JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT
FOR SITE PLAN NO. 820170120

Site Plan Justification for Leisure World
New Administration Building and Clubhouse Additions

I. INTRODUCTION

Applicant, Leisure World Community Corporation (the “Applicant”), by its attorneys, Linowes and Blocher LLP, submits this Site Plan Justification Statement to demonstrate conformance of the proposed development with all applicable review requirements and criteria. The subject property, which is owned by Leisure World Community Corporation, consists of Parcel 63, as shown on the subdivision record plat known as “Rossmoor Leisure World – Parcels 62 and 63”, recorded among the Land Records of Montgomery County as Plat No. 25219 and Parcel 4 as shown on the subdivision record plat known as “Plat 2 - Rossmoor Leisure World”, recorded among the Land Records of Montgomery County as Plat No. 7814 (the “Property”). The Property contains a total of 11.62 acres.

The Property is bounded by North Leisure World Boulevard to the west, Parcel 62 (also shown on Plat No. 25219) to the north and east, and Gleneagles Drive to the south. The Property, which is currently improved with an aging administration building, a private clubhouse building (the “Clubhouse”), recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, and several surface parking lots, is zoned Planned Retirement Community (PRC), and is subject to the recommendations of the Aspen Hill Master Plan approved and adopted in 1994 (the “Master Plan”). The Property is in the Northwest Branch Watershed (Class IV).

Pursuant to the applicable provisions of Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code (the “Zoning Ordinance”), Applicant submits this application and Site Plan for the proposed redevelopment of the Property with a new administration building containing approximately
20,500 s.f. GFA, improvements to the clubhouse, and a new surface parking lot (the “Parking Lot”) with approximately 75 spaces (collectively, the “Project”). The Project will facilitate a number of recommendations of the Master Plan by supporting housing options for seniors, an important private recreation area, and the original goals of the PRC zone in Aspen Hill, as well as general goals for public safety, community identity and design, transit, and economic activity in the Aspen Hill planning area.

II. BACKGROUND

Dating back to 1961 the majority of the Aspen Hill planning area has been purposefully left to residential uses, as recommended in the original Wedges and Corridors Plan. Furthermore, most of Aspen Hill has historically been comprised of relatively low-density residential housing. The Leisure World community, however, has long been an important and notable exception beginning with the rezoning of over 920 acres of land previously designated to allow only two DU/A or one half DU/A to the PRC zone in 1964. Master Plan at 13. The original purpose of the PRC zone was to accommodate age restricted housing, and the 1964 rezoning of Aspen Hill was largely enacted to accommodate the Leisure World community.

Development of Leisure World began in 1966, and the existing administration building that is proposed for replacement was one of the first buildings constructed in the community. At present, however, the administration building needs to be replaced in order to effectively serve the Leisure World community. Additional space is required above that provided by the existing administration building. Similarly, the Clubhouse must be expanded and modified to accommodate the changing needs of the community. As discussed below, the proposed improvements, and their design will enhance Leisure World and promote the community as a housing amenity for seniors in the County into the future.
III. PROPOSED PROJECT AS REFLECTED IN SITE PLAN

The purpose of the Project is to support the Leisure World community and the private outdoor space represented by the Leisure World golf course. The design described below will assist by filling the basic Leisure World community needs for administrative office space and additional space at the Clubhouse. Of particular importance, however, the proposed improvements will deliver needed accessibility improvements for the senior community residents, and will do so in a manner which is compatible with Leisure World design, on-site features, and the immediately adjacent properties. The Project will also increase community identity, and generally support transportation goals, and economic activity, as discussed further below.

As noted on the included Site Plan, Applicant proposes to redevelop the Property with the Project, which includes approximately 21,870 square feet of new structures and the 75 space Parking Lot, in addition to site improvements, including redesigned road access and landscaping. Among the other elements described, the primary feature of the Project is the new 20,555 square foot building designed to house administrative office uses, and community services (the “Administration Building”). The Administration Building, which will be a split level structure and approximately 4,000 square feet larger than the existing building, will be located partially on the eastern edge of an existing surface parking lot and partially on vacant land east-adjacent to the existing surface parking lot. (See elevations and floor plans enclosed with the Site Plan.) The larger space will accommodate current Leisure World staffing needs and business functions and allow for effective staff-resident interactions in proposed new meeting spaces. The Administration Building will also include several basic functions and desired conveniences for
the Leisure World residents. Specifically, the Administration Building will house community services such as a post office and possibly a financial institution for residents’ use.

