

Oaks of Laurel

Case #XXXXX

JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES WAIVER

April 12th, 2024

Attn: Emily Cline-Gibson
City of Laurel
Department of Economic and Community Development
Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center
8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD 20707

The parcels at 14251 and 14275 Park Center Drive are proposed for development and lack notable environmental features. Hence, we request an exemption waiver from the city's environmental regulations.

Per Sec. 20-41.16. of the Prince George's County code, the required priorities for an exemption waiver are as follows in the order listed:

(A) Describe the special conditions peculiar to the property which would cause unwarranted hardship.

The 8.29 acres of subject properties lack environmental features necessitating an environmental review. Historical imagery from the PG Atlas indicates the forest on the subject parcels was cleared between 1965 and 1977 for the development of existing homes on adjacent properties. Since then, the parcels have been maintained preventing the regrowth of a forest. A recent site visit by qualified CPJ staff on April 5, 2024, confirmed the absence of specimen trees, wetlands, streams, floodplains, steep slopes, wildlife, or highly erodible soils. Requiring a full environmental review would impose unwarranted hardship given the absence of such features.

(B) Describe how enforcement of these rules will deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by others in similar areas.

Enforcement of these rules would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by others in similar areas due to several factors. Firstly, as detailed in (A) and (C) below, the subject parcels are deemed suitable for development and do not possess environmental features that would hinder development. Additionally, the proposed residential use aligns with the surrounding properties to the east, while neighboring properties to the west are designated for commercial use. Therefore, any delay or prevention of development based on environmental review would unjustly deny the applicant rights typically exercised by others in the area.

(C) Verify that the granting of the waiver will not confer on the applicant a special privilege that would be denied by other applicants.

Granting the waiver does not provide the applicant with privileges denied to others. Development of the subject parcels will adhere to standard city procedures and regulations, ensuring fairness for all.

(D) Verify that the waiver request is not based conditions or circumstances which are the result of actions by the applicants.

This land was cleared years before this development proposal and has remained without an established forest since. CPJ staff observed mowed land during a field visit, corroborated by aerial imagery revealing distinct mower lines. The fact that there are no environmental features on site is not a result of actions by the applicant.

(E) Verify that the request does not arise from a condition relating to land or building use, either permitted or nonconforming, on a neighboring property.

The request is independent of any conditions related to land or building use on neighboring properties. All proposed and existing uses on the subject parcels and surrounding properties comply with City of Laurel regulations.

(F) Verify that the granting of a waiver will not adversely affect water quality.

The granting of this waiver will not adversely affect water quality. Proper stormwater management practices will be implemented during the development process.

Submitted by:

Lomax Mulheron
Charles P Johnson & Assoc., Inc.
lmulheron@cpja.com