STAFF RECOMMENDATION

E. Keller

NCPC File No. MP06

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, GLEN HAVEN SECTION
MASTER PLAN MODIFICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
Horde Street and Windham Lane, Montgomery County, Maryland

Submission by the Department of the Army

November 26, 2003

Abstract

The Department of the Army has submitted an update of the Master Plan at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Glen Haven Section, for development of a new military personnel housing program called the Residential Community Initiative (RCI). The RCI plan at Glen Haven would demolish the existing housing stock and reconstruct both the Glen Haven site layout and buildings to provide 234 new homes in a mix of apartments and townhouses. The site currently contains approximately 211 family housing units, all townhouses (average age 46 years). The Commission, in April 2002 encouraged the Army to commence a re-evaluation of the Glen Haven Army housing units as a high-priority enterprise and to introduce the RCI as a potential method to address the need to improve the physical condition of military housing, which is at a premium in the Washington metropolitan area.

Authority

Approval of master plan modification pursuant to Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)))

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Approve the Master Plan Modification for the Glen Haven Section of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, located in Montgomery County, Maryland, as presented in the drawings and report titled, *Residential Communities Initiative, Walter Reed Army Medical Center*, dated August 2003.

Recommend the Army establish a pedestrian sidewalk at or adjacent to Horde Street to provide school-age children an adequate walking path and school bus stop waiting area on the sidewalk, at a location to be determined in coordination with County authorities, if adequate existing street

right-of-way is available to accommodate such an improvement without additional land acquisition.

Require the submission of detailed preliminary and final site and building plans of the Residential Community Initiative project to the Commission, as one submission if possible, after consulting with Commission staff on the design and development for the sidewalk improvement. The submission of the more detailed project plans, when available, should also address the reforestation requirement of the housing project, clearly indicating onsite mitigation that will be established, and are to be coordinated with the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

* * *

BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

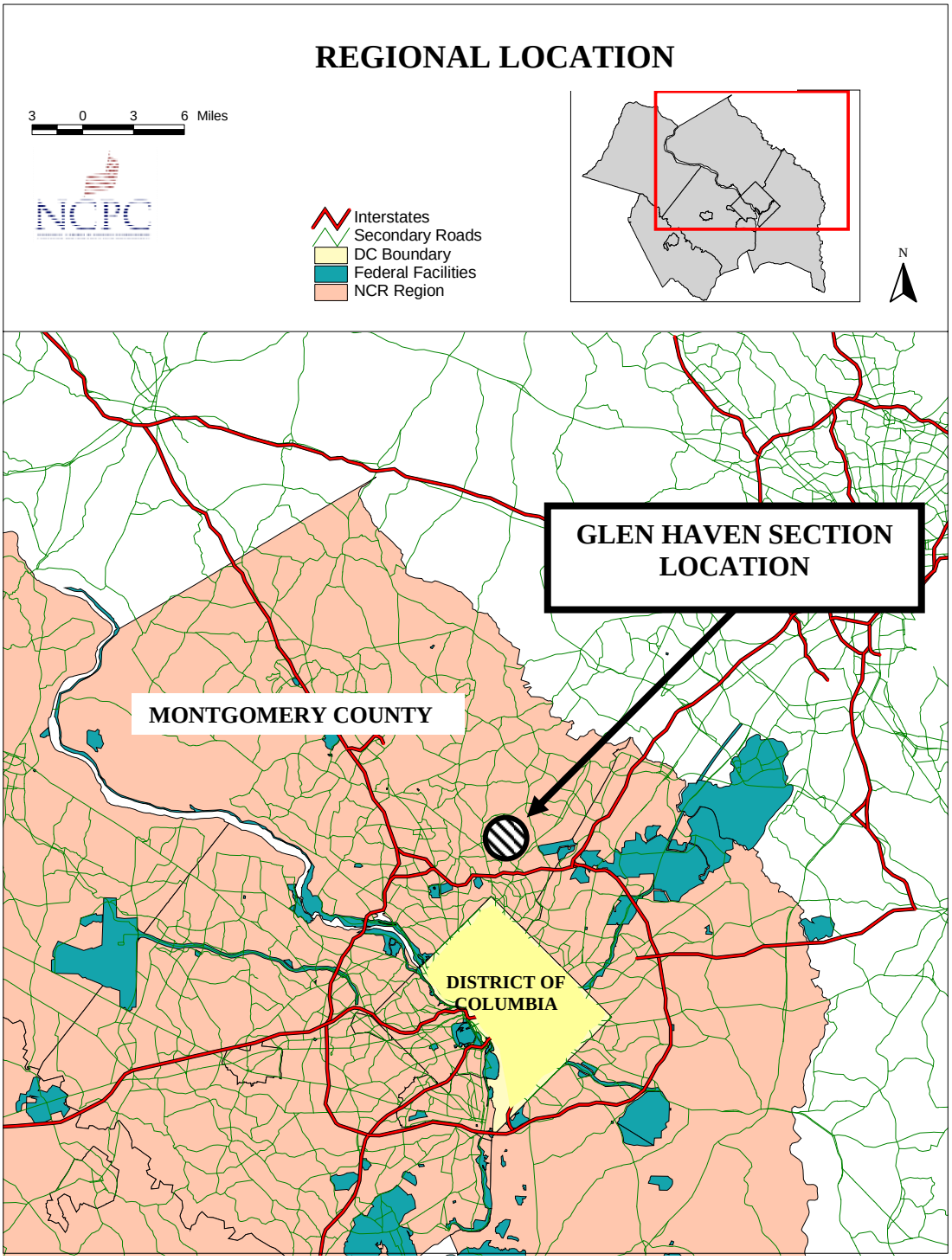
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The Glen Haven Section of WRAMC in Montgomery County, Maryland is approximately 4.2 miles north of the Main Section in the District of Columbia and 3.4 miles northeast of Forest Glen Section. Glen Haven Section occupies approximately 20 acres and has 211 family housing units for enlisted soldiers, grades E-4 through E-9. The units consist of 126 two-bedroom, 45 three-bedroom, and 40 four-bedroom multi-family units. Glen Haven is surrounded on three sides by local residential-community neighborhoods. The Glen Haven public elementary school, a county facility, is adjacent to the east side of the Army property while to the southeast is Glen Haven Park, a county maintained neighborhood park.

