



IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC File No. MP117

SEP 23 2009

Clerk of the Council
County Administration Building, Room 2198
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

RE: Public Hearing Comments for Preliminary Glenn Dale-Seabrook-Lanham and Vicinity Sector Plan and Proposed Section Map Amendment

To the Clerk of the Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Preliminary Glenn Dale-Seabrook-Lanham and Vicinity Sector Plan and Proposed Section Map Amendment. The comments provided below focus on the National Capital Planning Commission's (NCPC) role as the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region (NCR). NCPC coordinates all federal planning activities in the region, and has several planning functions: comprehensive planning; project planning; federal project and master plan reviews; and multi-year federal capital improvements planning. Among its major responsibilities are preparing long-range plans and special studies to ensure the effective functioning of the federal government in the NCR; preparing jointly with the District of Columbia government the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, and reviewing master plans and area plans proposed by state, regional and local agencies for their effect on the federal establishment. We invite you to visit our website, www.ncpc.gov, for additional information.

Overall, Commission staff finds the recommendations in the Preliminary Sector Plan to be consistent with the planning principles and policies of the Comprehensive Plan of the National Capital: Federal Elements (Comprehensive Plan). Specifically, one of the overarching principles in the Comprehensive Plan states: "Reinforce Smart Growth and Sustainable Development Planning Principles." The Sector Plan recommendations for mixed-use neighborhoods within walking distance of a major transit services or facilities, the development of pedestrian-oriented design standards, the provision of affordable and workforce housing, the creation of new parks and open spaces, and the development of a sustainable stormwater management system, are all consistent with the principles and advance regional and federal interests considered in the Comprehensive Plan.

Clerk of the Council

Page 2

Staff review has identified the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Introduction Station, at 11450 Old Pond Drive, as a primary federal interest. We informed the Agricultural Research Service at the U.S. National Arboretum, regarding this preliminary Sector Plan and Proposed Section Map Amendment draft, and encouraged them to provide additional review comments to the Planning Board and the County Commission.

The site at Glenn Dale, where a portion of the in-ground collection of the USDA plant research was maintained, is scheduled for closure by the Department although no time frame is set for the federal government to sell the plant introduction station land. Once the federal government decides to sell the buildings and acreage, the Prince George's County M-NCPPC could plan to acquire the property. The USDA Plant Introduction Station, due to its proximity to the Glenn Dale Hospital site, may help create a regional park and opens space amenity.

Prior to 2006, over 180 genera of plants were located at the Glenn Dale USDA site. The development of several species in research efforts at the Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station is historically important to the chronicles of landscape plant development in the United States. One of the best recent examples might be the disease resistant American elm varieties that were grown at Glenn Dale and the prior extensive establishment of the Glenn Dale varieties of Azaleas, now in existence throughout the country. Staff has reviewed the preliminary Sector Plan and takes no exception to the stated open space and historic preservation strategy to acquire the 70 acres of land formerly utilized as the Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station. Staff expresses, however, that an effort should be made by the Prince George's County M-NCPPC to identify in the future at the site, in some appropriate fashion, the important role the previous Glenn Dale federal facility contributed to the science and research of the United States plant and landscape industry.

Consistent with several policies the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan that focus on promoting mass transit and multi-modal transportation systems for the region, the staff notes support for the provision of bikeways within public streets right-of-way, and enhancing the functionality of the Seabrook MARC Station for improved ridership. The recommendations, if adopted, will not only enhance the effectiveness of the Transit Management and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies that are already in place, but will also enhance the commuting experience of federal employees and the environment of the county.

The transit and multi-modal transportation strategies are also consistent with the Air Quality policies found in the Federal Environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Federal policies to reverse the high level of ozone in the region include reducing mobile sources of air pollutants through transportation strategies such as adopting Transportation

Clerk of the Council

Page 2

Management Plans in federal workplace operations and incentivizing mass transit use by federal employees.

NCPC staff supports the proposal to incorporating low-impact stormwater management strategies to open spaces for the Glenn Dale-Seabrook-Lanham and Vicinity Sector Plan. Improving the water quality and maintaining green buffers is not inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan policies. The use of low-impact stormwater facilities is compatible with the federal government's adoption of Green development practices for facilities throughout the National Capital Area.

We commend your proactive efforts in ensuring that the federal government is engaged in your planning endeavors and encourage you to continue doing so. NCPC staff looks forward to future coordination with the Prince George's County Planning Department. Please contact Eugene Keller at (202)482-7251 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Sherman", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael A. Sherman, APA, Associate AIA
Director, Policy and Research Division

cc: Dr. Thomas Elias
National Arboretum