

CORRECTED LETTER

April 30, 2021



Wellspring Manor & Spa
1311 Drumsheugh Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Re: Notification of Planning Board Action on
Departure From Design Standards DDS-674
Wellspring Manor and SPA

Dear Applicant:

This is to advise you that, on **April 22, 2021**, the above-referenced application was acted upon by the Prince George's County Planning Board in accordance with the attached Resolution.

In accordance with Section 27-239.01 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board's decision will become final 30 days after the date of this letter, unless an appeal is filed prior to this date with the Circuit Court for Prince George's County by any person of record. Please direct questions regarding this matter to Mr. Sydney J. Harrison, Clerk of the Circuit Court, at 301-952-3318.

(You should be aware that you will have to reactivate any permits pending the outcome of this case. If the approved plans differ from the ones originally submitted with your permit, you are required to amend the permit by submitting copies of the approved plans. For information regarding reactivating permits, you should call the County's Permit Office at 301-636-2050.)

Sincerely,
James R. Hunt, Chief
Development Review Division

By: 
Reviewer

Attachment: PGCPB Resolution No. **2021-47**

cc: Donna J. Brown, Clerk of the County Council
Persons of Record

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the Prince George’s County Planning Board has reviewed Departure from Design Standards Application No. DDS-674, Wellspring Manor and Spa, requesting approval in accordance with Subtitle 27 of the Prince George’s County Code; and

WHEREAS, after consideration of the evidence presented at the public hearing on April 1, 2021, the Prince George’s County Planning Board finds:

- Request:** The applicant requested a departure from design standards to allow a driveway width reduction of eight feet for a bed and breakfast inn, pursuant to Section 27-239.01 of the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance.

Pursuant to Section 27-560 of the Zoning Ordinance, a 22-foot width is the normal requirement for two-way driveway traffic. However, the applicant proposed a variable width driveway that measures 14 to 22 feet wide. The applicant plans to install ground-level signage (speed and yield), as well as widening the driveway 18 to 20 feet at the natural curve of the driveway, to facilitate the safety of all visitors and guests.

- Development Data Summary:** The following chart summarizes the approved development for the subject property.

	EXISTING	APPROVED
Zone	R-R/R-S	R-R/R-S
Use(s)	Residential	Commercial
Total Acreage	7.35	7.35
Lot	1	1
Dwelling units	1	1
Suites	0	5
Gross Floor Area	320,695 sq. ft.	320,695 sq. ft.
Parking		
	Required	Proposed
Number of Parking Spaces Required	6	7 (including 1 ADA accessible)

- Location:** The subject site, known as Lot 27, is dual zoned in the Rural Residential (R-R) Zone and Residential Suburban Development (R-S) Zone, located east of Drumsheugh Lane and about 400 feet north of the intersection of Largo Road (MD 202) and Mount Lubentia Way. The site is accessed by an existing driveway for ingress/egress from Drumsheugh Lane.

4. **Surrounding Uses:** Specifically, the subject site is located at 11311 Drumsheugh Lane, and is surrounded by one-family detached dwelling units to the north and beyond Drumsheugh Lane to the west, one-family attached dwellings to the south, and undeveloped property to the east all in the in the Residential Suburban Development (R-S) Zone.
5. **Previous Approvals:** Special Exception SE-4585 was filed for a funeral parlor for the property in conjunction with a Departure of Design Standards, DDS-574, for setback for access to a loading space, and Alternative Compliance application, AC-06023, for buffering incompatible uses. This application was dismissed on March 20, 2013 and is not applicable to the subject application.
6. **Design Features:** The applicant proposes a conversion of the single-family residence to a commercial use, specifically, a bed and breakfast inn with a spa. The bed and breakfast inn will be in the existing residence located in the central portion of the site. The subject property will be owner occupied and managed. There will be 5 suites available for a maximum occupancy of 12 overnight guests in parties of two or more. The submitted site plan also shows a parking compound with six parking spaces and one Americans with Disabilities Act accessible space.

The subject site's current site plan indicates that the driveway width ranges from 14 to 22 feet. The site has a single access point off Drumsheugh Lane, a residential roadway that is not a through street. The site has an existing two-way vehicular residential driveway with no existing pedestrian (sidewalks) or bicycle facilities. There are no proposed sidewalks. The driveway connects to a 16-foot-wide vehicular turn around in front of the bed and breakfast inn.