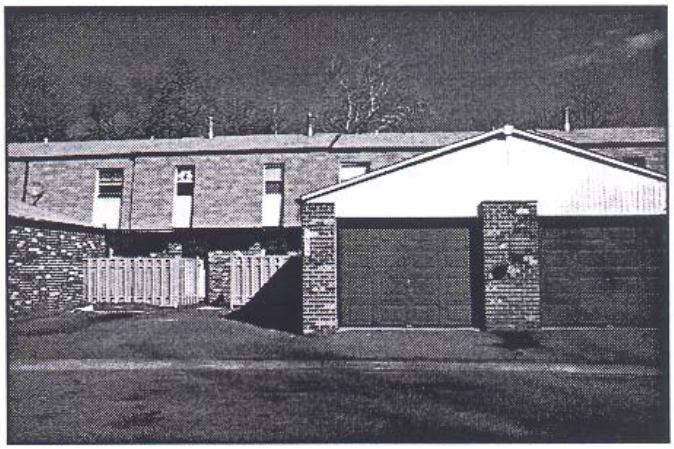
The submitted proposal is a full Master Plan Modification of the Glen Haven Section and reflects a complete redesign of the site and structures at this Army property. Glen Haven is an Army facility totally dedicated to housing Army personnel and their families only. The Modification updates the previous Master Plan approved by the Commission in August 2002. This new Plan incorporates the RCI program with the added consideration of boundary security as a gated community. This effort is a project that is a partnership between WRAMC and a private developer, GMH Military Housing L.L.C., to enable the military installation to leverage existing appropriated housing funds (personnel housing allowances) and assets (real property) to attract private capital for needed army housing improvements. At Glen Haven a 50- year lease would be executed to allow GMH to maintain and operate the property for military housing purposes. The RCI program will be utilized to replace and renovate military housing throughout WRAMC, including locations at the Main Section in the District of Columbia and the Forest Glen Section in Montgomery County, Maryland.