As demonstrated by the enclosed site plan, floor plan, perspectives and elevations, the Administration Building has been designed with a focus on high-quality architecture and building materials, improved accessibility, energy efficiency, and compatibility with surrounding buildings and landscaping. The exterior of the Administration Building takes its design cues from the nearby clubhouse building and the predominant aesthetics of the greater Leisure World community. Specifically, the design is inspired by horizontal proportions that blend within the landscape. Although the campus has an eclectic architectural style, most buildings have common elements such as such as ribbon windows, large solid areas of varying materials, asymmetry and planar roof lines. The Administration Building draws upon these existing cues and is defined by its dramatic pitched roofs, large roof overhangs, and the relationship of large glazed openings to solid mass walls.

The sloped topography allows the building to be nestled within the site which brings forth a symbiotic relationship with the landscape. The design ties outdoor elements with interior functions to take advantage of the golf course views, a lawn bowling area and a light, open plaza entrance. In addition to enhancing the experience of the surrounding landscape, these indoor-outdoor connections will also have the benefit of encouraging interactions between community members.

With regard to access, the split level design of the Administration Building provides for two entrances – one primarily for staff and the other for the community. In turn, dual entrances allow administrative staff parking to be redistributed away from Clubhouse parking in order to reduce congestion, which is a concern among Leisure World residents. Additionally, the lobby of
the Administration Building has been designed to optimize the connection between the building’s main entrance and the newly designed Parking Lot, as further discussed below. Importantly, the main entrance of the Administration Building has been designed in coordination with an on grade renovation of the Leisure World Bus Stop (the “Bus Stop”). Further, a covered walkway is included to connect the Bus Stop and the entrance to the Administration Building.

Facade materials will be consistent with the existing Clubhouse, as well as certain additions described below, to allow for a unified aesthetic, also compatible with overall Leisure World design themes. A mix of facade materials and a varied roof design will create visual interest in the Administration Building that will be further enhanced by landscaping and other site improvements as discussed immediately below.

Landscaping for the Administration Building, and the Project generally, will be consistent with existing Clubhouse landscaping, and will include plantings, with vegetation to provide summer shade and other protection from the weather. Site improvements for walkways and drop-off areas will make use of a mix of surface materials, including permeable paving where possible for new parking spaces. Site improvements and landscaped areas will also provide locations for the addition of benches and other seating for residents coming and going from the Administration Building and Clubhouse.

Additions to the Clubhouse (the “Clubhouse Additions”) are proposed for the northern wing of the Clubhouse. Specifically, the Clubhouse Additions include two vestibules – one at the entrance to the “Clubhouse Grille” restaurant, located at the northern part of the Clubhouse’s western edge (the “Grille Vestibule”), and another along the northern edge of the Clubhouse (the “Terrace Room Vestibule”). The Grille Vestibule will provide for safe, sheltered pick-up and drop-off of residents dining at the Clubhouse Grille. The Terrace Room Vestibule is proposed in
conjunction with a patio area and an expansion of the Clubhouse’s “Maryland Room,” which will provide needed extra seating area in the Clubhouse. Both vestibules will be designed with materials that are consistent with those of the new Administration Building, further tying the proposed new features to the existing Clubhouse to create a continuous coherent experience of the Project. Both vestibules will also aid in energy efficiency providing for “air trap” to minimize loss of heating and cooling from the Clubhouse. Doors to the vestibules will function with motion sensor automatic openers to further increase efficiency.

As with elements of the Administration Building discussed above, the vestibules will greatly improve access to the Clubhouse. Covered walkways, which were the enhancements most requested by Leisure World residents, will connect the designated drop-off areas at both vestibules to the new proposed Parking Lot and access drive (described below).

In addition to the Administration Building, the Clubhouse Addition and associated site and landscape improvements, the Project also includes plans for the new Parking Lot, as well as a drop-off circle and access drive. Essentially, a new access drive is planned along the western edge of the Clubhouse, with a drop-off circle just south of the proposed location of the Administration Building (collectively, the access drive and drop-off circle are herein referred to as the “Access Drive”), and the Parking Lot at the approximate location of the existing administration building. The Access Drive will connect with and provide drop off locations for the Clubhouse Additions on the northern edge of the Clubhouse, and will provide connection and drop off for the Administration Building to the north. To the west of the Access Drive (and southwest of the proposed new drop-off circle), the new proposed Parking Lot will be constructed with approximately 75 parking spaces primarily serving the Clubhouse.
The key features of the Access Drive and Parking Lot include varied surface materials and permeable paving to add color, texture and stormwater functionality where possible. Together, the Access Drive and Parking Lot will provide improved circulation, safe and efficient loading areas, easy pedestrian access, additional ADA parking spaces, and integrated Bus Stop for an improved rider experience of the Property. The new Parking Lot will provide approximately 4 new ADA spaces at its eastern edge, while the Access Drive will provide an additional 8 spaces just west of the Clubhouse Grille, and 4 spaces near the northern part of the Administration Building’s western edge. The Access Drive will also include a new segment providing for designated drop off area at the Grille Vestibule, and additional designated drop off areas (a) off the southern side of the roundabout for the Terrace Room Vestibule, and (b) from the exiting lane of the roundabout for the Administration Building as well as provide (9) ADA spaces. Further details of proposed circulation and loading are provided below.

