



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
 3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2350
 Lynda D. Eisenberg, AICP, Director FAX 410-313-3467

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Planning Board Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing of September 3, 2026

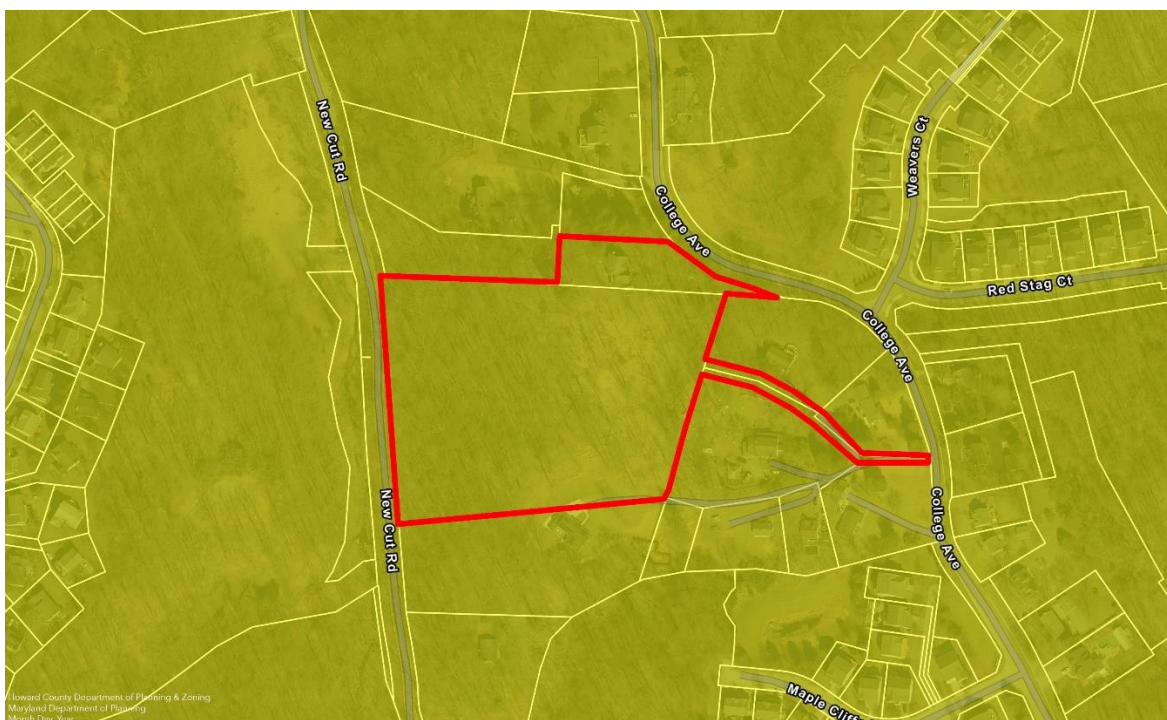
Case No./Petitioner: PB-462, College House, LLC and Historic Ellicott Properties

Project Name: Timber Woods Lots 1-6 and Open Space Lots 7 & 8

DPZ Planner: Donna Despres, RLA
 410-313-3429, ddespres@howardcountymd.gov

Request: The Petitioner seeks approval of Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan SP-24-003 for Timber Woods, a 6 residential lot and 2 open space lot subdivision per Section 107.0.F of the Howard County Zoning Regulations. Development in the R-ED District requiring a sketch or a preliminary equivalent sketch plan must be approved by the Planning Board, applying Section 1.105 of the Planning Board Rules of Procedure.

Location: The development (Tax Map 25 Parcel 50 and Lot 2 of Parcel 49, in the Second Election District) will be accessed from College Avenue.

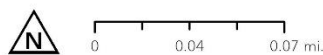


Zoning & Vicinity

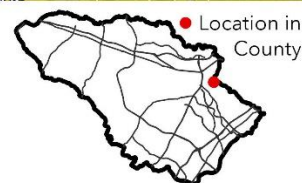
Tax Map 25 Parcel 49 Lot 2
 Tax Map 25 Parcel 50

SP-24-003

Zoning
 R-ED



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



PB 462, SP-24-003 Timber Woods

Vicinal Properties: The subject property is adjacent to an existing subdivision to the north known as the Swearer Property. Lot 2 of the Swearer property is part of this proposal. The west boundary of the property is adjacent to New Cut Road and the opposite side of New Cut Road is property owned by Howard County Department of Public Works. To the south is an existing home on a 2.1 acre deeded parcel. The east boundary is adjacent to several existing homes on deeded parcels. There is a 30’ wide access ROW that runs between the existing homes and provides access to the proposed subdivision.

Legal Notice: The property was posted with 2 posters on July 30, 2026 in accordance with Howard County law. Legal advertisements were published in two local papers, the Baltimore Sun and Washington Post, on July 30, 2026 in accordance with County Law.