The submitted Master Plan Modification reflects the complete redesign of all features at Glen Haven, but does not deviate from the overall existing land use of the property. The proposed features of the modified plan include:

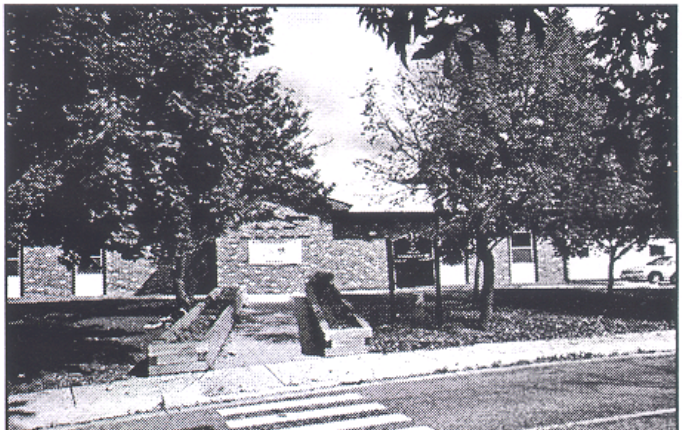
- The existing child development center and its expansion, which was approved by the Commission in August 2002
- 180 three and four bedroom apartments, including 20 that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.
- 54 three and four bedroom townhomes with garages (four which are ADA compliant)
- 560 regular and handicapped surface parking spaces for the housing units



- A new 2,400-square-foot Community Center building for meeting, small management office, and teen recreational purposes
- 12 required surface parking spaces for the operation of the child development center (includes 2 handicapped spaces)
- 54 driveways to single car garages as part of the townhome site development
- Three tot-lot playgrounds, one larger school-age playground, and one full-court basketball court
- New pedestrian sidewalks throughout
- A one-acre replanted village green space
- New pedestrian walkway spine that connects to adjacent elementary school
- New north boundary connecting entrance road
- New perimeter brick and metal picket fence with gated entrances at the community entry roads
- New streetlight and open space pedestrian security lighting
- New landscape plantings, including street trees and parking area trees, throughout the community site plan
- New paved streets adhering to county standards of pavement material, design and width



TYPICAL EXISTING GLEN HAVEN HOUSING



EXISTING GLEN HAVEN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

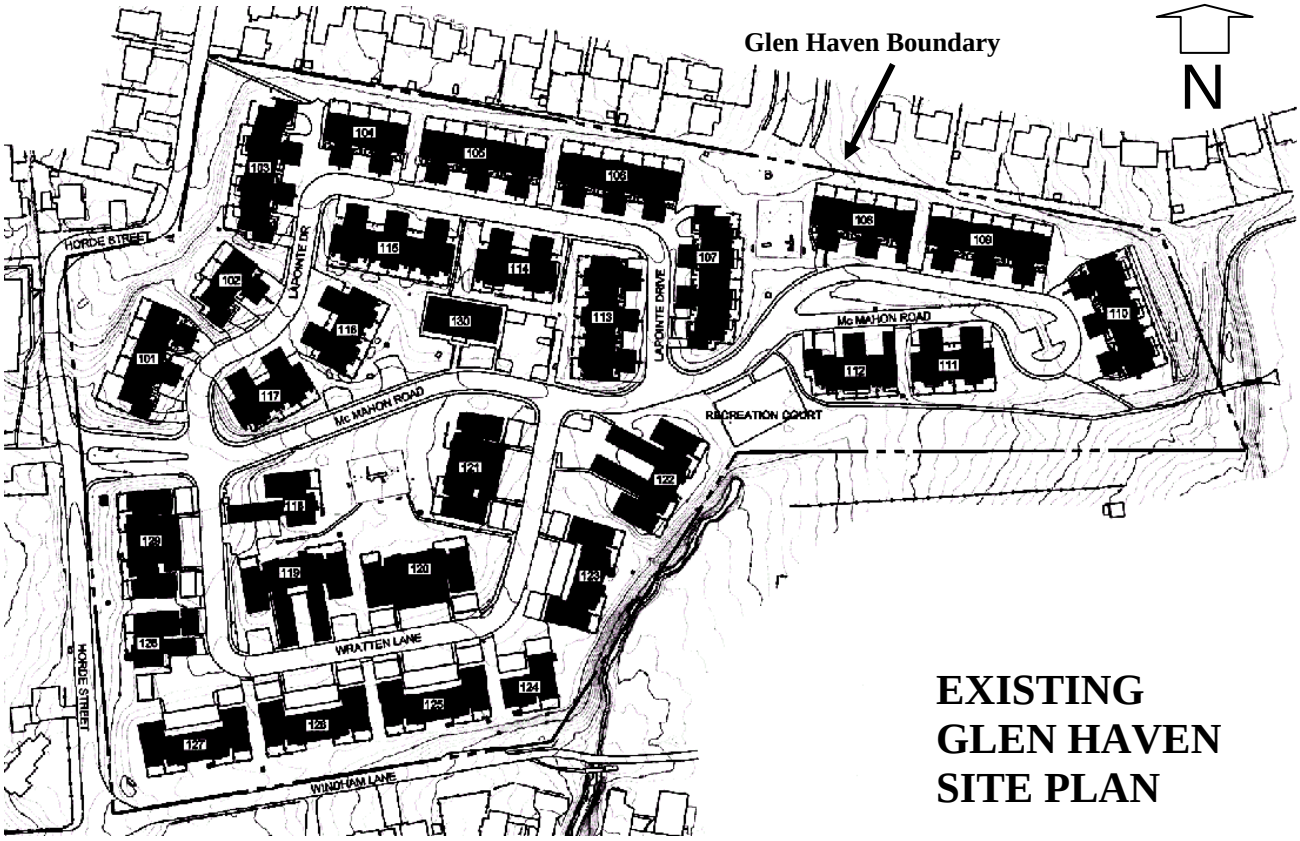
A redesigned stormwater drainage and management system would be established in the new Plan that would exhibit an increase in sub-watershed drainage flows of 1 to 1.75 cubic feet per second for each community drainage area of 8 and 12 acres respectively. Eight-tenths of an acre of existing trees are cleared in development of the proposed plan. The only large existing tree cover on the property consists of that forest area . Total forest re-establishment requirement for the Plan, in accordance with county regulations would be 3.50 acres. The afforestation requirement for the development can not be met at the current existing project property.