IV. FINDINGS REQUIRED FOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Section 59-7.3.4.E.2 of the Zoning Ordinance provides the findings that the Planning Board must make before approving a site plan application. The following is an analysis of how the Application satisfies these findings:

To approve a site plan, the Planning Board must find that the proposed development:

a. satisfies any previous approval that applies to the site;

The proposed development satisfies all applicable requirements of Development Plan Amendment 84-4, as amended (the “DPA”).

b. satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 the binding elements of any development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014;

This section is inapplicable as there are no binding elements of an associated development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014.
c. satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 any green area requirement in effect on October 29, 2014 for a property where the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was the result of a Local Map Amendment;

The green area requirements pursuant to the DPA have been satisfied based on the gross tract area of the Leisure World Community (see Development Tabulations).

d. satisfies applicable use standards, development standards, and general requirements under this Chapter;

As shown on the Development Tabulations, the Project as reflected in the Site Plan meets all of the applicable development standards of the PRC Zone.

e. satisfies the applicable requirements of:

i. Chapter 19, Erosion, Sediment Control, and Stormwater Management;
   and

ii. Chapter 22A, Forest Conservation

Pursuant to Chapter 19 of the Montgomery County Code, Applicant will provide sediment and erosion control and water quality and quantity treatment as required by Montgomery County laws, rules, and regulations. This is demonstrated in the concept sediment control plan and conceptual stormwater management plan included in the Site Plan application. Applicant has provided an approved a Forest Conservation Plan Exemption Exhibit.

f. provides safe, well-integrated parking, circulation patterns, building massing and, where required, open spaces and site amenities;

The Project incorporates safe, adequate, and efficient parking, circulation, and building massing. From the drop-off circle at the eastern terminus of Rossmoor Boulevard, the Project will extend Rossmoor to the north by construction of the Access Drive. The basic layout of the Access Drive includes a new proposed drop-off circle just south of the proposed Administration Building and north of the proposed Clubhouse Additions. The Parking Lot projects west from the Access Drive as the Access Drive stems north from the existing Rossmoor loop. As
combined with the existing lot to the west of the proposed Administration Building location, the Parking Lot will provide more than sufficient parking, as shown on the parking tabulations included with the enclosed Site Plan. At its western edge, the Parking Lot will also include a separate connection to the existing Rossmoor loop. Together, the Access Drive and the Parking Lot will improve circulation and will offer greater safety and convenience for both pedestrians and drivers.

The Project includes multiple points of access for the Administration Building and the Clubhouse Additions. The main entrance to the Administration Building – at the southern part of its western edge, on the building’s “upper level” – will be served by two new improvements. First, a covered walkway will connect to the part of the Access Drive, which exits the proposed new drop-off circle at the Bus Stop. The covered walkway also allows the at grade Bus Stop to serve the Administration Building’s primary entrance. Second, the existing parking lot will be accessible to main “upper level” entrance via a ramp. New parking spaces, including four ADA spaces, will be located east-adjacent to the existing surface lot on the Property and adjacent to the lower level on grade entrance.

The proposed layout of the Access Drive provides increased vehicle and pedestrian safety with clearly delineated spaces for loading, personal vehicles, and pedestrians. A separated, wide loading area stems at an angle from part of the Access Drive which enters the proposed new drop-off circle. The clearly partitioned, angled loading area will minimize confusion and safety related to the comingling of service vehicles, with personal vehicles, buses and pedestrians in this active node of the Property. The new loading dock will also be screened from public view.

Traffic flow entering the existing parking lot from the Access Drive will be from south to north, with Parking Lot ingress near the Administration Building’s upper entrance, and vehicle
circulation continuing past the main (upper) building entrance en route to Parking Lot egress at
the northern side of the lot. Since administrative staff parking will all be located in the existing
surface lot, the addition of the proposed Parking Lot, primarily serving the Clubhouse, will
reduce congestion related to traffic from the Clubhouse and the existing administration building
sharing the single existing lot.

g. substantially conforms with the recommendations of the applicable master plan
and any guidelines approved by the Planning Board that implement the
applicable plan;

As stated above, the Project advances multiple goals of the Master Plan. Leisure World
is a central feature of the Master Plan vision, and with specific relation to Leisure World, the
Master Plan calls for a range of senior housing choices, the sustained maintenance of private
recreation areas, and the accommodation of a post office location. Additionally, the Master Plan
more generally recommends support for Aspen Hill economic activity, public safety,
transportation mix, community identity and design, and increased access for the disabled. The
Project is entirely consistent with both the Master Plan goals, which are specific to Leisure
World and those of general application to the Aspen Hills plan area.

