

28/11 Sandy Spring HD
Montg. Mutual Subdivision



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
(301) 279-1000

March 17, 1988

Montgomery County Council
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. *Subin* Subin and Members of the County Council,

I am prompted by the March 7th letter from William Canby and Susan Carter, attorneys representing the Montgomery Mutual Insurance Company, to clarify some of the issues mentioned by them regarding the Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation for Sandy Spring/Ashton Historic Resources.

One major issue raised by Mr. Canby and Ms. Carter is that of property owner involvement in the historic master plan process. The Planning Board did notify Montgomery Mutual of the public hearing held on Sandy Spring Historic Resources, both by newspaper advertisement and by individual letter. A representative of the company, Richard Rismiller, did attend the public hearing and did provide testimony as to the company's feelings about historic designation.

At the public hearing, the Planning Board was unable to be specific about the date of our worksession other than to say it would be in early September. As a matter of courtesy, Planning Board staff did call each affected property owner when the date and time were set to afford them the opportunity to attend the worksession. A message was left at Mr. Rismiller's office with this information; however no representative from Montgomery Mutual attended the worksession. The worksession was, of course, shown on our agenda, which Miller, Miller & Canby do receive.

The Final Draft Amendment for the Sandy Spring/Ashton Historic Resources was transmitted to the County Executive on October 19, 1987. As you know, there is not a public hearing or worksession associated with the Executive's 60 day review of a master plan amendment.

The Executive transmitted the Final Draft Amendment to County Council on December 14, 1987 with one revision--the addition of the Sandy Spring as an individual resource. The County Council held a public hearing on this amendment on February 23, 1988, with the Council staff providing the required notice through newspaper advertisement.

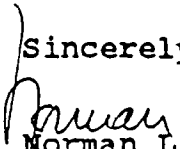
We regret that Montgomery Mutual was not more aware of the progress of the amendment. It is important to note, however, that Mr. Rismiller's testimony at the public hearing was taken very seriously by the Planning Board and was carefully weighed as the Board made its recommendations on the boundaries of the Sandy Spring Historic District.

The final outcome, from the Planning Board's perspective, was that the Board found the Montgomery Mutual property to be an important component of the Sandy Spring Historic District. Not only is Parcel 442 of the Montgomery Mutual property an essential link between the portion of the Sandy Spring Historic District which faces onto Route 108 and the portion farther down Meetinghouse Road, but it also contributes greatly to the overall character of the historic district. The Board acknowledged that Montgomery Mutual has been very sensitive in its new building design and found it desirable to assure continued architectural sensitivity on the part of Montgomery Mutual or any other future owner of the property by inclusion in the historic district. In addition, the importance of Montgomery Mutual as the oldest institution of its type in the County adds to the significance of all of the firm's buildings.

In conclusion, the Planning Board's recommendation to include the Montgomery Mutual Insurance Company's property within the boundaries of the Sandy Spring Historic District was a reasoned, deliberate decision. The feelings of the company were taken into consideration; however the Board found the public interest of preserving one of the oldest and most historic areas in Montgomery County most compelling.

I hope this helps to clarify the Planning Board's actions and recommendations. I look forward to attending the PHED Committee on March 21st and answering any additional questions you may have at that time.

Sincerely,


Norman L. Christeller
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning
Board

cc: William Canby
Susan Carter
Richard Rismiller

cc: BOBBI HAHN

LAW OFFICES
MILLER, MILLER & CANBY
CHARTERED
200-B MONROE STREET
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850
TELEPHONE (301) 762-5212

WILLIAM M. CANBY
ROBERT L. BURCHETT
JAMES L. THOMPSON
LEWIS R. SCHUMANN
J. S. KLINE
JOSEPH V. TRUHE, JR.
DIANE M. POOLE
SUSAN W. CARTER
ELLEN S. WALKER

March 7, 1988



Montgomery County Council
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Amendments to Master Plan for Historic Preservation
Sandy Spring/Ashton Special Study Area

Dear Mr. Subin and Members of the County Council:

We are writing to you on behalf of Montgomery Mutual Insurance Company out of concern for boundary designations for the Sandy Spring Historic District which you are presently considering.

The Final Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation for the Sandy Spring/Ashton area addressed in the Council's February 23, 1988 public hearing, includes as part of the Sandy Spring Historic District the site of the corporate headquarters of Montgomery Mutual Insurance Company (Parcel 442).

