

Diego Resublanca

April 23, 1984

MEMO



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Marty Reinhart, Community Planning South

SUBJECT: Preliminary Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: The Siegler Property Site #37/3-2, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Forward amendment to County Council designating the entire property -- approximately one acre -- on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation with the following additional/ clarifying language:

- The original structure completed in 1884 by Issac L. Thomas -- first postmaster, store owner and station master for Takoma Park -- is historically significant as one of the earliest homes constructed in B.F. Gilbert's Victorian suburban development.
- Original 2-story, T-shaped, "American Farmhouse" remodelled to present Queen Anne appearance with its conversion to a duplex in 1889.
- Extensively landscaped under the ownership of the Siegler Family, the grounds are dominated by large white oak trees with an understory of magnolia, America Holly, laurel, azalea, dogwood and cherry which aesthetically define the setting for the historic structures and contribute to the overall sylvan environment of Takoma Park. Included in the plantings are a number of prototype and non-hybridized specie azaleas which further research may show were incorporated as the result of the Siegler Brothers association with Benjamin Y. Morrison, noted horticulturalist and first director of the National Arboretum.
- The Thomas/Siegler site including the main house, the carriage house and the landscaped grounds, is historically significant as an early example of the Victorian suburban ideal still influential in modern suburban development. While the site's highest historic, cultural and aesthetical value would be in retaining it in its present integrated state, this plan recognizes that some development may need to be accommodated on the property in the future. To assure compatible development both within the site's environmental setting and the Takoma Park historic district this plan recommends the entire property be designated on the Master Plan and subject to the architectural review provided under the County's Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code).

BACKGROUND

The Siegler property located at 201 Tulip Avenue is covered by the 1974 Takoma Park Transit Impact Area Sector Plan. The Sector Plan recommends retention of the existing low density residential development and R-60 zoning for the subject property and the immediate neighborhood.

The property is also located within both the Takoma Park historic district designated on the National Register of Historic Places, and the district identified in the County's own historic inventory, The Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Although the 1974 Transit Impact Area Plan does not specifically address historic preservation, the 1982 Approved and Adopted Master Plan for the City of Takoma Park contains an extensive discussion of preservation issues (page four) and the Takoma Park historic district (pages 20 and 21).

Because the subject property falls within both the National Register and Locational Atlas historic districts, staff finds extension of the recommendations of the 1982 City of Takoma Park Plan to this property both reasonable and necessary to implement the overall preservation goals of that Plan. As a means of implementing those goals, the Plan specifically recommends the evaluation and designation of a local historic district under the provisions of the Prince George's and Montgomery County Historic Preservation Ordinances.

Master plan evaluation of the Siegler property prior to a consideration of the whole district was triggered when an application to resubdivide the property was filed by agents of the owner. The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviewed that application and recommended the property be designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation as an individual historic site and as a contributing resource to the Takoma Park Historic district.

The following analysis summarizes the attached research findings of the Park Historian on the significance of the site and outlines staff recommendations for the designation of this property on the Master Plan.

ANALYSIS

Architectural/Historical/Significance

The Park Historian's research substantiates the Thomas/Siegler house as one of the first homes constructed in B. F. Gilberts original Takoma Park suburban development. The original section of the house, a traditional, T-shaped dwelling characterized as an "American Farmhouse," was completed in the fall of 1884. The dwelling was later remodelled to its present Queen Anne appearance when the house was converted into a duplex in 1889.

The ancillary building was also constructed in two parts. The original two story structure dating from the end of the 19th century was probably built at the same time as the main house. The siting, configuration and construction details support its original use as a carriage house. The one story frame addition was constructed sometime during the early 20th century for use as an automobile garage presumably a function the earlier carriage house could not adequately perform.

The Park Historian's research could not establish a direct relationship between the azaleas planted on the Siegler property and the experimental work conducted by B. V. Morrison during the 1920's and 30's which resulted in the reknowned Glenn Dale azalea. Research did reveal that the Siegler Brothers -- noted scientists in their own right and avidly intrusted in horticulture -- were contemporaries of Morrison, associates of his at the USDA and fellow townsmen. It is not unreasonable to assume that the Siegler's participated in Morrison's experimentation but until historical or botanical evidence establishes a direct connection their association remains only reasonable conjecture.

Staff notes however that reliance on landscaping in other cases for identifying appropriate historic settings has not required establishing separate historical or botanical merit for individual plantings. Landscaping has been included as an element of historic settings in the past either because of its aesthetic contribution or because it was representative of period horticultural or landscaping practices.

Staff requested a landscape architect from the Urban Design Division evaluate the landscape plan of the Siegler property as it relates to the main house and carriage house. After several field visits to the property Rob Bushnell offered the following comments on the contribution of the landscape plan to the setting for the historic structures:

- The main house is the dominate structure on the site. By its very size, it requires a large site to serve as a foreground.
- The space about the house must be large enough to compose with it and best display it.
- The house requires a balance of open space and landscape plantings. Spaces have been designed within the plantings to create quiet islands from which one can view the surrounding plant material. These defined open spaces are areas where sunlight may flood in creating shadow patterns and airiness. Each one of these spaces is an entity, complete within itself. They are inseparable parts of the adjacent landscape plantings and main house.
- In summary, it appears that such related spaces, the structure and the landscape that surrounds them were considered together in the process of the design of the garden and grounds of the Thomas/Siegler House. To destroy or take away portion of the landscaped grounds would do severe damage, visually, to the entire property.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings of the Park Historian and additional documentation submitted by the HPC and the community, staff finds the Siegler property significantly meets the following Ordinance criteria cited by the HPC for designation on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:

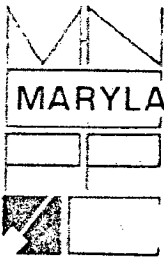
- 1a- has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the County, state or nation.
- 2e- represents an establishment and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or County due to its singular physical characteristic landscape.

Staff finds the property additionally meets criteria "1d. - exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities," as it contributes significantly to the character of the Takoma Park historic district. Staff therefore recommends the designation of the entire one acre property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Since it is the intent of the Master Plan to objectively evaluate and recognize resources of cultural or historic significance to the County, staff recommends the amendment reflect the Siegler property's importance as an integrated site exemplifying the Victorian suburban ideal. In order to assist pursuit of preservation incentives and open space grants, staff further recommends the amendment recognizes that the site's highest historic and aesthetic value would be in retaining the property's present size and scale without further development.

In the event efforts to preserve the site intact prove infeasible the amendment should specifically acknowledge the potential of the property to accommodate additional development under the review procedures established in the County Historic Preservation Ordinance.

In summary, the Siegler property is significant as it epitomizes the Victorian suburban ideal which greatly influenced the suburban development of Montgomery County. The legacy of the property both as an individual historic site and as a contributing resource within the Takoma Park historic district justifies review of any additional development on the site under the provisions of the County's Historic Preservation Ordinance. In this regard the proposed amendment language provides the greatest flexibility for the public/community to reasonably pursue preservation of the property while not foreclosing the property owners options under both the zoning and the Preservation Ordinances to seek resubdivision and additional development on the property.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

April 18, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian MW

RE: Historical Significance of Siegler Property as it Relates to
Takoma Park and Montgomery County Suburban Development

The Siegler Property represents the emergence, at the end of the 19th century in Montgomery County, of a specifically suburban style which was both adapted to previous middle class urban traditions and suited to some of the goals of the rural ideals. It was, in fact, this blending of city and country that stimulated B. F. Gilbert's creation and promotion of Takoma Park -- and indeed the development of virtually all of the County's early suburban communities -- as a haven for urban dwellers in search of the arcadian life, "a sylvan retreat from the turmoil of the city." From the outset, Takoma Park was conceived as a picturesque development.

Town planning and platting conventions of the 19th century influenced the grid pattern road system and narrow, deep lots of the first "paper town" of Takoma Park. But Gilbert's continued emphasis of the rural ideal resulted not in a regimented, tightly-packed development dictated by lines on paper, but in a free-flowing community of low density -- from one to two homes per acre -- of suburban residences surrounded by wide lawns and towering shade trees. One of the planning concepts that Gilbert used, in the earliest sections of Takoma Park, to achieve this picturesque quality was the idea of a large setback of house from street, providing a spacious front lawn for plantings and landscaping. This setback was later codified to forty feet by the Town Charter.

The physical realities of early Takoma were perhaps best described in a Washington Times article in 1903, entitled "Takoma Park, Unique Among Washington Suburbs." The article contrasted the suburb with the typical city development:

The \$4,000 that the fairly well-to-do Government clerk invests in a house in the city will purchase him a half

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

18 April 1984

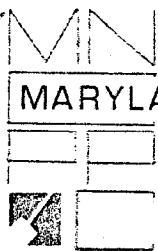
Page 2

acre of ground and build him a model house in Takoma. He would buy one of a long row in the city perhaps. He would get eighteen feet front, a six-room brick house, a lawn as big as a small hall bedroom, and a back yard three long strides each way. In Takoma he will get eight rooms and an attic, a front lawn bigger than his entire town lot, side lawns thirty feet wide, and a back lot a hundred feet each way. He will find three or four good oak trees, already on his lot, and can plant maples or poplars or willows, ten of them if he likes, and not crowd them. He can have twenty fruit trees in his back yard, or he can raise two hundred chickens.

The Siégler Property epitomizes that suburban ideal, and, along with the community's other early examples with their large lawns and tall trees framing the entire street, helps to maintain Takoma Park's distinctive sylvan setting.

One group that helped substantially to fulfill Gilbert's picturesque conception of Takoma Park was government scientists employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. From the beginning the suburb proved an attractive residential area for botanists and horticulturists seeking a quiet setting in which to cultivate their own gardens and, by connection, cultivate a "garden community." By 1901, the Takoma Park Citizens Association brochure could note that "Takoma Park is becoming quite a favorite dwelling place for scientists connected with the government work in Washington. Already there is quite a colony of these gentlemen established here." Similarly, Raymond Button in his 1915 promotional pamphlet, Glimpses of Takoma Park, pointed to the town's large community of "experts, scientists, and clerks who desired to live in a democratic suburb where they could have large lawns, plenty of flowers and ornamentals, and vegetable gardens and poultry yards." Takoma Park's continued emphasis on landscaping is due largely to the early presence of these scientists and specialists from the USDA; the Siégler Property, associated with two USDA scientists, Horace and Eugene Siégler, still reflects that early emphasis.

The picturesque qualities of such early suburban developments as Takoma Park, Forest Glen, and Garrett Park were to a large degree abandoned during the mid-20th century, when housing urgencies prompted the creation of large "boom town" developments, characterized by repetitious rows of housing on postage stamp lots. But still, the notion of suburbia as the perfect blending of city and country, as articulated by Gilbert and exemplified by early Takoma Park, continued to be a major enticement, drawing families to suburban Montgomery County.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

March 29, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian *MW*

RE: Thomas/Siegler House, Site 37/3-2

I have been asked by Planning Staff to verify some of the historical and architectural allegations made about the Siegler property in Takoma Park. The findings of my research are presented below, arranged in three major areas of concern: Main House; Carriage House; and Landscape.

MAIN HOUSE

In November of 1883, Mrs. Amanda G. Thomas, of Washington, D. C., purchased ten lots in B. F. Gilbert's new development, "Takoma Park." By the fall of 1884, the Thomas family house, at the corner of Oak -- now Cedar -- and Tulip Avenues, had been completed, and was occupied by Mrs. Thomas, her husband, Issac L. Thomas, and their two daughters, Jennie and Augusta. Some sources claim the Thomas House was the first dwelling completed in Takoma Park (Proctor, "Takoma Park, Energetic Community," The Sunday Star, 19 November 1933); others claim the Veitenheimer House, also on Oak Avenue, was the first erected (Heaton, "Jottings in Relation to Takoma Park," The Records of the Takoma Park Historical Society, No. 1, 1913). The point is, I believe, moot; it suffices to say that the Thomas House was one of the first homes constructed in the town of Takoma Park.

The house which stands on the property today was not constructed in toto in 1884; only a section of the house dates from that time. In configuration, the original Thomas House was a two story, three bay wide frame house, with the main facade oriented toward Tulip Avenue, and a two story integral rear ell running parallel to Cedar Avenue. It was a T-shaped dwelling, traditional, which could be styled "American Farmhouse." The original roofline can

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 2

still be discerned among the subsequent additions.

Isaac Thomas -- postmaster, store owner, and station master for the fledgling village -- died in March of 1889. Shortly thereafter, the widow Thomas convinced her sister, Rebecca McWilliam, formerly of Dickertown, New Jersey, to come and live with her in Takoma Park. In anticipation of her arrival, the original house was remodeled and expanded to provide comfortable accommodations for Rebecca. In essence, a second dwelling was attached to the original house; a new two story block was added, perpendicular to the rear ell of the first house and featuring a wrap-around porch and a two story turret at the southern point of connection. The two sections were tied together architecturally by the continuance of the original horizontal siding and such shared decorative elements as gable-end fan brackets.

The remodelling was completed by November of 1889. In that month, a lease arrangement was drawn up between the two sisters, under which Rebecca was charged one cent a year for rent. In the agreement, Rebecca's portion of the house and yard is described as "beginning at the point where the portico of the house erected by the said Rebecca McWilliam joins the dwelling of the said Amanda G. Thomas," and includes the section of the lot running along the southeast side of Cedar Avenue (Montgomery County Land Records, JA 16/26).

The present Queen Anne appearance of the house is primarily a reflection of the 1889 remodelling; the duplex design of the house is not original, but results from the subsequent additions. The two-part construction, however, does not detract from the historical significance of the building as one of the earliest architectural inhabitants of Takoma Park.

CARRIAGE HOUSE

Southeast of the main dwelling is a frame structure which allegedly served as a carriage house for the Thomas family. An examination of the building revealed, like the house, a two-part construction. The original structure, perhaps dating from the end of the 19th century and a contemporary of the main house, is a one and one-half story frame building, covered with horizontal beaded siding. On the southern facade a shed-roof porch covers the two bay entrances. The siting, the configuration, and the construction details of the

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 3

earlier section suggests an original use as a carriage house. To this building was added, sometime during the early 20th century, a one story frame addition, covered in german siding. This section was constructed for use as an automobile garage, a function which the earlier carriage house apparently could not perform.

The presence of a carriage house -- a rare survivor in Takoma Park -- gives the property additional historical value.

LANDSCAPE

In 1919 the Thomas property was purchased by Franklin and Catherine Siegler, formerly of Philadelphia, Pa., from Augusta W. T. Long, the sole heir of Amanda Thomas (d. 1913). Living in the house along with Mr. and Mrs. Siegler at various times was their daughter, Estelle, and their two sons, Edouard Horace (b. 1888) and Eugene Alfred (b. 1891). Later, the house was primarily occupied by Edouard and his wife, Esther.

The Siegler brothers, noted scientists, were both employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, from the 1920s onward. Dr. E. Horace Siegler worked in the Bureau of Entomology, specializing in toxicological studies, while Dr. Eugene A. Siegler worked in the Bureau of Plant Industry, concentrating on the diseases of fruit. Through their work and their publications, the two men made significant contributions to the advancement of botanical knowledge in America. (A partial listing of their works, included in the National Union Catalogue, identifies E. Horace Siegler as the author of 15 works published between 1915 and 1939, and Eugene Siegler as the author of 10 works published between 1923 and 1940.) The avid interest of the Sieglers in things botanical is reflected in the property's extensive landscaping and the wide variety of plantings on the site.

The contention has been made that among the various plantings are hybridized species of azaleas developed by Benjamin Yoe Morrison. These azaleas were reportedly part of experimental work conducted during the 1920s and 1930s, which later resulted in the reknowned Glenn Dale azalea.

Morrison was a contemporary of the Sieglers, an associate of theirs at the USDA, and a fellow townsman; his family home, where he lived with his parents, was on Piney Branch Road, only a few blocks from the Siegler house. Morrison joined the USDA in 1920 as an

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 4

assistant to David Fairchild. Beginning as a horticulturist, he became Chief, Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction at Glenn Dale, Maryland, from 1934 to 1948. From 1937 to 1951 he was Acting Director then Director of the National Arboretum at Washington, D. C. Among other achievements, he was founder of the American Horticultural Society in 1924, and from his home in Takoma Park served for many years as president of the society and editor of their quarterly journal. In addition, during the 1920s Morrison served variously as president, vice-president, and landscape gardener of the Takoma Horticultural Club, an organization which his father, Lisle Morrison, helped found in 1916, and still in existence today. The Morrison Azalea Garden at the National Arboretum is a tribute and memorial to the significance of his work.

Morrison began his pioneering azalea hybridizations at his parents home in Takoma Park during the 1920s, "with the end view of creating races of azaleas that should be winter-hardy at Washington, D. C., and that should have flowers as large as those borne by the varieties of Indian azaleas which were the great ornament of southern gardens" (Morrison, The Glenn Dale Azaleas, USDA Monograph No. 20, 1953; p. 2). Takoma Park was an area well-suited for his experiments; extensive growths of native azaleas had covered the hills prior to the town's development. In 1900, specimens of the Takoma Park native azalea, *Rhododendron atlanticum*, had been collected and catalogued for botanical study by T. A. Williams (Wilson and Rehder, A Monograph of Azaleas, Cambridge, 1921; p. 148).

From the Takoma Park beginnings, Morrison selected particular crosses to be transferred to the Glenn Dale, Maryland, experimental station. During the mid-1930s, however, a newly-appointed Division Chief ordered Morrison to "get rid" of the azaleas at Glenn Dale, and forbade him to do any additional work on them at that site. Undaunted, Morrison moved all the plants to gardens in and around his Takoma Park home, to continue the work. There he made the final crosses and selections (Livingston and West, Hybrids and Hybridizers, 1978; p. 112).

When the next Bureau Chief saw the hybrid azaleas in Takoma Park, he immediately recognized the value of Morrison's work, and agreed that they should be released to the wider public. Moved back to Glenn Dale Station, the selected plants were propagated, and eventually released to the nursery trade as Glenn Dale azaleas.

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 5

Private gardens in Takoma Park are known to have been actively involved in Morrison's pioneering work. But the question still remains of whether the Siegler property was specifically involved in the experimentations, and whether the azaleas which now exist on the property were part of Morrison's work. One would assume that, as associates of Morrison at the USDA, and as neighbors who shared an interest in horticulture, the Sieglers could very well have participated in the process and, as has been suggested, offered their property as a "study ground and laboratory for the science of azalea culture." Unfortunately, no written account specifically implicating the Siegler property has been found; Morrison, in his formal writings, never mentions private study sites by owner's name. The answer may rest in the Benjamin Morrison manuscript collection, deposited at the Hunt Library for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pa. Until that written evidence is discovered, or until someone better-versed in azalea culture examines the plants and concludes, from age and characteristics, that they are indeed pre-final selection Glenn Dale azaleas, their association with Morrison's hybridization experiments remains hearsay.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE MASTER PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
SUMMARY OF APRIL 5, 1984 PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY
SIEGLER PROPERTY SITE #37/3-2

Individual/ Organization	Comment/Issue	Staff Response
Margaret McFarland- Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outlined the HPC's findings on the historic significance of the Siegler property and cited Ordinance criteria for designating the <u>entire</u> property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. ● Noted in response to the Board's questions concerning documentation that additional research had been considered by the HPC in their hearing on the pending resubdivision. Offered to submit that research for the record. 	Staff agrees that the property significantly meets the Ordinance criteria cited by the HPC, 1A and 2E, and additionally finds it meets criteria 1D; "exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities."
Carl Iddings, Council member, City of Takoma Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read city's resolution supporting designation of the Siegler residence, carriage house and surrounding grounds on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. ● Highlighted findings of a competent array of specialists that the property is significant as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the oldest surviving house built as part of B.F.Gilbert's original Takoma Park development. - an unusually designed Victorian Revival duplex. - the site of one of the last remaining carriage houses in Takoma Park. 	While some of the resolution's findings will require additional research to more fully substantiate, they are not inconsistent with the research findings of the Park Historian on the property.

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Carl Iddings (Cont'd.)

- it lies entirely within the Takoma Park National Register Historic District.
- the grounds are extensively landscaped with notable specimens including specie azaleas most likely planted as a result of the Siegler's association with noted horticulturalist B.Y. Morrison.
- as an integrated property, it constitutes a full fledged Victorian estate which typifies the early development of Takoma Park.

Additionally, the property is within the historic district identified on the County's Locational Atlas and Inventory of Historic Sites.

Jim Douglas,
Old Takoma Park
Citizens Assoc.
(Old Takoma)

- Urged its designation as a reasonable and responsible step toward preserving a very special property in Takoma Park.
- Joined the HPC and the city in supporting designation of the entire Siegler property.
- Noted that the Siegler property is one of the few which remains in the configuration envisioned by B.F. Gilbert for his suburban Takoma Park development.
- Indicated preservation of the house without protecting the setting would not do justice to the historic nature of Takoma Park or the special value of the property.
- Characterized the property as distinguished by a large number of mature oaks and extensive plantings resulting in the overall sylvan setting promoted by Gilbert and the reason Takoma Park merited inclusion in the National Register.

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Jim Douglas (Cont'd.)

- Noted that historic designation adds to property values in Takoma Park rather than detracts.

The general experience with historic designation on single lot properties in districts has been stabilization and even an increase in property value. The effect however, on properties capable of additional development or redevelopment is less clear.

- Requested opportunity to examine and respond to testimony that may be presented by the property owner as part of the continued public hearing.

The record will remain open and the hearing be continued on April 26th at 7:30 P.M. The family and the community will be given the opportunity to present additional testimony to the Board prior to their worksession and action on the amendment and the hearing on the resubdivision of the property.

