

MEMORANDUM

September 20, 2012

To: Lori Shirley, Planner Coordinator, Area 2

Via: Josh Sloan, Planner Supervisor, I-270 Corridor Team, Area 2

From: Steve Findley, Planner Coordinator, Area 2

RE: Travilah Grove Prelim. Plan # 120120290 Master Plan Conformance Analysis

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The Travilah Grove development is proposed to occupy the area identified as the Rickman Property site in the Life Sciences Center (LSC) South district of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan. The applicant's justification statement lists as the "primary objective" of the Master Plan to "Transform the LSC into a dynamic live/work community while ensuring growth opportunities for research, medical, and bioscience interests" (GSSC Master Plan page 9). This is actually the first of 11 "Key Recommendations" listed at the beginning of the Plan. While many of these Key Recommendations do not apply to the Rickman Property, one of the Key Recommendations applies directly: to "Ensure that development in the Piney Branch Special Protection Area used the best available stormwater treatment techniques to protect the watershed's headwaters" (GSSC Master Plan page 10). Another Key Recommendation that should be applied to every development in the GSSC, including the Rickman Property, is to "Create a sustainable community that will attract nationwide interest with design and materials that minimize carbon emissions, maximize energy conservation, and preserve water and air quality" (GSSC Master Plan page 10). This recommendation is echoed by the urban form recommendation to create "A standard for sustainability that reflects the LSC's cutting edge science" (Master Plan pg. 25).

Page 27 of the Master Plan includes a number of recommendations to protect water quality, beginning with "site design and construction options that minimize imperviousness," including "compact development, parking options such as reduced parking requirements and the use of structured parking and/or shared facilities," various Environmental Site Design treatment approaches, vegetated roofs and walls, use of landscaping plants that do not require extensive fertilization and watering, and increasing tree canopy cover. Residential mixed-use areas have a specific recommendation for 20-25 minimum tree canopy cover.

Page 27 and 28 include a specific section focusing on the Piney Branch Special Protection Area, with a specific reference to the Rickman Property, noting that "Development on this property should minimize new impervious surfaces especially on that portion of the property that drains to the Special Protection Area" (page 28). There are two specific recommendations on page 28 pertaining to development within the Piney Branch SPA:

- Future development in this area should minimize imperviousness in their site designs, particularly in the Special Protection Area.
- Any development that involves or is adjacent to serpentinite habitat should preserve this area and provide additional buffering wherever possible.

Discussion and recommendations specific to the LSC South district are covered on pages 50-52 of the Master Plan. Of the Rickman property, the Plan states:

“Only the 13-acre Rickman property on Travilah Road is undeveloped. The Plan recommends the Rickman property be rezoned from the R&D Zone to CR 0.5: C 0.5, R 0.5, H 80. The CR Zone has a height limit of 40 feet for standard method development. (Note – the height restriction was removed in subsequent iterations of the Zone). However, a maximum height of 80 feet on this property could be considered to minimize imperviousness and encourage compact development, which may include parking underneath buildings (ground-level). The Rickman property is not subject to the Staging requirements.

The Piney Branch SPA bisects the Rickman Property. A key to protecting water quality in the SPA is limiting impervious surfaces. Development within this SPA requires a water quality plan that details how stormwater runoff will be managed to prevent further degradation to water quality in the SPA. The water quality plan is prepared by the developer and reviewed and approved during the development review process. Guidelines for the development of the Rickman property are provided below. In addition, a population of state endangered *Krigia dandelion* is located east of the property along Shady Grove Road. The road was specifically aligned to avoid disturbance of this plant. Further development in this area should avoid disturbance of this population and provide a buffer area from new uses.”(page 50)

Master Plan recommendations specific to the Rickman property are:

- Rezone the Rickman site to CR 0.5: C 0.5, R 0.5, H 80. Development of the property must address the following guidelines.
  - Minimize impacts to the SPA by orienting buildings and parking nearer Travilah Road, outside the SPA boundary to the extent feasible.
  - Ensure proper sediment control during construction
  - Consider parking underneath buildings (ground-level), compact development design, and other techniques to minimize impervious surfaces.
  - Consider placing recreation facilities that are not noise-sensitive closer to Shady Grove Road.
  - Consider meeting afforestation requirements in the area adjacent to the existing protective strip along Shady Grove Road to enhance protection of the *Krigia dandelion* population.

The applicant proposes to locate three of the buildings, plus the swimming pool and associated clubhouse to the west of the WSSC water lines, closer to Travilah Road as suggested by the Master Plan. The remaining buildings are just to the east of the WSSC water lines.

Subsequent to the June 2010 approval and adoption of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan, WSSC initiated a new policy requiring establishment of an 80-foot building restriction line from large, high-pressure water mains. Two such water mains traverse the center of the Rickman property from north to south, roughly midway through the site. This policy restricts the construction of buildings to