



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING  
3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2350

Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director

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October 29, 2013

Dave Loudermilk  
Howard County Department of Public Works  
3430 Courthouse Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

RE: WP-14-010, Elkridge Fire Station

Dear Mr. Loudermilk:

The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning considered your request for a waiver from the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

As of the date of this letter, the Planning Director **approved** your request to waive;

- Section 16.116 – Restricting grading activities and the removal of vegetation within wetlands and streams (and associated buffers), as well as on steep slopes (25%+ over 10 vertical feet)
- Section 16.117 – Design in accordance with existing topography and to minimize clearing
- Section 16.1205(a) – Avoid forest removal in priority retention areas and avoid removal of trees with a 30" dbh or greater (specimen trees)

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Obtain a permit from MDE for the wetland and wetland buffer impacts in conjunction with the JPA submitted on June 28, 2013.
2. Maintain groundwater flow to the ephemeral stream and remaining wetlands with the installation of an underdrain to pipe the groundwater through the site to maintain the flow pattern.
3. For each of the specimen trees removed, 2 shade trees of the same species (tulip poplar) are to be planted for a total of 4 trees. Please show these replacement trees on the landscape plan and indicate their purpose. Since tulip poplars are not recommended for landscape trees, please place these trees in the interior of the site near the southern extent of the LOD. If a safe planting area cannot be selecting, please provide another large shade tree species within the Recommended Plant List of the Landscape Manual.
4. Submission of a site development plan in compliance with the above conditions.

Our decision was made based on the following:

**Extraordinary Hardship or Practical Difficulty** – The applicant has provided adequate justification that the site, which is already owned by the County, provides the optimal location to address the critical need of adequate response time for this area of Elkridge, and that alternative site designs would impact the response time issues, or create other public safety or environmental disturbance issues. Failure to approve the waiver

would create longer response times, create points of conflict between the intersections, road and driveways, and/or would negatively affect the functional design of the facility.

**Alternative Proposals** – Alternative proposals were reviewed in conjunction with the applicant's application to MDE, but each alternative had its own environmental and/or operational impact that would make the project unviable.

**Not Detrimental to the Public Interest** – The proposed site design is made with the intent to best serve the public interest. Environmental impacts are being mitigated onsite to the extent possible. The use of underdrains will maintain the flow of groundwater that feeds the wetlands and streams down site, the construction of microbioretention facilities will provide stormwater management and some habitat (and existing invasive species will be removed) and the two specimen trees that are removed will be replaced with four new trees. Additional mitigation may be required by MDE.

**Will Not Nullify the Intent or Purpose of the Regulations** – The purpose of the regulations are not nullified since a public need is being met on the site and reasonable mitigations to the environmental disturbance is required. All impacts to wetlands will be approved by a state regulatory agency and an in-field meeting has occurred with MDE and the Army Corp of Engineers prior to site construction.

Indicate this waiver petition file number, request, section of the regulations, action, conditions of approval, and date on all related plats, and site development plans, and building permits. This requested waiver will remain valid for one year from the date of this letter or as long as a site development plan remains in active processing.

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Manion-Farrar at (410) 313-2350 or email at [jfarrar@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jfarrar@howardcountymd.gov).

Sincerely,



Kent Sheubrooks, Chief  
Division of Land Development

KS/JMF

cc: Research  
DED  
Real Estate Services  
Forest Conservation Coordinator  
Tesseract  
Marion Honcezy – Maryland Department of Natural Resources