

## MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Alfred D. Lott, ICMA-CM, CPM  
City Manager

SUBJECT: ***Status Report***

DATE: December 3, 2020

### ***Status Report***

1. City Grant to Employ Prince George's Hourly Worker Fund Final Report

With the City of Bowie's grant to Employ Prince George's, made in July of this year, EPG assisted 92 City of Bowie residents by disbursing 92 cards (1 to each pre-approved resident) valued at \$200 per card. All grant funds have been disbursed.

| Spent              | Bowie              |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Advertising        | \$170.72           |
| CareerEdge         | \$600.00           |
| Supplies           | \$400.00           |
| Card Purchases     | \$18,400.00        |
| Card Fees          | \$322.00           |
| Delivery           | \$107.28           |
| <b>Total Spent</b> | <b>\$20,000.00</b> |

2. Jesuit Retreat Center Stakeholders Meeting

The attached memorandum summarizes the topics of discussion from Tuesday evening's Stakeholders Meeting conducted by the Planning Department. A total of 61 attendees participated in the virtual meeting. A video of the meeting is available on the City Council video webpage.

3. City Tree Lighting

The official start of the holiday season in Bowie begins on the first Sunday of December with the City Tree Lighting. Because of the pandemic this year's event cannot be in-person.

The event will be held this Sunday and will include a videotaped holiday greeting from the Mayor and holiday music from a prior year's Holiday Concert performed by the Bowie Youth Choir. It will also include greetings from Santa & Mrs. Claus followed by

the grand illumination of trees located throughout the City including Veterans Park, Belair Mansion and the lobby of City Hall.

This pre-recorded event will be released for the initial viewing at the normal tree lighting time, Sunday, December 6th at 7:00PM. It will be available for viewing on FIOS 10 or Xfinity 71 or 996, [www.cityofbowie.org/viewmeetings](http://www.cityofbowie.org/viewmeetings) or YouTube @cityofBowieMD. We ask your help in getting the word out to residents so they can enjoy the event from home this year.

ADL: lfr  
Attachment



# City of Bowie

15901 Excalibur Road  
Bowie, Maryland 20716

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Alfred D. Lott, ICMA-CM, CPM  
City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Jesuit Retreat Center  
Stakeholders Meeting Summary

**DATE:** December 3, 2020

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On Tuesday evening, a Stakeholders Meeting was held to review a conceptual plan for a 45,000 square foot religious retreat center on 36 acres of the Jesuit Property, located on the south side of MD 450 between Sacred Heart Church and Race Track Road. Father Robert Hussey of the Jesuits, USA East Province, presented the project, noting that the Province has been planning for retreat centers on the East Coast as part of their overall ministry of retreat centers. The Bowie site was chosen because of its proximity to Baltimore and Washington population centers. Father Hussey stated that the proposal will establish a low intensity use for the land and preserve the character and rural feel of the property. He described the characteristics of the proposed facility and how it might impact traffic and development of the site. Following presentations by the Jesuits' land planner, traffic consultant and land use lawyer, the meeting was opened up to questions from Stakeholders. The following comments/questions were discussed:

- Will walking paths be available to the public and connect to the adjacent public parkland? A: This would depend on the intensity of demand for it and the need to respect the quiet atmosphere of the retreat center. No connections are shown on the current plan.
- Are there plans for the remaining site owned by the Jesuits? A: There are no other plans at this time.
- The proposed zoning text amendment should be kept to the 36-acre site only.
- The retreat center's location in close proximity to MD 450 will subject it to noise from road traffic, such that it will negate a quiet, contemplative setting. A: The site is comparable to the Atlanta facility, which has more traffic passing by it. The proposed center will be set back a long distance from the road and the presence of steep slopes will provide additional buffering to the facility's location.
- There will be a problem making left turns out of the entrance driveway. A: A thorough review of traffic conditions will be done at the time of Preliminary Plan of subdivision review. The proposal does pass the County's three-step traffic review process.
- How will sewage disposal and stormwater management be accomplished, and how will these affect the limits of disturbance? A: The project will connect to public water and sewer, so there will be no septic disposal systems. The water line will be installed along the access driveway, so it will not result in any additional disturbance. Easements will be needed to get access to existing sewer lines. Stormwater management will meet all requirements and will include bioretention.

