

From: Pifer Phil GFCA philip.pifer@gfca.org
Subject: Fwd: last two email from Sam & Sandy
Date: July 19, 2016 at 12:33 PM
To:

GP

Jul 15

Dear Commissioner Ulfelder,

My wife, Sandy, and I live at 10321 Eclipse Lane in Great Falls, VA. Our property abuts the approximately 11 acre parcel of land that The Gulick Group would like rezoned from R-A to R-1 for cluster development. There was a meeting held last Friday, July 8, 2016 including yourself, Fairfax County Planning Commission staff, several Gulick Group representatives, and a few Great Falls citizens. We would have liked to attend, however we had previous plans to be out of town, and we were given only 2 days' notice to try to rearrange our schedules to be there.

We learned from the Great Falls residents in attendance that there was a change to the General Development Plan for this property. Specifically, that the shared tree on our property line with Hill's Nursery has been approved for removal by the county without our permission! This is very disturbing. In the original General Development Plan, it clearly states that "Shared trees shall not be removed without written permission from affected adjacent property owners." How is it that no one from the county or the Gulick Group contacted us to ask our permission or even bring this change to our attention? On what grounds has this decision been made? This tree is clearly healthy.

As of now, the change to the General Development Plan has not been filed on the county website. My understanding is that Bob Katai of the county staff hopes to have it published by the morning of July 19, 2016, just 2 days before the next meeting of the Planning Commission to decide on approval of this application. The public hearing that Sandy and I attended on June 29, 2016 and at which Sandy presented arguments against the proposed development was based on a plan to preserve our tree. Now that the plan has changed, we need ample time to bring in our own arborist to assess our property's trees and the impact that construction will have on them.

We have been in contact with an expert arborist who is out of town until next Tuesday, July 19, 2016. We need more time to be able to get him scheduled to survey our trees and prepare a report regarding their health and the impact of construction on them. We are requesting that the decision be postponed for 2 weeks so that we can make the necessary arrangements with our arborist.

In addition to our concern about the shared tree, we are also concerned about aggressive root pruning that is planned in order to place 3 septic fields almost on and very near our property line. It is well known and supported by the Fairfax County Tree Commission that such root pruning will cause the trees to die. In addition, under the proposed plan, root pruning is indicated around the entire perimeter of the development. There are dozens of trees both on and off of the Hill's Nursery plot that will be damaged and eventually die. This is not in keeping with the many county tree ordinances designed to protect our trees, nor is the plan aligned with Fairfax County's intention to increase canopy cover. The Gulick Group's plan to clear cut the property also does not align with Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. In particular, "*no more land shall be disturbed than is necessary to provide for the proposed use, development, or redevelopment*" and that "*indigenous vegetation shall be preserved to the maximum extent practicable consistent with the use, development, or redevelopment*".

In an effort to respect the environment (not to mention mitigate the huge problem with storm water management in our community), it would be much more reasonable to reduce the number of homes to be developed to, say, 5 rather than 10 so that more trees can be preserved. It would be nicer to have a neighborhood with established, mature trees rather than a clear cut parcel of land with new trees that will take decades to provide the environmental benefits that the existing trees already do. Septic fields can be moved away from property lines where they will endanger the trees on existing property owners' lots. It would also be less costly to the developer to remove more trees

on existing property owners lots. It would also be less costly to the developer to remove more trees, and it will increase a property's value by having the mature trees remaining.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sam Cappiello
10321 Eclipse lane
Great Falls, VA 22066-1731

Jul 17

Dear Commissioner Ulfelder,

We are pleased that the Gulick Group has recognized that the shared tree on our lot and the proposed property can not be removed without our written permission. We also appreciate the changes made to the shorter distance between silt fences that is to be utilized during any construction.

There are some other issues that still need to be addressed (some previously mentioned and some new):

--The aggressive root pruning that is to take place around the entire perimeter of the proposed parcel will lead to the death of many trees. In particular, our shared oak (#505) has an extensive critical root zone that will be severely damaged by pruning. If the plans move forward as drawn, a bond

needs to be posted in order to cover the full replacement value of the tree as well as its removal. It needs to be enforceable for many years into the future.

--I have heard that there is a "super silt barrier" available to help contain runoff from construction lots. Is this the type to be utilized?

--I noted on the plans that the septic fields for lots #6 and 7 are very close to one another (less than 30' based on the scale). Is this permissible? Has the Health Department approved this close proximity?

I would like to suggest the following:

--Many of these issues that are deleterious to the environment can be mitigated by reducing the number of homes being built on this parcel. More trees could be saved around the perimeter (and in the interior) that would allow septic fields to be moved further from existing lots and avoid aggressive root pruning.

--Rather than clearing all lots at one time, if they were cleared only when they are sold, there would be less silt runoff that could harm the local streams and rivers. I believe this approach was approved for the Brooks Farm development.

--The developer should agree to monitoring for an extended period the impact of the development on storm water management issues that are so damaging to our community. This, too, is something that was provided in the Brooks Farm plan.

I have arranged for an arborist to come to my property on Tuesday, July 19, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. to inventory our trees and make an evaluation of their health as well as the risk the proposed development will have on them. He will not be able to prepare a report that I can share with the Planning Commission before the meeting this Thursday, July 21, 2016. I am requesting postponement of the meeting for a couple of weeks. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Can you please share my e-mails with the other members of the Planning Commission. I do not have their direct e-mails, and I am limited to 2,000 character if I try to e-mail through the Planning Commission website. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Sam Cappiello

M. Eric Knudsen