Montgomery Mutual feels very strongly that it should have been included to a greater extent in the planning process before the draft amendment was finalized. Richard Rismiller, Senior Vice President and Secretary of Montgomery Mutual, testified at the July 30, 1987 public hearing held by the Planning Board and requested that parcels P-442 and P-55 be excluded from the Historic District designation. At the conclusion of the Board's public hearing, Mr. Rismiller understood that his comments would be considered and that he would be advised of future worksessions and about the status of the Plan Amendment. Montgomery Mutual was therefore surprised when it was advised by this office about your public hearing on the 23rd. We mention these facts not to complain that notice requirements have not been satisfied but rather to explain why you have not heard from Montgomery Mutual heretofore.

We are now writing to ask that the property containing the headquarters building of Montgomery Mutual Insurance building (Parcel 442) be excluded from Historic District designation before the draft amendment is approved. (As we will explain later, we no longer request exclusion of

Parcel 533), Our reasons for requesting exclusion of Parcel 442 are as follows:

1. The Building, Constructed in 1977, Has No Inherent Historical Significance

The present Montgomery Mutual Insurance building cannot properly be considered an "historic" building. This building was not constructed until 1977 and therefore has no inherent historical significance.

In its September 8, 1987 staff response to Mr. Rismiller's July 30, 1987 testimony, the Planning Staff concludes that the current insurance company buildings' significance is "as a continuum of the oldest composition in the county which is reflective of the county's economic heritage."

We do not contest in any way the inclusion of the original (1904) Montgomery Mutual Insurance building in the historic district. While our client is complimented that its longevity has been recognized, it feels that it stretches the bounds of reasonableness to argue that any subsequent structures built by this company should be designated "historic" merely because they were built by one of the County's oldest companies.

2. The County Will Retain Site Plan Control of the Property In Any Event

Since the purpose of designation of Montgomery Mutual's property is to protect the environmental setting of Friends' Meeting House, it should be recognized that the county will not lose control over any future expansion of the Montgomery Mutual property merely because it is excluded from historic designation. That property is currently zoned C-T (Commercial-Transitional) which means that any proposed expansion must go through site plan approval pursuant to Section 59-D-3 of the Montgomery County Code. Under that section, the Planning Board must take into account whether each structure and use is compatible with existing and proposed adjacent development, and certainly the Planning Board's concerns about setbacks, screening and landscaping would also be addressed. Parcel 442 is the only parcel in the proposed historic district currently zoned "C-T". To further designate it "historic" would subject the property to an unnecessary second level of review since the site plan approval already required by the zoning ordinance would assure adherence to the principles of historic preservation.

3. Montgomery Mutual has a Proven Record of Development with Sensitivity to Historic Preservation Issues

Any concern about proposed future expansion on the site should be allayed not only by the requirement of site plan approval but also by Montgomery Mutual's proven record of sensitivity to historic preservation issues. The Planning Board in fact noted at its September 8, 1987 meeting, the "sensitivity with which the firm has constructed its new building."

The 1977 building was designed to be very much in keeping with its historical surroundings and was built in a colonial style which the Historic Preservation Commission has noted is "obviously modeled after Brafferton Hall at the College of William and Mary."

The Council can be assured that a similarly sensitive approach will be taken toward any future expansion.

4. Inclusion of Montgomery Mutual's Site is not Critical for Protection of the Setting Around Friend's Meeting House

The pastoral environmental setting around the Friends Meeting House could still be adequately preserved even if P-442 were excluded from the historic district.

The current Montgomery Mutual building is distant enough from the Meeting House and other historic buildings and would be screened by the vacant land and protective stand of trees on Parcel 553 between the Montgomery Mutual property and the Friends Meeting House. Although Montgomery Mutual originally expressed an interest in excluding P-553 from the historic district as well, we no longer make that request. There had been a possibility of a joint venture with the Friends of Sandy Spring to build a parking area by special exception, but those plans have been abandoned.

In addition, the concerns expressed by the Planning Staff in its September 8, 1987 report about the effect of any planned road improvements along Route 108 on the historic area could not be affected by the exclusion of P-442 since it is not located on Route 108. The Savings Institution of Sandy Spring and the red Montgomery Mutual building, which are located on Route 108, would still be included in the district, with entrance to the Friends Meeting House property via Meeting House Road.

Mr. F. David Rolwing, President of Montgomery Mutual, noted in his July 9, 1987 letter to the Chairman of the Planning Board that Montgomery Mutual is pleased to be recognized for its historical significance as part of the Sandy Spring area. It does not contest the inclusion in the district of the Montgomery Mutual building, located on Route 108, which was constructed in 1904 and has acknowledged historic significance.

