



Amy Gowan, Director

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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Planning Board Meeting of April 21, 2022

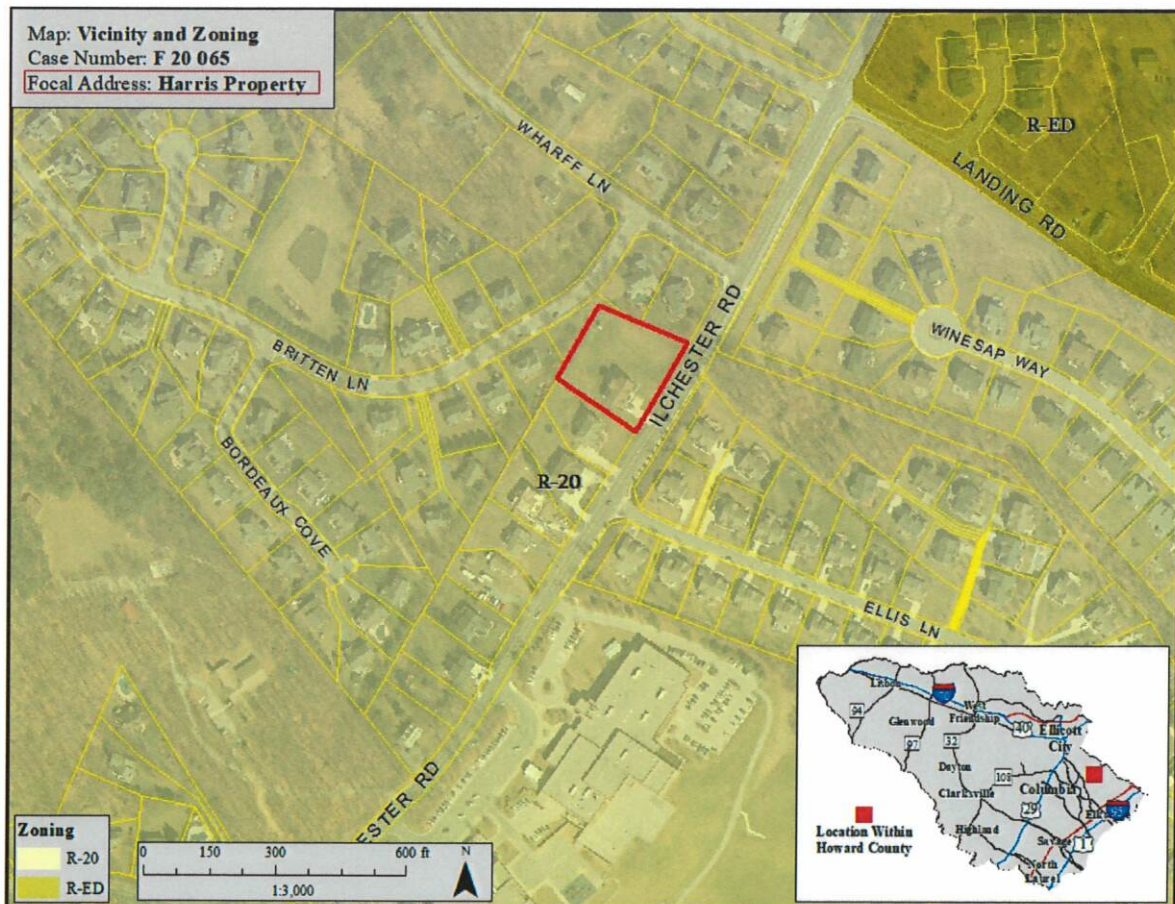
Plan No./ Applicant F-20-065, Dedra & Jonathan Harris

Project Name: Harris Property

DPZ Planner: Jennifer Wellen, jwellen@howardcountymd.gov

Request: Scenic road plan review. A request to review Final Subdivision Plan (F-20-065) in accordance with Section 16.125(c)(1) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for a subdivision that abuts or adjoins a scenic road. The subject property is 1.0-acre, zoned R-20 (Residential: Single) and will be subdivided into two lots.

Location: The property is located at 5000 & 4996 Ilchester Road in Elkrige. The property is located on Tax Map 31, Grid 10, Parcel 153 in the 1st Election District.