Mary Dean, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor,
School of Architecture
University of Maryland

- Generally discussed the importance of the site/situation and scale of the Siegler property within the historic B.F.Gilbert development; the importance of the Tulip and Cedar intersection as indicated by Gilbert's choice of the opposite corner for his own homesite.

- Used slides to visually analyze the ancillary building. Concluded the structure was the product of at least two separate building programs. The two-story building on the left being contemporaneous with the house and used as a carriage house. The addition to the right, constructed during the early 20th century for use as an auto garage.

Analysis is consistent with the Park Historian's research and conclusion that the ancillary building was contemporaneous with the main house and functional initially as a carriage house.

David Saumweber,
Takoma Park Historic
Preservation Committee

- Endorsed placement of the entire Siegler property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Richard Prario,
B.F. Gilbert's Cit.
Association

- Noted the importance of the site as one of the earliest structures in the historic B.F. Gilbert development.

Joanne Bowman,
Historic Takoma

Lou D'Ovidio,
Council member,
City of Takoma Park
& Rep. N.Takoma
Cit. Assn.

- Cited the contribution of the property's sylvan setting to the historic character of Takoma Park.

Roland Halstead,
Historic Takoma

Mike Haney,
Council member,
Takoma Park (P.G.Co.)

Harold Phipps,
Takoma Park
Horticultural Club

- Supported designation of the entire property on the Master Plan. Urged the preservation of the site's nature tree canopy and significant landscaping as a valuable community resource.

Michael Guercin.
Arborist

Dolores Milmoie

- Noted for the record that the community had submitted documentation on the historicity of the site.

The HPC, the applicant, and the community have submitted documentation in connection with the resubdivision plan on the property. That documentation has been incorporated in the record on the Preliminary Draft Amendment.

**Individual/
Organization**

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Charles Richards,
Representing the
Siegler Family

- Acknowledged on behalf of his client that the house is old but altered and not unique within Takoma Park.
- Noted that B.F. Gilbert's development was platted in 50' wide lots and that Takoma Park has historically been built in this fashion. Felt the Sieglers should not be penalized for retaining and landscaping a larger parcel.
- Cited the family's financial circumstances as requiring them to pursue the highest and best use of property. Questioned the impact of designation in developing the site and maintaining the property.

The Park Historian notes that while platted in smaller lots the Victorian custom was to purchase as many lots as needed to provide an appropriate setting for the size house you intended or could afford to build.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifically requires the HPC to consider economic hardship in the application of the Ordinance's Demolition by Neglect (minimal maintenance) and Historic Area Work Permit provisions.

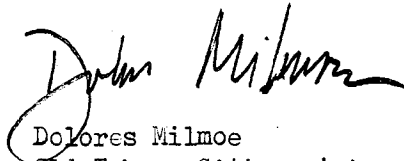
To Marty Rinehart
Community Plan South
Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20907

March 26, 1984

Dear Marty:

The following draft is submitted by Mary Dean, architectural historian and assistant professor at the University of Maryland. It is a review of the carriage house on the Siegler property at 201 Tulip Ave., Takoma Park, Md. The formal report and Dr. Dean's testimony will be presented on April 5 at the Planning Board meeting.

Sincerely,



Dolores Milmo
Old Takoma Citizens' Association

DRAFT

Subject: the date and significance of the building at the rear of the Horace Reigler property, 201 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, commonly known as the "carriage house," now a storage place.

Conclusion: the oldest part of the present structure is contemporary to the main house and served as an important dependency. Together they formed a building complex which occupied the center lots to their full depth and implied the need for adjacent Lots 31 and 36 to remain part of the complex.

Preface

The following report is based upon only the most basic archival and other research and upon only a superficial examination of the exterior of the structure. As a result it has been necessary to be more tentative in the conclusions presented than would certainly be the case if it had been possible to make a complete analysis of both house and dependency, and if there had been time to pursue more lines of outside investigation.

The Present Structure

At present, the outbuilding is the product of at least two building periods. One of these the earlier is a two-story structure with a porch or porte-cochere facing south. A large double door and a single door are protected by this porch. The larger of the two doors may be original; the smaller is made of the same material as the later auto garage doors, suggesting that it was introduced in the 1920's. The building has small double casement windows on the side facing the house, one on each story, and an identical window survives on the second floor of the opposite, east, side. The rear of the building is blind, but patched planking suggests that it once had a single window in its northeast part. The structure is wood frame with plain board siding and a tile roof.

A one-story auto garage was added on the east side of this structure sometime between 1901 and 1926. The fact that the two parts of the present structure are not contemporary is readily visible, for they use different types of siding; in the case of the auto garage, German siding. The fact that the two-story part is the older is also readily visible, for the roof peak of the lower addition blocks one of its second-story windows. The hardware on this part of the building bears a patent date of 1901, giving it a terminus post quem, and it was in existence by 1926 when it was recorded on the earliest Sandborne Fire Insurance map to cover this part of town. On the Sandborne map it is identified as an addition to the two-story building.

Purpose of the Original Building

The building is colloquially called a carriage house and it appears as such on an undated tax worksheet in the records of the county tax accessor. However, no presently-known nineteenth-century document names it (only a letter, diary, or some such accidental reference would be expected to mention it) and without a full inspection no conclusion can be drawn on the basis of its interior appointments. Whatever purpose it originally served, it was not a minor storage shed.

DRAFT

-2-

It had a formal relationship to the house: it was placed on axis with it, not to the side of the lot, and it communicates with it directly via a straight path and a back door. It may also be significant that the door frame of the larger portal has chamfered upper corners, as does the north porch of the house. This, together with the fact that the building is served by a double door suitable for accommodating equipment and has a two-story arrangement suitable for combined storage and service purposes suggests that it may in fact have served as a carriage house and stable.

Date of the Original Building

Documents tell us only that the building was in existence by 1901. A photograph of the house was used for a booklet published in that year, and the original photo shows the outbuilding, complete with its southern porte-cochere.

However, a more precise date is suggested by archaeological evidence. The older part of the present structure was put together with machine-made nails. This type of nail went out of production in the 1880's in favor of the wire nail. Hence it is impossible that the dependency could have been built after 1890, and it is more likely that it was built by the middle of the decade; in other words, contemporary with or shortly after the main house of 1884.

Significance of the Structure

The historic significance of this building is great. The Siegler property preserves not only an early example of the suburban Victorian house, but a comparatively rare instance of the preservation of such a house cum membris, all preserved in their original relationship to each other and on a lot which has not suffered any erosion of its original scale. It is not just the house but the whole building complex, including the land which was planned to surround them either to set off the house (Lot 31, which is in front of what early photos tell us was considered a major viewpoint for the house) or to provide access (Lot 36: the dependency originally lay on the property line to the rear, so access to the lot must have been from Tulip Street through Lot 36). If the Thomas house is an important testament of Takoma Park's earliest years and an important force in the historic district, the Thomas house complex is of considerably greater value. Alone, the house is a remnant and a monument; as we find it at present it tells us much more of the aspirations and the accommodation of those who came to live in one of the early planned suburbs.



MARY A. DEAN, PH.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742

Home - 270-6343

(301) 454-3428

Amanda Thomas House



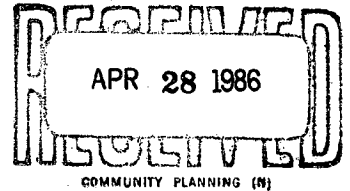
Photo found in book published by Takoma Park Citizens' Association, pub. 1901

Carriage House seen in rear. Photo taken from Cedar Ave. before alterations.



Maryland Historical Trust

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



April 24, 1986

Mrs. Mary Anne O'Boyle Leary
Thomas Siegler Development
Advisory Committee
7301 Takoma Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Dear Mrs. Leary:

The Maryland Historical Trust is in receipt of your letter of April 16, 1986, regarding the Thomas Siegler Property at 201 Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park, Maryland.

As you are aware, the Thomas Siegler property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, as a contributing element of the Takoma Park Historic District (officially listed on July 16, 1976). Listing on the National Register does not automatically place a higher standard on the "use" of a designated property. But this listing, and designation as a Montgomery County landmark by the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, highlights aspects of the property--most importantly is architecture and important landscape features--from which its importance is derived and linked.

The plans to subdivide this lot for private development, as well as the creation of a park, with attendant "Mexico Forge equipment, climbing slides, swings, a tetter-totter, and bouncing animals" would be, in our opinion, inappropriate for this property. The trust is seriously concerned about the proposed subdivision and park plan, because of its very real potential for adversely affecting the sitting of The Siegler property. We hold this opinion for a variety of reasons:

- 1) Montgomery County Historian Mark Wallston has already thoroughly documented the importance of the relationship between this property's dwelling and its setting--its landscape and plantings. In this instance, this inter-relationship is of the greatest importance, and should be maintained at all costs.

- 2) The current plan would simply destroy the above-noted symmetry and interrelationship. "Extensively landscaped under the ownership of the Siegler Family, the grounds are dominated by large white oak trees with an understory of magnolia, American Holly, laurel, azalea, dogwood, and cherry which aesthetically define the setting for the historic structures and contributes to the overall sylvan environment of Takoma Park." Not only would the highly significant horticultural aspects of the property be damaged or destroyed through the proposed plan, but the relationship between the main house and carriage house within this landscape would also be destroyed.
- 3) The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings states very clearly that "the relationship between historic buildings, and streetscape and landscape features within a historic district or neighborhood helps to define the historic character and therefore should always be a part of rehabilitation plans." In particular, the following actions -- all of which this scheme would cause -- are not recommended:
 - a) removing or radically changing those features of the district or neighborhood which are important in defining the overall historic character so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
 - b) destroying streetscape and landscape features by widening existing streets, changing paving material, or introducing inappropriately located new streets or parking lots.
 - c) removing or relocating historic buildings, or features of the streetscape and landscape, thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings, features and open space.
- 4) If this project were being reviewed by this office and the action were federally-assisted, the regulations which implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR Part 800 "Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties") would clearly define the proposed project as having a decidedly adverse effect on the Thomas Siegler property. Section 800.9 "Criteria of Adverse Effect" defines a variety of adverse impacts. In this case, three of the standards would be violated:
 - a) "Destruction or alteration of all or part of a property";

Mrs. Mary Anne O'Boyle Leary
April 24, 1986
Page 3

- b) "Isolation from or alteration of its surrounding environment;" and
- c) "Introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property or alter its setting."

For these and other reasons, this office would recommend a plan which would retain this property as a whole, and would change the nature of the proposed park from active to more passive. I believe a scheme that would preserve the grounds as an integral park of the property, while allowing the integration of walkways and benches, would be more appropriate, and would better blend in with the significant aspects of this property.

Should you require any additional information, please feel free to contact this office again at your convenience. Good luck!

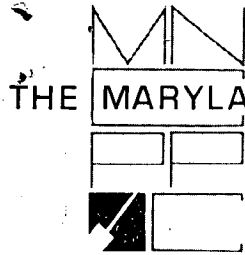
Sincerely,



Mark R. Edwards
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

MRE/mmc

cc: Mrs. Mary Ann Kephart
Ms. Marty Reinhart
Mr. Mark Wallston
Ms. Roberta Hahn



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

April 27, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian *MW*

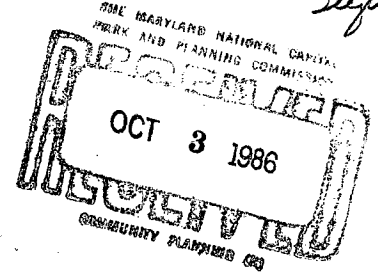
RE: Thomas/Seigler House, Site 37/3-2

Research subsequent to the submittal of my first report on the Siegler Property in Takoma Park has shown that the construction sequence of the main dwelling as suggested in that report is incorrect. In reality the process was the reverse of that described. The first house constructed by the Thomas family in 1884 was, in essence, an L-shaped Queen Anne dwelling (the southern block of the present house), two story in height, covered in horizontal siding, and featuring a square turret at the inner angle of the L. The house was oriented toward Cedar Avenue. To this building the simple T-shaped section, facing Tulip Avenue, was attached in 1889, giving the dwelling its eventual duplex design. Thus the Queen Anne appearance of the house is not primarily a reflection of its 1889 remodelling, but was the intrinsic style of the original 1884 house.

- Chairman responded
- get response

Entered
10/8/86
Sle Thomas
Siefer

ROUTING SLIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE



FILE NUMBER: 860293 DATE RECEIVED: 10/2/86

CORRESPONDENCE TYPE: letter DATE OF LETTER: 9/29/86

AGENDA DATE:

FROM: Stephen J. DelGiudice, Mayor, Takoma Park

SUBJECT:

Letter refers to condition of Thomas-Siegler Property in Takoma Park, listed in MC Hist. Atlas; requests advice of landscape architect in park's development.

TRANSMITTED TO: Parks Dept./NLC

COPIES TO: Reinhart

DATE DUE:

[] PREPARE REPLY FOR CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

[] REPLY; CC TO CHAIRMAN

REMARKS:

- Reply desirable but I need to discuss with the Chairman.
- recommend that we get involved in some way preferably to suggest competent consultants and review plans in order to protect public investment in the historical & botanic integrity of the site.

TO MARY

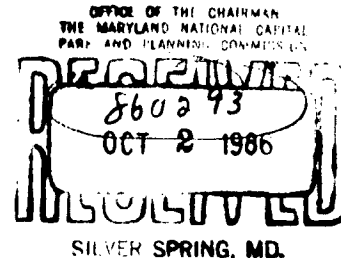
City of Takoma Park
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

OFFICE OF THE
MAYOR

29 September 1986

Mr. Norman Christeller
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

RE: Thomas-Siegler Property,
Takoma Park, Maryland



Dear Mr. Christeller,

As you know, in 1985 the City of Takoma Park acquired - with Program Open Space funds - the one acre period garden known as the Thomas-Siegler Property. The garden and carriage house we acquired, together with the privately-owned Victorian home, are listed in the Montgomery County Historic Atlas.

The garden has been designated a community park. The City has established a Development Advisory Committee to help give form to this park. Because of the historical and botanical significance of the site, and partly as a result of the fact that it has been left largely untended for the past 20 years, our Development Advisory Committee has found itself in need of the advice of a landscape architect or designer to provide professional guidance in the early stages of the park's development. As the City is not equipped to provide such specialized services, would it be possible for M-NCPPC to provide some short-term landscape design assistance? Several people have mentioned Mr. Hans Hanes - who's work is much admired here - as a possible source of advice and guidance. Of course, any physical labor needed to make basic initial improvements to the grounds would be provided by the City.

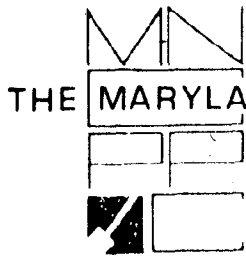
Please let me know if the Commission is capable of rendering such short-term assistance to us. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Del Giudice
Stephen J. Del Giudice
Mayor

SJD:imr

cc: Councilmember Carl Iddings
Chairman, Thomas-Siegler
Development Advisory Committee



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907
495-4605
(301) 279-1000

October 17, 1986

8

860293

The Honorable Stephen J. Del Giudice
Mayor
City of Takoma Park
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

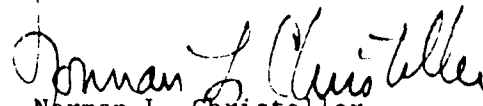
Dear Mayor Del Giudice:

I am responding to your letter of September 29, 1986, which requested short-term landscape design assistance to the City of Takoma Park for the Thomas-Siegler property. I am sure that the Planning Board would agree with me that the public interest would be well-served by such a cooperative arrangement. There is, however, a serious question as to how much assistance we can provide at this time.

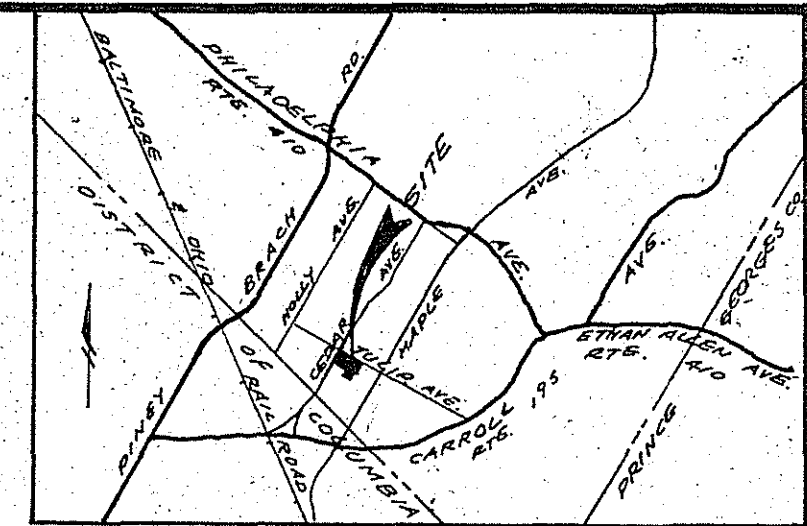
Our Park design staff are extremely busy with a multitude of current projects such as Sheridan-Hancock Local Park. We have been pressing them to increase the annual rate of completions in our Capital Improvements Program because we consider the schedule set out in the CIP as at least a tentative commitment to the interested communities. I hope it is obvious that asking the Parks Department to make Hans Hanes available to help you will run counter to our strong directive on CIP production.

Under these circumstances, I would like to have some indication of the amount of his time you think would be needed. I realize that this may be difficult to estimate because this is an unusual project for which you have no in-house expertise or experience. Perhaps it would be best if you could discuss this with Myron Goldberg, Chief of Park Planning, Design and Engineering (telephone 495-2535). After he has a better feel for the demands the project would place on Hans Hanes' time, we will be better able to respond to your request.

Sincerely yours,

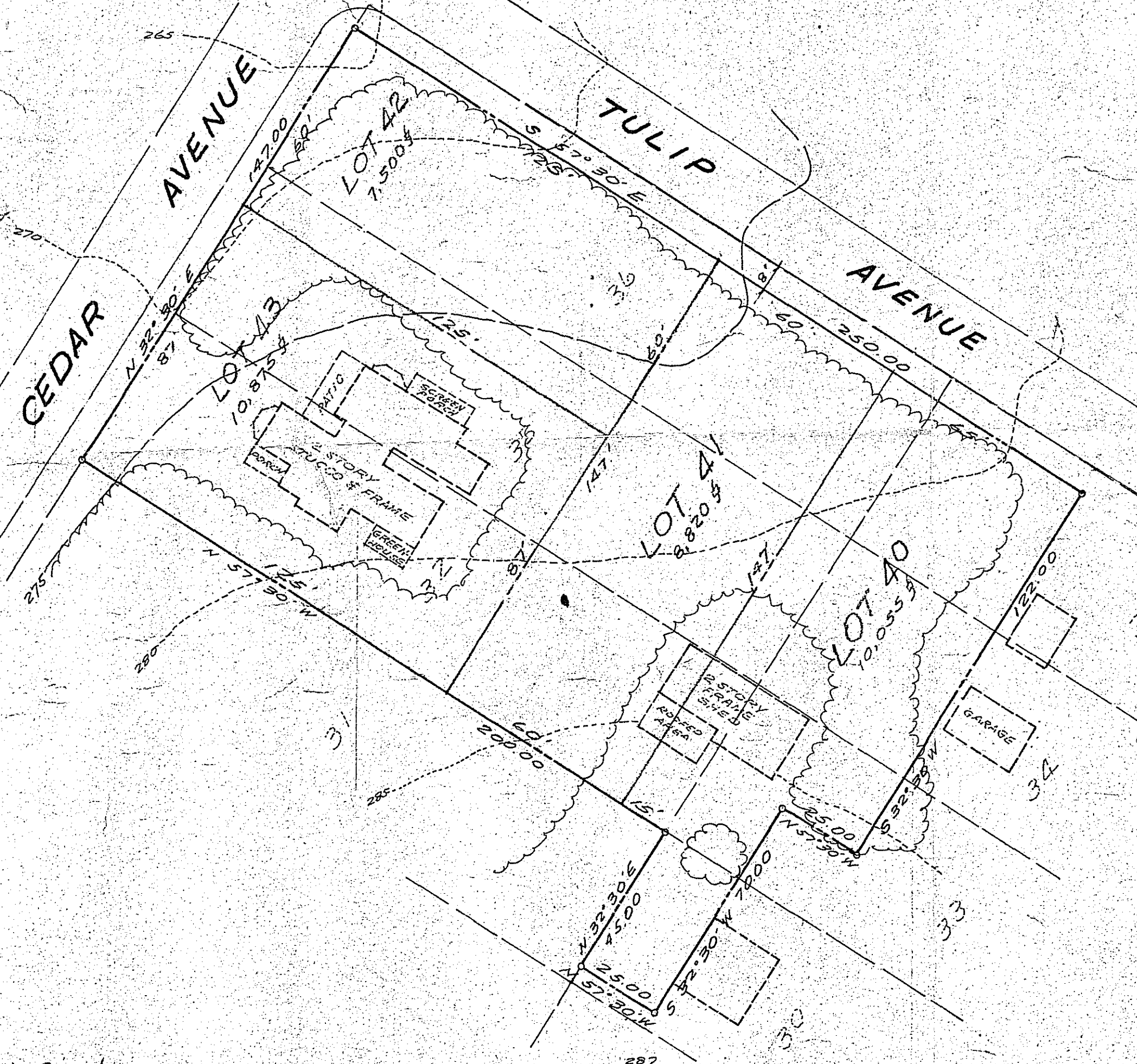

Norman L. Christeller
Chairman, MCPB

NLC:MBG:pa



VICINITY MAP SCALE: 1" = 2000'

1-833309 Takoma Park



OWNER: E.H. Siegler
 % John Urciolo
 311 G Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20001
 789-1177

Frey, Sheehan, Stoker & Assoc., Inc.
 Land Planning Consultants
 919 Gist Avenue
 SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20910
 528-3110

PRELIMINARY PLAN		
LOTS 40 THRU 43 BLOCK 4		
B. F. GILBERT'S ADDITION TO TAKOMA PARK		
SCALE: 1" = 30'	APPROVED BY:	DRAWN BY:
DATE:		REVISED:
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MARYLAND		
		DRAWING NUMBER
		83-1564

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association
7209 Holly Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

COMMUNITY PLANNING COM.
THE APPLICATED RESUBDIVISION
PAR. A & B PLANNING COM.