To include the modern headquarters building as well, however, places unnecessary restrictions on the ability of the company to expand its facilities without additional administrative expense and lost time. As we have already noted, the company has a proven record of sensitivity to historical issues and would certainly plan additional expansion with those in mind.

We request, therefore, that P-442 be excluded from historic district designation.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

MILLER, MILLER & CANBY

WILLIAM M. CANBY

William M. Canby

Susan W. Carter
Susan W. Carter

JSK:jrh

cc: Jean Arthur
Norman Christeller
Gwen Marcus
David Rolwing
Dick Rismiller

M E M O R A N D U M

December 18, 1987

TO: Don Bohrer
DOT

FROM: Bobbi Hahn *BH*
Historic Preservation Commission

SUBJECT: Subdivision Plan 1-87066 Montgomery Mutual

As you may know from the discussion at Subdivision Review at MNCPPC, the above referenced plan falls within the boundaries of the Sandy Spring Historic District (historic site #28/11) as proposed to the County Council by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Board, and the Executive for placement on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. The HPC is very concerned about retaining the character of the Meeting House Road area with as little disturbance as possible. These concerns were spelled out in the attached letter addressed to Charles Loehr.

I understand that the applicant will be required to build the section of Meeting House Road adjacent to their property from the current 10' width to 20' to accommodate the proposed new construction on the site. While we realize that the widening may be necessary we would appreciate your concurrence with our request that no curb and gutter be required along the road in an effort to retain the ambiance of the lane. We appreciate your cooperation on similar projects in the past and look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other projects.

Attachment

cc: Gwen Marcus
Office of Planning Policies

BH:gk:0557E

M E M O R A N D U M

March 27, 1987

TO: Charles Loehr, Subdivision Review, MNCPPC
Don Bohrer, Department of Transportation

FROM: Bobbi Hahn
Historic Preservation Commission

SUBJECT: Subdivision plan 1-87066 Montgomery Mutual

At its March 19, 1987, meeting the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the above referenced plan of subdivision which was submitted in order to record the lot prior to proposed new construction. This plan falls within the boundaries of the Sandy Spring historic district (#28/11) as recommended by the HPC in March, 1986 (a copy of which is attached). The Planning Board has not yet acted on this recommendation but is scheduled to do so this year.

Whereas the Commission has no objection to the proposed subdivision it is greatly concerned about any requirements imposed on the applicant to make substantial changes to the road or to "improve" the intersection at Route 108 to the extent of demolishing the existing buildings.

It is of the utmost importance that this area be disturbed as little as possible. Sandy Spring is one of the oldest communities in Montgomery County and one of its most influential because of its longtime association with the Quakers. In evaluating the Sandy Spring historic district the HPC found that the only remaining concentration of buildings which can be identified as a coherent district is the Meeting House Road area. Here one finds buildings representing the commercial, religious, educational, and residential aspects of the Quaker community. Every effort should be made to protect the character of this area. We therefore request that any necessary waivers be granted to Montgomery Mutual regarding road and intersection requirements in order that the character of the area be retained as much as possible. We appreciate your cooperation and will be happy to work with you in resolving the issues involved.

BH:GK:0025E

 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

MEMORANDUM

October 16, 1987

TO: Richard Ferrara, Director
Department of Housing and Community Development
John L. Menke, Director
Department of Environmental Protection
J. Rodney Little, Director
State Historic Preservation Office
✓ Philip Cantelon, Chairperson
Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Melissa C. Banach, Chief
Community Planning North *MCB*

SUBJECT: Final Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for
Historic Preservation: Sandy Spring/Ashton Historic
Resources

