



**CITY OF COLLEGE PARK ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**8400 BALTIMORE AVENUE, COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND 20740**  
**TELEPHONE: (240) 487-3538**

**ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Approved Minutes of Meeting**  
**March 4, 2021**

*(Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, this was a Virtual Meeting)*

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Stephanie Stullich, Chair	<u>    x    </u>	<u>        </u>
Santosh Chelliah, Vice-Chair	<u>    x    </u>	<u>        </u>
Ben Flamm	<u>        </u>	<u>    x    </u>
James McFadden	<u>        </u>	<u>    x    </u>
Daejauna Donahue	<u>    x    </u>	<u>        </u>
Vernae Martin	<u>    x    </u>	<u>        </u>

Also Present: Planning Staff – Terry Schum, Miriam Bader and Theresheia Williams;  
 Attorney - Susan Cook; Presentation team: Mark Vogel and Faik Tugberk, Architect

- I. Call to Order and Amendments to Agenda:** Stephanie Stullich called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. There were no Amendments to the Agenda.
- II. Approval of the Agenda:** Daejauna Donahue moved to approve the agenda as published. Vernae Martin seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.
- III. Approval of Minutes:** Santosh Chelliah moved to adopt the minutes of February 4, 2021. Daejauna Donahue seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.
- IV. Public Remarks on Non-Agenda Items:** There were no Public Remarks on Non-Agenda Items.
- V. CPV-2021-03** Variance to extend a garage  
Applicant: John P. Murphy for Mary M. Murphy, Living Trust  
Location: 6908 Dartmouth Avenue

Stephane Stullich explained the hearing procedures and placed witnesses under oath. Miriam Bader summarized the staff report. The applicant is requesting a variance to permit the replacement of a garage and covered work area with a new garage. The property is rectangular with a 1,630 square foot, 2 story and brick frame house, a 258.3 square foot freestanding garage, and an 896 square foot driveway, all built in 1936. The driveway extends almost the whole length of the lot since the garage was put at the very back of the lot.

The existing lot coverage exceeds the maximum allowed by 3.11%. The proposed new garage will reduce lot coverage by 0.95% or 70.3 square feet by reducing the size of the driveway and including the work area within the new garage. Two very large oak trees prevent moving the garage closer to the street. The new Zoning Ordinance will permit lot coverage in the R-55 zone to be 35%, but it has not yet gone into effect.

Staff recommends approval of the requested lot coverage variance of 2.15% or 160.30 square feet. Miriam Bader submitted the staff report, Exhibits 1-10, and the PowerPoint presentation into the record.

John Murphy, applicant, testified that the garage is leaning a couple of degrees and the foundation is cracked and it needs to be replaced.

Stephanie Stullich asked if the proposed garage will look the same as the existing garage and have the same footprint?

John Murphy stated that the new garage will be larger, 20 x 20 square feet to replace the 12 x 20.5 existing garage. He stated that he will try to keep the design as close as possible to the existing garage. He has not decided on vinyl siding or cement board. He was waiting to get the variance and the permit before he spent additional money to get detailed site plans. He wanted to install a 20 x 24 garage but felt it may be out of scale for the width of the lot.

Bob Schnabel asked if there was a picture of the existing garage?

Miriam Bader stated yes and shared the photo on the screen.

Bob Schnabel asked if the proposed garage will be like the existing garage with the gable but with a larger footprint?

John Murphy stated that the roof will not be as tall or steep.

Bob Schnabel asked what are the materials of the existing garage?

John Murphy stated it was constructed in the 1930s. It is all wood and the bottom is rotten out and sunken into the ground. He is worried that the garage will fall over.

Commissioners reviewed the criteria that need to be met before the variance can be granted and determined that:

- 1) The property is exceptionally deep with the original garage built in 1936 located at the very back of the lot. The resulting long driveway adds significantly to lot coverage. The proposal to construct a new garage will reduce lot coverage from the existing condition.
- 2) The strict application of the Zoning Ordinance will result in a peculiar and unusual practical difficulty by preventing the replacement of an old garage even when doing so will reduce lot coverage. The existing improvements, including the garage and driveway, preceded the Zoning Ordinance and so did not require a variance.

- 3) Granting the lot coverage variance will not substantially impair the intent or purpose of the applicable County General Plan or County Master Plan since lot coverage will be reduced, the amount of variance requested is small, and the size of the new garage is not out of character with the rest of the neighborhood.