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association

TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912

RECEIVED
JAN 27 1984
January 18, 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.
PARK AVE.

103

RECEIVED
JAN 23 1984
935
DIR. OF PLANN.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Mr. Norman R. Christeller, Chairman
Maryland Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20907

RE: Proposed Re-Subdivision - Corner of Tulip and Cedar - (Application Number 1-83209)

Dear Mr. Christeller:

At its January 12, 1984, meeting, the Old Takoma Citizens Association voted unanimously to oppose the proposed re-subdivision of the property at the southeast corner of Tulip and Cedar Avenues. In voting to oppose the re-subdivision the Association cited several reasons. First is the question of procedure. It was not until January 13, after two phone calls to the project engineer, that all of the adjacent property owners were finally notified of the pending application. As you know, the City's notification is similarly tardy (if it has been received at all).

Beyond the procedural problems, though, are important substantive reasons why the Association opposes the application and believes that, if successful, the project will harm all of Takoma Park. These reasons include:

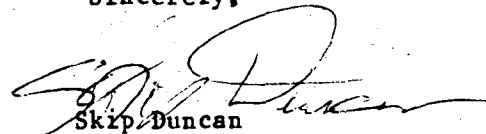
1. Historical significance - The house on the property was the first house completed in Takoma Park. It symbolizes the very history of which we are all so proud and which we have been celebrating for the last year. But more than the house, the property itself has historical significance since the original carriage house still stands and the large lot has old trees, providing the City with a sense of its origin.
2. Trees and plantings - The land around the existing house has two important resources. The large oak trees are a prime example of the sort of environment which the City has been trying to protect with such measures as the tree ordinance and which has given Takoma Park national prominence. Among these trees are plantings of azaleas including B. Y. Morrison varieties. The Morrison varieties are one of two prototypes of modern azaleas and are found in only one other place.
3. Small town character and park-like environment - One of the features of Takoma Park which makes it so distinctive is its ability to remain a small town on the immediate fringe of Washington. The small town character and park-like nature of the City comes from the mixture of large and small properties, the sprinkling of truly exceptional houses, and the enclaves of large trees and less densely occupied space.

The Association recognizes that the current owner, Mr. Siegler, needs to have reasonable alternatives to his current plans so that he does not bear the entire burden of keeping Takoma Park a livable city. One such

alternative is for the City to obtain Maryland Open Space funding to purchase a portion of the property. We voted, again unanimously, to urge the City Council to actively pursue Open Space Funding city-wide and particularly for this property. We stand ready to assist the city in identifying open space needs and other potential acquisitions. A second alternative is to find a buyer for the entire property at a fair price for Mr. Siegler. In only the last few days we have already identified several potential buyers who are prepared to donate historic easements over the property and give Mr. Siegler's mother (the current resident of the property) the right to remain in her house. We feel certain that one of these alternatives, or others which may emerge, will be more than fair to Mr. Siegler while achieving the goals of protecting an important historical, horticultural, and environmental resource for the City.

In summary, Mr. Christeller, the Association strongly opposes the proposed re-subdivision and subsequent development of the Siegler property (Application Number 1-83209). Please notify the Association of the date, time, and place of the scheduled public hearing pertaining to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Skip Duncan

President, Old Takoma Park Citizens Association
7249 Holly Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

February 6, 1984
53 Walnut Ave.
Takoma Park, Md. 20912

Mr. Norman Christeller, Chairman
Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

209

Dear Mr. Christeller:

SILVER SPRING, MD

The Westmoreland Area Community Organization strongly supports neighborhood determination. A neighborhood adjoining us, represented by the Old Takoma Citizens Association, is opposing the subdivision and development of the Siegler property at the southeast corner of Cedar and Tulip Avenues in Takoma Park, a matter now before the Commission (Application No. 1-83209).

We also oppose the subdivision. As another Metro-impacted area, we don't want a precedent set which could lead to further subdividing of large historic properties near the Takoma Metro stop.

We know you're aware that Takoma Park is a community which, more often than not, has to run just to stay in place. We have our undue share of zoning non-enforcement, pressure to close our public schools, etc.

~~You have been supportive of Takoma Park in the past. We're particularly grateful for the critical support you and the Commission lent this community in the most recent of its never-ending battles to save Takoma Park Jr. High.~~

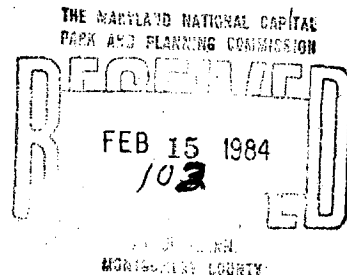
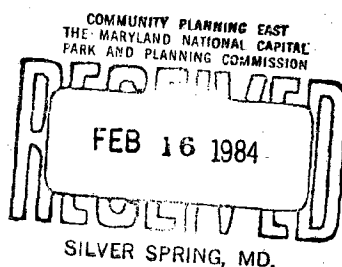
We hope you will once again support this community by opposing the subdivision of one of the properties which make Takoma Park such a special place. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Rhodenbaugh

Suzanne Rhodenbaugh
for the Westmoreland Area
Community Organization

cc: Mr. Charlie Loehr
Old Takoma Citizens Association



Information

COMMUNITY PLANNING EAST
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
FEB 10 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.

copy

103 Grant Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
2 February 1984

Mr. Charles Loehr
Park and Planning Commission
Subdivision Coordinator
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20907

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
FEB 8 1984
988
DIR. OF PLANN.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

174
FEB 8

Dear Mr. Loehr:

"Urban renewal" meaning "raze every building in sight" was the popular remedy for urban blight when we moved to Takoma Park twenty years ago. Real Estate agents warned us that housing was cheaper here because the area was blighted, in transition, and scheduled for urban renewal. Fortunately wholesale urban renewal did not occur. Instead, over the years we saw the gradual purchase, rehabilitation and preservation of fine old homes and properties in Takoma Park amidst a growing feeling of sense of community. An awakening admiration among citizens for the character and unique quality of Takoma Park went hand in hand with a pride in the past and an appreciation for the trees and azaleas earlier citizens had left as a legacy. Takoma Park was transformed from a blighted older suburb to an inviting, charming small town to a large extent by preserving, restoring, and maintaining its architectural and natural resources.

In my opinion, subdividing the property on Tulip and Cedar (Application 1-83290) would be a dangerous and chilling first step backwards from the twenty years of positive direction we have seen in Takoma Park. Takoma Park already has enough population density; it has more than its fair share of high and low rise apartment buildings and small bungalows. If a balance is to be maintained (which is crucial if it is to remain attractive to prospective residents), then it is essential that those older areas, our historic districts, maintain their integrity. Without preservation of these areas, Takoma Park could easily lose its unique character and could soon become similar to any one of the many non-descript housing developments in Montgomery County.

Accessibility of metro has increased the attractiveness of living in Takoma Park and has generated pressure by some owners and developers for subdivision of property in order to gain monetary advantage from the situation. Acquiescence to such pressure, however, could well lead to the demise of what is most attractive about Takoma Park. The outcome of the current subdivision application will send a clear message to other property owners and developers in regard to our area's vulnerability. For that reason, along with the many others you have heard from other concerned citizens, I urge you to deny the proposed subdivision. I would appreciate being notified of the date, time and place for the public hearing on this issue.

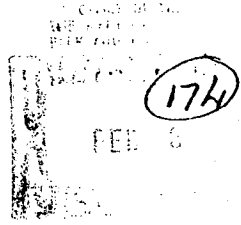
Sincerely,
Faith Bueltmann Stern
Faith Bueltmann Stern

Information.

COPY

103 Grant Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
29 January 1984

Mr. Charles Loehr
Park and Planning Commission
Subdivision Coordinator
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20907



Dear Mr. Loehr:

I am writing as a long-time Takoma Park resident to register my strong objections to the proposed subdivision of the property at Tulip and Cedar Avenues in Takoma Park (Application 1-83290).

Several years ago the citizens of Takoma Park prevailed on the Park and Planning Commission to hold public hearings on the master plan for the Takoma Park Metro Station area. As a result of these hearings, the single-family zoning for the area was incorporated into the new master plan, and we now enjoy the preservation of a beautiful, historic part of Takoma Park. The property in question is part of that area. Although the proposed subdivision is probably legal, it would be highly offensive to the character of its surroundings, with its old houses and wooded lots.

In particular, the Siegler house is the oldest house in Takoma Park, and the property is heavily planted with a great variety of old trees and shrubs. Additional construction would have a severe negative impact, both on the immediate neighborhood and on the character of Takoma Park itself. As regards the latter point, subdivision of this property would only encourage similar subdivisions in other parts of Takoma Park, which would thereby lose its present residential character and park-like atmosphere.

I urge that the proposed subdivision be denied and request notification of the date, time, and place for the public hearing on this issue.

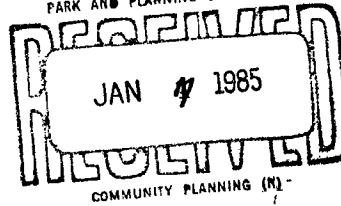
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kurt H. Stern

Kurt H. Stern

Herbert W. Kaufman
214 Tulip Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 3, 1985



Norman Christeller
Maryland-National Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Christeller:

My name is Herbert Kaufman. I live at 214 Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park and am writing to you to state my unequivocal opposition to the proposed resubdivision of the property owned by the Siegler family at the southeast corner of Tulip and Cedar Avenues in Takoma Park. This property lies within the boundaries of the Takoma Park historic district. It is the site of the first house completed in Takoma Park, standing virtually unaltered with its original carriage house approximately 100 feet to the rear.

When the resubdivision proposal was first announced in late 1983, the Old Takoma Park Citizen's Association met and agreed unanimously that the proposal posed a serious threat to the character of our neighborhood and would substantially alter the nature of the heart of the historic district. Since that time numerous other groups around the City have also announced their opposition, along with such public bodies as the City of Takoma Park and the County's Historic Preservation Commission. The Association has worked tirelessly for months in opposition because we believe that this proposal will create a major disruptive change in our community.

It is not hard to see why the proposal drastically alters the character of the area. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the major points. First, the historic importance and value to the community will be lost forever if four houses are allowed to be placed around the existing house. Second, the proposal simply is not consistent with the purposes of a resubdivision, as provided in section 50-2 of the Montgomery County Code. It does not provide for "harmonious development," it does not avoid "population congestion," it does not provide lots which conform "to the character of lots within the existing subdivision," and it certainly does not provide for the "preservation of outstanding natural or cultural features and historic sites or features." Third, the resubdivision is not necessary in order for the owners of the property to receive a reasonable return on their property.

The resubdivision proposal was predicated on the notion that Mr. Horace Siegler who currently resides in Darien, Connecticut, needed funds to continue the support of his mother's health requirements. Mrs. Siegler is indeed in poor physical condition. She is however,

lucid. She is a cherished friend of the neighborhood and has conveyed to us on several occasions how unappealing a subdivision of her property would be. It was in fact her own words, "there must be someone out there willing to buy the property as is" that provided the impetus for the Association's involvement in seeking alternatives to the proposed resubdivision. Alternatives which would satisfy Horace Siegler's financial needs, Mrs. Siegler's hope, and the community's desire to preserve an outstanding historical resource.

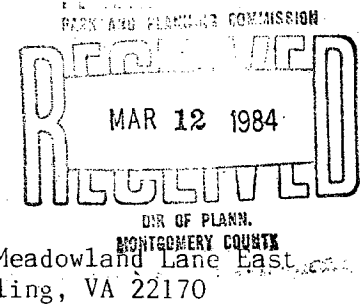
As a result of the Association's efforts, funds for the City of Takoma Park through Project Open Space have been approved by you and the City stands ready to turn the property into a natural park. The Trust for Public Land, (TPL) working with the City, has been actively pursuing the acquisition of the parcel or parts of the parcel. They have presented fair market value offers to Mr. Siegler, all of which have been rejected by him, yet the Association has been told that Mr. Siegler is a man of modest means who desparately needs money to take care of his mother. His refusal to reach an agreement with the TPL, which incidently would earn him the highest net return for the property addressed in the resubdivision proposal, clearly implies that Mr. Siegler has no intentions of considering the community's interest, the City's interest or even his mother's well-being. I am aware that Mr. Siegler has been advised by a Washington developer that a resubdivision would yield greater profits. This is simply not true in that a) an agreement with the TPL would yield him 100% cash value for the property within 6 months of the transaction, and b) the remaining corner lot and house would continue to appreciate at market value rather than depreciate given the existence of four new houses surrounding the original house. Mr. Siegler is in the unique and fortunate position of acquiring more money both in the short-term and the long-term should he decide to complete a sale of the property described in the proposal before you with the TPL and the City of Takoma Park.

In conclusion, Mr. Christeller, the proposal before you would substantially alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood, destroying an important historical resource and peaceful community, and is not necessary for the owners of the property to receive a reasonable economic return. On behalf of the citizens of the immediate neighborhood, I ask that you act to deny the request. Thank you for consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

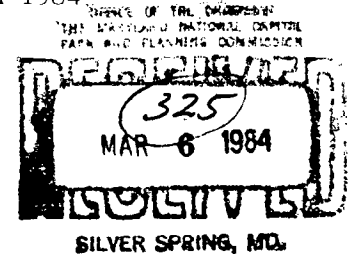


Herbert Kaufman



4 March 1984

Mr. Norman R. Christeller, Chairman
Maryland Park and Planning Commission
8787 George Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20907



Dear Mr. Christeller:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Old Takoma Park Citizens Association to urge that the Maryland Park and Planning Commission deny the pending application to re-subdivide the Siegler property at 201 Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park.

As a professional botanist (Smithsonian Institution) long concerned with the preservation of urban wildlands, I have been active over the years in various environmental and natural history organizations of the region, and I frequently have been called upon to defend urban green space. From 1974 to 1977 I was president of the Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States, headquartered in Chevy Chase, and currently I serve on its Board. I also have been a member of Loudoun County's Open Space Advisory Committee for more than three years and currently am its chairman. During the controversy over I-66, I was an active member of the coalition "Scientists for Urban Wildlands" that opposed the highway's construction through Arlington.

After visiting the Siegler property, discussing its status with members of the Citizens Association, and studying documents provided by them, I find several important reasons for denying the application to re-subdivide:

(1) The character of the historic Victorian house depends to no small degree on its spacious and historic setting, and this character would be all but destroyed by the crowding that is proposed.

(2) The large, mature 'Glenn Dale' azalea plantings tell a history of their own of another era in Takoma Park, but also make a significant contribution to the springtime ambience of present-day Takoma Park. One does not need to be a specialist to know that one does not create instant azalea gardens like this one, and it would be a great pity for all the residents of Takoma Park to destroy the integrity of this bit of history and mature beauty by balkanizing the property.

(3) The property contains other noteworthy botanical specimens that should be preserved. There are at least 30 large trees, mostly white oaks, and these are heritage trees for Takoma Park. To destroy them would be a crime, and it is nonsense to say, as has been said, that they can be preserved even with subdivision. Few if any would survive, even if saved initially. The botanical heritage of this property and hence of the area includes also some magnificent specimens of American holly, large-flowered magnolia, flowering dogwood, weeping cherry, mountain laurel, rhododendron, and wisteria.

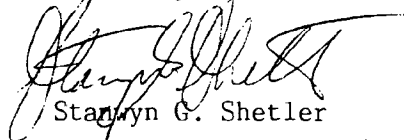
(4) A parcel of this size constitutes a critical mass of urban habitat for many birds to take refuge from the otherwise inhospitable city environment. Such urban wildlands are crucial as temporary resting and feeding places for migrating birds and as green sanctuaries and green reservoirs where resident species may nest or to which they may retreat from time to time from the surrounding area. For the many city dwellers who enjoy feeding birds or watching them during migration, these enclaves are priceless. The mass is important. Ribbons of street trees and a green buffer here and there do not add up to the same thing. Very few enclaves of such size remain in Takoma Park.

What is at stake here is no less than the very right of the people to determine the character of their own living space, in this instance the right to retain a mosaic of green spaces - some large, some small - in the midst of the city. By what inexorable law must we atomize the urban landscape into nothing but the artificial sameness of dense pie-slice lots? The green space is the intercellular cement that keeps the man-made cells of our urban estate from coming unstuck. Surely, today's residents of Takoma Park deserve to see the Siegler space preserved as nearly intact as possible. If the Planning Commission cannot find a way to preserve open space within the matrix of a town or city, then it might as well concede general defeat on open-space preservation, because today's countryside is tomorrow's city. Already the Citizens Association has shown that there are other alternatives that would enable the Sieglers to realize a fair market return on the property without giving it over to radical subdivision.

*What are
they?*

I respectfully urge in the strongest terms, therefore, that the Commission deny the application for re-subdivision and ask the applicant to bargain in good faith with those who would buy the property at full value and preserve it.

Sincerely,


Stanwyn G. Shetler

cc: Mr. Charles Loehr
Mr. Herbert Kaufman

CHEN, WALSH & TECLER

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

200A MONROE STREET
SUITE 300

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

JOHN BURGESS WALSH, JR.
WILLIAM JAMES CHEN, JR.*
KENNETH B. TECLER*
DENNIS M. MCHUGH*

July 30, 1984

Norman L. Christeller, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Re: Thomas/Siegler Site
Master Plan Designation
Preliminary Plan of Re-Subdivision 1-83209

Dear Mr. Christeller:

As I believe you know, the undersigned represents the Old Takoma Park Citizens' Association in connection with the above matters which are presently pending before the Planning Board. My understanding is that the County Council recently concluded holding its hearing regarding the proposed Master Plan Amendment and that the Planning Board plans to take up these matters at its meeting scheduled for August 9, 1984. Unfortunately, I have longstanding vacation plans which would preclude my attending that meeting and I am writing to you to request that the Board reset this matter for an early date in September. In that regard, my understanding is that Mr. Dan Neal of the City of Takoma Park may also have some difficulty with attending that meeting, depending upon whether or not it is held in the afternoon or in the evening.

My further understanding is that there has been some continuing discussions and negotiations with respect to achieving a common consensus among the parties to this matter. It is my belief that a brief delay would be fruitful to those discussions. I have had some preliminary discussions regarding a short postponement with Charles Richards, the attorney for the Sieglers, and by copy of this letter I would ask that he advise you as to his position on a postponement, which I believe would be favorable.

JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
240
JUL 30 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.

(301) 279-9500

THE BAR/ALSO ADMITTED IN THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RECEIVED
766
AUG 1 1984
DICK BE PLANN
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

CHEN, WALSH & TECLER

Norman L. Christeller, Chairman
Page Two
July 30, 1984

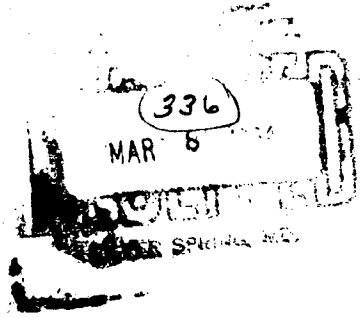
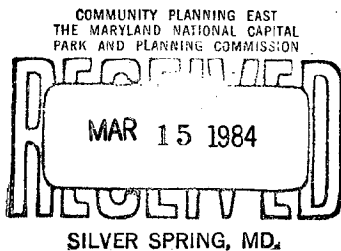
The Board's favorable consideration of my request would be appreciated. I await hearing from you with respect to this matter.

Very truly yours,


John B. Walsh, Jr.

JBW:cc
Enclosure/as stated

cc: Charles Loehr
Charles Richards, Esq.
Dolores Milmo
Jim Douglas



SENATE OF MARYLAND

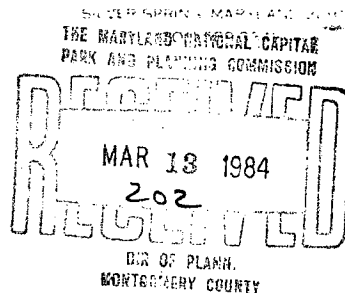
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401 1981

STEWART BARNUM, JR.
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BUDGET & TAXATION COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS AND TRANSPORTATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET
JOINT BUDGET & AUDIT COMMITTEE

OFFICE ADDRESS:
211 JAMES SENATE OFFICE BLDG.
WASHINGTON AREA 858 3634 (TOLL FREE)
ANNAPOLIS AREA 841 3634 (TOLL FREE)

DISTRICT OFFICE:
912 TRAYER AVENUE
SUITE 210
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20910

March 2, 1984



Mr. Norm Christeller
Planning Board Chairman
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Dear Mr. Christeller:

I urge you to help preserve the unique property located at the southeast corner of Tulip and Cedar Avenues by prohibiting the further subdivision and development (application #1-83209) of the land surrounding one of the oldest Takoma Park homes.

There are many reasons why I believe it is not a good idea to re-subdivide this property.

Located in the heart of the historic district, the house was completed in 1884, the first house to have been built and furnished in Takoma Park, and thus has considerable historic value.

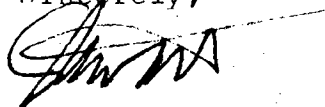
It is surrounded by trees, shrubs and flowers which were cultured and seeded by the original owner. Of particular note are the "Glenn Dale" azaleas developed on the property by B. Y. Morrison, horticulturist and founder of the National Arboretum. It is due to these azaleas that Takoma Park became known as "Azalea City." It is important that the existing flora be preserved.