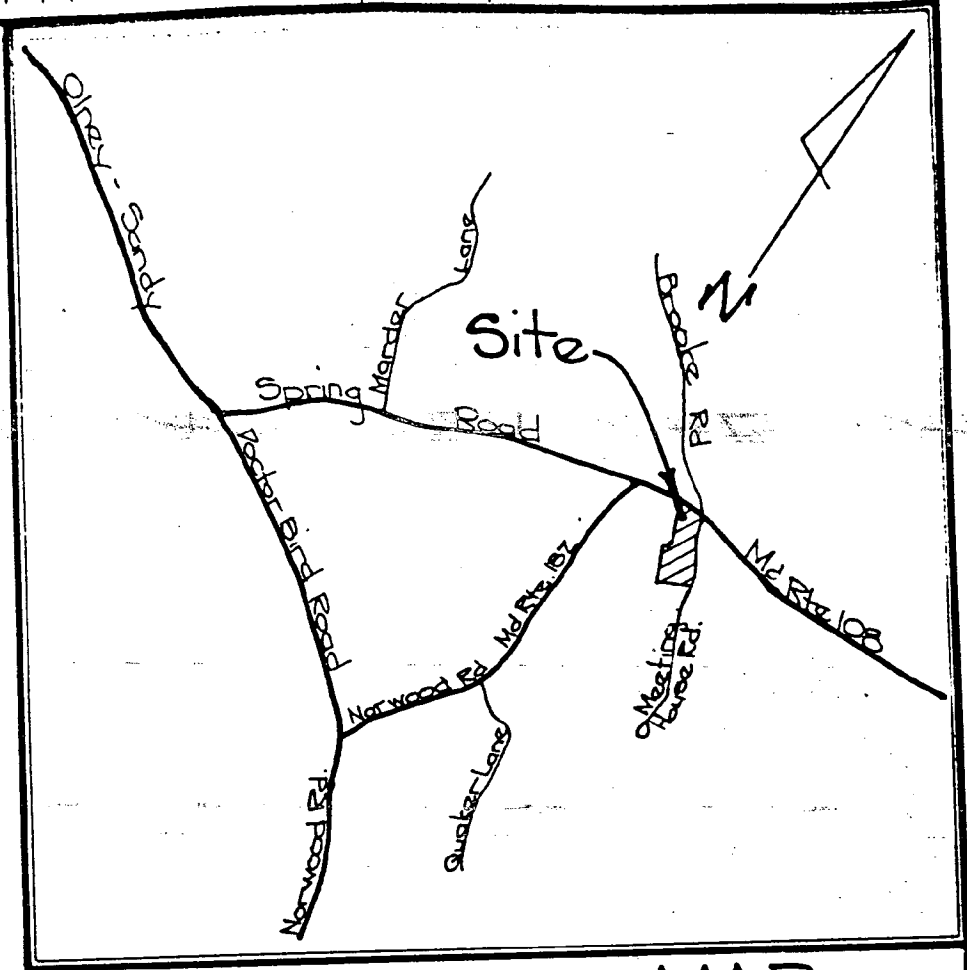
I am pleased to transmit to you this Final Draft Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

This document contains the recommendation of the Montgomery County Planning Board on the designation of the Sandy Spring Historic District and four historic sites.

Should you have any questions concerning this Amendment, please do not hesitate to contact Susan Cianci at 495-4565.

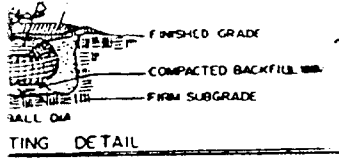
MCB:SC:dws
Attachment

II. Site Plan - Sandy Springs historic district



VICINITY MAP

Scale: 1" = 2000'