The proposed Master Plan Modification would have all vehicular circulation on the perimeter of the site with the pedestrian green spaces internalized to the central area of the Plan, allowing all walkways and tot lots to be accessed by crossing only one street. The addition of 23 homes to the housing stock does generate a minimal increase in vehicle trips associated with those added residences. However, as determined in the prepared traffic analysis completed in October 2003, there is a negligible increase in traffic volume. Projected traffic volume remains within the Congestion Standard set by the Montgomery County Planning Board for the Kensington/Wheaton Policy area which has a critical lane volume (CLV) of 1650 to 1800 vehicles per hour. The project CLV, peak hour (morning and evening), ranges from 62 to 1361 vehicles.

CONSULTATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Staff contacted U.S. Army personnel at WRAMC to review the proposed modification issues in early spring 2003 and in August through October 2003. These meetings resulted in defining the general scope of the RCI, defining the Commission's submission requirements for this planned change, and also assisted the Army in:

- Identification of the Master Plan Modification environmental status.
- Discussion of Master Plan Modification with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning staff to identify issues of potential concern.



EXISTING GLEN HAVEN SITE PLAN

- Specification that the RCI program will be utilized to replace and renovate military housing throughout WRAMC in the metropolitan area.

Presently, the RCI Program involves two of the three Sections at WRAMC: the Glen Haven Section, slated for replacement of all the 1976-constructed Army Family Housing units (AFH) buildings and the Main Section in the District of Columbia that includes ten historic-eligible AFH units, built circa 1915, serving as individual Officer Quarters. Two of the latter buildings are currently vacant and subsequent demolition is anticipated at the Main Section; the remaining eight buildings are to be turned over to GMH for renovation and/or maintenance responsibility. Of the eight historic structures, WRAMC Buildings #8 and #9 are to be inventoried as part of a 50-year lease agreement with GMH and, accordingly, will be renovated per earlier-conducted surveys of the structures. Meanwhile, Buildings #19, #21, #22, #25, #26 and #29 are to be entered into a maintenance agreement with GMH until the units are vacated or returned to the responsibility of WRAMC, whichever occurs first.

As the WRAMC Main Section Master Plan is updated (slated for spring to early summer 2004), and concept plans are further developed for the proposed Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) Project (a WRAMC public/private partnership for Main Section, separate from RCI), the buildings noted for GMH maintenance-only responsibility will be returned to WRAMC. These buildings will be considered for use as interim housing for families associated with hospital patients and funded in a manner similar to the Fisher House and Ronald McDonald House Foundations. As part of the program process, the AFIP Project will identify which of the noted buildings are to be included with its project and the development of a site plan, appropriate to the overall needs of the AFIP Project, and will propose onsite relocation of the selected structures.