7. **Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance Requirements:** The criteria for approval of a departure from design standards is set forth in Section 27-239.01(7) of the Zoning Ordinance, which states:
 - (A) **In order for the Planning Board to grant the departure, it shall make the following findings:**
 - (i) **The purposes of this Subtitle will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal;**

The applicant has proposed to convert the legally existing single-family dwelling to an owner occupied and managed bed and breakfast inn. The existing driveway on the property is 14 to 22 feet wide and is sufficient for a residential driveway. The applicant intends to comply with specific use requirements of Section 27-445.13(a), for a bed and breakfast inn, which requires, among other things, that such a use of property shall be residential in nature. However, with the conversion of the residential home to a bed and breakfast inn, the requirement for access to the property for two-way traffic is 22 feet in width. The code does allow for 20-foot-wide driveways when not adjacent to parking. The applicant has indicated that the bed and breakfast inn will have five suites available for occupancy, and there will be a minimal number of cars on the premises at one time.

The applicant states that even though the driveway does not meet requirements, the existing driveway easily satisfies the intended use, a bed and breakfast inn.

The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance as identified in Section 27-102 include:

- (1) To protect and promote safety,
- (2) To provide adequate privacy,
- (3) To promote the most beneficial relationship between the uses of land and buildings and protect landowners from adverse impacts of adjoining development,
- (4) To protect against undue noise,
- (5) To encourage the preservation of lands of natural beauty, dense forests, and
- (6) To protect and conserve natural resources.

The applicant's request for an eight-foot variance in the width requirement for the driveway will allow for the retention of existing forestland that provides a buffer from neighboring properties and protects neighboring landowners from the impacts associated with the operation of a bed & breakfast including, but not limited to, visual and noise impacts. Preventing the destruction of woodlands will also preserve the beauty of the site and conserve important environmental features. The retention of the existing driveway will also serve to maintain the property's residential appearance in accordance with the residential use of the surrounding properties.

The Board heard testimony from counsel for a neighboring homeowner's association that the expected uses of the property consist of activities not associated with bed & breakfast uses. However, the application states that the property will only be used as a bed & breakfast and, therefore, the Board reviewed the application as proposed and considered the testimony of both the applicant and association counsel and determined the narrower driveway will meet the requirements of protecting and promoting safety on the condition the following improvements are implemented by the applicant:

- Install easily seen alternating ground-level signage, including one 9"x12" sign that denotes "10 MPH" and another that denotes "Caution: Drive Slowly" every 20 to 25 feet along the entire driveway.
- In addition, the applicant will install a "Yield Proceed Slowly" sign at the site access to remind exiting vehicles to yield to any oncoming traffic from Drumsheugh Lane. It has been noted that Drumsheugh Lane is a residential road that is not a through street and therefore, a low traffic road.
- Widen the driveway, at its curve, to 19 feet. This will allow for bi-directional traffic to have room to pass and would retain the residential character and use of the driveway.

Based on the foregoing, the Board finds the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.

(ii) The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.

A bed and breakfast inn is permitted on the site and subject to additional requirements for specific uses, as described in Section 27.445.13. The requirements for a bed and breakfast inn are designed to limit the appearance of the commercial operation. Maintaining a narrow drive will help meet these requirements. The requested eight-foot departure is the minimum necessary, as the applicant will provide signs and widen the driveway at the curve to ensure safety and functionality for two-way traffic. A smaller departure would also necessitate the removal of existing trees that provide a buffer for neighboring property owners. Maintaining the existing driveway width will be more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood as it will maintain a more residential feel and appearance. The proposed departure will allow the applicant to retain the residential character and use of the driveway, while addressing the functionality issues of a 14 to 15-foot-wide driveway that has to accommodate two-way traffic. It is also noted that before approval of any Use and Occupancy or grading permit, the applicant shall comply with the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) standards for commercial driveway curb cuts at the vehicular entrance from Drumsheugh Lane. The standard commercial curb cut is 30 feet wide unless a waiver from DPW&T is approved.

The approved access, circulation, and parking area within the subject site is appropriate and consistent with requirements.