Santosh Chelliah moved to recommend approval of variance CPV-2021-03 based on the criteria outlined in the discussion. Daejauna Donahue seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.

**VI. Presentation of a Development Concept for vacant land located on Rhode Island Avenue between Knox Road and Calvert Road in the Old Town College Park neighborhood.**

Terry Schum gave a brief description of the development concept that will be presented by Mark Vogel and his team. This is a concept that has been in development for the last couple of months because the property owner, Carlton Green, who is a long-time property owner in Old Town has decided to sell the property and attempt to develop it. The development proposal to be presented tonight is just a concept and is at the exploratory stage. No application has been submitted to the City or the M-NCPPC, there is nothing formal under review. This property would be subject to rezoning and must submit a Preliminary Plan of Subdivision and Detailed Site Plan before it can be approved and built. The intention tonight is to show the concept and get input from those in the audience so that the property owner and the potential developer, Mark Vogel, will know whether to pursue this development concept or not.

Mark Vogel introduced himself and described his history and experience with the City of College Park. He stated that he has worked with the City of College Park for several years on a couple of projects. He owns the land where Varsity and University View are located. The owner of the subject property, Carlton Green, has owned the property for a long time. The property is close to the green line metro. The property would be marketed to young professionals, people who work at the University and Research Park and people who prefer not to live on US 1. We are trying to get some reaction on what the residents like and what they do not like. The only way that we would go forward is if there was a consensus that this is what the City of College Park wants. This project would not include 2- or 3-bedrooms units. The rent would be high so we do not think there would be any student tenants or, at least, very few.

Faik Tugberk, Architect Collaborative, showed a PowerPoint presentation to explain the development concept. He stated that he is familiar with College Park and the University of Maryland and the surrounding area. Mr. Faik stated that he thinks it is important not to disturb the scale of the neighborhood. He would like to make a positive addition to the community. The property is located between Rhode Island Ave, Calvert Road, Dartmouth Road and Knox Road. There is frontage on three streets, Calvert Road, Rhode Island, and Knox Road. There are two adjoining residential homes that are also owned by Carleton Green but are not part of this project. There is an existing bike trail along Rhode Island Avenue and that could be improved and tied into the context of the project. In the proposed design, an attempt was made to limit the number of hard surfaces.

The intent is to develop three small buildings and give them enough shape and geometry to reduce the scale impact along Rhode Island Avenue. The buildings are 3 and 4 stories with a trellis and terrace at the top. The two structures along Rhode Island are tied together by a shallow, small elevator core. All the buildings are approximately 18 units each with a couple of 1 bedroom and studio apartments. They will be market-oriented towards professionals or other people who are working in this area. We are not trying to create a dorm. There will be a design tied to the history of the hiker/biker trail. There will be places to sit, and interesting landscaping and lighting. Whatever plants are replaced, will be rejuvenated. There will be additional planting, maybe a green roof concept and many new plants and trees that will last for a long time. Contemporary and more modest versions with brick details will give the buildings more character.

Stephanie Stullich, Chair, thanked Mr. Vogel and the architect, Mr. Tugberk for the presentation and asked APC Members and the audience if there were any questions. In addition to APC members and staff, there were 5 members of the Developer's team and 16 members of the public attending the meeting. The questions, answers and comments are summarized below.

1. **Question from Stephanie Stullich:** What is the existing zoning for the property in question?

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** It's not zoned for multi-family. The perspective would be because it is so close to the Purple Line and the Metro that it is a transitional area. This is something that would be a collaboration with the community. It is not zoned for the concept you are viewing.

2. **Question from Stephanie Stullich:** Is it currently zoned for R-55 single-family housing or something else?

**Answer by Terry Schum:** The new zoning has not been implemented yet, which will be R-65. For now, it is R-55 except for a portion that may be zoned R-18 for small apartments. In Old Town, there is an existing mix of both R-55 and R-18 zoning to accommodate the single-family homes and small apartment buildings that are there today.

3. **Question from Stephanie Stullich:** I just want to inform the architect that the two houses on Calvert Road are not vacant. One of the tenants is participating in the meeting tonight.

**Answer by Faik Tugberk, Architect:** That is my misperception. I walked the site and did not see anyone, so that is what I based my comment on.

4. **Question from Stephanie Stullich:** When I was comparing the existing view and proposed view, it did look to me that the land would be completely covered with buildings and parking except for a little bit on the frontages on Calvert Road, Knox Road and Rhode Island Avenue. Most of the green space that was shown along Rhode Island Ave. is in the public right-of-way for the hiker/biker trail.