This facet of the related RCI program planning has been, and continues to be, coordinated with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Officer (DCHPO) and DCHPO staff have been in discussions with the Army regarding the Section 106 Process at the Main Section. A Programmatic Agreement is being sought by the Army for the Main Section proposal.

COORDINATION

The Montgomery County Planning Board staff of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) was provided copies of the Master Plan Modification in August 2003 with the request for comment to NCPC. The County staff reviewed issues with NCPC staff and verbally indicated that comment would be provided. On November 19, 2003 M-NCPPC staff provided comments and requested that detailed project plans be provided to M-NCPPC for Planning Board review when available. During their initial staff reviews, M-NCPPC highlighted that the Army did provide a Forest Delineation Plan to the M-NCPPC staff which appears to fall short regarding some county desired objectives. M-NCPPC has identified the following issues that they request further detail from the Army:

- A developed stormwater management plan.
- Use of low impact development and design of stormwater management using green technology approaches.

- Use of native plant species.
- A final forest conservation plan which includes a tree save plan meeting county requirements.
- Make attempts to reduce impervious surfaces or limit those surfaces to the existing limits if possible.

PROPOSED GLEN HAVEN MASTER PLAN MODIFICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Additionally, in earlier discussions with the Army, M-NCPPC expressed a desire for the extension of a north road entrance to the development and the concern to have a direct pedestrian connection to the Glen Haven Elementary School. These requirements are provided in the

submitted plan and will be coordinated with the county Department of Public Works and Transportation as requested by M-NCPPC.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Applicant: Department of the Army, Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Architect: GMH Military Housing L.L.C. Frederick, Maryland, an affiliate of GMH Associates, Inc. in conjunction with Benham, a firm that is a comprehensive architecture, engineering and design/build firm, having a long history of providing professional services to the United States military specifically for military housing. Other associated partners are the Centrex Construction Group from Dallas, Texas.
Square Footage: Approximately 400,000 square feet of total residential structure construction
Estimated Cost: Estimated total cost of the initial stage of the project is $184 million dollars.
Schedule: Not available at this time, although the initial development requirement of the RCI program established that the selected developer must begin operation within a five-year period established from January 2004.

EVALUATION

Finding that most major issues are addressed satisfactorily within the submitted Master Plan Modification and that the RCI Plan as a whole meets the objective expressed by the Commission in April 2002, **staff recommends approval** of the submitted Master Plan Modification. Staff observes that the modification:

- Includes an assessment of programmatic needs, which is thoroughly discussed.
- Describes existing conditions and the facility's location context, and that goals and objectives are clearly stated.
- Fully describes the proposed exterior and urban development intent for the community development initiative.

Staff believes that implementation of the Master Plan amendment will result in an improved installation design and provides a substantial upgrade for necessary functional buildings, circulation, and open space in the Glen Haven military housing complex. The building density and character of the planned housing fits with the Wheaton Planning Area housing stock. The adjacent existing density identified in the Wheaton Sector Plan is 22 units per acre, compared to the proposed 11.7 units per acre. The Kensington/Wheaton Master Plan indicates 60 percent of the adjacent area housing consists of townhouse units in the County developed plan. At various locations throughout the planning area, small infill townhouse developments occur consisting of densities from 6 to 12 units per acre.

Both NCPC staff and county planners have reviewed the potential to improve transit connections to the Glen Haven housing relative to the Wheaton Metro Station and its accessibility to pedestrians for work trips. However, in the detailed transportation study completed by the Army, the conclusion was expressed that the currently operated WRAMC shuttle bus was more efficient and user friendly than the reliance on Glen Haven residents to undertake the 15 to 20

minute walk to the Metro Station on improved sidewalk routing. Moreover, the commuter would then still face the additional time for bus transit from the Tacoma Park Metro Station to the Main Section of WRAMC at the other end of the in-bound trip on Metrorail, which adds more time to the work trip.

TOWNHOME BUILDING - ELEVATION

APARTMENT BUILDING - ELEVATION

BUILDER SKETCHES OF MASTER PLAN MODIFICATION HOUSING TYPES FOR THE GLEN HAVEN RCI PROGRAM

BUILDER SKETCH OF HORDE STREET ENTRANCE GATE FOR THE GLEN HAVEN RCI PROGRAM

The current headway of the WRAMC shuttle bus to and from Glen Haven is 15 to 25 minutes with trips lasting five to ten minutes in duration for the five mile trip. Consequently, it is recommended that WRAMC maintain the shuttle bus to and from Glen Haven and WRAMC Main Section.

