



DATE: April 28, 2025

TO: Lakisha Hull, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, Planning Director

VIA: Jill Kosack, Chair, Alternative Compliance Committee

FROM: Dexter E. Cofield, Alternative Compliance Committee Member

PROJECT NAME: Sterling Care Hillhaven

PROJECT NUMBER: Alternative Compliance AC-25008

COMPANION CASE: Special Exception SE-24003

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE

Recommendation: X **Approval** _____ **Denial**

Justification: SEE ATTACHED

Dexter E. Cofield

Jill Kosack for DC

Reviewer's Signature

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REVIEW

_____ **Final Decision** _____ **Approval** _____ **Denial**

 X **Recommendation** **Approval** _____ **Denial**

_____ **To Planning Board**

 X **To Zoning Hearing Examiner**

Planning Director's Signature

Lakisha Hull

Lakisha Hull (May 1, 2025 17:27 EDT)

05/01/2025

Date

APPEAL OF PLANNING DIRECTOR'S DECISION

Appeal Filed:

Planning Board Hearing Date:

Planning Board Decision: _____ **Approval** _____ **Denial**

Resolution Number:

Alternative Compliance: AC-25008
 Name of Project: Sterling Care Hillhaven
 Companion Case: Special Exception SE-24003
 Date: April 27, 2025

Alternative compliance is requested from Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscape Requirements, of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual).

Location

The subject 8.34-acre property is located on the west side of Powder Mill Road, approximately 200 feet south of its intersection with Pleasant Acres Drive. The site is currently developed with an existing nursing or care home, a one-story brick accessory building, and a two-story residential building with a detached garage. The development is bounded to the northwest by government-owned property, to the north and south by single-family detached residential properties, and to the east by Powder Mill Road. The property is located within the Residential, Rural (RR) Zone. Under the prior Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance, which the special exception (SE) is subject to, the site was located within the Rural-Residential (R-R) Zone.

Background

The SE proposes the construction of an approximately 23,745-square-foot addition to the existing 94,282-square-foot nursing or care home and supporting site improvements. The applicant requests alternative compliance from Sections 4.7 and 4.9 of the Landscape Manual as follows:

Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses

REQUIRED: Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, Bufferyard A, adjacent to a single-family detached residential use

Length of bufferyard	637 linear feet
Minimum building setback	30 feet
Minimum landscape yard	20 feet
Existing trees	15 percent
Fence or wall	Yes, for 266 linear feet
Plant units (80 per 100 linear feet)	434

PROVIDED: Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, Bufferyard A, adjacent to a single-family detached residential use

Length of bufferyard	637 linear feet
Minimum building setback	25 feet
Minimum landscape yard	20 feet
Existing trees	15 percent
Fence or wall	Yes, for 266 linear feet
Plant units	463

Justification of Recommendation

The applicant requests alternative compliance from Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, which requires a minimum 30-foot building setback when a Type B bufferyard is applicable due to the adjacent single-family detached dwelling unit. The proposed building setback is reduced to 25 feet at its narrowest point, and gradually increases along the southwestern property line. To maintain an effective buffer, the applicant has exceeded the required number of planting units in this area. In addition, a fence is proposed along the portion of the property line where the building setback is reduced, to further enhance the visual barrier between the developments.

Given that the proposed building addition encroaches only five feet into the required setback, the full landscaped yard width is provided, and the required number of plant units is exceeded in addition to a fence, the Alternative Compliance Committee finds the proposal to be equally effective as normal compliance with Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual.

Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscape Requirements

The applicant also requests alternative compliance from Section 4.9(c)(5), Sustainable Landscape Requirements, which prohibits trees planted in fulfillment of Landscape Manual requirements from being located on slopes steeper than 3:1. Only one proposed shade tree is to be planted on a steeper slope. The applicant notes that the proposed tree species is not intolerant of sloped conditions and provides a tree planting detail demonstrating how the tree will be planted on the slope to ensure survivability.

Given the applicant only proposes one shade tree to be planted on a slope steeper than 3:1 and provides a detail for specialized planting, the Alternative Compliance Committee finds the applicant's proposal equally effective as normal compliance with Section 4.9 of the Landscape Manual.

Recommendation

The Alternative Compliance Committee recommends APPROVAL of Alternative Compliance AC-25008, from the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, for Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscape Requirements, subject to the following condition:

1. Prior to certification, the landscape plans shall be revised as follows:
 - a. Remove notes on plans requesting alternative compliance for Section 4.7 for Bufferyard D, as this request was withdrawn.
 - b. Label the tree on the landscape plans that will be planted on the slope steeper than 3:1.