Vicinal Properties: The subject property is surrounded to the north and east by the Britten/Brady Property residential subdivision, to the west by the Lowe Property residential subdivision, and to the south by Ilchester Road.

Legal Notice: The property was properly posted and verified by DPZ in accordance with the legal requirements for Planning Board public meetings.

Regulatory Compliance: This project must comply with the Amended Fifth Edition of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, the Zoning Regulations, the Howard County Design Manual, the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, the Howard County Forest Conservation Manual and the Howard County Landscape Manual.

I. General Information:

Plan History:

- The property was previously recorded under the Lowe Property, Plat number 18023, F-06-123 on February 9, 2006.
- ECP-20-014, Harris Property, Lots 6 & 7 was given technically complete September 13, 2021 to create one additional lot.
- F-20-065, Harris Property was submitted April 14, 2020 and is still in review.
- WP-22-002, Harris Property was approved on November 15, 2021 to allow a separate driveway for the proposed dwelling, to reactivate F-20-065 and extend the resubmission deadline date.

Existing Environmental Conditions and Site Improvements:

The property contains 1.0 acres and is improved with a single-family detached house. The property is flat, maintained as a mowed lawn with a gentle slope along the south and west portions of the property. There are no environmental features, forest, specimen trees or rare or endangered species on the site.

Character and Quality of the Scenic Road (Ilchester Road):

The subject property has 240 feet of public road frontage along Ilchester Road, which is designated as a scenic road. Section 16.1402 (Subtitle 14) of the County Code defines scenic roads as public roads in the County which has one or more of the following characteristics:

- 1) an area of outstanding natural environmental features providing views of scenic elements such as forests, steep topography and streams or river valleys;
- 2) provide outstanding views of rural, agricultural landscapes;
- 3) follow historic road alignments and provide views of historic resources; and
- 4) the road provides frontage for properties that are in a historic district or subject to a perpetual or long-term agricultural, environmental or historic easements.

In 1994, Ilchester Road from Talbotts Landing Road to the Baltimore County line was designated by the County Council as a scenic road. At that time, the County's Scenic Road Inventory described Ilchester Road as a "rolling, winding road that passes through an area of steep, forested terrain" and that the "scenic character of Ilchester Road is created primarily by outstanding natural features." The scenic road currently exhibits a rural residential character with a consistent setback of 50 feet or more with single family homes on both sides of the road and private driveways, tree plantings, and open fencing are seen from Bonnie Branch Middle school as the site is approached from the south and from Landing Road as the site is approached from the north. An overhead utility line is also located along the western side of Ilchester Road and it crosses the road at the approximate mid-length of the site frontage. The eastern side of Ilchester Road exhibits a consistent streetscape of road, curbs, mowing strips, 4 feet concrete sidewalks and street tree plantings along the northbound side.

II. Planning Board Criteria

In accordance with Section 16.125(c)(5)(i) and (ii) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, the following criteria must be considered by the Planning Board when evaluating the initial plan submittal.

1. Access. Whether the property has frontage on a non-scenic road, the impacts to environmental features, and traffic safety.

- a. **Wherever practicable, access shall be located along a non-scenic road.**
Access to and from this proposed subdivision will be from Ilchester Road. There are no other public roads adjoining the site.
- b. **Only to the extent vehicular access cannot be practicably located along a non-scenic road, access along a scenic road shall be permitted at an existing driveway location.**
Access to and from this proposed subdivision will be from Ilchester Road. There are no other public roads adjoining the site. The existing lot has 240 feet of public road frontage onto Ilchester Road and will be subdivided into two frontage lots. The existing house is situated along the southern property line and the new house will be situated to the northern site. The existing driveway is opposite of the proposed common lot line. In order to access the new home from the existing driveway location, the plan would require a shared driveway to be constructed from the existing driveway, through the front yard of the existing house parallel to the scenic road, to connect to the new house. This access cannot be practicably accomplished without significant impervious surface and impact to the character of the scenic road.
- c. **Only to the extent vehicular access cannot be practicably located along a non-scenic road or at an existing driveway, additional access along a scenic road may be permitted.**
Most of the neighboring houses have individual driveways. Allowing each house a separate driveway will more adequately maintain the same character of the neighborhood, the scenic road overall, and reduce the impervious surface needed. Access to the proposed subdivision must be from Ilchester Road. There are no other public roads to provide access to the lot and constructing a parallel driveway along Ilchester Road to connect to the new home to the existing access point would be impracticable.
- d. **To the extent that any access is permitted along a scenic road, such access shall preserve the alignment, topography, and surroundings to minimize interference with views from the road while ensuring public safety.**
Lot 6 is currently improved with a single-family 2-story home with a 12-foot wide driveway from Ilchester Road. Lot 7 is a flat, mowed lawn with a gentle slope along the south and west portions of the property. The road alignment will be maintained. The applicant's scenic road exhibit demonstrates that the line of sight from Ilchester Road will not distort the natural views from the new development of the single-family home.