Mr. Norm Christeller
March 2, 1984
Page 2

Of significance too, is the need for the "open space" provided by this property - the last of the large lots in that area. The lack of adequate park facilities in this section of the County makes this a major consideration.

I hope that you will carefully consider the many good arguments against re-subdividing this property, and will then conclude as I and many others have, that the proposal should be denied.

Sincerely,



Stewart Bainum, Jr.

SBjr:ta

cc: Herb Kaufman

City of Takoma Park, Maryland

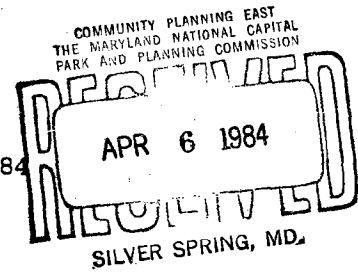
OFFICE OF CITY ADMINISTRATOR
TELEPHONE 270-1700



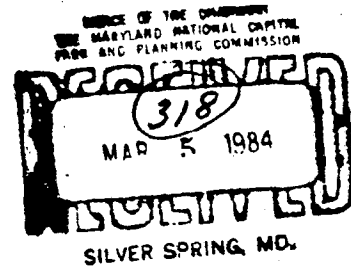
7500 MAPLE AVENUE
TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912

Norman L. Christeller
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

March 5, 1984



Re: M-NCPPC File No. 1-83209, Resubdivision at Tulip and
Cedar Avenues in Takoma Park

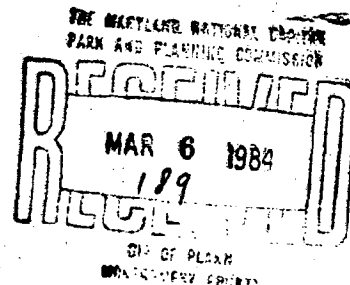


Dear Mr. Christeller,

On Friday, March 2, 1984, shortly after I sent to you my request for a postponement of the Planning Board's hearing date for the above-referenced resubdivision application until May 14, Mr. John Urciolo, E. H. Siegler's representative in this application, presented the City with a signed authorization of waiver and consent to the extension of the hearing to April 26, 1984. The original of this signed waiver is enclosed.

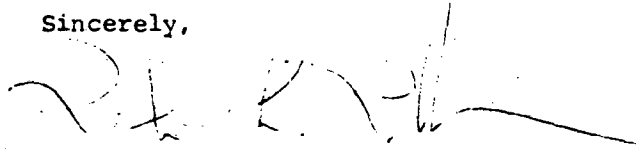
In light of the above, and in consideration of the City's desire to facilitate cooperation in this matter, I ask at this time that you reschedule the hearing for April 26, as authorized in writing by Mr. Urciolo. You should be aware, however, that, in accordance with the wishes of the Mayor and Council of Takoma Park, the City will continue to negotiate with Mr. Urciolo for a further mutually acceptable postponement of the hearing. It is anticipated that more time will be needed than would be afforded by a hearing on April 26. Furthermore, I wish to reiterate our request that this hearing be held during evening hours in Takoma Park.

Please inform me at your earliest convenience whether or not you will in fact reschedule this hearing for the evening of April 26 and if it will be possible for the hearing to be held in our Council Chambers here.



Finally, please accept my appreciation for the assistance you and your staff have provided in our efforts to reschedule this hearing in such a way as to maximize the benefits to all concerned.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Robbins
Acting City Administrator

RLR:imr
Enclosure a/s

cc: Mayor and Council
Charles E. Loehr
John Urciolo
Old Takoma Park Citizens' Assn.
c/o Herbert Kaufman
Takoma Park Historic Pres. Com.
c/o Ed McMahon

Copy

CHEN, WALSH & TECLER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

2000 MONROE STREET
SUITE 300

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

JOHN BURCESS WALSH, JR.
WILLIAM JAMES CHEN, JR.
KENNETH B. TECLER
DENNIS M. McHUGH

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
508
APR 2 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.
(301) 279-0500

February 27, 1984

Mr. John Urciolo
311 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

ALSO ADMITTED TO THE
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
APR 4 1984
295
DIR. OF PLANN.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Re: Proposed Subdivision of Siegler Property
Corner of Tulip Avenue and Cedar Avenue
M-NCPPC File No. 1-83209

Dear Mr. Urciolo:

This firm has been retained by the Old Takoma
Citizens' Association in connection with the above matter.
The purpose of my letter is twofold.

First, I would ask you to contact me promptly to
arrange for an inspection of the subject property for the
purpose of obtaining an appraisal.

Secondly, I would like you to advise me when Mr.
Siegler and yourself would be available to meet in order to
discuss possible alternatives to resolving this matter.

Your prompt attention to this matter is
appreciated.

Very truly yours,

John B. Walsh, Jr.

JBW:cc

COMMUNITY PLANNING EAST
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
APR 5 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association

TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912

COPY
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
509
APR 2 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.

COMMUNITY PLANNING EAST
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
APR 5 1984
SILVER SPRING, MD.

March 23, 1984

Memorandum

To: John R. Urciolo
From: Old Takoma Park Citizens Association
Subject: Inspection of Siegler Property

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
RECEIVED
APR 4 1984
296
DIR. OF PLANN.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Old Takoma Park Citizens Association in an attempt to develop a financially viable alternative to the re-subdivision of the Siegler property, has initiated arrangements for an inspection of the Siegler house and surrounding property. We suggest March 29, at approximately 4:00 pm as the date and time for a meeting to include the following people:

1. Ms. Karen Maury (Realtor representing potential buyers)
2. Mr. Thomas Twomey (Realtor representing potential buyers)
3. Ms. Mary Dean (Architectural Consultant and member of Takoma Park Historic Preservation Committee)
4. Mrs. Nancy Marter (Potential purchaser)
5. Mr. Jim Douglas (Vice-President, Old Takoma Park Citizens Association).

The purpose of the inspection is to assess the property so that detailed proposals can be presented to the owner of the property and/or to you. Please meet with us at 212 Tulip Ave.

If you have any questions pertaining to this matter, please call me at 343-2151 or 589-2942. In any case, please call to confirm our proposed meeting of March 29 at 4:00 pm.

*April 2.84. To date
Mr. Urciolo has not
replied.*

Sincerely,

Jim Douglas
Vice-president,
Old Takoma Park Citizens
Association

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association

COPY

COMMUNITY PLANNING EAST
 THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
 PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
 APR 6 1984
 DEPT. OF PLANN.
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY
 SILVER SPRING, MD.

TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
 PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
 APR 5 1984
 529
 SILVER SPRING, MD.

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
 PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
 March 30, 1984
 APR 5 1984
 299
 DIR. OF PLANN.
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY

I am the vice-president of the Old Takoma Park Citizens Association and an immediate neighbor of your mother's. As you know, the Association, the City, and a wide variety of citizens and other groups are quite concerned about your request to re-subdivide the property at 201 Tulip Avenue. We are also very interested in making sure that you and your mother receive fair compensation for the property and in making sure that your mother's best interests are served. Thus, I am writing directly to you to offer our assistance and to assure you that we are ready and willing to work together with you to see that everyone is happy with the eventual solution.

We in the neighborhood and the City appreciate your concern that sufficient money be available to pay for your mother's care and that her life not be disrupted by any change in ownership. Thus, any alternative to the re-subdivision will meet those terms. It is important to us that we have a chance to discuss alternatives with you and get your views.

Since there have been many activities and events in Takoma Park concerning this issue, and since I know you have recently returned from Florida, allow me to briefly summarize what has happened to date.

First, after the neighborhood learned of your re-subdivision proposal, we met as a citizen's-association to review the proposal and to discuss alternatives to it. We quickly agreed that any alternatives would have to provide you with a fair return on the property and would have to assure that your mother's life is not disrupted. We also agreed that it is important to the neighborhood and to the community at large that the entire property should be preserved. Our basic reasons for that conclusion were that the house and surrounding property are an important historic feature of Takoma Park and that the very character of the neighborhood and the area is defined by the few remaining large properties such as that at 201 Tulip.

The Association unanimously agreed to oppose the re-subdivision proposal and to actively look for alternatives. We have had the support of dozens and dozens of residents from around the City, from many other citizens' associations, from the County and City Historic Preservation Commissions, and from the City Council. At our request, and with the agreement of your representative, the City requested that the hearing before the County Park and Planning Commission be postponed in order to give us time to further develop the alternatives. The hearing is currently scheduled for April 26.

In addition, the City Historic Preservation Commission has requested the County to add the entire district, including the 201 Tulip property, to the County's master plan of historic preservation. The County Historic Commission considered the district and the property separately, voting

unanimously on March 1 to recommend that the 201 Tulip property (both house and grounds) be added to the master plan. On March 26 the City Council also voted unanimously to support that recommendation. On April 5, the Park and Planning Commission will hold a hearing and make a decision. We strongly support this action since the combination of the historic house, the traditional grounds, and the carriage house represent the best example of historic Takoma Park.

I am happy to report that much progress in developing suitable alternatives has been made. Back in February when the City Council considered whether or not to oppose the re-subdivision request, a great deal of concern was expressed by us and members of the City Council that in order for alternatives to be truly considered, we had to have some idea of the value of the house and property - both as a whole and in a re-subdivided form. Your representative at that hearing, Mr. Urciolo, agreed to allow an appraiser to visit the property, to allow a small group of citizens to inspect the property, and to accept any offers for the property and forward them to you. Since that time we have dealt with an appraiser who subsequently visited the property with Mr. Urciolo and a potential buyer and we have been talking on an informal basis with local realtors who know of people who may be interested in making offers on the property. Those offers will contain provisions to allow your mother to remain on the property as long as she wishes.

We have now received the appraisal and have requested permission from Mr. Urciolo to inspect the property with local realtors and potential buyers. This is an important next step since in order for you to get the best deal, the largest number of people possible should be notified of the opportunity to make offers on the property. However, at this point we are uncertain as to whom those offers should be addressed.

Let me also point out that there are likely to be several different options presented by the potential buyers. Some may wish to offer your mother a life estate on the property. Others may wish to buy some now and take an option on the house. Others may wish to occupy the other half of the house immediately. In every case they will be making offers which are designed to accommodate your mother completely. And in every case they will be willing to discuss the situation to resolve any problems you foresee.

In addition to these types of offers, there still remain some other alternatives which are feasible. These include a role for the Trust for Public Land in acquiring the property and then reselling it to the City or a private buyer. As you know, this could result in important tax savings. A second alternative is to work with the County in an arrangement to sell the development rights separately, a plan which is working well elsewhere in the County for agricultural land and can be used for historic sites as well.

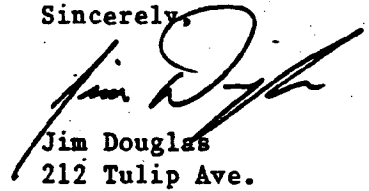
Obviously there are a number of complex questions which need to be resolved. We need to work closely together at this point to make sure that we agree on the next step. I understand your reluctance to travel if you do not have to. Thus, we are prepared to visit with you in

Connecticut to more fully explain the options and figure out the best way to handle matters from here on. Another possibility is to talk with you by telephone.

I am enclosing some copies of recent correspondence on this issue so you can be aware of some of the details I left out of my summary above. You should know that we have retained legal counsel to advise us on the complex issues of land use law and in preparing for the upcoming Park and Planning hearings. I want you to understand, though, that we do not wish this to become a battle of lawyers, but instead a group of neighbors and fellow citizens working together for the best possible solution.

I look forward to hearing from you in the very near future. I am confident that together we can make this work.

Sincerely,



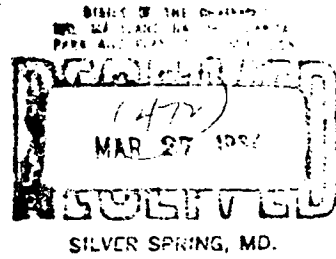
Jim Douglas
212 Tulip Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301/589-2942 (Home)
202/343-2151 (Work)

cc: Mr. John Urciolo
City of Takoma Park
Maryland National Capital Park ✓
and Planning Commission.

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association

TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912 March 26, 1984

Honorable Sammie Abbott
Municipal Building
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912



Dear Mayor Abbott and City Council Members:

On March 22, 1984, John Urciolo wrote to you about the proposal to re-subdivide the property located at the southeast corner of Tulip and Cedar Avenues, the so-called Thomas-Siegler property. In that letter Mr. Urciolo, who represents Mr. Siegler, makes a number of allegations which we believe need to be clarified.

Mr. Urciolo states that he has, "not been contacted by anyone in reference to the house and ground[s] being appraised." In fact, our attorney (Chen, Walsh and Tecler) wrote to Mr. Urciolo on February 27, 1984, specifically requesting that Mr. Urciolo contact him to arrange for an inspection of the property for the purpose of obtaining an appraisal. Mr. Urciolo responded to this letter orally, requesting the name of the appraiser. At that time our appraiser dealt directly with a potential buyer whom the Association had located. As a result, an appraiser visited the property on March 7, accompanied by Mr. Urciolo and a potential buyer. The appraisal, expected any day, will evaluate the property as a whole and as subdivided.

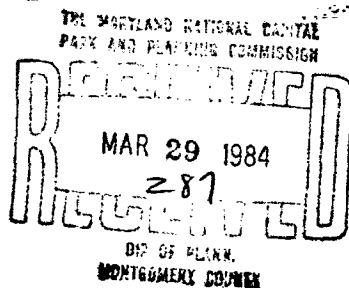
In addition, on March 12, 1984, Ms. Karen Maury, President of a local real estate company, wrote to Mr. Urciolo requesting guidance on the price that would be appropriate for the property. You will recall that at an earlier City Council meeting, Ms. Maury stated that several persons were interested in the property and that she would like information on prices. Mr. Urciolo told her to communicate with him in writing.

Second, Mr. Urciolo states that citizens groups have acted in bad faith, merely to stall action by the planning board. As noted above, significant progress toward alternatives has been made. The postponement in planning board proceedings has been with the full consent of all parties. Once the appraisal figures are available, we expect that many potential buyers will be making offers. Two local realtors have noted that interest in the property is high.

All in all we have acted responsibly and in good faith. We have been making good progress in finding alternative buyers. Before those buyers can make reasonable offers they must have an idea of the value of the property. Since the property is unique, conducting the appraisal is difficult. Mr Urciolo is simply not correct in arguing that no efforts have been made, and is being unrealistic to argue that the issue should have been resolved by now.

Sincerely,

Jim Douglas
Vice-president
Old Takoma Park Citizens
Association



cc: Norman Christeller

Old Takoma Park Citizens Association

TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND 20912

March 23, 1984

Memorandum

To: John R. Urciolo
From: Old Takoma Park Citizens Association
Subject: Inspection of Siegler Property

The Old Takoma Park Citizens Association in an attempt to develop a financially viable alternative to the re-subdivision of the Siegler property, has initiated arrangements for an inspection of the Siegler house and surrounding property. We suggest March 29, at approximately 4:00 pm as the date and time for a meeting to include the following people:

1. Ms. Karen Maury (Realtor representing potential buyers)
2. Mr. Thomas Twomey (Realtor representing potential buyers)
3. Ms. Mary Dean (Architectural Consultant and member of Takoma Park Historic Preservation Committee)
4. Mrs. Nancy Marter (Potential purchaser)
5. Mr. Jim Douglas (Vice-President, Old Takoma Park Citizens Association).

The purpose of the inspection is to assess the property so that detailed proposals can be presented to the owner of the property and/or to you. Please meet with us at 212 Tulip Ave.

If you have any questions pertaining to this matter, please call me at 343-2151 or 589-2942. In any case, please call to confirm our proposed meeting of March 29 at 4:00 pm.

Sincerely,

Jim Douglas
Vice-president,
Old Takoma Park Citizens
Association

MAURY SALES
MAURY SALES, INCORPORATED • (301) 588-2600
8401 Dixon Avenue, Suite One • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK
RECEIVED
MAR 23 1984
TAKOMA PARK, MD.

March 12, 1984

Mr. John R. Urciolo, II
Urciolo & Urciolo
311 G Street, N.W.
Judiciary Square
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Urciolo:

As I am sure you are all too well aware, there is an abundant interest on the part of the neighbors and local citizenry about the destiny of the Siegler property in Takoma Park.

We met and talked briefly at the City Council meeting in Takoma Park on February 13, 1984. Because I am President of MAURY SALES, Incorporated, and have been specializing in the listing the sale of single family houses in Takoma Park for the last six years, I have been contacted by countless concerned citizens and interested buyers for the Siegler property. You will agree that the rumors of its sale and/or development have been considerable.

Questions which remain unanswered as far as I know are the following:

- 1- Is Mrs. Siegler interested in selling all or part of her property?
- 2- If she is, what is the price of the whole, or of parts for sale?

At the City Council meeting, you suggested that if I were to write you a letter asking these questions, you would contact Mr. Siegler in Connecticut to see what his response would be.

I understand you kindly accompanied Mr. Sheridan, the appraiser, through the subject property in order that he may make an appraisal which I appreciate very much. Of course, I have had a difficult time with the repeated question as to its worth because I have never been in the property. Mr. Sheridan is highly respected in his profession and has considerable experience in the estimation of values in Takoma Park — a community where appraisal is most difficult.

Possibly it is an unorthodox behavior for a real estate agent, but mine, over the years, has been to leave Mrs. Siegler to her peace and privacy rather than to contact her with the proposal that she market her property would be one of the most expensive and competitive so far in our community.

I believe that I reflect the position of the neighborhood as I say that no one resents or is opposed to the notion of a profit being made by the Siegler family in the marketing of their very desirable real estate.

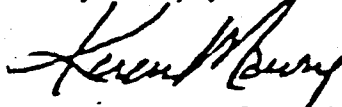
My primary concern is that Mrs. Siegler receive a fair market value for her property, if and when she is interested in selling it, and that the fair market value be established in the traditional way — allowing the opportunity for competition to demonstrate the maximum dollar obtainable for the land and improved sections.

Needless to say, there is a continuing concern that historic and open space be preserved. Please understand that this is an on-going and wide spread concern, not one that is limited to this particular piece of property.

I would very much appreciate your giving me some guidance as to the price/ prices you have advised Mrs. Siegler and her son are appropriate for their asset. I am anxious not to violate what appears to be a relationship of trust and confidence between you and Mr. Siegler which is why I am writing to you in hopes that you will relay to me the position of the owner of this publicized parcel.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience. I have enclosed my business card for your convenience in response.

Very truly yours



Karen Maury, President
MAURY SALES, Incorporated

KM:tg

**** Over \$19 Million Listed/Sold in Takoma Park****

COMMUNITY PLANNING EAST
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

RECEIVED
MAR 29 1984
RECEIVED
SILVER SPRING, MD.

URCIOLO & URICIOLO
URBAN PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS
311 G STREET, N. W.
JUDICIARY SQUARE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
(202) 789-1177

RECEIVED
461
MAR 28 1984
RECEIVED
SILVER SPRING, MD.

JOHN R. URICIOLO, II
JOSEPH J. URICIOLO, ESQ.

RECEIVED
MAR 27 1984
200
RECEIVED
DIR OF PLANN.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

PLEASE REPLY TO:
P. O. Box 4155
CHEVY CHASE, MD. 20815

March 22, 1984

Sammie Abbott, Mayor
City of Takoma Park
7600 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20812

Re: Siegler Site

Dear Mayor Abbott & City Council Members:

As you and the Council will recall at the meeting of February 13, 1984, which I attended on behalf of the Sieglers, the City Council recommended that a motion be made to extend the time of the planning board meeting for a period of ninety (90) days. At that meeting I objected to that delay on the grounds that it was merely to stall the issues, however it the citizens groups were really sincere in their effort, 90 days was not necessary. Against my protest, the Council settled on 60 days and specifically asked me if I would co-operate fully by making the house and ground available for review by two appraisers. I agreed that I would do my best to accomodate the Council's request as well as ask Mr. Siegler to come down from Connecticut to discuss various proposals to possibly resolve the subdivision issue.

It has now been over 40 days since that meeting and to date I have not been contacted by anyone in reference to the house and ground being appraised. Consequently, I feel that you and the Council should be aware the the verbal assurances made by many of the citizens groups that were opposed to the re-subdivision at that meeting were given to the Council in bad faith and was merely done in an effort to stall any action by the planning board. By stalling they could then collect support funds and proceed to made amendments to the master plan for historic sites and that they really never had any intention of making a good-faith offer or proposal.

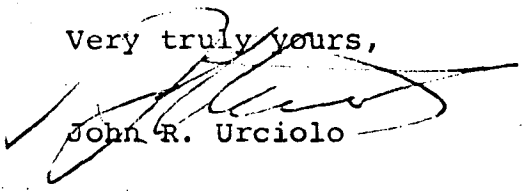
If is my feeling that the citizens groups have totally mislead the City Council by making verbal assurances with little , if any, honorable real intentions. Mrs. Siegler, on the other hand, who is also a 60 year resident of Takoma Park, has continued to act in good faith and merely is applying for a re-subdivision which is surely within her rights as a loyal citizen of Takoma Park and Montgomery County.

I would be most happy to attend your next meeting to further emphasize to you and the Council the Sieglers position as to how stalling tactics have further hurt them as residents

with the appearance that the City Council has aided the opposition in their cause to prevent a re-sundivision request on a piece of property well within their rights as City and County residents in good standing.