The applicant has indicated that the proposed bed and breakfast inn will comply with access, circulation, and parking standards, and the approval of this departure to allow for a reduction in the driveway width is the minimum necessary to facilitate the proposed use. However, given the driveway is comparably longer than the adjacent properties and turns in direction, the Planning Board approves widening the small middle portion of the driveway, where the curve is located, 18 to 20 feet, to avoid any possible accidents at the turn. It is also noted that at time of permit, the applicant shall follow DPW&T standards for commercial driveways and provide a minimum driveway width of 30 feet at Drumsheugh Lane or obtain a waiver.

(iii) The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances, which are unique to the site or prevalent in areas of the County developed prior to November 29, 1949;

The single-family dwelling and existing driveway were built circa 1953, and the proposed uses will maintain the existing open space, landscaping, and tree lines on the property without changing its residential appearance. The property has a unique shape with a long narrow footprint at its connection with Drumsheugh Lane and is significantly

different in size and shape from the surrounding properties. The departure from design standards for the driveway width is necessary due to the unique nature of the property to preserve this landscaping and enhance its historic footprint and significant visual appeal within the community.

(iv) The departure will not impair the visual, functional, or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.

This departure will not impair the visual, functional, or environmental quality or integrity of the site. The widening of the entire asphalt driveway would require the removal of the current landscaping and would detract from the scenic and aesthetic appeal, which are unique to this property in size and scope. The existing driveway will remain, with only widening at the curve, and the residential appearance and integrity of the site will be maintained while also maintaining the functionality.

- 8. 2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** In accordance with Section 27-450, Landscaping, screening, and buffering, of the Zoning Ordinance, the proposed development is subject to the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*. Specifically, Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets; Section 4.4, Screening Requirements; Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses; and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscape Requirements, apply to this site. Conformance with the applicable landscaping requirements will be reviewed at the time of permit application.
- 9. Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** This application is exempt from the requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance because the project proposes less than 5,000 square feet of site disturbance.
- 10. Further Planning Board Findings and Comments from Other Entities:** The relevant comments submitted for this application were included in this technical staff report. The following referral memorandums were received, and are incorporated by reference herein:
 - Subdivision Section dated February 26, 2021 (Diaz-Campbell to Braden)
 - Environmental Planning Section dated February 26, 2021 (Nichols to Braden)
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 - Historic Preservation Section dated March 1, 2021 (Stabler to Braden)
 - Urban Design Section dated March 2, 2021 (Bishop to Braden)
 - Transportation Planning Section dated March 5, 2021 (Howerton to Braden)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code, the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission adopted the findings contained herein and approved the above-noted application, subject to the following condition:

1. Prior to certification of the departure site plans, the plans shall be revised to:
 - a. Install easily seen alternating ground-level signage, including one 9"x12" sign that denotes "10 MPH" and another that denotes "Caution: Drive Slowly" every 20 to 25 feet along the entire driveway.
 - b. In addition, the applicant will install a "Yield Proceed Slowly" sign at the site access to remind exiting vehicles to yield to any oncoming traffic from Drumsheugh Lane. It has been noted that Drumsheugh Lane is a residential road that is not a through street and therefore, a low traffic road.
 - c. Widen the driveway, at its curve, to 19 feet. This will allow for bi-directional traffic to have room to pass and would retain the residential character and use of the driveway.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appeal of the Planning Board's action must be filed with the District Council for Prince George's County, Maryland within thirty (30) days of the final notice of the Planning Board's decision.

* * * * *

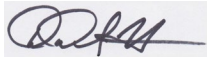
This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the action taken by the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on the motion of Commissioner Washington, seconded by Commissioner Bailey, with Commissioners Washington, Bailey, Doerner, Geraldo and Hewlett voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Thursday, April 1, 2021, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 22nd day of April, 2021.

Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman


By Jessica Jones
Planning Board Administrator

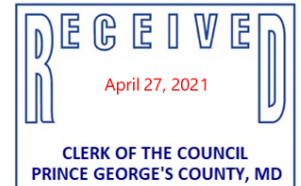
EMH:JJ:SB:nz
APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY



David S. Warner
M-NCPPC Legal Department
Date: April 9, 2021

April 27, 2021

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Based on the foregoing, the Board finds the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.

(ii) The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.

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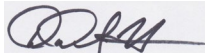
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Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 22nd day of April, 2021.

Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman


By Jessica Jones
Planning Board Administrator

EMH:JJ:SB:nz
APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY



David S. Warner
M-NCPPC Legal Department
Date: April 9, 2021