2. Buffers. The buffer preserves or enhances the visual character of the road and surrounding area, and whether access minimizes impacts to the buffer.

This resubdivision is within the Planned Service Area but is not considered a new major subdivision that requires a minimum 100-foot continuous vegetated buffer per Section 16.125(c)(2) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. The property is flat, maintained as a mowed lawn with a gentle slope along the south and west portions of the property. There are no environmental features, forest, specimen trees or rare or endangered species on the site. The subdivision frontage will include street tree plantings and landscape screening along the side and rear of Lot 7 that will enhance the visual quality of the scenic road from the current condition.

3. Visual Assessment

In accordance with Section 16.125(c)(4)(iii) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, the initial plan submittal shall include a visual assessment for the purposes of evaluating this project's compliance with the County's regulations for the protection of scenic roads:

- a. **Plans and aerial photographs showing the subject property, its context, and surrounding land uses and development character, including the setbacks and lot layouts of the surrounding area.**

This information was provided with the final subdivision plan and is included as an exhibit attached with this staff report.

- b. **Perspective drawings, photographic simulations, cross sections and/or elevations showing existing conditions and proposed changes associated with the proposed development.**

This information was provided with the final subdivision plan and is included as an exhibit attached with this staff report.

- c. **A survey of existing vegetation showing trees 12 inches or greater in caliper and non-native, invasive species.**

There are no existing trees 12 inches or greater in caliper or non-native invasive species within the development area and limit of disturbance.

- d. **A description summarizing the character and quality of the scenic road, as viewed from the road, using the scenic roads inventory as a guide.**

Ilchester Road, in proximity to the Harris Property subdivision, has a straight horizontal and a gently curving vertical alignment as it passes the site. The existing pavement is approximately 30 feet wide within the existing 60-foot public road right-of-way and has a speed limit of 30 mph. The character of the scenic road along this stretch is suburban residential with existing single-family detached dwellings setback at least 50 feet from both sides of the road. Alternating private driveways, street tree planting and open fencing are seen as the site is approached from the both the north and south. The western side of Ilchester Road (southbound) from Wharff Lane to Bonnie Branch Middle School is an open-section road with an overhead utility line. Concrete sidewalk (4ft width) with curb and gutter is located directly north of the property adjacent to 4966 Wharff Lane. The eastern side of Ilchester Road (northbound) from Bonnie Branch Middle School to Landing Road is a closed-section road with curb and gutter, a 4-foot width concrete sidewalk and street tree plantings.

- e. **A detailed assessment of any proposed visual impacts to scenic or historic features and proposed mitigation measures, including an assessment of whether the proposed changes comply with the Guidelines for Development of Land Abutting a Scenic Road in subsection (b).**

The proposed subdivision has been designed to minimize visual impacts and enhance the scenic quality of Ilchester Road. No new buildings or additions are proposed to the existing dwelling on Lot 6 and no existing trees will be removed. The proposed dwelling on Lot 7 will face Ilchester Road, have a single 12-foot wide driveway and be setback at least 50 feet to be consistent with the other existing homes along the western side of the road. The subdivision frontage will include street tree plantings, and curb and gutter and sidewalk that will tie into the existing infrastructure north of the property. In addition to the street tree plantings, landscape screening will be provided along the side and rear of Lot 7. With the proposed streetscape improvements, the subdivision will enhance the visual quality of the scenic road and improve pedestrian connectivity.


 Amy Gowah, Director
 Department of Planning and Zoning

4-6-22
 Date