Very truly yours,

CC: E.H. SIEGLER
C. CHRISTELLER, MNCP&P


John R. Urciolo

Chairman's Office, MCPB

31

No: 504 Date: 9/12/85

Letter Dated: 9/10/85

Who will handle: Justicia Reinart

cc: MIC to me

Agenda Date: _____

Prepare reply for Chairman's signature

Reply; cc to Chairman

Remarks: File Sign
Howard

City of Takoma Park, Maryland

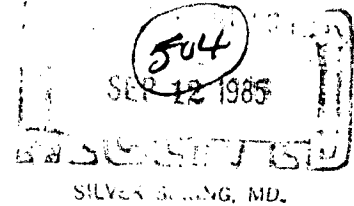
OFFICE OF CITY ADMINISTRATOR
TELEPHONE 270-1700



7500 MAPLE AVENUE
TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912

10 September 1985

Mr. Norman L. Christeller
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907



Dear Mr. Christeller,

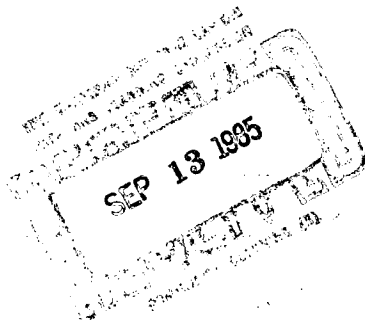
I suspect that you will be interested to learn that the City of Takoma Park has acquired the Thomas/Siegler property, which at one time presented us with some perplexing issues and difficult choices. I have enclosed for your information a copy of the news release about the acquisition that was released today.

Once again, we at the City of Takoma Park wish to express our appreciation to the members of the Planning Board for having provided us with the time, the patience and the support we needed to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. Our special thanks to you, Mr. Christeller, for guiding the process fairly and with a keen eye for the successful resolution we have ultimately attained.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Neal
Economic and Community
Development Coordinator

DJN:imr
Enclosure a/s



City of Takoma Park, Maryland

TELEPHONE 270-1700



7500 MAPLE AVENUE
TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912

NEWS RELEASE

DJN:imr

85-006

Contact: Daniel Neal, 301-270-1700

TAKOMA PARK ACQUIRES HISTORIC
THOMAS/SIEGLER PROPERTY FOR
COMMUNITY PARK

For Immediate Release:
10 September 1985

A public/private partnership forged between the City of Takoma Park, the State of Maryland, the Old Takoma Citizens' Association and the Trust for Public Land, a national land conservation organization, has successfully forestalled a development threat to the open space and historic character of Takoma Park and resolved a controversial clash of public and private needs. This successful effort culminated when the City of Takoma Park, with funds made available through Maryland's Program Open Space, acquired for a garden park a sizable portion of the historic and scenic Thomas/Siegler property located in the Takoma Park Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

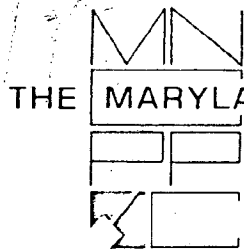
In response to the proposed residential development of this site various citizens' groups, City officials and the Trust for Public Land worked closely together to develop a viable alternative that would meet the legitimate financial needs of the property owner while preserving the historic open space through the creation of a much-needed neighborhood park. This alternative - the planned purchase of the property - was made possible with assistance provided by the Trust for Public Land, which negotiated a purchase agreement, optioned the property and held the option until the City could arrange for financing to buy the land at its fair market value. TPL Project Manager Rose Harvey commented that "the project would never have happened without the persistence, creativity and flexibility of the City of Takoma Park officials and citizens' groups who put this deal together and pursued it to its very end. I've never seen such an active and involved citizen constituency nor a city government as innovative and dynamic." The project is the first completed by TPL in the State of Maryland.

The site, nearly one acre in size and a mere stone's throw from the Takoma Metro Station, is itself listed on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. The plan has this to say about the site:

Extensively landscaped under the ownership of the Siegler family, the grounds are dominated by large white oak trees with an understory of magnolia, American holly, laurel, azalea, dogwood and

cherry which aesthetically define the setting ... and contribute to the overall sylvan environment of Takoma Park.

According to Daniel Neal, the City's Economic and Community Development Coordinator and project manager for the acquisition, "the park will be planned and developed by the City in close cooperation with the residents of the Old Takoma neighborhood. In fact, the local citizens' association or a newly formed land trust may ultimately lease the land and assume some management and maintenance responsibilities. The exceptional natural features of the site will be left undisturbed, so that the site can function primarily as a passive urban garden park. The existence of a small open lawn, an historic carriage house and some short trails through the wooded area create the potential for something more than strolling and meditation. We'll be focusing particular attention on the carriage house. We will strive to find a means of preserving this historic structure for an appropriate use that will not disrupt the site or the neighborhood."



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

March 1, 1984

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Charles Loehr
FROM: Community Plans South
RE: Preliminary Plan of Resubdivision 1-83209 Takoma Park

RECOMMENDATION

Deny resubdivision or defer pending resloution of the historic status of the subject property.

Community Planning South Staff have reviewed the above cited plan of resubdivision for compatibility with the immediate neighborhood and for its effect on the Takoma Park historic district and offers the following comments and recommendations:

Master Plan compatibility and preservation issues

The subject property located at 201 Tulip Avenue is covered by the 1974 Takoma Park Transit Impact Area Sector Plan. The Sector Plan recommends retention of the existing low density residential development and R-60 zoning for the subject property, and the immediate neighborhood.

In terms of the immediate neighborhood, staff notes that three of the four corners at the intersection of Tulip and Cedar are currently developed with large lots. Staff finds reduction of the subject property to the lot sizes shown in the plan of resubdivision would not be in keeping with the majority of existing development at the intersection, and therefore recommends against approval of the resubdivision as proposed.

The subject property is also located within both the National Register historic district and the district identified in the County's own historic inventory, The Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Although the 1974 Transit Impact Area Plan does not specifically address historic preservation, the 1982 Approved and Adopted Master Plan for the City of Takoma Park contains an extensive discussion of preservation issues (page four) and the Takoma Park historic district (pages 20 and 21).

Because the subject property falls within both the National Register and Locational Atlas historic districts, Staff finds extension of the recommendations of the 1982 City of Takoma Park Plan to this property both reasonable and necessary to implement the overall preservation goals of that Plan. As a means of implementing those goals, the Plan specifically recommends the evaluation and designation of a local historic district under the provisions of the Prince George's and Montgomery County Historic Preservation Ordinances.

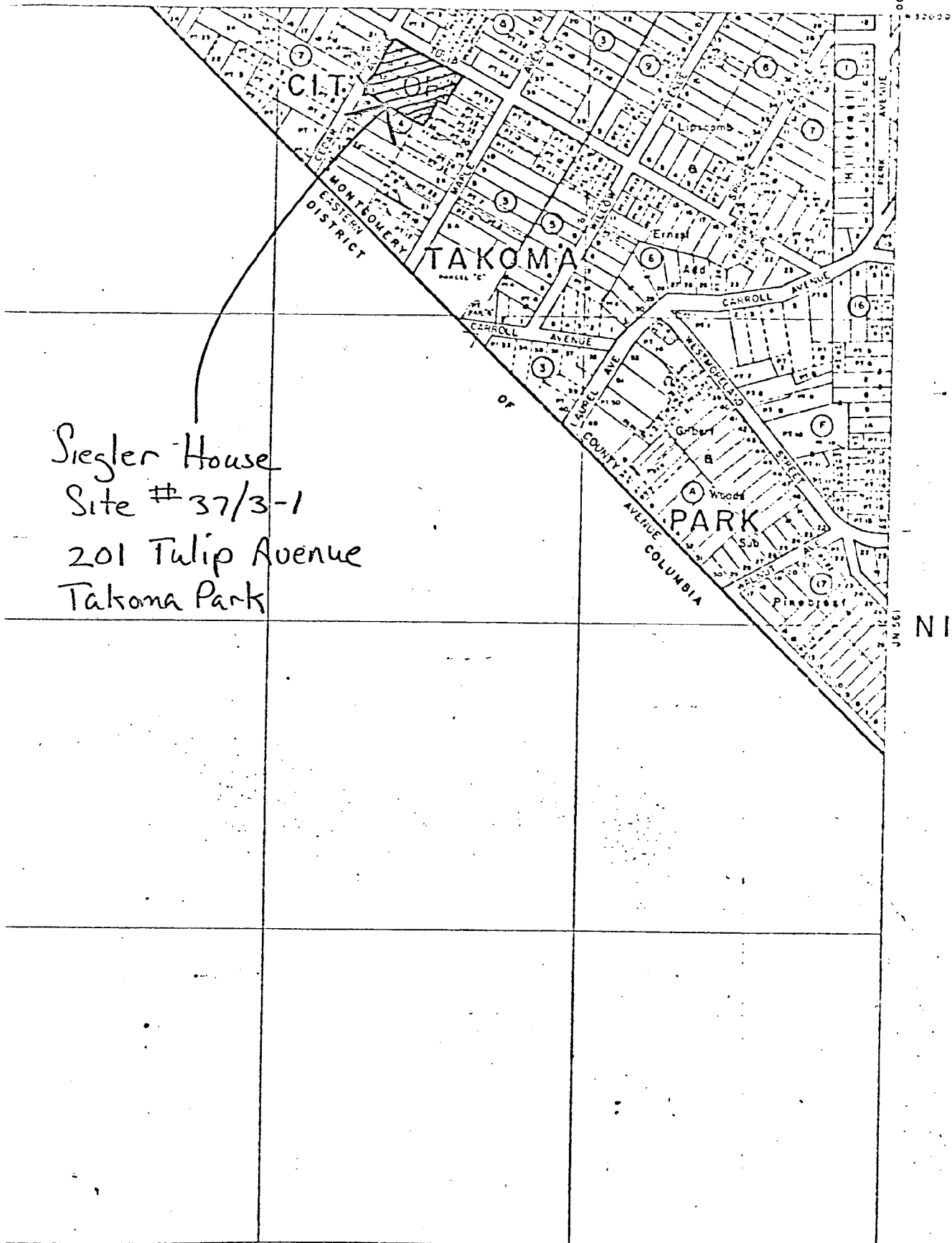
The subject property has been identified as a contributing resource to the district and as having individual historic interest because it is the site of one of the oldest houses in Takoma Park and because of the species and prototype azaleas identified on the property. The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has recommended the property be designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation as an individual historic site and a contributing resource to the Takoma Park historic district. As you know, the Planning Board has approved a preliminary draft amendment on that recommendation for public hearing on April 5, 1984.

Staff finds approval of the resubdivision prior to a determination of the property's historic significance and delineation of its environmental setting could adversely affect the preservation of the historic site.

Based on the incompatibility of the proposed lot sizes with existing corner development, and the potential negative impact of the resubdivision on both the individual historic site and the Takoma Park historic district, Staff recommends denial of the proposed resubdivision or deferral pending resolution of the property's historic status.

MR:lys

cc: Tom Robertson

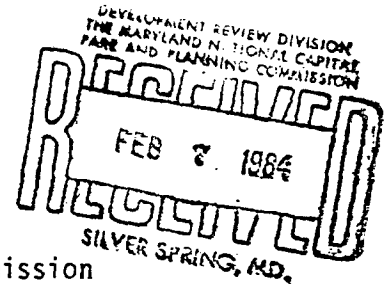


Siegler House
 Site # 37/3-1
 201 Tulip Avenue
 Takoma Park

INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS TABLE		DIST	CURRENT TO	SCALE 1" = 200' 	Map JN341 W.S.S.C. 208441 Location TAKOMA PARK
		13	1-1-81		

MEMORANDUM

February 6, 1984



TO: Charles Loehr
Subdivision Review Coordinator
Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission

FROM: Bobbi Hahn *BH*
Historic Preservation Commission

SUBJECT: Subdivision Plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park

At its February 2, 1984, meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park. This resubdivision plan involves the Siegler property, located at 201 Tulip Avenue, which is within the Takoma Park Atlas historic district (#37/3). The Commission found that the house on this property was completed in 1884, one of the first built within B.F. Gilbert's Takoma Park; that it is located in the heart of the historic district and is adjacent to other contributing historic resources; that the subject parcel is the last remaining of the large lots in its immediate area which typified the Victorian neighborhood; that the addition of four more houses here combined with two on lots already approved for development across the street would increase the density of the immediate area by 60% in a two year period; that the grounds of the subject property contain one of the few remaining carriage houses in the historic district and that this would be demolished were the resubdivision plan to be approved; that the grounds are heavily planted, so remarkably so as to be the subject of numerous articles on horticulture; that the grounds make a major contribution to the character and nature of the historic resource and to the historic district; that the grounds contain experimental nursery stock, some of which are unique, some of which are prototypes of nationally known species.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed resubdivision of the Siegler property is not compatible in character and nature with the historical and cultural features of the historic district and that the proposal does constitute substantial alteration of the historic district; therefore, the Commission unanimously recommends that the proposed resubdivision of the Siegler property be denied.

BH:jpl

cc: Norman Christeller
Carl Iddings
David Saumweber
Dolores Milmoe
John Urciolo

Siegler Property Site Analysis

Location: 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland

Prepared by: Roy H. Gauzza Jr., consultant in design, restoration, preservation and history of landscape architecture and horticultural sites

Description of Site

In the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, the Siegler house stands on an approximately one acre site of trees, shrubs, vines and lawn that form a naturalistic setting. While the house stands as the oldest in the city, much of the property's extensive plantings date from the 1920s to the 1950s, presently forming a situation of mature plant material relatively unaltered in natural shapes and growth habits. Though a number of plant species grow on the site, including mountain laurel, wisteria, bamboo, magnolia, Winter Daphne, Cryptomeria and wildflowers of Virginia Bluebells and trillium, the focus of plantings lies in the site's azaleas and rhododendrons. Hundreds of the plants in an extensive range of colors and growth habits flourish on the property, in borders, around lawn areas, and as specimen plants. They range from native to introduced and, especially, hybridized species and from deciduous to evergreen, and they serve as a broad view to azalea culture.

Significance of Site

The Siegler property has a character, interest, and value, giving it an important place among sites historically and culturally significant. While the property reflects a pleasing and somewhat striking example of a woodland setting, following the naturalistic style of landscape architecture, that character, interest, and value lies in the horticultural properties of the site. Forming that unique characteristic are the azalea plantings. They are the type known as 'Glenn Dale' azaleas, and as such, are some of the first plants hybridized as that variety that is so popular in the nursery trade of today. Created there--on the Siegler property--during the 1930s by Benjamin Y. Morrison,

a horticulturist, geneticist, plant breeder and plantsman, (1891-1966), the azaleas at the Siegler property are plants from which propagation provided the beginning of a strain of azaleas seen in the home landscape today throughout the eastern United States. As the property was a site for the start of the 'Glenn Dale' hybrids, labeled in 1954 as "one of the finest races of azaleas" in existence by the then director of the National Arboretum, Dr. Henry T. Skinner, it now illustrates a rare picture of the pioneering work performed on the azalea species during the plant hybridization that marked the twentieth century. It is a site like that of the Siegler property that emphasizes Takoma Park's identification as Azalea City.

The Siegler property was one of the several sites near his parent's home in Takoma Park that Benjamin Y. Morrison used for his experimental work that created the 'Glenn Dale' hybrid azaleas. He planted a vast number of seedlings there, selecting a fraction for introduction into the nursery trade. He made the property unique as a study ground and laboratory for the science of azalea culture, and the property as it is preserved today reflects the outstanding work of an award winning plantsman for whom the Morrison Azalea Garden at the National Arboretum was dedicated and who helped change the face of azalea use in the landscape.

The Siegler property is the site of Morrison's named 'Glenn Dale' azalea varieties, including Helen Close, Martha Hitchcock, Corrine Murrah and Dayspring. Yet, a number of plants from his crosses remain, unnamed and not introduced into the nursery trade, presenting an extraordinary potential for further study and selection of new varieties for introduction into the nursery trade today.

Conclusion:

The Siegler property ranks with sites of Montgomery County and the State of Maryland designated as historic and deemed worthy of preservation based on the significance outlined above. With its

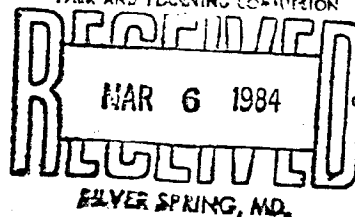
horticultural and landscape architectural significance, it has the potential for:

- * education and scientific study in the fields of significance
- * interest and appreciations of those fields and its unique illustration of them
- * reflecting the historical and cultural heritage of those fields

URCIOLO & URICIOLO
URBAN PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS
311 G STREET, N. W.
JUDICIARY SQUARE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20001

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DIVISION
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
(202) 789-1173

JOHN R. URICIOLO, II
JOSEPH J. URICIOLO, ESQ.



PLEASE REPLY TO:
P. O. BOX 4155
CHEVY CHASE, MD. 20815

Mr. Charles Loehr
Park & Planning Commission
Subdivision Coordinator
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Dear Mr. Loehr:

On February 6, 1984, the Historic Preservation Commission sent you a memorandum of their findings from its February 2, 1984, involving the property of the Sieglers (Sub-plan # 1-83209)

In that memorandum, the Historic Preservation Commission relied on facts given to them about the property which included, that the property and "grounds are heavily planted, so remarkably so as to be the subject of numerous articles on horticulture; that the grounds make a major contribution to the character and nature of the historic resource and to the historic district; that the grounds contain experimental nursery stock, some of which are unique, some of which are prototypes of nationally known species" At that meeting on February 2nd, I indicated that this was not true and that I could have a affidavit fully notarized by Estelle Siegler Phillips a resident on the property from 1919 to 1941.

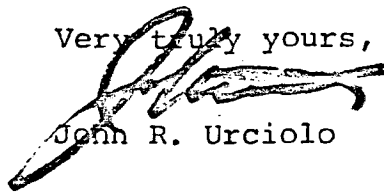
The Historic Preservation Commission did not see fit to consider this as evidenced by their memorandum of February 6, 1984. Last Thursday, March 1, 1984, the Historic Review Commission, at the request of the planning board, had another hearing on the Siegler property. At this meeting, I presented them with a copy of the affidavit, a copy of which I have enclosed for your review. Again this Commission decided not to consider the facts in the affidavit and therefore continue to rely on untrue facts. It is obvious that this Commission rules solely on their personal feeling and that a scheduled public hearing is merely a sham under which they can operate.

If is the feeling of the owners of the property that the memorandum of February 6, 1984 should be modified to take into account the facts as told to them as well as presented in the affidavit enclosed, however, it appears that this will not be done by them. Therefore it is imperative that you and the Planning Board be aware of all facts that pertain to this property.

I have taken the liberty to forward copies of this letter to the same persons that were listed on your memorandum with the addition of a copy to the County Executive, since it is important that he be aware of the real facts as opposed to those given to you by the Historic Preservation Commission.

If we can be of any further assistance to you or the Planning Board, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Very truly yours,



John R. Urciolo

JRU/lmcd

CC: Norman Christeller
Carl Iddings
David Saumweber
Dolores Milmo
Charles Gilcrest, Cty Execctive
Bobbi Hahn, Historic Preservation
Commission

Subject: Subdivision Plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am the sister-in-law of Mrs. E. Horace Siegler, the present owner of the Siegler property located at the corner of Cedar and Tulip Avenues in Takoma Park, Maryland. My parents purchased this property in 1919 and, with the exception of some very brief periods, I lived there from 1919 until 1941 with my parents, my brother Horace and his family after his marriage, and my brother, Eugene.

Eugene Siegler was the one very largely responsible for the plantings on the Siegler property. His specialty with the Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Agriculture, was the diseases of fruits. Through the years, he developed an interest in landscaping and azaleas as a hobby.

I am very familiar with the plantings made on the Siegler property. Practically all of the azaleas are of the mollis variety purchased from nurseries in the Carolinas as large plants to give an immediate effect. The rhododendrons planted there were also large plants purchased from truckers who brought them from the Carolinas to sell in the Washington area. We purchased what they did not sell elsewhere. I was present when many of these purchases were made and when most of the azaleas and rhododendrons were planted.

My brother was acquainted with Mr. B.Y. Morrison, both being employed by the Department of Agriculture, and they had mutual friends. However, he was not closely associated with Mr. Morrison either personally or professionally at any time.

At no time was the Siegler property used as a site for plants hybridized by Mr. Morrison and none of the "Glenn Dale" azaleas were created there. None of his azaleas were planted there when he was active in developing them in the 1930's.

The above information is based upon my personal knowledge. I trust that it will correct the statements made in the report prepared by Roy H. Gauzza, Jr. with regard to the historical and/or study value of the plantings on the Siegler property.

Submitted by

Estelle Siegler Phillips

Estelle Siegler Phillips
(Mrs. E.S. Phillips)
70 W. Lucerne Circle, Apt. 1810
Orlando, Florida, 32801

State of Florida
County of Orange

Sworn and subscribed before
me this 24 day of FEBRUARY
1984.

James J. Honey
Notary Public

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF FLORIDA AT LARGE
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES NOV 24 1984
BONDED JHEU GENERAL INS. UNDERWRITERS

Chairman's Office, MCPB

(8)

No: 515 Date: 4/3/84

Letter Dated: 3/29/84

Who will handle: Justin Hoover

cc: MCPB/Recipies (CPS)

Agenda Date: PH 4/5/84

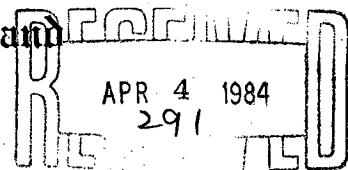
Prepare reply for Chairman's signature

Reply; cc to Chairman

Remarks: _____

City of Takoma Park, Maryland

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

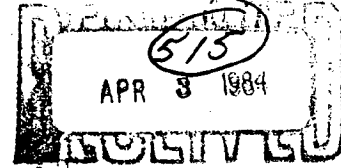


7500 MAPLE AVENUE
TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912

OFFICE OF CITY ADMINISTRATOR
TELEPHONE 270-1700



March 29, 1984



SILVER SPRING, MD.

