rezoning Application Review **Z-2014-23B**
Proposed: "Westwood Neighborhood" Planned
Unit Development
Property located at: **772 North Forest Road (portion) and
375, 385 & 391 Maple Road**
Application received: December 19, 2016 (revised)
Representative: Sean Hopkins, Esq.

This updates the Planning Department's previous review dated November 10, 2016 and is based on the revised rezoning application received December 19, 2016.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:

1. Policy 3-9: "Redevelopment of large tracts of former recreational land such as golf courses or playing fields requires careful master planning that maintains the essential character of the site while accommodating significant changes in use and density." While the northern two-thirds of the revised proposal is significantly less dense than previously submitted, the office, commercial, and hotel uses proposed for the southern third contrast with the previous golf course use and with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

"New land uses should not result in service requirements exceeding available infrastructure capacities unless mitigation measures are provided with the project or programmed through public sources." There continue to be issues with the capacity for sanitary sewer and stormwater management for this project that have not been addressed.

The plan does address a previous recommendation to include connections to North Forest Road and Frankhauser Road in order to allow better traffic flow and circulation. The amended plan now features a roundabout in the southeast corner of the site at the location of the existing sharp curve of North Forest Road.

Further revisions aimed at addressing Policy 3-9 include:

- replacing offices in the southwest corner of the site with townhomes, which will be more appropriate adjacent to the existing single-family homes on Frankhauser Road, and
 - replacing multi-family units along the western side of the site with enlarged single-family lots that will back up to existing single-family homes on Fairways Boulevard.
2. Policy 3-14: *“Encourage conservation development with incentives for the dedication of open space in private developments.”* The revised plan shows an increase in total open space preservation from 64 acres to 81.6 acres. Existing wooded areas on the site, most notably the area in the northwest section of the property where a mature stand of trees is located, are proposed to be preserved. In addition, the pond areas in the center of the site have been enlarged to present a more usable public space. A multi-purpose field has been added in this area generally identified as a ‘Town park’ that takes advantage of proximity to Ellicott Creek. The proposed trail system has been shifted to more interior locations to increase accessibility and connectivity.
 3. Section 3.3.2: *Regional Centers*: The project is not in one of the preferred locations identified in the Comprehensive Plan for regional centers, yet the southern portion of the site includes regional-scale uses (hotel, larger office buildings). Any encroachment by new commercial development in this area should be minimal and complementary to the surrounding neighborhood.
 4. Section 3.3.3: *Mixed-Use Patterns*. This area is not identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a mixed use center and does not meet mixed-use criteria as described in the Plan.

Consistency with Zoning Ordinance:

The comments below relate to the standards included in Section 5-6, “Traditional Neighborhood Development District (TND)” as described in the Zoning Ordinance:

1. *“Traditional neighborhood business districts have identifiable centers and edges that are consistent in scale and context with the surrounding neighborhood.”* Overall, the scale of the proposed ‘neighborhood center’ is not consistent with the character of the surrounding residential neighborhood, although some changes have been incorporated into the master plan to soften the edges of the development. Office uses previously shown in the southwest corner of the site have been replaced with townhomes to more closely correspond to the residential uses on Frankhauser Road. However, there is a parking lot shown in this area that would be adjacent to the first few homes on Fairways Boulevard, an unacceptable treatment for the project edge.
2. *“Density is highest in the center of the district and decreases with distance from the center.”* As mentioned above, some changes have been included that minimize large parking fields along Frankhauser Road and Sheridan Drive and create transitions from the existing adjacent lower intensity development to the project site. However, the highest proposed density of

development is not at the center of the project, but at the southern third of the site. One of the most dominant features of the development – the senior living facility – is now shown in the southeast corner in perhaps the most visible spot in this development; it should be centrally located within the site. The existing view to the clubhouse from the Sheridan/North Forest intersection is an important open space component for the community and should be kept open.

3. *“Streets are interconnected and blocks are small.”* The concept plan has been revised to include connections with the existing community street system (Frankhauser Road and North Forest Road), however, blocks in the proposed residential section of the development appear to be typical of most subdivisions and do not comply with the unique TND criterion.
4. The requested GB zoning for the proposed hotel is required because hotels are not permitted uses in the TND. Inserting a GB use in the midst of a TND development conflicts with the overall concept of the TND.

Consistency/compatibility with surrounding development zoning:

TND: The revised development plan remains inconsistent with the overall residential character of the surrounding neighborhood, a requirement of the TND. Introducing a commercial component into the area should be done in a way that preserves the existing neighborhood character. In this case, low-intensity commercial/office uses would be appropriate but not those of the scale proposed with this project.

MFR-7: The MFR-7 zoning for the proposed senior living facility is not inconsistent, since it would allow a specialized type of residential use, but it should be relocated to a central part of the site to minimize negative impacts to residential neighbors.

GB: The proposed GB zoning, as the most intense commercial district available in the Town, is not appropriate to the site or consistent with surrounding development/zoning.

DGEIS Comments:

As no modifications to the DGEIS were submitted with this revised rezoning application, the previous comments made regarding the DGEIS remain in effect.

X/Current Planning/Files/Rezoning/Z-2014-23_B/Planning Review_010617

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