With regard to goals specific to Leisure World, the Master Plan identifies Leisure World
as Parcel Area 19 and recommends sustaining Leisure World as an appropriate location for
senior housing. Master Plan at 69-70. Additionally, the Master Plan makes specific mention of
Leisure World as an important source of housing choice for the “elderly,” noting Leisure World
as an exceptional and large collection of multifamily and attached single-family housing. Master
Plan at 188.

The administrative and business functions which support the management of Leisure
World require a headquarters for daily office use, storage, and meeting space. The
Administration Building is therefore plainly key to supporting Leisure World. This is also true of the Clubhouse Additions which upgrade the larger Clubhouse, which is central to the basic character and function of the Leisure World community.

The golf course at Leisure World is also specifically named as an important source of private recreation and open space area. Master Plan at 179. The Master Plan states, “major private open spaces [specifically including the Leisure World golf course,] are valuable visual resources and provide vistas from adjacent roads and residences. The private recreational facilities also relieve pressure on the existing public facilities and additional future need for such facilities in the planning area.” Id. The Administration Building is being designed to provide views which take advantage of the golf course vistas referenced in the Master Plan and both the Administration Building and the Clubhouse serve the continued operation and maintenance of this valuable private recreation area.

Finally, with specific mention of Leisure World, the Master Plan lists post office resources in the Aspen Hill area. Master Plan at 196. The proposed post office, like the proposed community services will provide basic services needed by the residents of Leisure World.

With regard to more general recommendations, the Project will support goals for increased economic activity, area transportation, public safety, increased access for people with disabilities, and community identify and design. See Master Plan at 15 – 17; 196. Sustaining Leisure World as a well-functioning community and a desirable place to live supports the existing businesses of the Aspen Hill area for which the residents of Leisure World serve as a local customer base and source of employment. With regard to transportation, the design of the Project makes the Bus Stop a central element of the new Administration Building and site improvements for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, thus supporting the mix of transportation
modes called for in the Master Plan. The inclusion of the on-site community services such as a financial institution and post office also encourage shorter trips by pedestrians and by bus transit. The circulation plan and enhanced accessibility associated with the Administration Building, the Clubhouse Additions, and the Parking Lot also forward public safety goals, as does the provision of on-site community services. The Project directly increases access for people with disabilities by providing twelve new ADA spaces, and a Bus Stop which will retain its at grade elevation. As discussed above, high-quality architecture and building materials are a key focus of the proposed new structures. These new buildings, as well as improved landscaping and streetscape will support the Master Plan goal for community identity and design.

h. will be served by adequate public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage, and other public facilities. If an approved adequate public facilities test is currently valid and the impact of the development is equal to or less than what was improved, a new adequate public test is not required. If an adequate public facilities test is required the Planning Board must find that the proposed development will be served by adequate public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, and storm drainage;

The Project will be served by adequate public services and facilities. The proposed Administration Building and Clubhouse Additions do not contemplate increases in employment over that serving the existing administrative offices and Clubhouse, and will not generate additional vehicle trips. Since the uses have been in place and in continuing use for more than 12 years, the Project will generate much fewer than 50 additional peak hour trips (and a traffic study is not required to satisfy the Local Area Transportation Review test).

i. on a property in a Rural Residential or Residential zone, is compatible with the character of the residential neighborhood; and
This section is inapplicable to the Site Plan as the Property is not located in a Rural Residential or Residential zone.

j. on a property in all other zones, is compatible with existing and approved or pending adjacent development.

The Project is also compatible with existing and approved adjacent development. The proposed building is similar in height, massing, and architectural appearance to the adjacent structures on the Property and adjacent Leisure World properties. The Project’s building types and use are consistent with existing buildings which they will replace and supplement, and which have been compatible with adjacent development for many years. If any effects are felt by adjacent developments, they will be felt as beneficial results of the new improved loading and circulation plans.

V. CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests that the Planning Board grant approval of the Site Plan application. As explained above and shown in the plans submitted with the application, the Site Plan satisfies the findings that the Planning Board must make to approve a site plan under Section 59-7.3.4.E of the Zoning Ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,

LINOWES AND BLOCHER LLP

By: \[Signature\]
Scott C. Wallace
By:  

Philip C. Dales

7200 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
(301) 961-5124 (Wallace)
(301) 961- (Dales)

Attorneys for Applicant