



# HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2350

Voice/Relay

Amy Gowan, Director

FAX 410-313-3467

March 14, 2022

Locust United Methodist Church  
6851 Martin Road  
Columbia, MD 21044

RE: WP-22-075, Locust United Methodist Church

Dear Applicant:

This letter is to inform you that your request for alternative compliance to the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for the subject project was reviewed.

The Department of Planning and Zoning hereby determines that you have demonstrated to its satisfaction that strict enforcement of Section 16.118(c) would result in an unreasonable hardship or practical difficulty. This determination is made with consideration of your alternative compliance application and the four (4) items you were required to address, pursuant to Section 16.104(a)(1):

**1. Strict conformance with the requirements will deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by others in similar areas;**

The proposed walkway is a safety requirement for the emergency egress door at the rear of the church addition that was approved with SDP-18-047. This request to install the walkway is being required by the County to ensure safe egress from the building and will be constructed minimizing the disturbance to the buffer areas. The ability to provide safe egress is a right commonly enjoyed by others religious institutions in similar areas.

**2. Uniqueness of the property or topographical conditions would result in practical difficulty; other than economic, or unreasonable hardship from strict adherence to the regulations;**

The location of the graves in relation to the existing church structure created a practical difficulty in installing the necessary walkway in full conformance with the regulations. There are multiple graves along the rear of the building and disturbance to the grave buffer is unavoidable. The location of the graves in relation to the existing building creates a very narrow area for the required walkway and the disturbance proposed is the minimum necessary to complete the walkway.

The site development plan for the proposed church addition has already been approved and the architectural plans have been completed and submitted to the Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits for review. The Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits has commented that a walkway will be required from the exit door to the parking lot. It would be an unreasonable hardship to require conformance with this requirement, and would result in a potentially unsafe condition.

**3. The Variance will not confer to the applicant a special privilege that would be denied to other applicants and;**

The proposed variance is to facilitate safe emergency egress from the rear of the building and does not confer a special privilege to the applicant that would be denied to others.

**4. The modification is not detrimental to the public health; safety or welfare, or injurious to other properties.**

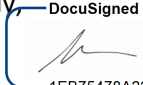
The proposed variance is to facilitate safe emergency egress from the rear of the building. A safe passage is required from the door to the nearest paved parking area which would promote public health and safety. Ground penetrating radar will be used to verify the proposed pathway will not disturb any graves or historic resource.

Approval of this Alternative Compliance is subject to the following conditions:

1. Ground penetrating radar shall be performed within the limits of disturbance for the proposed walkway prior to any work or disturbance to verify that there are no additional graves in the vicinity, and to ensure existing known graves will not be disturbed in any way by the proposed work.
2. The limit of disturbance should be to the minimum amount necessary to construct the required emergency walkway from the fire door to the parking lot. There shall be no activity or stockpiling of materials outside the limit of disturbance.
3. Include this alternative compliance number, description, result, and any conditions in general notes on the SDP and any subsequent plans.

Indicate this alternative compliance 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 alternative compliance approval will remain valid for one year from the date of this letter or as long as a subdivision or site development plan is being actively processed in accordance with the processing provisions of the Regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicholas Haines at (410) 313-4333 or email at [nhaines@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:nhaines@howardcountymd.gov).

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:  
  
1EB75478A22B49A...  
Anthony Cataldo, AICP, Chief  
Division of Land Development

AC/NH  
cc: Research  
DLD - Julia Sauer  
Real Estate Services  
DSThaler & Assoc (Ken Snodgrass)



**Howard County Maryland**  
**Department of Planning and Zoning**  
 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

(410) 313-2350

**DPZ Office Use only:**

**File No.**

**Date Filed**

## ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE APPLICATION

**Site Description:**

**Subdivision Name/Property Identification:**

**Location of property:**

**Existing Use:**

**Proposed Use:**

**Tax Map:**

**Grid:**

**Parcel No:**

**Election District:**

**Zoning District:**

**Total site area:**

Please list all previously submitted or currently active plans on file with the County (subdivision plans, Board of Appeals petitions, alternative compliance petitions, etc.). If no previous plans have been submitted, please provide a brief history of the site and related information to the request:

In the area below, the petitioner shall enumerate the specific numerical section(s) from the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for which an alternative compliance is being requested and provide a brief summary of the request. Please use the additional page if needed.

Section Reference No.	Brief Summary of Request

Section Reference No.	Brief Summary of Request

**Signature of Property Owner:**

**Date:**

**Signature of Petitioner Preparer:**

**Date:**

**Name of Property Owner:**

**Name of Petition Preparer:**

**Address:**

**Address:**

**City, State, Zip:**

**City, State, Zip:**

**E-Mail:**

**E-Mail:**

**Phone No.:**

**Phone No.:**

**Contact Person:**

**Contact Person:**

**Owner's Authorization Attached**

Section Reference No.	Brief Summary of Request