Norman L. Christeller
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Re: Preliminary Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:
The Thomas-Siegler Historic Site, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland

Dear Mr. Christeller:

The Mayor and Council of Takoma Park, at their regular meeting on March 26, 1984, adopted unanimously a resolution which supports the passage of the above-referenced amendment to Montgomery County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Pursuant to this resolution, I herewith present to you and to the Montgomery County Planning Board a certified copy of the Resolution on the Thomas-Siegler Historic Site (enclosed), which I request be entered into the official records of the Planning Board's hearing on the proposed amendment, now scheduled for April 5, 1984.

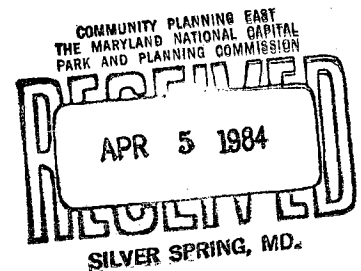
Thanking you for your kind attention in this matter, I am,

Sincerely,

James S. Wilson, Jr.
James S. Wilson, Jr.
City Administrator

JSW:imr
Enclosure a/s

cc: Mayor and Council
Charles E. Loehr
Takoma Park Historic Preservation
Committee, c/o David Saumwebber, Pres.
Old Takoma Citizens' Association
c/o Jim Douglas, Vice President



RESOLUTION
ON
THOMAS-SIEGLER HISTORIC SITE

- WHEREAS, The Thomas-Siegler House at 201 Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park, Maryland, completed in 1884 as part of B.F. Gilbert's original Takoma Park suburban development, is the first completed and oldest surviving house of that development in Takoma Park; AND
- WHEREAS, This house is a two and one-half story stucco over clapboard frame Victorian Revival home with an unusual duplex design; AND
- WHEREAS, The property on which the Thomas-Siegler House is situated, being lots 31, 32, 35 and 36 and parts of lots 30, 33, 34 and 37 of B.F. Gilbert's Addition to Takoma Park, is an extensively landscaped setting which includes a number of both prototype and non-hybridized species of axalea, which were planted as a result of former owner Dr. Siegler's association with Benjamin Y. Morrison, noted horticulturalist and first director of the National Arboretum; AND
- WHEREAS, The property contains other exceptional and noteworthy botanical specimens, including white oak trees, American holly, large-flowered magnolia, flowering dogwood, weeping cherry, mountain laurel, rhododendron and wisteria; AND
- WHEREAS, The grounds of this property contain a one and one-half story carriage house, one of only a few remaining in Takoma Park; AND
- WHEREAS, The property is within the Takoma Park Historic District, which is officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places; AND
- WHEREAS, The Thomas-Siegler House, carriage house and grounds are an integrated property which characterizes the historic nature of the immediate neighborhood and the City and constitute a unified environmental setting; AND
- WHEREAS, The Mayor and Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, have in the past supported and continue to support reasonable and responsible efforts to preserve the City's cultural, historical, ecological and architectural resources;
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland; THAT
- SECTION 1. The Mayor and Council find that the Thomas-Siegler House and the surrounding property
- a) have character, interest and value as part of the development, heritage and culture of the City of Takoma Park and therefore of Montgomery County;

- b) constitute one of the City's premier cultural, historical, ecological and architectural resources and, as such, possesses cultural, historical, ecological and architectural significance for Takoma Park and for Montgomery County; AND
- c) represent a valuable and long-established and integral feature of the Old Takoma neighborhood.

SECTION 2. The Mayor and Council conclude that the Thomas-Siegler House, carriage house and the surrounding property are eminently worthy of inclusion on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation as an Historic Site and on any other register of historic resources, as appropriate.

SECTION 3. The Mayor and Council hereby direct the City Administrator to present these findings and conclusions to the Montgomery County Planning Board at its public hearing scheduled for April 5, 1984.

MARCH 26, 1984

THE AFOREGOING IS HEREBY CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND ON MARCH 26, 1984.

M. Sibyl Pusti

M. Sibyl Pusti, City Clerk

Chairman's Office, MCPB

No: 492 Date: 4/2/84 ✓

Letter Dated: 3/20/84

Who will handle: Justin Hoover

cc: MCPB / Rev. Peay (CPS)

Agenda Date: 4/15/84 P/H

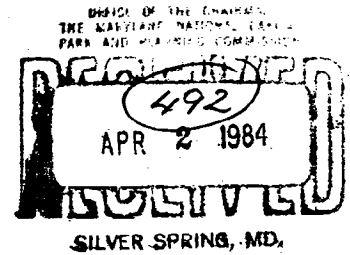
copy to Charles Locke - D.R.
Prepare reply for Chairman's signature

Reply; cc to Chairman

Remarks: _____

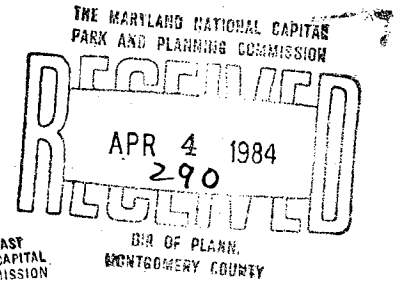
4/3

Jim and Gail Douglas
212 Tulip Ave.
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

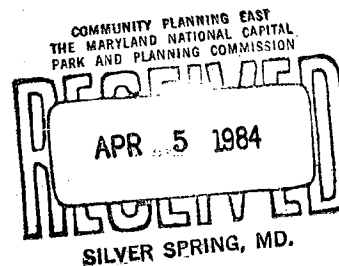


March 20, 1984

Mr. Norman Christeller
Chairman, Maryland National Capital Parks
and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907



SUBJECT: File No. 1-83209



Dear Mr. Christeller:

We are writing as adjacent landowners to the property which is the subject of the above referenced file before the Commission. The owner of this property at 201 Tulip Avenue in Takoma Park wishes to re-subdivide the original lots in order to add four more houses. Under the current subdivision two houses could be built on the property.

We wish to register our strong opposition to the proposed re-subdivision. There are many reasons why a resubdivision would not be appropriate.

* Creating five buildable lots (including the lot which would contain the existing house) will substantially alter the existing character of the neighborhood. At present Takoma Park is characterized by its mixture of "normal" sized properties and those of a significantly greater size. It is this mix of large and small properties, combined with the resultant mix of different sized structures and the various landscaping techniques of the owners, which gives Takoma Park its famous charm and park-like atmosphere. Since the larger properties are the exception rather than the rule in the area, splitting them up has a tremendous effect on the surrounding area.

* The historic importance of not only the existing house, but the site itself, has been well documented. The house was the first completed in B.F. Gilbert's Takoma Park subdivision. While the house will not be physically affected by the proposed resubdivision, the property on which the house sits will be. This property contains a carriage house which dates back to the construction of the house (not to a much later period as the developer alleges). The property is also representative of what historic Takoma Park really looked like.

As noted above, Takoma Park currently consists of a mixture of large and small properties. A look at the area in which this property sits once consisted of a number of large properties, now mostly split up. Thus, the property proposed for resubdivision represents a truly historical look at the City.

* Also on the property are a number of plantings of azaleas, important from both a historic and horticultural standpoint. The azaleas are some of the original Glen Dales, developed elsewhere in Takoma Park and notable as the precursor of the modern, hardy azaleas now prevalent throughout Takoma Park and elsewhere in the Washington area. Once again the presence of these plantings illustrates the historic and integral nature of this property in its current form.

As you know, a number of us in the neighborhood have been active in looking for alternatives which will provide the Seiglers with a fair return on their property while still retaining the essential character of the property and the neighborhood. Years of zoning case law are clear in affirming the rights of the owner, but also in recognizing that there is a community interest which must be protected as well. There are alternatives which will benefit everyone. We hope that you will appreciate the importance of this property and will act to assure its important place in the community.

We are prepared to present our views to you and the rest of the Commission when you hold a public hearing on the proposal. Please inform us of the date and time such a hearing will be held.

Sincerely,



Jim and Gail Douglas

cc: Mr. Charles Loehr
Subdivision Coordinator, MNCCP



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

April 18, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian *MW*

RE: Historical Significance of Siegler Property as it Relates to Takoma Park and Montgomery County Suburban Development

The Siegler Property represents the emergence, at the end of the 19th century in Montgomery County, of a specifically suburban style which was both adapted to previous middle class urban traditions and suited to some of the goals of the rural ideals. It was, in fact, this blending of city and country that stimulated B. F. Gilbert's creation and promotion of Takoma Park -- and indeed the development of virtually all of the County's early suburban communities -- as a haven for urban dwellers in search of the arcadian life, "a sylvan retreat from the turmoil of the city." From the outset, Takoma Park was conceived as a picturesque development.

Town planning and platting conventions of the 19th century influenced the grid pattern road system and narrow, deep lots of the first "paper town" of Takoma Park. But Gilbert's continued emphasis of the rural ideal resulted not in a regimented, tightly-packed development dictated by lines on paper, but in a free-flowing community of low density -- from one to two homes per acre -- of suburban residences surrounded by wide lawns and towering shade trees. One of the planning concepts that Gilbert used, in the earliest sections of Takoma Park, to achieve this picturesque quality was the idea of a large setback of house from street, providing a spacious front lawn for plantings and landscaping. This setback was later codified to forty feet by the Town Charter.

The physical realities of early Takoma were perhaps best described in a Washington Times article in 1903, entitled "Takoma Park, Unique Among Washington Suburbs." The article contrasted the suburb with the typical city development:

The \$4,000 that the fairly well-to-do Government clerk invests in a house in the city will purchase him a half

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

18 April 1984

Page 2

acre of ground and build him a model house in Takoma. He would buy one of a long row in the city perhaps. He would get eighteen feet front, a six-room brick house, a lawn as big as a small hall bedroom, and a back yard three long strides each way. In Takoma he will get eight rooms and an attic, a front lawn bigger than his entire town lot, side lawns thirty feet wide, and a back lot a hundred feet each way. He will find three or four good oak trees, already on his lot, and can plant maples or poplars or willows, ten of them if he likes, and not crowd them. He can have twenty fruit trees in his back yard, or he can raise two hundred chickens.

The Siegler Property epitomizes that suburban ideal, and, along with the community's other early examples with their large lawns and tall trees framing the entire street, helps to maintain Takoma Park's distinctive sylvan setting.

One group that helped substantially to fulfill Gilbert's picturesque conception of Takoma Park was government scientists employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. From the beginning the suburb proved an attractive residential area for botanists and horticulturists seeking a quiet setting in which to cultivate their own gardens and, by connection, cultivate a "garden community." By 1901, the Takoma Park Citizens Association brochure could note that "Takoma Park is becoming quite a favorite dwelling place for scientists connected with the government work in Washington. Already there is quite a colony of these gentlemen established here." Similarly, Raymond Button in his 1915 promotional pamphlet, Glimpses of Takoma Park, pointed to the town's large community of "experts, scientists, and clerks who desired to live in a democratic suburb where they could have large lawns, plenty of flowers and ornamentals, and vegetable gardens and poultry yards." Takoma Park's continued emphasis on landscaping is due largely to the early presence of these scientists and specialists from the USDA; the Siegler Property, associated with two USDA scientists, Horace and Eugene Siegler, still reflects that early emphasis.

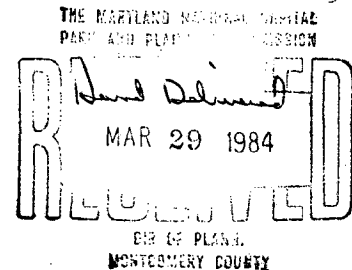
The picturesque qualities of such early suburban developments as Takoma Park, Forest Glen, and Garrett Park were to a large degree abandoned during the mid-20th century, when housing urgencies prompted the creation of large "boom town" developments, characterized by repetitive rows of housing on postage stamp lots. But still, the notion of suburbia as the perfect blending of city and country, as articulated by Gilbert and exemplified by early Takoma Park, continued to be a major enticement, drawing families to suburban Montgomery County.

CHARLES L. RICHARDS, P. A.
ATTORNEY AT LAW

18 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, EAST
FOUR CORNERS
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20901
593-6220

March 29, 1984

Mr. Norman L. Christeller, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907



RE: Public Hearing April 5, 1984 @7:30 p.m.
Siegler Property, Takoma Park
201 Tulip Avenue
Site 37/3-1

Dear Sir:

Please be advised that I was recently retained by Mr. E. Horace Siegler, Jr., son of the owner of the property located at the corner of Cedar Avenue and Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland, said property being the subject of a hearing now set for April 5, 1984 at 7:30 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to consider including the Siegler property in the Master Plan for historical preservation.

I have discussed the matter with my client, and with Mr. John Urciolo and Mr. James Sheehan, the planners and engineers who were retained by the owner of the property for the purpose of re-subdividing same. In addition I have viewed the property and discussed this matter briefly with Ms. Bobbi Hahn who is on the staff of the Historical Preservation Commission. I will need additional time in order to competently present my client's case. I therefore respectfully request that the hearing be continued.

My review of the numerous documents available indicate a gross overstatement of the historical significance of the property. A great deal has been made of the plantings, i.e. azaleas, and a claim made that they were planted by Benjamin Y. Morrison a well-known horticulturist. This is not true. None of the plantings, shrubs and flowers on the property were ever planted by anyone other than family members and have no historical significance. The building itself is no different from a large number of buildings located in Takoma Park as regards size and design.

Mr. Norman L. Christeller, Chairman

March 29, 1984

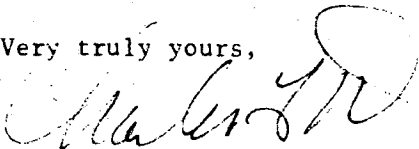
Page Two

There also appears to be some misconception regarding the financial resources of my client. The owner is quite elderly, incapacitated, and living on a limited income. Her son, Mr. E. Horace Siegler, Jr., lives in Connecticut and is a paraplegic. He is cared for in the home by his wife and is a man of limited means. I am advised that the letters I have received from Mr. Siegler were typed by him at a great physical exertion. He is forced to hold a pencil in his teeth in order to type letters to send to me and to Mr. Urciolo, the consultant who was advising him regarding the re-subdivision. Mr. Siegler decided to re-subdivide the property in order to raise funds to provide medical and other care for his mother. The property is in a state of disrepair. The main house needs extensive and expensive repairs that cannot be paid for by the family. The so-called "carriage house" is in such a state of disrepair as to constitute a danger. This building described as a carriage house is in actuality a garage/shed. I have been advised by the family that no carriages were ever housed in the building.

It is important to a proper determination of this case that the above requested continuance be granted.

Thanking you for your cooperation in advance, I remain

Very truly yours,



Charles L. Richards

CLR:dp



Montgomery County Government

March 13, 1984

John R. Urciolo, II
Urciolo & Urciolo
P. O. Box 4155
Chevy Chase, Md. 20815

Dear Mr. Urciolo,

I am in receipt of your undated letter to Charles Loehr, Subdivision Review Coordinator, MNCPPC, regarding subdivision plan #1-83209, the Siégler Property, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland. I wish to point out a basic misunderstanding which you apparently have concerning the March 1, 1984 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. This was a matter separate and distinct from the plan for the resubdivision of the property which had been discussed at the Feb. 6, 1984 HPC meeting.

As was clearly stated in the material sent to Mr. E. H. Siégler via you on February 7, 1984, the intention of the March 1 meeting was for the Commission to evaluate the Siégler property against certain specific historic and architectural criteria in the Ordinance for Historic Preservation (Sec. 24-A of the Montgomery County Code), a copy of which was also sent to Mr. Seigler, to determine whether or not the subject property met any of those criteria. I am enclosing another copy of this information for your perusal.

After evaluating a property the Commission makes a recommendation to the Planning Board as to whether or not that site should be added to the Master Plan of Historic Sites. In this case the Siégler property was found to meet criteria #1A and #2E and was recommended for placement on the Master Plan on the basis of its historic importance to Takoma Park. The recommended environmental setting for the house is the entire parcel of land which is well landscaped and which was found to contribute to the character and nature of the Takoma Park historic district. The carriage house on the rear of the property was included in the environmental setting.

The affidavit which you submitted to the HPC at its March 1, 1984 meeting regarding the plantings on the grounds of the Siégler property, although it did not have any direct bearing on the Master Plan recommendation being made that evening, will be transmitted to the Planning Board with the HPC's recommendation. I assume that you have submitted a copy of the same to Charles Loehr, Subdivision Review Coordinator, MNCPPC, for the record regarding the application for resubdivision of the Siégler property. That is more clearly where it belongs.

Historic Preservation Commission

100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850, (301) 279-1490

John R. Urciolo, II
March 13, 1984
Page Two

Please note also that neither of the above referred to HPC meetings on the Siegler property were formal public hearings. The Planning Board holds a public hearing on Master Plan amendments at which time you will be welcome to submit whatever information you deem important into the record. I believe their Public Hearing on adding the Siegler property to the Master Plan is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 1984.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Bobbi Hahn, Executive Secretary
Historic Preservation Commission

BH:js

Enclosure

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTROLS AND ACTIONS

Planning, Subdivision, and Site Planning Controls

Historic resources placed on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation must be legally recognized in public planning. All area master plans should identify the location of sites. As a regular part of the master planning process, the Historic Preservation Commission should be asked to identify sites that should be added to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. They should also be included in the subdivision review process when appropriate. The addition of sites to area master plans will serve as amendments to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Much preservation can be accomplished using techniques of historic site density transfer, subdivision review, site plan review, development plan review, creative variances, etc. Section 59-A-6 of the County Zoning Ordinance allows density transfer for historic sites in residential zones. (Site plan review is required for historic site density transfer and Section 59-D-3 explains the site plan review process.) The subdivision review process presently encourages but does not require a site plan for a subdivision that has an historic resource. Present zoning regulations include criteria defining historic significance but the criteria are inconsistent with those in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Appendix B is a proposed zoning text amendment that would make the criteria in 59-A-6 consistent with those of the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Staff and Planning Board sensitivity to historic preservation techniques will further enhance the climate for preservation.

Transfer of Development Rights (T.D.R.)

Section 59.31.1 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance presently allows only the transfer of dwelling units. This Plan recommends that the T.D.R. concept be expanded to include commercial or industrial density transferability.

Building Code

Montgomery County, following the B.O.C.A. Code (1975) has the authority to use flexibility in dealing with historic structures, providing the public's health, safety, and welfare are protected. This provision should be aggressively and sensitively administered.

Public Improvements

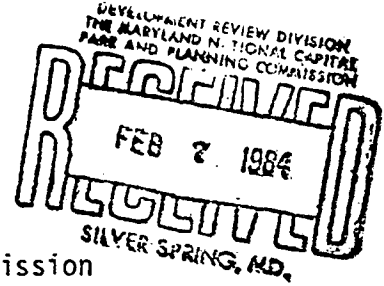
Street lights, public roads, the proper tone of concrete, the design or placement of a sign or individual gas meter, the design of a park entrance, the decision to help finance underground utility wiring, choice of street trees, etc.—each of these improvements can have a profound effect on the "flavor" of an historic area. The design of public facilities, therefore, in the vicinity of historic resources should be sensitive to and maintain the character of the area. The Planning Board should consider the effect of the design of public works on historic resources in its administration of the Mandatory Referral process.

Use of Publicly Owned Buildings

The County Government and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission should continue to adapt the historic structures and sites within their

MEMORANDUM

February 6, 1984



TO: Charles Loehr
Subdivision Review Coordinator
Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission

FROM: Bobbi Hahn *BH*
Historic Preservation Commission

SUBJECT: Subdivision Plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park

At its February 2, 1984, meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park. This resubdivision plan involves the Siegler property, located at 201 Tulip Avenue, which is within the Takoma Park Atlas historic district (#37/3). The Commission found that the house on this property was completed in 1884, one of the first built within B.F. Gilbert's Takoma Park; that it is located in the heart of the historic district and is adjacent to other contributing historic resources; that the subject parcel is the last remaining of the large lots in its immediate area which typified the Victorian neighborhood; that the addition of four more houses here combined with two on lots already approved for development across the street would increase the density of the immediate area by 60% in a two year period; that the grounds of the subject property contain one of the few remaining carriage houses in the historic district and that this would be demolished were the resubdivision plan to be approved; that the grounds are heavily planted, so remarkably so as to be the subject of numerous articles on horticulture; that the grounds make a major contribution to the character and nature of the historic resource and to the historic district; that the grounds contain experimental nursery stock, some of which are unique, some of which are prototypes of nationally known species.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed resubdivision of the Siegler property is not compatible in character and nature with the historical and cultural features of the historic district and that the proposal does constitute substantial alteration of the historic district; therefore, the Commission unanimously recommends that the proposed resubdivision of the Siegler property be denied.

BH:jpl

cc: Norman Christeller
Carl Iddings
David Saumweber
Dolores Milmoe
John Urciolo

Chairman's Office, MCPB

No: 316 Date: 3/5/84 (7)

Letter Dated: _____

Who will handle: Tuesday / Locker

cc: MCPB CPS (FYI)

Agenda Date: _____

Prepare reply for Chairman's signature

Reply; cc to Chairman

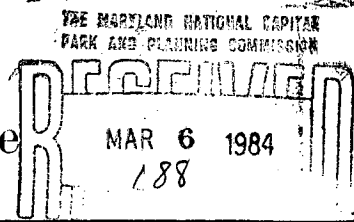
Remarks: → Locker file
noted - Jm.