Another aspect of the project design that staff wishes to clarify is that the Army fully intends to comply with the the Maryland Forest Conservation Act as it pertains to federal projects pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, Environment Article, Title 4, Subtitle 2 the Stormwater Management Regulations, Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 26.17.02.01 through 26.17.02.12.; the requirements of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 08.19.01-04 Natural Resources Article 5-103; and the provisions of County Regulation Chapter 22A, *Forest Conservation – Trees* effective on November 5, 2001, Section 22A-5, subparagraph (f) a governmental project reviewed for forest conservation purposes by the state Department of Natural Resources under the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Finally, while staff is encouraged by the Modification Plan and expresses staff's complete support in the need and purpose of the RCI program, staff finds one detail of the Plan that requires further investigation and improvement. This issue, the establishment of a pedestrian sidewalk at or adjacent to Horde Street, to provide school-age children an adequate walking path

to the closest public school bus stop on or near that street, is an important general safety issue (it is a narrower, two lane road), even though the street is not heavily traveled. Staff recommends this feature be provided if adequate existing street right-of-way is available to accommodate such an improvement, without additional land acquisition, and that detailed final project development plans should be provided to the Commission in the Army's submission of preliminary and final site and building plans. The submission of the more detailed project plans, when available, should also address the reforestation requirement of the housing project and clearly indicate where any onsite mitigation can be established.

Wheaton CBD Sector Plan, 1990	Plan encourages use of Planned Development Zones and mixed generational housing to provide a range of housing types for populations balanced by age, income and family structure.	The Plan outlines that sites should be near public transportation; near shopping and recreation; accessible without crossing major arteries	Potential sites: **Plan recommends PD Zone for WTOP property; PD Zone for six-acre property on University Blvd east of Amherst; PD Zone for WSSC tanks.**

M-NCPPC WHEATON SECTOR PLAN HOUSING DISCUSSION SUMMARY, 1990

CONFORMANCE

National Historic Preservation Act

In the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan, November 24, 1999, the Army found that there are no historic or archaeological National Register-eligible resources at the Glen Haven Section property or its vicinity. In a letter dated March 3, 1999, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development concurred with the Army's determination that there is little potential for archaeological resources at Glen Haven and therefore found that the site is ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Army has concluded its Section 106 responsibilities regarding the Glen Haven Section.

The RCI Program realization involves another section of WRAMC, the Main Section in the District of Columbia, which includes ten historic-eligible AFH units, built circa 1915, serving as individual Officer Quarters. Two of the latter buildings are currently vacant and subsequent demolition is anticipated at the Main Section; the remaining eight buildings are to be turned over to GMH for renovation and/or maintenance responsibility. Of the eight historic structures,

WRAMC Buildings #8 and #9 are to be inventoried as part of a 50-year lease agreement with GMH and, accordingly, will be renovated per earlier-conducted surveys of the structures. Meanwhile, Buildings #19, #21, #22, #25, #26 and #29 are to be entered into a maintenance agreement with GMH until the units are vacated or returned to the responsibility of WRAMC. The planning for this portion of the RCI program has been, and continues to be, coordinated with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Officer (DCHPO) and DCHPO staff have been in discussions regarding the Section 106 Process at the Main Section. Programmatic Agreement is being sought by the Army for the Main Section proposal and has been completed per the attachment (see attached agreement).

National Environmental Policy Act

Pursuant to the regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Department of the Army completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Master Plan in November 2003. The proposed preferred alternative of the Master Plan Modification, a partial privatization alternative, a private-sector reliance alternative, and the "No Action" alternative were evaluated by the NEPA process effort. The EA addresses the potential environmental impacts of preferred option to transfer responsibility for providing housing and ancillary facilities to GMH Military Housing, L.L.C. and the development of the conceptual plan as submitted in the Master Plan Modification. The EA and it determination of effects was signed by the Department of Army authorities on November 20, 2003.