**MAYOR** Timothy J. Adams

**MAYOR PRO TEM** Adrian Boafu

**COUNCIL** Michael P. Esteve • Henri Gardner • Ingrid S. Harrison • Roxy Ndebumadu • Dufour Woolfley **CITY MANAGER** Alfred D. Lott  
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In addition, the use of cisterns and green roofs will be considered. Stormwater facilities will be installed around the perimeter of the facility. Approximately five acres will be disturbed for the entire site development, including stormwater management.

- Will climate-friendly construction be used? A: Yes, climate friendly features have been included in other retreat center designs. This will be examined more closely during this project's design phase.
- Is there sufficient room for a left-turn lane on MD 450? A: The Jesuits will work with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to meet their standards for lane width.
- What other access improvements are anticipated? A: None are expected. Sidewalks and acceleration/deceleration lanes do not appear necessary. A driveway apron will be installed. There will be some grading done for the entrance and possibly removal of some vegetation to establish adequate sight distance.
- What will be done about the current traffic back-ups? A: Traffic conditions will be addressed in the scope of study for the report required at the time of Preliminary Plan of subdivision review.
- Were the administrative and support staff counted in the traffic evaluation? A: Yes. Nine staff members were accounted for and used conservatively in the peak hour analysis.
- Will there be a study of light pollution affecting adjacent properties? A: This can be looked at but, generally, retreat centers by their nature are not large light producers.
- Will there be any Jesuits residing at the facility on a permanent basis? A: No. The plans do not include facilities for permanent residents.
- Is there a written commitment that the zoning for the rest of the property will not be altered in the future? A: Only the 36-acre portion of the property is being examined now. The Jesuits are not looking for any changes now, but it can't be predicted what the future might hold. That would be a different conversation.
- How will on-site parking be accommodated, including bus traffic, and what is the plan for water and sewer service? A: The facility provides more than 50% more parking than the Atlanta retreat center. Some guests of the center may choose to carpool or arrive by private bus service. Parking is adequate based on actual experience. Water and sewer needs have been assessed and, at the appropriate time, the systems will be designed.
- Has there been coordination with Sacred Heart Church? A: The proposal has been discussed with the pastor, as well as the Archdiocese of Washington. The pastor was invited to share information about the proposal with Sacred Heart parishioners.
- What is the timeframe for the remaining phases for review for this project? A: First, a legislative amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will be sought for the use. Second, a Preliminary Plan of subdivision will be reviewed. Third, a Detailed Site Plan will be reviewed.
- Can you confirm that access to public water and sewer will not be used for future development? A: This proposal covers only 36 acres, at this point. It does not include the remaining property.
- Why was the location of the entrance, opposite the unused driveway to Cornerstone Church, chosen as the site access? A: This location works well for adequate sight distance and the topography allows for a pathway to the retreat center that is less environmentally impactful.
- When would the retreat center open? A: Several years into the future. The approval process will be time consuming before any construction can even occur.
- Will there be any recognition of the site's important history in the design? A: This would be of value and would be appropriate to consider during the design stage.
- Will there be an impact on MD 450 from construction traffic? A: The typical traffic study does not evaluate construction traffic. In some instances, it is reviewed on very large projects. Construction traffic for this project will not have a significant impact on MD 450 and would be

short term. Also, use of the site's planned driveway will avoid creating any other access points or disturbance during construction.

- Will there be any disturbance to the Patuxent watershed? A: Only five of the 36 acres will be disturbed, and erosion control measures will be placed to address sediment and run-off during construction. Additional measures will also be designed to protect water quality and waterways.
- Have studies been done to determine the impact on unmarked slave graves? A: Several studies have been done and there is no evidence of unmarked graves on this part of the property. The Natural Resources Inventory found artifacts on other parts of the Jesuit Property, but the 36-acre site was found to be clear of those features. The archaeological studies are available from The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.
- What is the frequency of use anticipated for the retreat center? A: Overall, there will be low intensity of use. Some people will stay at the facility for whole programs, some will stay for longer programs (such as weekly or monthly programs), or they will come only for the day or evening programs.
- What will be the starting point for the review process? A: The legislative amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is expected to be submitted for the upcoming Spring session of the Prince George's County Council. Following that, if the amendment is approved, it will take some months to prepare all the information required for a Preliminary Plan of subdivision. A Preliminary Plan may be submitted next Fall or the following Spring.