



City of Bowie

Memorandum

Thursday, November 3, 2022
Alfred D. Lott, ICMA-CM, CPM,
City Manager

STATUS REPORT

1. Melford Pod 6 Detailed Site Plan 07031-05

On Thursday, November 3rd, the Prince George's County Planning Board reviewed Detailed Site Plan 07031-05 for Pod 6 of Melford. The 39-acre site is located south of Melford Blvd, north of Howerton Way and east of Tesla Drive. This detailed site plan (DSP) requests revision to DSP-07031-04, to replace two single-story flex/office buildings (25,840 square feet each) and one multi-story office building (42,000 square feet) with two one-story flex/research and development (R&D) buildings (36,120 and 23,520 square feet). This would be an overall reduction of square footage for Pod 6 from 372,889 square feet to approximately 338,849 square feet. On July 5th, City Council conducted a public hearing and voted to recommend approval of the DSP revision. The Planning Board voted unanimously, 4-0 (Commissioner Bailey absent), to APPROVE DSP-07031-05, per the staff recommendation. The motion to approve was made by Commissioner Washington and seconded by Commissioner Geraldo.

2. Environmental Advisory Committee Tree Canopy Support

At its November 2, 2022, meeting, the Environmental Advisory Committee voted to send the attached letter to Council expressing the importance of maintaining tree canopy to the greatest extent possible on the property scheduled for the development of Rustic Woods on Randonstone Lane. They also voted to endorse the No-Net Loss, Resolution R-62-22.

3. Update on Prince George's County Public Schools Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative Report

Dr. Goldson announced on November 2, 2022, that she will recommend to delay the consolidation of Pointer Ridge Elementary School until fall 2024. Attached please find a letter from the City's Education Committee stating their opposition to the boundary changes and the closure of Pointer Ridge.

November 3, 2022

Mayor Timothy J. Adams & Members of the Bowie City Council
Bowie City Hall
15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, MD 20716

SUPPORT FOR MAINTAINING GREEN SPACE AT RUSTIC WOODS

Dear Mayor Adams and members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Environmental Advisory Committee, I would like to express our interest in the plans for development at Rustic Woods. Understanding that the intent for this parcel of land is still up for discussion, **we request that maintaining the current tree canopy on this property be a top priority for the Council.** Maintenance of the tree canopy is not only important for achieving City urban tree canopy and climate objectives, but also for preserving habitat on this relatively undisturbed parcel of woodland that runs along the southern edge of the WB&A trail.

We recognize that there are several development options available to the property owners at this time. We are hopeful that options will be explored that would promote environmental education and limit development to the current Montessori site. At the least, we do ask that maintaining the current tree canopy remain a priority, whatever alternatives are under consideration. By concentrating development only on the developed Montessori area, the City has an opportunity to both develop and be environmentally conscious.

We look forward to seeing how further discussions about the Rustic Woods property transpire, and we are available to discuss the matter further if Councilmembers are interested.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

Best Regards,

Abby Snyder

Abigail Snyder
Chair, Environmental Advisory Committee

CC:

John Teasdale, Vice Chair, Environmental Advisory Committee
Environmental Advisory Committee Members
Joe Meinert, City of Bowie Director of Planning & Sustainability
Ashleigh Diaz, City of Bowie Sustainability Manager
Tiffany Wright, City of Bowie Watershed Manager

November 2, 2022

Dear Mayor Adams and Members of City Council,

It is my pleasure to serve as chair of the Education Committee and to work alongside a number of talented, creative, and committed individuals who dedicate their time supporting education in the City of Bowie. My response below reflects the written and verbal feedback I have received from members of the committee as well as my own.

The Education Committee appreciates the opportunity to share our thoughts as the City Council reviews the PGCPs updated Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative. The report proposes scenarios for student transfers and school consolidations based on capacity, utilization, feeder patterns, community input from surveys, and five virtual community conversations. This data was used to populate new and expanded school facilities and balance facility utilization across the county.

Six Bowie schools are impacted by the recommendations. According to the September 30, 2021 PGCPs Student Enrollment Report, Pointer Ridge was at 48% capacity. If the proposed changes are approved, 156 Pointer Ridge students will be reassigned to Northview and Woodmore; all others will be reassigned to Perrywood. Pointer Ridge would close at the end of this school year. In this plan, some of the Perrywood students will be reassigned to Kettering to make room for the Pointer Ridge students.

Boundary changes are recommended for Northview, Rockledge, Whitehall, Samuel Ogle, and Benjamin Tasker. A limited number of students will be reassigned from Samuel Ogle to Benjamin Tasker, and from Benjamin Tasker to Kettering Middle School. Tulip Grove and Rockledge will receive reassigned Whitehall students. Fewer than 100 students at each school will be impacted by these boundary changes.

The new Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative has many potential negative impacts to the students, families, and local community including social and emotional learning challenges, blighted property should the school close, longer bus wait times, greater distance traveled, and movement to lower performing schools. Many of our students are experiencing a decline in social emotional learning in this post COVID environment. This will be the first-year students have been able to attend school in a fully in person setting since the start of the pandemic three years ago.

A closed and vacant building in the community influences crime, lowers property values, and limits the educational accessibility of future residents. Students who are residents of the City of Bowie and reassigned to schools outside of Bowie will no longer be eligible to participate in educational programming sponsored by the City of Bowie Education and Academic Travel Grants and the college scholarship initiative. The City of Bowie's grant programs have funded

educational opportunities such as science labs, field trips, literacy improvement, math, social and emotional learning, and learning tools for special needs students. Relocated students would also not have access to the yearly City of Bowie funded scholarships and new school educational travel grant initiative.

Pointer Ridge is an older, but well-maintained building. The school is a 4-star school with TAG programs and rated as an EGATE school. Their 2018-19 MSDE School Report Card rating is 63%. Perrywood is an older school, and their 2018-19 MSDE School Report Card rating is 61%. Although this may be a small difference, why would students move from a higher performing school to a lower performing school?

Major residential developments are planned along Route 301 in Bowie to include South Lake and Melford Town Center. These developments are projected to generate large numbers of students over the next several years. South Lake students are currently assigned to Pointer Ridge, this would increase enrollment at this school. Perrywood will be at 85% utilization once they receive Bowie students - they will be near or over capacity once South Lake is fully sold.

The City of Bowie Education Committee does not support the closing of Pointer Ridge, or the boundary changes as presented in the Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative report. It is our understanding the school board will vote on the boundary changes on November 10, 2022, but Dr. Monica Goldson has the sole authority to close schools. Please consider the aforementioned points. The City of Bowie Education Committee stands with the outpouring opposition from the parents, families, and local community in regard to the current Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative and welcomes the Council's support on the way forward.

Warm Regards,

Nadji Kirby

Nadji Kirby, Chair
City of Bowie Education Committee