The existing environment of the Glen Haven Section has essentially remained consistent since the Army upgraded the facility's housing units in the late 1970s. The Glen Haven Section is in the central portion of Montgomery County, Maryland in a drainage area that serves as a tributary watershed of Sligo Creek. This creek is a tributary of the Anacostia River. Since stormwater pipes enclose most existing drainage at the site, no major constraints affect the preferred plan or are impacted by it. All housing and buildings that would comprise the redeveloped Glen Haven property are outside the 100-year floodplain of Sligo Creek.

Vegetation at the site is comprised of a severely fragmented Oak-Chestnut forest, but is dominated by horticultural plant species associated with mowed lawn or other landscape areas defined as open space in the plan. The one area having natural vegetation occurs along the wooded drainage way south of multi-family housing units at the eastern end of Glen Haven. Field investigations for state and federal rare or endangered species of flora or fauna identified no eligible candidates.

Issues of the environmental review focused primarily on minor alteration of site topography, minor erosion impacts from construction, and minor increases in vehicle trips due to an increase of 23 residential homes. The potential effects and mitigation measures identified for the proposed Plan include:

- **Topography**: Activities associated with implementing the Glen Haven Master Plan Modification would minimally modify topography on the property.

- **Soils**: Activities associated with implementing the Glen Haven Master Plan Modification would result in some minimal soil disturbance and the potential for some short-term erosion during construction. Erosion problems would be minimized by use of Best Management Practices.
- **Surface Water**: Any increase in sediment loading into the Sligo Creek drainage during construction would be minimized by employment of Best Management Practices as indicated above. Because much of the proposed construction is residential in nature, measures would include sediment fence barriers, straw bale water flow barriers, and stone vehicle-wheel sediment traps.
- **Ecological Resources**: Activities associated with implementing the modification and its revised housing would result in the loss of approximately 0.8 acres of trees and a number of other landscaping elements at Glen Haven. New landscape plantings would follow the WRAMC Landscape Development Plan for the new housing.
- **Land Use**: The proposed action would result in a small reduction in recreation land uses and a small increase in Community Facilities land use. The use changes amount to less than one-half acre in total area and are insignificant to the whole of the housing complex.
- **Transportation**: Activities associated with implementing the Plan would result in the addition of an additional access road to the development. This would aid in emergency vehicle response time to the eastern end of the housing complex. Emergency vehicle right-of-ways would be maintained as an open grassy pervious surface by employing one of the available technologies that provide subsurface support yet allow establishment of turf grass. The addition of 23 homes to the housing stock does allow an increase in vehicle trips to occur, however, there is a negligible increase in traffic volume as determined in the prepared traffic analysis completed in October 2003. Projected traffic volume remains within the Congestion standard set by the Montgomery County Planning Board.
- **Socioeconomics**: Implementation of the Glen Haven Master Plan Modification would result in improved childcare facilities, improved outdoor safety for children in the vicinity of Building 130, and improved open space relationships and landscape aesthetics for the housing complex overall in a reconfigured central corridor. There would be no disproportionate impact on minority or low-income populations.
- **Noise**: Noise would be generated by construction equipment. Temporary impacts would be minimized with noise control equipment installed on construction vehicles and restricting construction to daytime/weekday hours.

Staff finds the minor environmental effects and their mitigation supportable and fully defined by the EA evaluation. Staff believes the Army determination is a complete review of the requirements of the Master Plan Modification regarding the RCI program and supports its implementation of the mitigation actions identified above.

Federal Capital Improvements Program

The Master Plan Modification is not included in the Federal Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2002-2007 adopted by the Commission on July 3, 2001 or any succeeding programming. Because this work entails all private funding for construction of the capital

improvements to the military housing project, no federal funds are being appropriated to expend in the undertaking. Lease of in-kind assets are being offered by the Department of Defense in consideration of the use of private funds per the Congressional intent of the undertaking.

Comprehensive Plan

The proposal is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. The Federal Facilities Element designates the installation for military use with a medical purpose. The Master Plan Modification provides for the expansion of the existing child development center (CDC) and the upgrade of family housing units on site. An improvement to the CDC is consistent with an applicable policy in the Federal Employment Element of the Comprehensive Plan, which specifies:

> Space for programs of day care for children of Federal employees at locations with significant numbers of Federal employees is encouraged to be made available.

As the Glen Haven Section is part of the Department of the Army's Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the upgrading of the military family housing stock would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, nor would any ecologically sensitive areas or historic properties be impacted by the proposal.