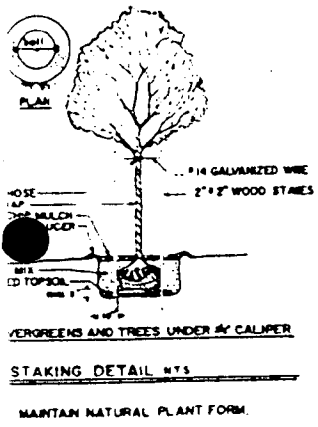


V Site Plan Montgomery Mutual

Proposal cannot be built with parking less than 40' from the front property line

R-10 Zone
Sandy Spring Village
Condominium
Plat-2
Lot 7 Block A
PB 110 P12799

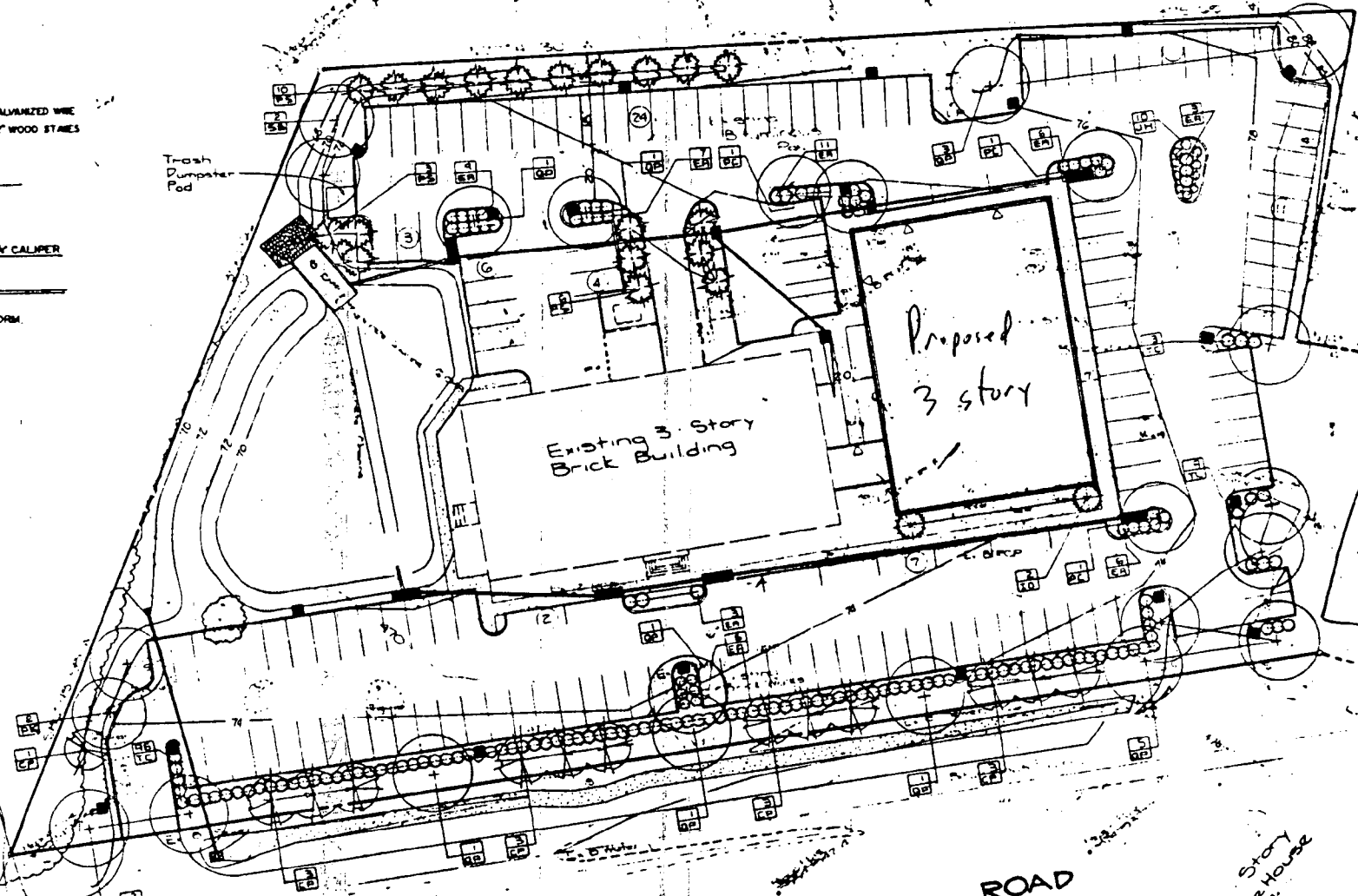
Undeveloped



E-2 Zone
Robert Stabler
305 F 407

E-2 Zone
Sandy Sp
National
L 424C

Ex 2 1/2 story