Robertson to see
Remhardt to file

azalea
city
of the
nation



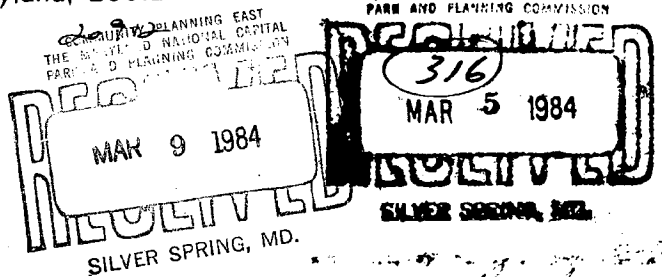
The
Takoma Park
Azalea Committee



TAKOMA PARK

7500 MAPLE AVE. TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND, 20012

8 Columbia Avenue • Takoma Park, Maryland, 20012
732 Piney Br Rd.



Dept. Park & Planning

Dear Sir:

I'm sending you the Takoma Park
newsletter so you can read the article (pg. 6)
supposedly written by the higher son.

This is another example of the developer
not being truthful or above board with
the Takoma Park residents who have tried
to deal fairly with him. These myths
are in his mind and I'm sure Tak. Pk.
residents realize this. I hope because we
are inside the beltway we are not going
to be written off & allowed to be over
developed & become another town with no
open spaces - beautiful trees or environment
minded residents like the old stock who first
settled here. I'm raising against the sub division.

Yours Sincerely
Dorothy D. Cichello

NEIGHBORHOODS ...

We are writing to ask for your help in stopping the rising tide of uncontrolled development which is sweeping through Takoma Park.

As you probably know, the property surrounding the Siegler house—the oldest house in Takoma Park—is threatened by a proposed subdivision. Unless we act now one of our city's most important historic, ecological and scenic resources may soon be bulldozed and destroyed.

The Old Takoma Citizens Association has joined with numerous groups and concerned citizens throughout the City in an effort to save this historic site. The Association is exploring a variety of ways to save the property. To help us in this effort the Association has retained legal counsel who will advise and represent us in the upcoming hearings on this project.

The zoning, planning, and historic preservation laws of Montgomery County are extremely complex. Consequently we feel that skilled legal assistance is vital if we hope to save this unique site. Professional legal aid obviously costs money and this is one way you can help. Your contribution of \$15, \$25, \$50 or whatever you can afford will help us do what is necessary to protect this Takoma Park historic site.

One by one the landmarks of our community have been destroyed—B. F. Gilbert's House, the Takoma Train Station, and the Sanitarium Building—to name just a few. Likewise the sylvan setting and park-like atmosphere of Takoma Park has been slowly eroded to the point where less than 2 percent of the buildable land in Takoma Park remains in open space. Now the City's oldest house set amidst rare azaleas, massive trees, and sprawling gardens is also threatened.

We hope you'll act today to help us preserve this remnant of the original Takoma Park. Please make your check payable to Old Takoma Park Citizens Association and send it to: H. W. Kaufman, 214 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Md. 20912.

—HERBERT KAUFMAN

Chairman, Fund Raising Committee

Contributors: Ed McMahon, Bob Friedman, Jim Douglas

OPEN LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF TAKOMA PARK

Help Save this Property!

*This January 1984
photo shows some of
the beauty of the
historic Thomas House
and its sylvan setting*

*Photo courtesy of
Frank & Angela
Bednarczyk*



31 and 36 as presented in the diagram as shown. Under this plan the corner lot would have to be segregated from the Siegler house and consequently it would guarantee that the corner site be developed. This is why the Siegler's decided after careful analysis that the best solution was to re-subdivide so that someone could in fact purchase the house and either of the adjacent lots or both.

Another of the myths that have been circulating on the Siegler property is that B. Y. Morrison, a former resident of Takoma Park and a well-known horticulturist, used the Siegler property as a "study ground and laboratory for the science of azalea culture". This is totally unfounded! Although the property does contain "Glenn Dale" azaleas developed by Mr. Morrison, the entire Siegler site was planted by the Siegler family and Mr. Morrison did not use the site as a laboratory as many of the residents would have you believe. As most

family health failed or money problems arose, they felt that they could always sell a portion of the property and still protect their home. This is exactly what Mrs. Siegler is doing in this subdivision plan. She is in great need of additional funds for her support and well being. Under the law, she is entitled to subdivide her property. This subdivision request is asked by a 63-year resident of Takoma Park, a person who has supported the City throughout her life. To oppose this subdivision request with inaccurate rhetoric and myths appears to be insensitive and unimaginably cruel to a loyal resident of the City of Takoma Park.

**Council Adopts
Resolution on Siegler
Resubdivision...**

Notice this is written in 3rd person unusual for a son

Another View of the Siegler Property Issue

by Horace Siegler, Jr.

Many of the residents of Takoma Park seem to be misinformed on the proposed subdivision of the Siegler Property (southwest corner of Tulip & Cedar Avenues). The request for a re-subdivision has been made by the Siegler family, continuous residents of Takoma Park since 1921. It is untrue that a developer is sitting in the wings waiting for the subdivision to take place so that he can immediately start building houses. The Sieglers have tried to exercise sensitivity to the needs of the community; however, some residents have tried to make people believe that the Siegler house itself is threatened. This is not the case! In fact, saving the house is a financial goal. The proposed subdivision (Chart B) shows that the new lot 43 (Siegler Home) is to remain untouched with an 87' front reduced from the original 100' frontage that now exists.

It is the intention of the Sieglers to sell off the subdivision lots to individuals for home sites; it is not intended to be sold to one developer. Each new structure would, of course, be subject to the Historical Review Committee of the City and the County before any buildings would be allowed to be constructed. Lots 40 and 41 as proposed would be sold first and the funds used to assist Mrs. Siegler's 24-hour nursing care costs. At some later date, since Mrs. Siegler intends to remain on the property, lots 42 and 43 would be offered for sale as one parcel. In the event the house would not sell, then and only then would lot 42 be sold separately. Lot 31, which is also owned by the Sieglers, is currently a buildable lot and it is not under consideration for the re-subdivision. Consequently it can be sold "as is" or also offered with the Siegler home when the time presents itself.

Chart A shows what now exists on the Siegler site and, without any change, houses could be built on Lot

of us are aware, the Glenn Dale azalea is very prevalent in Takoma Park as well as throughout the metropolitan area. However, the Siegler site growth has been allowed to overgrow to unnatural proportions.

Another myth that needs to be clarified is the one pertaining to the so called "carriage house, a relic of the horse & buggy era". This outbuilding was constructed by the Sieglers who acquired the house after 1921, many years after the horse & buggy era. In fact, the shed is built on land acquired by Mr. Siegler from the owners of property in the rear (parts of lots 30, 33, 34 & 37—see Chart A).

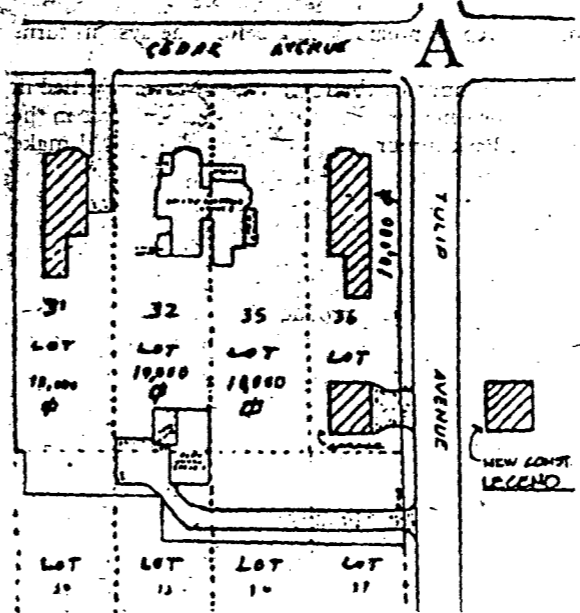
The Sieglers feel that these points should be made known to all the citizens of Takoma Park, since there are some people who would purposely mislead the residents to protect their own front-door park at the Siegler's expense. Mrs. Siegler is well up in her years and she is entitled to be as comfortable as possible.

Historically, many people have acquired adjacent properties to serve as a built-in security. The large Siegler property was bought with this in mind. If the

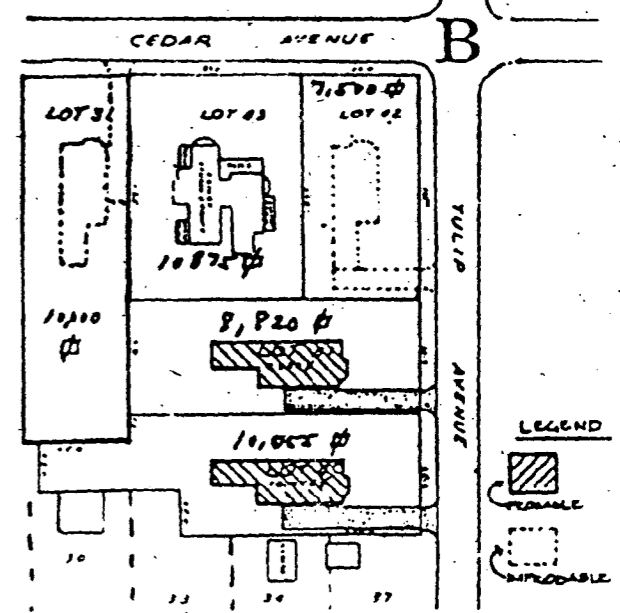
At its Monday, February 12th meeting, the City Council by a favorable vote of six to one abstention, adopted the following resolution:

"In view of the interests of the citizens in maintaining the integrity of the neighborhood and the interest of the City to maintain public space and private space which contributes to the over-all park-like character of the City, we oppose at this time the proposed resubdivision of the Siegler property and direct the City Administrator to request an extension of 60 days based upon the willingness of all parties involved to achieve some reconciliation on the matter. We further request that the Planning Board hearing be held in Takoma Park during evening hours."

Permitted Construction



Proposed Construction

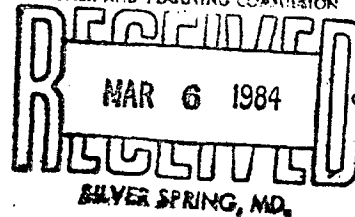


Mr. Arcella the developer advised us he plans to buy Lot 31 himself & live in Tak. PK.

URCIOLO & URICIOLO
URBAN PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS
311 G STREET, N. W.
JUDICIARY SQUARE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20001

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DIVISION
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
(202) 789-1177

JOHN R. URICIOLO, II
JOSEPH J. URICIOLO, ESQ.



PLEASE REPLY TO:
P. O. BOX 4155
CHEVY CHASE, MD. 20815

Mr. Charles Loehr
Park & Planning Commission
Subdivision Coordinator
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Dear Mr. Loehr:

On February 6, 1984, the Historic Preservation Commission sent you a memorandum of their findings from its February 2, 1984, involving the property of the Sieglers (Sub-plan # 1-83209)

In that memorandum, the Historic Preservation Commission relied on facts given to them about the property which included, that the property and "grounds are heavily planted, so remarkably so as to be the subject of numerous articles on horticulture; that the grounds make a major contribution to the character and nature of the historic resource and to the historic district; that the grounds contain experimental nursery stock, some of which are unique, some of which are prototypes of nationally known species" At that meeting on February 2nd, I indicated that this was not true and that I could have a affidavit fully notorized by Estelle Siegler Phillips a resident on the property from 1919 to 1941.

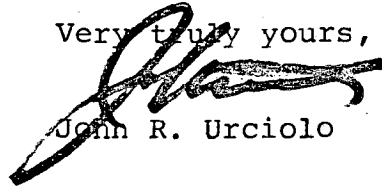
The Historic Preservation Commission did not see fit to consider this as evidenced by their memorandum of February 6, 1984. Last Thursday, March 1, 1984, the Historic Review Commission, at the request of the planning board, had another hearing on the Siegler property. At this meeting, I presented them with a copy of the affidavit, a copy of which I have enclosed for your review. Again this Commission decided not to consider the facts in the affidavit and therefore continue to rely on untrue facts. It is obvious that this Commission rules solely on their personal feeling and that a scheduled public hearing is merely a sham under which they can operate.

If is the feeling of the owners of the property that the memorandum of February 6, 1984 should be modified to take into account the facts as told to them as well as presented in the affidavit enclosed, however, it appears that this will not be done by them. Therefore it is imperative that you and the Planning Board be aware of all facts that pertain to this property.

I have taken the liberty to forward copies of this letter to the same persons that were listed on your memorandum with the addition of a copy to the County Executive, since it is important that he be aware of the real facts as opposed to those given to you by the Historic Preservation Commission.

If we can be of any further assistance to you or the Planning Board, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Very truly yours,



John R. Urciolo

JRU/lmcd

CC: Norman Christeller
Carl Iddings
David Saumweber
Dolores Milmo
Charles Gilcrest, Cty Executive
Bobbi Hahn, Historic Preservation
Commission

February 24, 1984

Subject: Subdivision Plan #1-83209, B.F. Gilberts Takoma Park

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am the sister-in-law of Mrs. E. Horace Siegler, the present owner of the Siegler property located at the corner of Cedar and Tulip Avenues in Takoma Park, Maryland. My parents purchased this property in 1919 and, with the exception of some very brief periods, I lived there from 1919 until 1941 with my parents, my brother Horace and his family after his marriage, and my brother, Eugene.

Eugene Siegler was the one very largely responsible for the plantings on the Siegler property. His specialty with the Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Agriculture, was the diseases of fruits. Through the years, he developed an interest in landscaping and azaleas as a hobby.

I am very familiar with the plantings made on the Siegler property. Practically all of the azaleas are of the mollis variety purchased from nurseries in the Carolinas as large plants to give an immediate effect. The rhododendrons planted there were also large plants purchased from truckers who brought them from the Carolinas to sell in the Washington area. We purchased what they did not sell elsewhere. I was present when many of these purchases were made and when most of the azaleas and rhododendrons were planted.

My brother was acquainted with Mr. B.Y. Morrison, both being employed by the Department of Agriculture, and they had mutual friends. However, he was not closely associated with Mr. Morrison either personally or professionally at any time.

At no time was the Siegler property used as a site for plants hybridized by Mr. Morrison and none of the "Glenn Dale" azaleas were created there. None of his azaleas were planted there when he was active in developing them in the 1930's.

The above information is based upon my personal knowledge. I trust that it will correct the statements made in the report prepared by Roy H. Gauzza, Jr. with regard to the historical and/or study value of the plantings on the Siegler property.

Submitted by

Estelle Siegler Phillips

Estelle Siegler Phillips
(Mrs. E.S. Phillips)
70 W. Lucerne Circle, Apt. 1810
Orlando, Florida, 32801

State of Florida
County of Orange

Sworn and subscribed before
me this 24 day of FEBRUARY
1984.

Jane J. Roney

Notary Public

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF FLORIDA AT LARGE
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES NOV 24 1984
BONDED THRU GENERAL INS. UNDERWRITERS



Montgomery County Government

March 13, 1984

John R. Urciolo, II
Urciolo & Urciolo
P. O. Box 4155
Chevy Chase, Md. 20815

Dear Mr. Urciolo,

I am in receipt of your undated letter to Charles Loehr, Subdivision Review Coordinator, MNCPPC, regarding subdivision plan #1-83209, the Siegler Property, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland. I wish to point out a basic misunderstanding which you apparently have concerning the March 1, 1984 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. This was a matter separate and distinct from the plan for the resubdivision of the property which had been discussed at the Feb. 6, 1984 HPC meeting.

As was clearly stated in the material sent to Mr. E. H. Siegler via you on February 7, 1984, the intention of the March 1 meeting was for the Commission to evaluate the Siegler property against certain specific historic and architectural criteria in the Ordinance for Historic Preservation (Sec. 24-A of the Montgomery County Code), a copy of which was also sent to Mr. Seigler, to determine whether or not the subject property met any of those criteria. I am enclosing another copy of this information for your perusal.

After evaluating a property the Commission makes a recommendation to the Planning Board as to whether or not that site should be added to the Master Plan of Historic Sites. In this case the Siegler property was found to meet criteria #1A and #2E and was recommended for placement on the Master Plan on the basis of its historic importance to Takoma Park. The recommended environmental setting for the house is the entire parcel of land which is well landscaped and which was found to contribute to the character and nature of the Takoma Park historic district. The carriage house on the rear of the property was included in the environmental setting.

The affidavit which you submitted to the HPC at its March 1, 1984 meeting regarding the plantings on the grounds of the Siegler property, although it did not have any direct bearing on the Master Plan recommendation being made that evening, will be transmitted to the Planning Board with the HPC's recommendation. I assume that you have submitted a copy of the same to Charles Loehr, Subdivision Review Coordinator, MNCPPC, for the record regarding the application for resubdivision of the Seigler property. That is more clearly where it belongs.

Historic Preservation Commission

John R. Urciolo, II
March 13, 1984
Page Two

Please note also that neither of the above referred to HPC meetings on the Siegler property were formal public hearings. The Planning Board holds a public hearing on Master Plan amendments at which time you will be welcome to submit whatever information you deem important into the record. I believe their Public Hearing on adding the Siegler property to the Master Plan is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 1984.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Bobbi Hahn, Executive Secretary
Historic Preservation Commission

BH:js

Enclosure

XEROX REQUEST FORM

From Marty Reinhart Date 4/25/84

Number of Copies 12 ~~20~~ copies

Needed by 4/25/84

CIRCLE APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS: 17 pages

back to back one side only staple collate

Color: white pink yellow blue buff green

Return to Marty Reinhart

Room Number 3rd Floor Ad. d. CPN
2 copies for Man - Sophia 305

From the desk of.....

Marty Reinhart

ext. 4-7354

Original

Reports

April 23, 1984

MEMO



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Marty Reinhart, Community Planning South

SUBJECT: Preliminary Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: The Siegler Property Site #37/3-2, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Forward amendment to County Council designating the entire property -- approximately one acre -- on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation with the following additional/ clarifying language:

- The original structure completed in 1884 by Issac L. Thomas -- first postmaster, store owner and station master for Takoma Park -- is historically significant as one of the earliest homes constructed in B.F. Gilbert's Victorian suburban development.
- Original 2-story, T-shaped, "American Farmhouse" remodelled to present Queen Anne appearance with its conversion to a duplex in 1889.
- Extensively landscaped under the ownership of the Siegler Family, the grounds are dominated by large white oak trees with an understory of magnolia, America Holly, laurel, azalea, dogwood and cherry which aesthetically define the setting for the historic structures and contribute to the overall sylvan environment of Takoma Park. Included in the plantings are a number of prototype and non-hybridized specie azaleas which further research may show were incorporated as the result of the Siegler Brothers association with Benjamin Y. Morrison, noted horticulturalist and first director of the National Arboretum.
- The Thomas/Siegler site including the main house, the carriage house and the landscaped grounds, is historically significant as an early example of the Victorian suburban ideal still influential in modern suburban development. While the site's highest historic, cultural and aesthetical value would be in retaining it in its present integrated state, this plan recognizes that some development may need to be accommodated on the property in the future. To assure compatible development both within the site's environmental setting and the Takoma Park historic district this plan recommends the entire property be designated on the Master Plan and subject to the architectural review provided under the County's Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code).

April 23, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Marty Reinhart, Community Planning South

SUBJECT: Preliminary Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: The Siegler Property Site #37/3-2, 201 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Forward amendment to County Council designating the entire property -- approximately one acre -- on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation with the following additional/ clarifying language:

- The original structure completed in 1884 by Issac L. Thomas -- first postmaster, store owner and station master for Takoma Park -- is historically significant as one of the earliest homes constructed in B.F. Gilbert's Victorian suburban development.
- Original 2-story, T-shaped, "American Farmhouse" remodelled to present Queen Anne appearance with its conversion to a duplex in 1889.
- Extensively landscaped under the ownership of the Siegler Family, the grounds are dominated by large white oak trees with an understory of magnolia, America Holly, laurel, azalea, dogwood and cherry which aesthetically define the setting for the historic structures and contribute to the overall sylvan environment of Takoma Park. Included in the plantings are a number of prototype and non-hybridized specie azaleas which further research may show were incorporated as the result of the Siegler Brothers association with Benjamin Y. Morrison, noted horticulturalist and first director of the National Arboretum.
- The Thomas/Siegler site including the main house, the carriage house and the landscaped grounds, is historically significant as an early example of the Victorian suburban ideal still influential in modern suburban development. While the site's highest historic, cultural and aesthetical value would be in retaining it in its present integrated state, this plan recognizes that some development may need to be accommodated on the property in the future. To assure compatible development both within the site's environmental setting and the Takoma Park historic district this plan recommends the entire property be designated on the Master Plan and subject to the architectural review provided under the County's Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code).

BACKGROUND

The Siegler property located at 201 Tulip Avenue is covered by the 1974 Takoma Park Transit Impact Area Sector Plan. The Sector Plan recommends retention of the existing low density residential development and R-60 zoning for the subject property and the immediate neighborhood.

The property is also located within both the Takoma Park historic district designated on the National Register of Historic Places, and the district identified in the County's own historic inventory, The Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Although the 1974 Transit Impact Area Plan does not specifically address historic preservation, the 1982 Approved and Adopted Master Plan for the City of Takoma Park contains an extensive discussion of preservation issues (page four) and the Takoma Park historic district (pages 20 and 21).

Because the subject property falls within both the National Register and Locational Atlas historic districts, staff finds extension of the recommendations of the 1982 City of Takoma Park Plan to this property both reasonable and necessary to implement the overall preservation goals of that Plan. As a means of implementing those goals, the Plan specifically recommends the evaluation and designation of a local historic district under the provisions of the Prince George's and Montgomery County Historic Preservation Ordinances.

Master plan evaluation of the Siegler property prior to a consideration of the whole district was triggered when an application to resubdivide the property was filed by agents of the owner. The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviewed that application and recommended the property be designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation as an individual historic site and as a contributing resource to the Takoma Park Historic district.

