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Annapolis, MD 21401
410-222-7450

Jason M. Schwier
Chair, Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee

July 17, 2024

Ms. Jenny Dempsey
Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning
2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Comments on Odenton Junction proposed construction at 1457 Hale St

Dear Ms. Dempsey:

This letter constitutes a response by the Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) to the request presented on June 25, 2024 regarding the proposed construction of Odenton Junction, a workforce housing project, to be located at 1457 Hale St in Odenton, MD. The OTCAC recommends approval of the proposed development project as meeting the vision and intent of the 2023 Odenton Town Center Master Plan (OTCMP). Modification requests for forest clearing, possible removal of a specimen tree, and reduced public activity space were presented to the Committee during the meeting.

The presentation outlined a proposal to create workforce housing within the Odenton Town Center, a housing type that is desperately needed across Anne Arundel County. This property is located along Odenton Road (MD-175) within the OTC-C (Core) zoning district of the Odenton Town Center. The proposal explained the properties are undeveloped and predominantly wooded. The developer is unaware of specimen trees, steep slopes, or highly erodible soils. The development has two phases, with the first providing 110 workforce housing units that are a mix of one, two, and three bedrooms. Phase two will provide condominiums on one portion of the property. The applicant, up front, stated that they are requesting a modification to have only 55% of the public activity space required, but would offset this through proffers. The proffers that they provided initially were to exceed the required green space, potentially add additional bicycle spaces, add native plantings beyond County requirements, create structured parking, and provide additional parking spaces. The applicant was not able to provide any additional information on proffers because they had not finalized certain aspects of the design regarding the public activity space.

County Specific Modification Request to Anne Arundel County Code §17-6-305(b):

- Clear forest below County afforestation threshold

OTCAC Recommendation: No opinion

OTCAC Comment: Request is for a modification outside OTCAC scope.

County Specific Modification Request to Anne Arundel County Code §17-6-303(5):

- Removal of specimen tree pending site environmental study

OTCAC Recommendation: No opinion

OTCAC Comment: Request is for a modification outside OTCAC scope.

County Specific Modification Request to Anne Arundel County Code §17-6-111:

- Reduced public activity space

OTCAC Recommendation: No opinion

OTCAC Comment: Request is for a modification outside OTCAC scope.

While the OTCAC did not take a formal stance regarding the modification requests because they are beyond the scope of the Committee, members expressed disappointment with the steep reduction in public activity space and the missed opportunities with additional proffers or structure around the provided activity space. Committee members, for example, stated that public art installations or creation of a public forum could easily have been added to the design. Additionally, requesting review of a modification, such as a specimen tree removal, that is not actually known to be occurring introduces risk into the review process. For matters within its purview, the OTCAC generally cannot provide opinions on modification request that are not tangible due to the context required to understand the modification. Regarding the specific specimen tree modification, OTCAC members sustained previously expressed concern about the continued removal of specimen trees and the impact on the overall natural environment of Odenton at a community level.

The Committee also expressed disappointment with the low number of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, as the proposal only included the County minimum of 3 spaces (rounded down). Specifically, the Fort Meade representative stated that this low number would fail to meet the Fort's requirements for EV chargers because demand for EV charging is surging. Members requested that the applicant, at minimum, create the infrastructure in the structured parking to be able to add additional EV chargers in the future. Members asked if the design would include solar panels, especially with the apartments being five stories, which should be well above tree level for the area. The applicant stated that they would discuss solar panels with the property owner. Lastly, members recommended that the landscaping islands explicitly have no parking permitted in order to permit emergency vehicles to access the site.

The OTCAC also received a letter from Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS) in support of the proposal and factored this into the Committee's recommendation. For completeness in the formal record, this letter is included as an attachment to our letter. Regarding the impact of this letter of support, however, the OTCAC defers to the experience of the Office of Planning and Zoning regarding this matter and trusts that the County will apply the correct standards and requirements when evaluating this letter.

The OTCAC asserts the proposed construction of the workforce housing meets the vision and intent of the OTCMP and recommends approval of the proposal. The Committee does feel that this proposal has room for improvement through better use of the community proffers focused on people and place in order to justify the offset of the reduced activity space. The OCTAC

recognized it was missing information in the presentation regarding the proffers to make a more informed recommendation.

The OTCAC recognizes the criticality of workforce housing, and the Fort Meade representative expressed interest in service-members being able to take advantage of this as soon as it is available. Committee members appreciate the opportunity to participate in the development process. Please let us know if you need further information or have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason M. Schwier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jason M. Schwier, Chair
Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee



June 21, 2024

Jason Schwier
Chair, Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee
c/o Office of Planning and Zoning, Long Range Planning Division
Anne Arundel County
2664 Riva Road,
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support – Odenton Junction

Dear Chairman Schwier:

On behalf of Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS), I am writing in support of Osprey Development Company's Odenton Junction project. Odenton Junction, to be located at 1457 Hale Street in Odenton, will add 122 new units for families to the County's inventory of affordable, workforce housing. There is a shortage of over 12,000 affordable workforce rental units in Anne Arundel County.

ACDS has collaborated and supported Osprey in the past to develop well-designed, well-managed housing developments that have been well received by their surrounding communities. These developments include Victoria Park at Edgewater (completed, Edgewater), Eagle Park Village (under construction, Hanover), and Eagle Park Vistas (under construction, Hanover). The proposed Odenton Junction development is being designed to complement the surrounding developments and meet the vision of the Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee. It will be a well-managed property that provides a variety of amenities, in close proximity to a variety of transportation modes.

We are thrilled that Osprey was able to secure competitive funding from the State of Maryland and look forward to supporting Osprey Property Company in the development of this project through low interest financing and other workforce housing incentives. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at ekarpewicz@acdsinc.org.

Sincerely,

Erin Karpewicz
Chief Executive Officer

EK:lb
cc: Brian Lopez, OPCII
Shalonda Gamble, OPCII