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** That is a good observation. This is lower density multi-family housing that doesn't allow for us to have structured parking, that would be a different building type. I do not have that much choice but to put parking on the surface. I do not think that all the green space that we left along Rhode Island Avenue is in the right-of-way from what I observed from the property line. I pulled it back on all sides more than I may have otherwise. You get caught in two different equations with something like this. There are approximately 66 units and 55 parking spaces on the surface. The dilemma is always how is the community going to react if I eliminate some of these parking spaces and introduce more green space and how is the market going to react. I would like to bring more green space, but this is the best that I can do. The current site is mostly open green space except for the driveway around the existing house in the front and back.

5. **Question from Daejauna Donahue:** Does the existing parking meet or exceed the zoning requirements?

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** I think it exceeds it. That is the challenge of this property. Parking is at a premium everywhere in College Park. We wanted to provide as many parking spaces as we could. Since this property is close to the metro, I think there is a reduction in required parking spaces.

**Answer by Terry Schum:** A reduction in parking requirements typically only happens if you are in a Development District Overlay Zone (DDO) or Transit District Overlay Zone (TDOZ). This property would be subject to the regular Zoning Ordinance which has been rewritten but is not effective yet. The new Zoning Ordinance is a little more permissive in what it allows in the residential zone, but parking is based on the number and size of bedrooms. The staff has not done a review of this as we do not have the data and are uncertain about what zoning category would be pursued to accommodate the development. This is something that we would evaluate as part of an application.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** It is important that we get as much feedback as we can. I have watched the changes in the last 20 years, and College Park is still missing quality multi-family housing for professionals. Most of us do not want to live on US 1. The demographics are so strong. This is a challenging site, and the visions of people living here may be different than what we see. It is important to me that this project would be looked at as something positive for the community and not take away from the community.

6. **Question from Daejauna Donahue:** The site plan outlined in red insinuates that the existing houses are part of the property. If this is or is not the case, it should be stated. It would be helpful if it were presented with the actual outline of the property.

**Answered by Mark Vogel:** Carleton Greene owns the two houses, but they are not part of the development.

- 7. Question from Daejauna Donahue:** The number of impervious spaces and the proximity of the development to the existing houses dictates a larger buffer. That would be helpful especially for the southern parking that is adjacent and between the two houses to allow some additional landscaping, garden walls, or some other treatment. The design on the western edge seems very elaborative and it brings the trail through in very close to the property. An extension of that green space could allow the existing houses to feel a sense of privacy and community. Is there any planned underground work that would require any underpinning or subterranean work?

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** There are no unforeseen issue as far as I can see. This is not ground that has been built on before and there are no large structures. We are not in proximity to anything that would require underpinning. Environmental checks and soil boring for structural capacity are required as usual, but that is about it. But that is standard for any project.

- 8. Question from Santosh Chelliah:** Are buildings 1A and 1B intended to have 15 units each and building 2 18 units?

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** Yes, that is correct. It should total 66.

- 9. Question from Santosh Chelliah:** As far as the parking spaces, is it 1 parking space per unit?

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** Currently, it is 66 units and 55 parking spaces.

**Comment by Stephanie Stulich:** The numbers do not add up, 15, 15 and 18 in building two is 48.

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** There are six units per floor in each structure. So, if you take a horizontal line in three buildings, there are 18 units per floor, multiply by 4 and subtract 6 for the units that have been eliminated to create the terrace. These are smaller units, and there are many variables here. You can change the unit character and you can eliminate units.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** That is 66 units.

- 10. Question from Santosh Chelliah:** So, all the parking is intended for residents of these buildings?

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** And a few guests. I did not segregate any of it. We have 55 parking spaces in this structure.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** You must have some guest parking and the variable is that some people may not have a car. It may be about 25% that do not have a car, which would make the parking much more manageable, especially for guests.

**Answer by Faik Tugberk:** Over the last 10 years, the parking space ratio has been shrinking. I would love to bring more parking and more green space. I appreciate all the comments. There is also the market and if the buildings are not leased, it does not do any good to anyone.

- 11. Question from David Dorsch:** I live about ½ a block from this location, and I am familiar with the area. This area has limited to no on-street parking around this lot area. All the parking for the residents would have to be on site. If more parking is needed, it may have to be under the building. From what I see of the project, I like it and think it would be an asset to the community and would like to see it further developed.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** That is our challenge, parking versus green space. That is something that we will be discussing if there is enough support for the project to move forward.