Brick House



R 200 Zone
Sandy Spring Vol
Fire Department
L 434 F 205

Ex 2 1/2 story
Brick Fire House

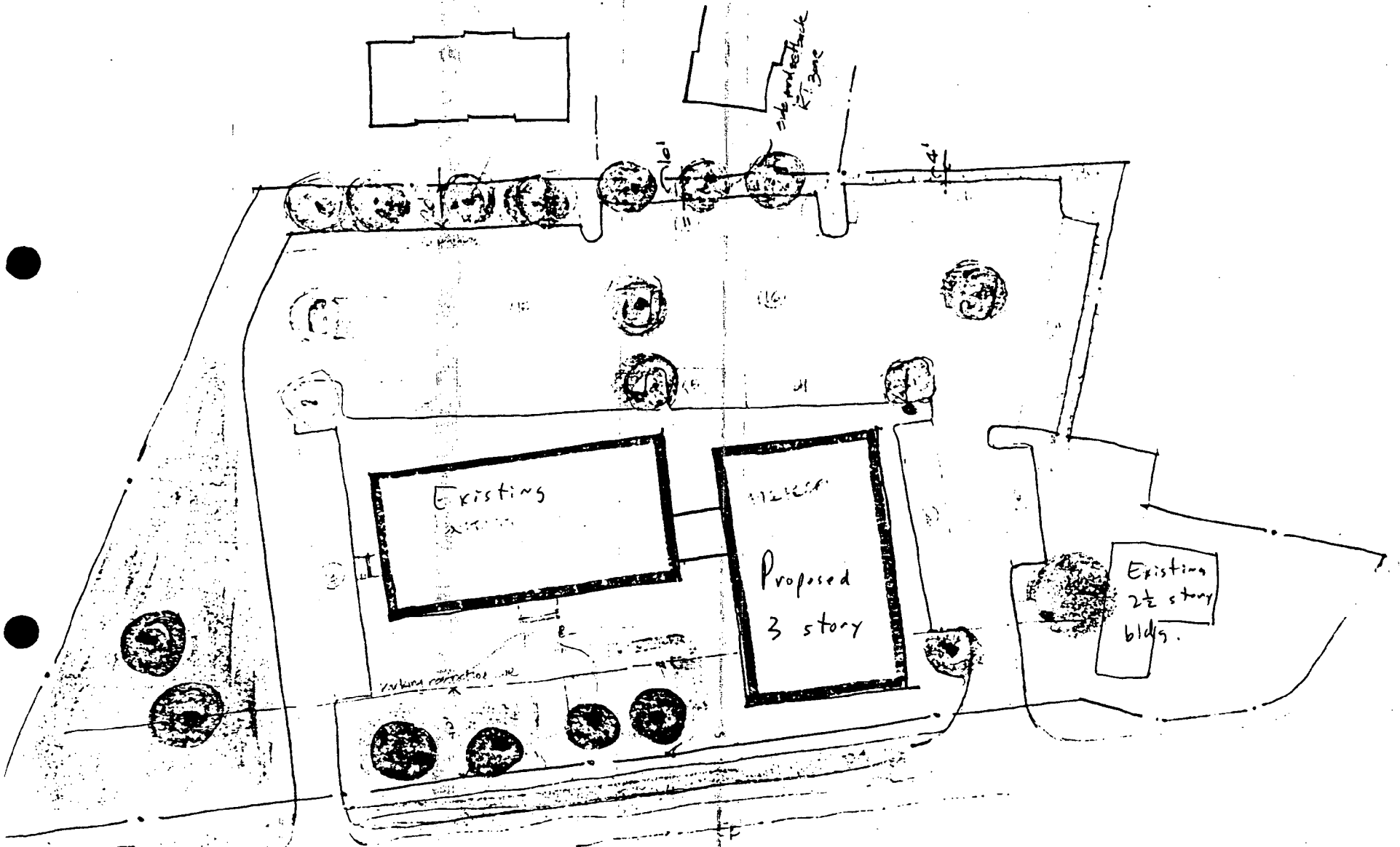
R 200 Zone
Carl R. & JL Sidell

SANDY SPRING VILLAGE ROAD

Montgomery Mutual - proposed by Parking
and Planning staff.

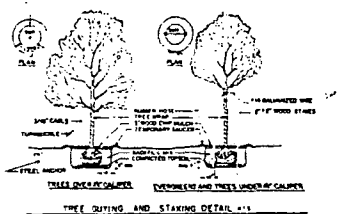
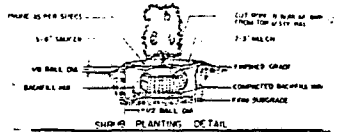
retiree
from rear yard
RT 3018

