

Remarks of Braddock District Planning Commissioner
Regarding RZ/FDP 2012-BR-020 (Eastwood Properties / Ox Road Estates)
November 21, 2013

In response to considerable neighborhood interest in this project, including the very well prepared remarks presented at the Public Hearing by Middleridge Civic Association President Rick Jones, my remarks this evening will be rather lengthy but will, I hope, save time by addressing most of the outstanding questions.

The Braddock Land Use Committee Chair transmitted to this Commission a detailed chronology of its review of this application. The analysis delineates the many community concerns that have been expressed over the last year and highlights many changes, including smaller and fewer houses, that the applicant has submitted to the original plans in response to community input.

The first major recurring concern of the neighbors is DENSITY. The design yields 2.5 houses per acre, mid-way in the Comp Plan recommended range of 2 to 3 and compatible with the adjoining neighborhoods. In view of existing storm water issues, the unusual parcel shape, and to create useful open space areas, the proposed PDH-3 zoning is appropriate for this site.

A related concern is the PRESERVATION OF TREES AND OPEN SPACE. One of the features of *and reasons for* this P-District is the creation of common open space including tree save areas and the resultant smaller individual lots. The 30% ten-year tree canopy in the proposal *exceeds* the requirement of 25%. The target of preserving *existing* trees as required by ordinance standards is exceeded by a thousand square feet. The 40% open space is *double* the amount required in a P-District. When the commonly-owned open space areas are added to the private yard spaces, then the lot coverage and the effective setbacks around the houses will be similar to or *greater than* neighboring properties, and thus the proposal is compatible with surrounding neighborhood.

As with all new developments, TRAFFIC is a concern. The traffic impact analysis indicates no significant cut-through traffic problem at this specific location. The applicant has proffered to request VDOT to examine during the subdivision phase the perceived need to extend the green light time on Adare Drive to clear traffic queues. Cycle and pedestrian crossing of Adare will be made safer by the new "Stop Here on Red" sign on Adare that will also alert cars not to block the service road.

Regarding the existing trail along Ox Road and located on public right of way, it will remain 8 feet wide and will continue to be maintained by the County until the road is widened, at which time the State will widen and assume responsibility for trail maintenance, as well as address any new storm water and noise concerns. While the private roads will need to be maintained by the HOA, they consume less space. It is noted that the developer will initiate funding of this HOA to begin building a reserve for this future expense.

The specific concern of one resident pertains to the USE OF THE EXISTING SEWER EASEMENT on her land, between lots 259 and 260. The Public Facilities Manual states, "GENERALLY, proposed sanitary sewers shall not be located closer than 15 feet from existing or proposed buildings." However, as shown in the sketch in attachment at the end of the staff addendum, the existing sewer easement begins less than four feet from the corner of the house on

lot 260, and because the easement is only ten feet wide, the word "generally" applies and the sewer line *must* be placed closer than fifteen feet from the corner of this house. The applicant will be required to place the new sewer line so that the exterior will be at least six feet from the exterior of an existing storm water line. The sketch indicates the eight-*inch* sewer line is planned to be located about ten *feet* from the house on lot 260 and six feet below ground, which is below the two-foot deep foundation of the closest corner of the house. DPWES sanitary sewer personnel have indicated the proposed placement of this sewer line is appropriate.

An overarching issue on this site, even without development, is that of managing the STORM WATER that not only falls directly onto the property but also drains from the neighboring yards to the south and from Ox Road to the west. Existing issues include ponding in yards downhill from this parcel, downstream stream erosion, and Woodglen Lake siltation. In these latest revised plans the applicant would access the existing storm water easement on lot 261 only to connect new lines under the manhole in the northwest corner.

As indicated at the bottom of page 2 of the Staff addendum, the underground storage area and rain gardens will detain and treat two- and ten-year storms and will *retain a proportion* of hundred-year storms. In a significant storm event, *delaying* a portion of untreated storm water flowing overland from offsite will improve the downstream situation. This proportional improvement will prevent exacerbating existing drainage problems downstream.

The current 27-inch storm water line that eventually conveys much of this water off the property has been inspected by Maintenance and Stormwater staff using a pole camera. NO blockages or other operation or structural issues were found. The lines are functioning adequately and are appropriately sized.

Additional flow elsewhere on the property would be controlled by channeling sheet flow through a network of pipes that would carry water to other existing storm drains.

Earlier versions of the proposal indicated a small drainage diversion that would require additional overland relief but that diversion has been eliminated. Therefore the proposal has been revised to meet overland relief and adequate outfall requirements entirely on-site.

The plan continues to exceed the standards required for phosphorous removal by 5%.

The new proffer 39 was added at my request and that of the County staff, and recognizing the ongoing storm water concerns of the residents in lots 261 and 262. To alleviate existing drainage issues, the applicant is offering to assist in the regrading of land on lots 261 and 262, *if requested to do so by the neighbors in writing*. However, the staff addendum indicates the application fully complies with storm water regulations and such regrading is NOT needed for the applicant to meet any and all requirements.

Also at my request, and at the recommendation of DPWES site review staff, the applicant has further engineered its storm water management design to demonstrate that it can fully detain 2- and 10-year storms onsite, and create a proportional improvement for hundred year storms that will greatly improve the current situation because it would remove a majority of the surface runoff that currently flows overland to the inlet on the southwest corner of lot 261. The Applicant has

completed storm water calculations extensive enough for site plan review, at which time a thorough and rigorous analysis, including review of the rain garden facility, will be conducted by County engineers. Because the applicant has performed these calculations much earlier than usual in the development process, the community has more months in which to review the computations.

No further deferral by this Commission is appropriate.