- 12. Question from DW Rowlands:** I am one of the residents in one of the two houses on the site. I admit I would miss having green space, but I think it is good to get more people in the neighborhood especially this close to a metro station. My main thought regarding the parking is if there could be some pervious pavers used for parking spaces so that the non-pervious surface would not be as high even if we cannot have very much green. I think it is a good idea to build apartments on this lot. I do not have a strong opinion about the detail of the specific plans. It looks like a lot to fit in, but I think it is a good idea and I am glad to see something being done with this lot with it being so close to the metro.

**Answer by Carlton Green:** He and his wife have owned the property since May 24, 1976. I own the two houses on Calvert Road, and the lot that goes back to Knox Road. Whenever this property is developed, we want it developed as a quality development that the neighbors enjoy and are not opposed to and fits in with everything around it. It is not an easy concept to come up with what makes the most sense. The fact that the Purple Line will be coming and be a major hub with the metro makes it time to develop. I asked Mark Vogel to look at the property because he has worked with the City of College Park in the past. If there are apartments built on this lot, it will be in character with the community. We are not in any rush to sell the property. At this time, there is no sale contract or letter of intent.

- 13. Question from Bob Schnabel:** I live in one of the Victorian houses shown on Knox Road and Dartmouth Avenue. I have lived in my house for 40 years and Calvert Hills for an additional 8 years. I am a member of the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). I feel that the project is totally out of scale. It is sitting on one of the most beautiful sites in College Park. The design, scale, and lack of green space is a significant problem to all of us in Old Town and Calvert Hills. We are experiencing so much flooding which is a result of the building that is going on at the campus and Rt 1. The scale of the property overwhelms the Old Town Historic District.

It is a small district about 4 blocks, and you are centering this project right in the heart of it. There has always been someone living in the two houses on this property. The amount of parking would be totally out of keeping with the nature and quality of Old Town College Park. I would be one of the people who would lay down in front of a bulldozer if I saw this site being developed. I was a major founder of the Old Town College Park Historic District. I feel this property is an assault on the Old Town Historic District and I am against this project and will do everything to prevent it from being built. The need for additional apartment buildings is not necessary for the neighborhood. There are enough apartment buildings, and this green space is one of the most beautiful areas in the Old Town area.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** It is good to hear your opinion. We did not mean to slight anyone indicating that the houses were vacant. That is an honest mistake.

**Question from Leslie Montroll:** Thanks for the presentation, it is interesting. You did not show the façade that would face the Old Parish House, which is one of the historic cultural gems of the neighborhood. How would you market this to discourage students from renting there?

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** There will not be any 2 or 3 bedrooms and the rents will be twice the price for a one-bedroom for the surrounding student housing. Most students want to be where the bars are so we do not think this would be an ideal spot for students. It would be unlikely that you would get many students there. I am not aware of the issue about the façade facing the Old Parish House.

**Question from Bob & Kathy Baer:** We live at 4701 Calvert Road which is the southeast corner of the intersection of Calvert Road and Rhode Island Avenue. I have been past president and vice-president of the Calvert Hills Citizens Association. We would like to thank Carleton Green and Mark Vogel for coming to the City with the presentation and the opportunity to comment. We are concerned but our opinions are somewhere between David Dorsch's full endorsement of the project and Bob Schnabel's opposite reaction to the project. We always expected the property to be developed. We know that Carleton Green and his partners were going to do something there. I have seen some of the other conceptual developments with townhomes and single-family homes which are sympathetic to both the historic district. We strongly believe that the scale, façade, the overall being of the facing on Calvert Road need to be sympathetic to the historic district. We are concerned about the scale, the appearance and think it is unrealistic. We agree that the proximity to the metro station and the coming Purple Line are significant to the development of this property and trying to get the people who respect the neighborhood into that property. Our greatest concern is the vehicular access, the façade, elevation, and the lack of green space facing the Calvert Road 4700 Block.

**Answer by Mark Vogel:** I appreciate your comment because there is always a difference of opinion. We are here to understand the difference of opinions. Your comments were helpful.