side yard setback
RT 3018



MEETING HOUSE ROAD

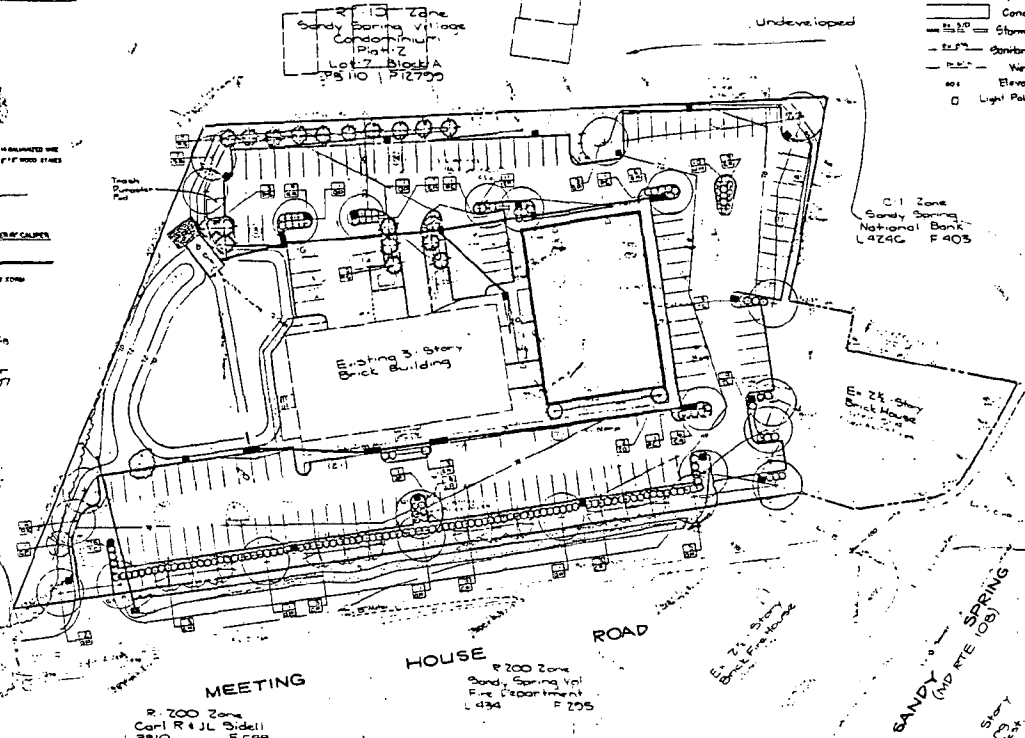
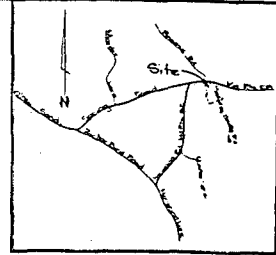
MONTGOMERY MUTUAL



NOTE: PLEASE FOLLOW BACK BY US. MAINTAIN NATURAL PLANT FORM.

LEGEND

Existing	Proposed
--- Contours	--- Contours
▭ Bituminous Paving	▭ Bituminous Paving
▭ Concrete	▭ Concrete
▭ Storm Drain	▭ Storm Drain
▭ Sanitary Sewer	▭ Sanitary Sewer
▭ Water	▭ Water
□ Light Poles	□ Light Poles



PLANTS

PLANT	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CAL	HGT	SPD	MISC.
CP 18	Campanula medium	Washington Campanula	14-17"	6-8'		
LD 2	Lilium	Lilium				
PC 2	Prunella laevis	Prunella	2-2 1/2'	6-8'		
PC 2	Prunella laevis	Prunella	2-2 1/2'	6-8'		
PC 2	Prunella laevis	Prunella	2-2 1/2'	6-8'		
PC 2	Prunella laevis	Prunella	2-2 1/2'	6-8'		
PC 2	Prunella laevis	Prunella	2-2 1/2'	6-8'		
EA 33	Echinacea purpurea	Witch-hazel	4-6"	6-8'		
TC 2	Taxus canadensis	Red Pine	4-6"	6-8'		

- NOTES**
- This plan is for landscaping only.
 - Contractor shall verify location of all underground utilities prior to beginning work.
 - All plant installations shall follow proper spacing of landscape systems.
 - When final installation shall show final placement of all plants, installers shall verify all plants are installed in the correct location.
 - All plant materials shall meet or exceed the standards set forth in the latest edition of the ANSI standards for nursery stock.
 - All trees are minimum 100% established to be planted.
 - Plant materials are for landscape only, and the contractor shall be responsible for any plant materials or materials on the site.
 - Light Poles to match existing.

OWNER
 Montgomery Mutual Insurance Company
 300 Olney Sandy Spring Road
 Sandy Spring, Maryland 20880

THIS PLAN FOR LANDSCAPING ONLY.