The following analysis summarizes the attached research findings of the Park Historian on the significance of the site and outlines staff recommendations for the designation of this property on the Master Plan.

ANALYSIS

Architectural/Historical/Significance

The Park Historian's research substantiates the Thomas/Siegler house as one of the first homes constructed in B. F. Gilberts original Takoma Park suburban development. The original section of the house, a traditional, T-shaped dwelling characterized as an "American Farmhouse," was completed in the fall of 1884. The dwelling was later remodelled to its present Queen Anne appearance when the house was converted into a duplex in 1889.

The ancillary building was also constructed in two parts. The original two story structure dating from the end of the 19th century was probably built at the same time as the main house. The siting, configuration and construction details support its original use as a carriage house. The one story frame addition was constructed sometime during the early 20th century for use as an automobile garage presumably a function the earlier carriage house could not adequately perform.

The Park Historian's research could not establish a direct relationship between the azaleas planted on the Siegler property and the experimental work conducted by B.V. Morrison during the 1920's and 30's which resulted in the reknowned Glenn Dale azalea. Research did reveal that the Siegler Brothers -- noted scientists in their own right and avidly intrusted in horticulture -- were contemporaries of Morrison, associates of his at the USDA and fellow townsmen. It is not unreasonable to assume that the Siegler's participated in Morrison's experimentation but until historical or botanical evidence establishes a direct connection their association remains only reasonable conjecture.

Staff notes however that reliance on landscaping in other cases for identifying appropriate historic settings has not required establishing separate historical or botanical merit for individual plantings. Landscaping has been included as an element of historic settings in the past either because of its aesthetic contribution or because it was representative of period horticultural or landscaping practices.

Staff requested a landscape architect from the Urban Design Division evaluate the landscape plan of the Siegler property as it relates to the main house and carriage house. After several field visits to the property Rob Bushnell offered the following comments on the contribution of the landscape plan to the setting for the historic structures:

- The main house is the dominate structure on the site. By its very size, it requires a large site to serve as a foreground.
- The space about the house must be large enough to compose with it and best display it.
- The house requires a balance of open space and landscape plantings. Spaces have been designed within the plantings to create quiet islands from which one can view the surrounding plant material. These defined open spaces are areas where sunlight may flood in creating shadow patterns and airiness. Each one of these spaces is an entity, complete within itself. They are inseparable parts of the adjacent landscape plantings and main house.
- In summary, it appears that such related spaces, the structure and the landscape that surrounds them were considered together in the process of the design of the garden and grounds of the Thomas/Siegler House. To destroy or take away portion of the landscaped grounds would do severe damage, visually, to the entire property.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings of the Park Historian and additional documentation submitted by the HPC and the community, staff finds the Siegler property significantly meets the following Ordinance criteria cited by the HPC for designation on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:

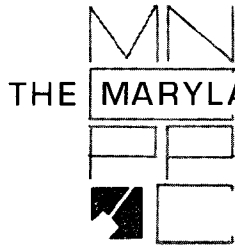
- 1a- has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the County, state or nation.
- 2e- represents an establishment and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or County due to its singular physical characteristic landscape.

Staff finds the property additionally meets criteria "1d. - exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities," as it contributes significantly to the character of the Takoma Park historic district. Staff therefore recommends the designation of the entire one acre property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Since it is the intent of the Master Plan to objectively evaluate and recognize resources of cultural or historic significance to the County, staff recommends the amendment reflect the Siegler property's importance as an integrated site exemplifying the Victorian suburban ideal. In order to assist pursuit of preservation incentives and open space grants, staff further recommends the amendment recognizes that the site's highest historic and aesthetic value would be in retaining the property's present size and scale without further development.

In the event efforts to preserve the site intact prove infeasible the amendment should specifically acknowledge the potential of the property to accommodate additional development under the review procedures established in the County Historic Preservation Ordinance.

In summary, the Siegler property is significant as it epitomizes the Victorian suburban ideal which greatly influenced the suburban development of Montgomery County. The legacy of the property both as an individual historic site and as an contributing resource within the Takoma Park historic district justifies review of any additional development on the site under the provisions of the County's Historic Preservation Ordinance. In this regard the proposed amendment language provides the greatest flexibility for the public/community to reasonably pursue preservation of the property while not foreclosing the property owners options under both the zoning and the Preservation Ordinances to seek resubdivision and additional development on the property.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

March 29, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian *MW*
RE: Thomas/Siegler House, Site 37/3-2

I have been asked by Planning Staff to verify some of the historical and architectural allegations made about the Siegler property in Takoma Park. The findings of my research are presented below, arranged in three major areas of concern: Main House; Carriage House; and Landscape.

MAIN HOUSE

In November of 1883, Mrs. Amanda G. Thomas, of Washington, D. C., purchased ten lots in B. F. Gilbert's new development, "Takoma Park." By the fall of 1884, the Thomas family house, at the corner of Oak -- now Cedar -- and Tulip Avenues, had been completed, and was occupied by Mrs. Thomas, her husband, Issac L. Thomas, and their two daughters, Jennie and Augusta. Some sources claim the Thomas House was the first dwelling completed in Takoma Park (Proctor, "Takoma Park, Energetic Community," The Sunday Star, 19 November 1933); others claim the Veitenheimer House, also on Oak Avenue, was the first erected (Heaton, "Jottings in Relation to Takoma Park," The Records of the Takoma Park Historical Society, No. 1, 1913). The point is, I believe, moot; it suffices to say that the Thomas House was one of the first homes constructed in the town of Takoma Park.

The house which stands on the property today was not constructed in toto in 1884; only a section of the house dates from that time. In configuration, the original Thomas House was a two story, three bay wide frame house, with the main facade oriented toward Tulip Avenue, and a two story integral rear ell running parallel to Cedar Avenue. It was a T-shaped dwelling, traditional, which could be styled "American Farmhouse." The original roofline can

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 2

still be discerned among the subsequent additions.

Isaac Thomas -- postmaster, store owner, and station master for the fledgling village -- died in March of 1889. Shortly thereafter, the widow Thomas convinced her sister, Rebecca McWilliam, formerly of Dickertown, New Jersey, to come and live with her in Takoma Park. In anticipation of her arrival, the original house was remodeled and expanded to provide comfortable accommodations for Rebecca. In essence, a second dwelling was attached to the original house; a new two story block was added, perpendicular to the rear ell of the first house and featuring a wrap-around porch and a two story turret at the southern point of connection. The two sections were tied together architecturally by the continuance of the original horizontal siding and such shared decorative elements as gable-end fan brackets.

The remodeling was completed by November of 1889. In that month, a lease arrangement was drawn up between the two sisters, under which Rebecca was charged one cent a year for rent. In the agreement, Rebecca's portion of the house and yard is described as "beginning at the point where the portico of the house erected by the said Rebecca McWilliam joins the dwelling of the said Amanda G. Thomas," and includes the section of the lot running along the southeast side of Cedar Avenue (Montgomery County Land Records, JA 16/26).

The present Queen Anne appearance of the house is primarily a reflection of the 1889 remodeling; the duplex design of the house is not original, but results from the subsequent additions. The two-part construction, however, does not detract from the historical significance of the building as one of the earliest architectural inhabitants of Takoma Park.

CARRIAGE HOUSE

Southeast of the main dwelling is a frame structure which allegedly served as a carriage house for the Thomas family. An examination of the building revealed, like the house, a two-part construction. The original structure, perhaps dating from the end of the 19th century and a contemporary of the main house, is a one and one-half story frame building, covered with horizontal beaded siding. On the southern facade a shed-roof porch covers the two bay entrances. The siting, the configuration, and the construction details of the

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 3

earlier section suggests an original use as a carriage house. To this building was added, sometime during the early 20th century, a one story frame addition, covered in german siding. This section was constructed for use as an automobile garage, a function which the earlier carriage house apparently could not perform.

The presence of a carriage house -- a rare survivor in Takoma Park -- gives the property additional historical value.

LANDSCAPE

In 1919 the Thomas property was purchased by Franklin and Catherine Siegler, formerly of Philadelphia, Pa., from Augusta W. T. Long, the sole heir of Amanda Thomas (d. 1913). Living in the house along with Mr. and Mrs. Siegler at various times was their daughter, Estelle, and their two sons, Edouard Horace (b. 1888) and Eugene Alfred (b. 1891). Later, the house was primarily occupied by Edouard and his wife, Esther.

The Siegler brothers, noted scientists, were both employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, from the 1920s onward. Dr. E. Horace Siegler worked in the Bureau of Entomology, specializing in toxicological studies, while Dr. Eugene A. Siegler worked in the Bureau of Plant Industry, concentrating on the diseases of fruit. Through their work and their publications, the two men made significant contributions to the advancement of botanical knowledge in America. (A partial listing of their works, included in the National Union Catalogue, identifies E. Horace Siegler as the author of 15 works published between 1915 and 1939, and Eugene Siegler as the author of 10 works published between 1923 and 1940.) The avid interest of the Sieglers in things botanical is reflected in the property's extensive landscaping and the wide variety of plantings on the site.

The contention has been made that among the various plantings are hybridized species of azaleas developed by Benjamin Yoe Morrison. These azaleas were reportedly part of experimental work conducted during the 1920s and 1930s, which later resulted in the reknowned Glenn Dale azalea.

Morrison was a contemporary of the Sieglers, an associate of theirs at the USDA, and a fellow townsman; his family home, where he lived with his parents, was on Piney Branch Road, only a few blocks from the Siegler house. Morrison joined the USDA in 1920 as an

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 4

assistant to David Fairchild. Beginning as a horticulturist, he became Chief, Division of Plant Exploration and Introduction at Glenn Dale, Maryland, from 1934 to 1948. From 1937 to 1951 he was Acting Director then Director of the National Arboretum at Washington, D. C. Among other achievements, he was founder of the American Horticultural Society in 1924, and from his home in Takoma Park served for many years as president of the society and editor of their quarterly journal. In addition, during the 1920s Morrison served variously as president, vice-president, and landscape gardener of the Takoma Horticultural Club, an organization which his father, Lisle Morrison, helped found in 1916, and still in existence today. The Morrison Azalea Garden at the National Arboretum is a tribute and memorial to the significance of his work.

Morrison began his pioneering azalea hybridizations at his parents home in Takoma Park during the 1920s, "with the end view of creating races of azaleas that should be winter-hardy at Washington, D. C., and that should have flowers as large as those borne by the varieties of Indian azaleas which were the great ornament of southern gardens" (Morrison, The Glenn Dale Azaleas, USDA Monograph No. 20, 1953; p. 2). Takoma Park was an area well-suited for his experiments; extensive growths of native azaleas had covered the hills prior to the town's development. In 1900, specimens of the Takoma Park native azalea, *Rhododendron atlanticum*, had been collected and catalogued for botanical study by T. A. Williams (Wilson and Rehder, A Monograph of Azaleas, Cambridge, 1921; p. 148).

From the Takoma Park beginnings, Morrison selected particular crosses to be transferred to the Glenn Dale, Maryland, experimental station. During the mid-1930s, however, a newly-appointed Division Chief ordered Morrison to "get rid" of the azaleas at Glenn Dale, and forbade him to do any additional work on them at that site. Undaunted, Morrison moved all the plants to gardens in and around his Takoma Park home, to continue the work. There he made the final crosses and selections (Livingston and West, Hybrids and Hybridizers, 1978; p. 112).

When the next Bureau Chief saw the hybrid azaleas in Takoma Park, he immediately recognized the value of Morrison's work, and agreed that they should be released to the wider public. Moved back to Glenn Dale Station, the selected plants were propagated, and eventually released to the nursery trade as Glenn Dale azaleas.

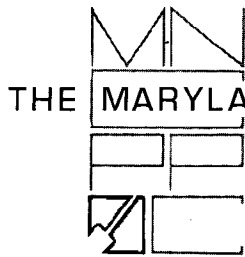
MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

29 March 1984

Page 5

Private gardens in Takoma Park are known to have been actively involved in Morrison's pioneering work. But the question still remains of whether the Siegler property was specifically involved in the experimentations, and whether the azaleas which now exist on the property were part of Morrison's work. One would assume that, as associates of Morrison at the USDA, and as neighbors who shared an interest in horticulture, the Sieglers could very well have participated in the process and, as has been suggested, offered their property as a "study ground and laboratory for the science of azalea culture." Unfortunately, no written account specifically implicating the Siegler property has been found; Morrison, in his formal writings, never mentions private study sites by owner's name. The answer may rest in the Benjamin Morrison manuscript collection, deposited at the Hunt Library for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pa. Until that written evidence is discovered, or until someone better-versed in azalea culture examines the plants and concludes, from age and characteristics, that they are indeed pre-final selection Glenn Dale azaleas, their association with Morrison's hybridization experiments remains hearsay.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

April 18, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Mark Walston, Park Historian *MW*

RE: Historical Significance of Siégler Property as it Relates to
Takoma Park and Montgomery County Suburban Development

The Siégler Property represents the emergence, at the end of the 19th century in Montgomery County, of a specifically suburban style which was both adapted to previous middle class urban traditions and suited to some of the goals of the rural ideals. It was, in fact, this blending of city and country that stimulated B. F. Gilbert's creation and promotion of Takoma Park -- and indeed the development of virtually all of the County's early suburban communities -- as a haven for urban dwellers in search of the arcadian life, "a sylvan retreat from the turmoil of the city." From the outset, Takoma Park was conceived as a picturesque development.

Town planning and platting conventions of the 19th century influenced the grid pattern road system and narrow, deep lots of the first "paper town" of Takoma Park. But Gilbert's continued emphasis of the rural ideal resulted not in a regimented, tightly-packed development dictated by lines on paper, but in a free-flowing community of low density -- from one to two homes per acre -- of suburban residences surrounded by wide lawns and towering shade trees. One of the planning concepts that Gilbert used, in the earliest sections of Takoma Park, to achieve this picturesque quality was the idea of a large setback of house from street, providing a spacious front lawn for plantings and landscaping. This setback was later codified to forty feet by the Town Charter.

The physical realities of early Takoma were perhaps best described in a Washington Times article in 1903, entitled "Takoma Park, Unique Among Washington Suburbs." The article contrasted the suburb with the typical city development:

The \$4,000 that the fairly well-to-do Government clerk invests in a house in the city will purchase him a half

MEMORANDUM

Walston/Planning Board

18 April 1984

Page 2

acre of ground and build him a model house in Takoma. He would buy one of a long row in the city perhaps. He would get eighteen feet front, a six-room brick house, a lawn as big as a small hall bedroom, and a back yard three long strides each way. In Takoma he will get eight rooms and an attic, a front lawn bigger than his entire town lot, side lawns thirty feet wide, and a back lot a hundred feet each way. He will find three or four good oak trees, already on his lot, and can plant maples or poplars or willows, ten of them if he likes, and not crowd them. He can have twenty fruit trees in his back yard, or he can raise two hundred chickens.

The Siégler Property epitomizes that suburban ideal, and, along with the community's other early examples with their large lawns and tall trees framing the entire street, helps to maintain Takoma Park's distinctive sylvan setting.

One group that helped substantially to fulfill Gilbert's picturesque conception of Takoma Park was government scientists employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. From the beginning the suburb proved an attractive residential area for botanists and horticulturists seeking a quiet setting in which to cultivate their own gardens and, by connection, cultivate a "garden community." By 1901, the Takoma Park Citizens Association brochure could note that "Takoma Park is becoming quite a favorite dwelling place for scientists connected with the government work in Washington." Already there is quite a colony of these gentlemen established here." Similarly, Raymond Button in his 1915 promotional pamphlet, Glimpses of Takoma Park, pointed to the town's large community of "experts, scientists, and clerks who desired to live in a democratic suburb where they could have large lawns, plenty of flowers and ornamentals, and vegetable gardens and poultry yards." Takoma Park's continued emphasis on landscaping is due largely to the early presence of these scientists and specialists from the USDA; the Siégler Property, associated with two USDA scientists, Horace and Eugene Siégler, still reflects that early emphasis.

The picturesque qualities of such early suburban developments as Takoma Park, Forest Glen, and Garrett Park, were to a large degree abandoned during the mid-20th century, when housing urgencies prompted the creation of large "boom town" developments, characterized by repetitive rows of housing on postage stamp lots. But still, the notion of suburbia as the perfect blending of city and country, as articulated by Gilbert and exemplified by early Takoma Park, continued to be a major enticement, drawing families to suburban Montgomery County.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE MASTER PLAN FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
SUMMARY OF APRIL 5, 1984 PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY
SIEGLER PROPERTY SITE #37/3-2

Individual/ Organization	Comment/Issue	Staff Response
Margaret McFarland- Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outlined the HPC's findings on the historic significance of the Siegler property and cited Ordinance criteria for designating the <u>entire</u> property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. ● Noted in response to the Board's questions concerning documentation that additional research had been considered by the HPC in their hearing on the pending resubdivision. Offered to submit that research for the record. 	Staff agrees that the property significantly meets the Ordinance criteria cited by the HPC, 1A and 2E, and additionally finds it meets criteria 1D; "exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities."
Carl Iddings, Council member, City of Takoma Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read city's resolution supporting designation of the Siegler residence, carriage house and surrounding grounds on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. ● Highlighted findings of a competent array of specialists that the property is significant as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the oldest surviving house built as part of B.F.Gilbert's original Takoma Park development. - an unusually designed Victorian Revival duplex. - the site of one of the last remaining carriage houses in Takoma Park. 	While some of the resolution's findings will require additional research to more fully substantiate, they are not inconsistent with the research findings of the Park Historian on the property.

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Carl Iddings (Cont'd.)

- it lies entirely within the Takoma Park National Register Historic District.
- the grounds are extensively landscaped with notable specimens including species azaleas most likely planted as a result of the Siegler's association with noted horticulturalist B.Y. Morrison.
- as an integrated property, it constitutes a full fledged Victorian estate which typifies the early development of Takoma Park.

Additionally, the property is within the historic district identified on the County's Locational Atlas and Inventory of Historic Sites.

Jim Douglas,
Old Takoma Park
Citizens Assoc.
(Old Takoma)

- Urged its designation as a reasonable and responsible step toward preserving a very special property in Takoma Park.
- Joined the HPC and the city in supporting designation of the entire Siegler property.
- Noted that the Siegler property is one of the few which remains in the configuration envisioned by B.F. Gilbert for his suburban Takoma Park development.
- Indicated preservation of the house without protecting the setting would not do justice to the historic nature of Takoma Park or the special value of the property.
- Characterized the property as distinguished by a large number of mature oaks and extensive plantings resulting in the overall sylvan setting promoted by Gilbert and the reason Takoma Park merited inclusion in the National Register.

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Jim Douglas (Cont'd.)

- Noted that historic designation adds to property values in Takoma Park rather than detracts.

The general experience with historic designation on single lot properties in districts has been stabilization and even an increase in property value. The effect however, on properties capable of additional development or redevelopment is less clear.

- Requested opportunity to examine and respond to testimony that may be presented by the property owner as part of the continued public hearing.

The record will remain open and the hearing be continued on April 26th at 7:30 P.M. The family and the community will be given the opportunity to present additional testimony to the Board prior to their worksession and action on the amendment and the hearing on the resubdivision of the property.

Mary Dean, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor,
School of Architecture
University of Maryland

- Generally discussed the importance of the site/situation and scale of the Siegler property within the historic B.F.Gilbert development; the importance of the Tulip and Cedar intersection as indicated by Gilbert's choice of the opposite corner for his own homesite.

Analysis is consistent with the Park Historian's research and conclusion that the ancillary building was contemporaneous with the main house and functional initially as a carriage house.

- Used slides to visually analyze the ancillary building. Concluded the structure was the product of at least two separate building programs. The two-story building on the left being contemporaneous with the house and used as a carriage house. The addition to the right, constructed during the early 20th century for use as an auto garage.

David Saumweber,
Takoma Park Historic
Preservation Committee

- Endorsed placement of the entire Siegler property on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Individual/ Organization	Comment/Issue	Staff Response
Richard Prario, B.F. Gilbert's Cit. Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Noted the importance of the site as one of the earliest structures in the historic B.F. Gilbert development. 	
Joanne Bowman, Historic Takoma		
Lou D'Ovidio, Council member, City of Takoma Park & Rep. N.Takoma Cit. Assn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cited the contribution of the property's sylvan setting to the historic character of Takoma Park. 	
Roland Halstead, Historic Takoma		
Mike Haney, Council member, Takoma Park (P.G.Co.)		
Harold Phipps, Takoma Park Horticultural Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supported designation of the <u>entire</u> property on the Master Plan. Urged the preservation of the site's nature tree canopy and significant landscaping as a valuable community resource. 	
Michael Guercin. Arborist		
Dolores Milmoie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Noted for the record that the community had submitted documentation on the historicity of the site. 	<p>The HPC, the applicant, and the community have submitted documentation in connection with the resubdivision plan on the property. That documentation has been incorporated in the record on the Preliminary Draft Amendment.</p>

Individual/
Organization

Comment/Issue

Staff Response

Charles Richards,
Representing the
Siegler Family

- Acknowledged on behalf of his client that the house is old but altered and not unique within Takoma Park.
- Noted that B.F. Gilbert's development was platted in 50' wide lots and that Takoma Park has historically been built in this fashion. Felt the Sieglers should not be penalized for retaining and landscaping a larger parcel.
- Cited the family's financial circumstances as requiring them to pursue the highest and best use of property. Questioned the impact of designation in developing the site and maintaining the property.

The Park Historian notes that while platted in smaller lots the Victorian custom was to purchase as many lots as needed to provide an appropriate setting for the size house you intended or could afford to build.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifically requires the HPC to consider economic hardship in the application of the Ordinance's Demolition by Neglect (minimal maintenance) and Historic Area Work Permit provisions.