**Question from Dan Oats:** I would like to thank the presenters for doing the presentation tonight. I am a resident of Calvert Hills. Everyone knows the challenges that residents have had in Calvert Hills and Old Town with stormwater management and flooding in recent years. I am concerned seeing the plans with this massive increase of impervious surface and how that may impact, and further ascorbate challenges that residents have had. I also echo some of the comments on the historic character nature of this project. For people who are walking or biking through the neighborhood at the intersection of the entrance to Calvert Hills as well as the entrance to Old Town along the trolley trail. A shared goal of the community and the University is to see how to increase owner-occupied within College Park overall. We have seen a lot of apartment buildings being built particularly on Baltimore Avenue.

**Question from Marion Green:** I would like to hear from Eric Olson of the City-University Partnership who is also joining the meeting about his ideas when he approached us about developing this property. I think cottages and townhomes seem like a better option for this lot and maybe more aesthetically pleasing to the neighbors.

**Eric Olson:** In 2015, I talked to an architect who drew up some preliminary plans of what could happen at the site by keeping density down. My thought was to put owner-occupied, graduate student housing, townhouses, or smaller house on the site. We did not pursue the project because I and the board were pulled in different directions and had other projects they were working on.

### **Chat Messages**

**DW Rowlands:** The homes are not vacant; I live in one of them. Would it be possible to use some sort of pervious surface? I fundamentally question the idea of having a low-density historical district this close to rapid transit infrastructure. It is hardly the highest and best use of the neighborhood. That said, drainage is a problem.

**Bob and Kathy Baer:** Those homes have occupants. The facade and scale facing Calvert Rd are not in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior guidelines for the sympathetic architecture of the two existing historic districts, Old Town and Calvert Hills. Essentially worthless code.

**Kathy Bryant:** Yes, and we all know those occupants well. I raised my hand, but if you cannot hear me when I speak, I support everything Bob Schnabel is saying. Everything I was going to say is going to echo what he is saying. Please mention, my yard is being constantly flooded by runoff from Route 1 and the water stays in my yard for days in areas that have never been flooded before in my lifetime. The impervious surface of this property will only increase my flooding. All this development is destroying my property. Also, this property is R-55 and in a Historic District, so the design in no way fits a Historic District. Also, Guilford Run water runs down under Calvert Road. The culvert was paved over years ago, but there is water all under Old Town.

**Leslie College Park, MD:** How are you going to prevent students from moving in? Also, what does the facade look like that faces the Old Parish House? Pavers for the parking to reduce the impervious space. Marion's idea of some small cottages sounds great. But again, they would still be surrounded by students.

**Urs Weber:** Is it possible to have the buildings proposed somehow match the external aspect of the houses that are in the historical neighborhood that is right across the street? The buildings are blocks and they are a shocking structure, compared to all the other older houses that are there. I find it not matching at all. Related to this, how is this matching the fact that this is surrounded by the historical district? How are studios going to be attractive to families or professionals who may want to move into the neighborhood long term, and not just to rich students who can afford this,

**Aaron:** Townhomes would be reasonable. Massive rentals at Whole Foods. Thank you!

**Chong Cho - Architects Collaborative Inc:** Developments like this require strict stormwater management.

**Mark Vogel** – I would like to thank everyone for their comments and differences of opinion. I have worked in College Park for a long time and been involved in a lot of the community and charities in College Park and I found some of the comments tonight to be very disrespectful. The intent of the presentation was to give you some background on the project. There was a lot of very negative back-and-forth discussion that I felt was unnecessary.

**Faik Tugberk** – I have been an architect for over 40 years and have designed and presented a lot of projects. I have never encountered such an impolite critique as what I heard tonight. I am personally insulted by the tone of many of the comments.

**VII. Update on Development Activity** – Terry Schum reported on the following.  
**Terrapin House-CSP** – Located at the northeast corner of Rt 1 and Hartwick Road. This project proposes assembling property and rezoning a portion of it and then building a mixed-use building. There is support for the project and it has been revised significantly from when it first came to the Advisory Planning Commission in a forum to collect wider input on the project before it went to City Council. The project came back much improved and it is still at the conceptual level, but the City Council will vote next Tuesday and then it will move on to the Planning Board for a public hearing.

**Tony Akaras property** - Mr. Akaras will be submitting a Detailed Site Plan to rebuild a restaurant at the property located at the southeast corner of Rt. 1 and Guilford Road. No plans have been filed. This is early notice of their intent to file. As soon as it is appropriate, we would like to bring this before the APC to have an opportunity for conversation.

**VIII. Other Business:** There was no other business.

**X. Adjourn:** There being no further business, Vernae Martin moved to adjourn the meeting. Daejauna Donahue seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Theresheia Williams