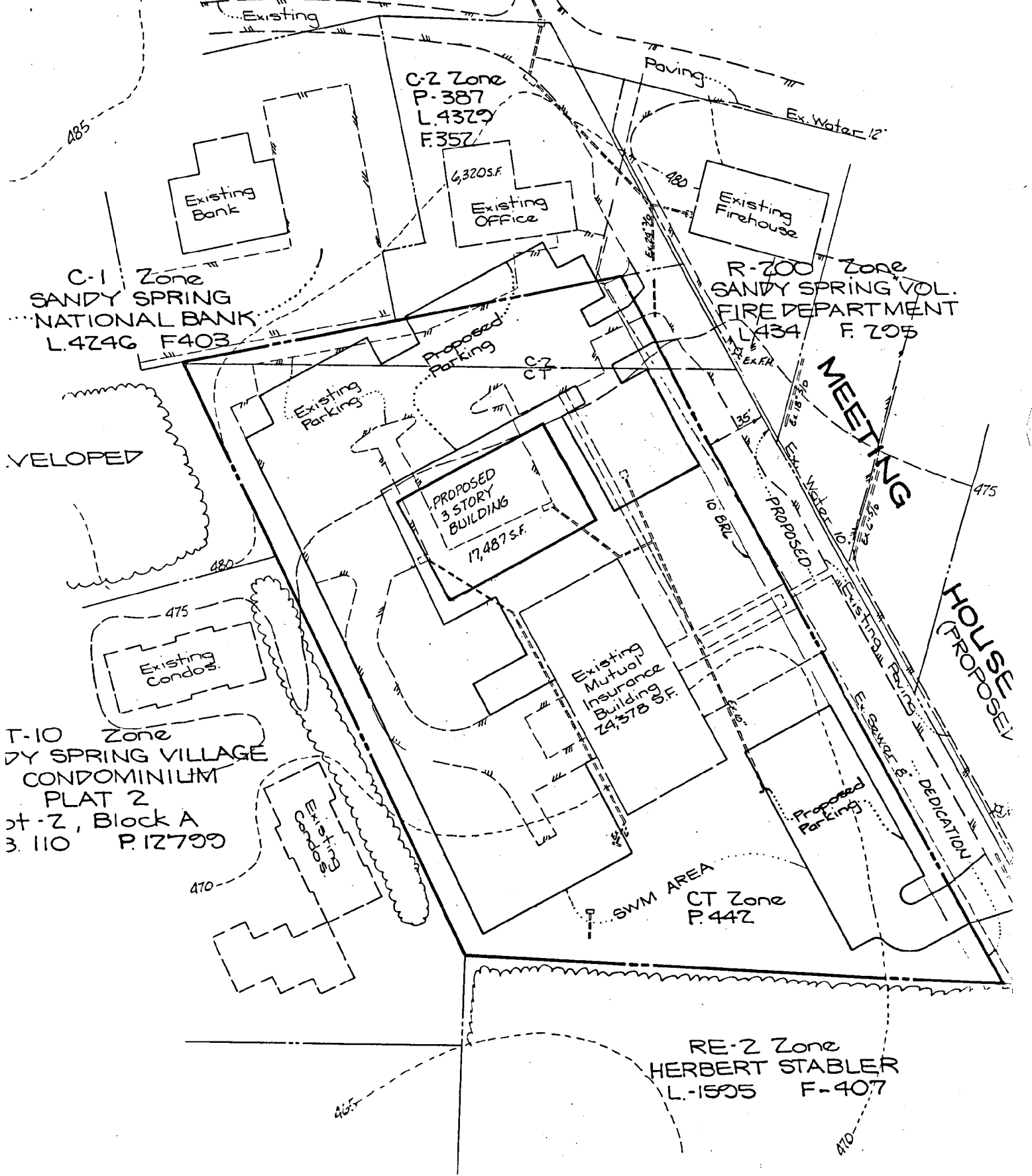
LANDSCAPE/LIGHTING PLAN
 PARCEL AT
MONTGOMERY MUTUAL
 8TH ELECTION DISTRICT
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Macris, Hendricks and Witmer P.A.
 Engineers • Planners • Surveyors
 Suite 229
 9220 Wiggins Road
 Gaithersburg, Maryland
 20878

101 8700840

Designed	Drawn
Checked	Scale
1/16" = 1'-0"	1/16" = 1'-0"
Sheet	Sheet
101 8700840	101 8700840

OLNEY ASHTON ROAD
MD. RTE. 108



C-2 Zone
P-387
L-4329
F-357

Existing Bank

4,320 S.F.
Existing Office

Existing Firehouse

C-1 Zone
SANDY SPRING
NATIONAL BANK
L-4246 F-403

R-200 Zone
SANDY SPRING VOL.
FIRE DEPARTMENT
L-434 F-705

Proposed Parking

MEETING

VELOPED

PROPOSED
3 STORY
BUILDING
17,487 S.F.

Existing Mutual
Insurance
Building
24,378 S.F.

HOLISEE
(PROPOSED)

T-10 Zone
SANDY SPRING VILLAGE
CONDOMINIUM
PLAT 2
Block A
L-3110 P-12799

Existing
Condos

Existing
Condos

Proposed
Parking

SWM AREA
CT Zone
P-442

RE-2 Zone
HERBERT STABLER
L-1595 F-407

DEDICATION