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

- F-83-009 Swearer Property Lots 1-4 was recorded as Plat 5347 in January 1983. Lot 2 of the Swearer Property is part of this proposed subdivision.
- Tax Map 25 Parcel 50 is a deeded parcel and has not been subdivided.
- ECP-23-047 Timber Woods, An Environmental Concept Plan was approved by DPZ staff August 15, 2024.
- SP-24-003 Timber Woods Lots 1-6 & Open Space Lots 7 & 8 Parcel 50 and re-subdivision of Lot 2 Swearer Property, began review in May 2024 and completed 7 review cycles. On April 6, 2026, the Subdivision Review Committee found the plans to be approvable pending review of the Planning Board of impacts to the Scenic Roads.
- The Planning Board considered a visual assessment of the affected scenic road and approved the project on May 21, 2026, in accordance with Section 16.125(c) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

Bulk Regulations (In accordance with Section 107.0.E of the Zoning Regulations)

- **Density** - R-ED District permits 2 dwelling units per net acre. This site’s net area is 3.48 acres (6.98 total acres less 3.5 acres of steep slopes), which permits a total of 6 dwelling units.
- **Lot Size** – The proposal complies with the R-ED minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet. The smallest lot, excluding the pipestem area, is 9,349 square feet.
- **Minimum Lot Width** – The proposal complies with the R-ED minimum lot width of 50 feet at the front of the building restriction line.
- **Setbacks** – The proposal complies with the setbacks for the R-ED zoning district. Those setbacks include:

Front setback from an external public street	75 feet
Side setback (from lots)	7.5 feet
Rear setback	25 feet
Property boundary line (adjacent to SFD)	30 feet

PB 462, SP-24-003 Timber Woods

II. Site Analysis

Site Conditions and Environmental Assessment:

Lot 2 of the Swearer Subdivision is 0.667 acres, improved with a single-family home and is accessed from College Avenue. Parcel 50 is 6.33 acres, unimproved, mostly wooded and slopes moderate to steeply down towards New Cut Road on the western boundary. The access to College Avenue on the eastern boundary is through an existing private right-of-way recorded over and through existing properties between Parcel 50 and College Avenue. The private right-of-way area is roughly graded and contains a mix of paved and gravel areas.

Site and Density Information Chart:

Total Project Area	7.33 acres
Less Area of private ROW	0.35 acres
Less 100-Year Floodplain Area	0.00 acres
Less steep slopes 25%+	3.50 acres
Net Site Area	3.48 acres
Density Permitted, 2 units per net acre	6.96 units
Number of units proposed	6.00 units
Proposed Acreage of the 6 buildable lots	2.38 acres
Open Space Required (50% of gross area)	3.67 acres
Open Space Provided	4.39 acres

Access and Frontage:

Access to the proposed development is through a private right-of-way access on College Avenue. There is an existing driveway access at this point. The proposal includes improvements to the road frontage and private driveway construction to meet County standards. There are lawn trees on the adjacent properties to remain. The frontage on New Cut Road will not be disturbed and will be placed in Forest Conservation Easement.

Water and Sewer Service

The site is in the Planned Service Area for public water and sewer services. Water and sewer shall be provided by the County under Contract Number 14-5257-D.

Proposed Development Plan

- **Subdivision Plan** – Six single family lots and two open space lots are proposed. The residential lots range in size from 11,663 to 26,821 gross square feet. Five new homes will access College Avenue through an existing private right-of-way and Lot 1 will access College Avenue from an existing driveway entrance.
- **Open Space** – At least fifty percent of the gross site area of 7.33 acres must be open space, or 3.67 acres. More than fifty percent open space is proposed, 4.39 acres. Open Space Lot 7 will be owned by the HOA and provide the storm water management. Open Space Lot 8 will be dedicated to Howard County and provide a Forest Conservation easement.

PB 462, SP-24-003 Timber Woods

- **Forest Conservation** – Forest cleared, including priority forest area within (steep slopes and urban forest), is 2.9 acres. The Forest Conservation obligation of 2.99 acres (rounded to 3 acres on the forest conservation chart) is satisfied with on-site retention located on proposed Open Space Lot 8, which is to be dedicated to Howard County.
- **Landscaping** – The proposed landscaping complies with the 2026 Landscape Manual.
- **Stormwater Management** – SWM is provided by micro-bioretenention, drywells and permeable surface, which will meet or exceed Environmental Site Design. The project site drains into the Tiber Branch watershed. Therefore, in accordance with County Regulations, quality management for the 24-hour 10 and 100 year storm events as well as 3.55 hour, 6.6 inch rain storm event is required. The SWM provides a managed result as “woods in good condition.”
- **Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)**

Roads Test – The APFO Traffic Study meets the level of service requirements for the studied intersections. No road improvements are required beyond the proposed frontage and access improvements.

Schools Test – The subdivision is in the Northeast School Region, the Worthington Elementary School District, the Ellicott Mills Middle School District, and the Howard High School District. Housing allocations and School Capacity Test will be assessed once the Decision and Order has been signed.

III. Planning Board Criteria

In accordance with Section 107.0.F.6. of the Zoning Regulations, the following criteria must be considered by the Planning Board when evaluating this Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan.

1. The proposed layout of the lots and open space effectively protects environmental and historic resources.

There are no historic resources. The environmental resources on site include steep slopes, priority forest for retention, and specimen trees. They are addressed as follows:

There are 3.5 acres of steep slopes of 25% or greater. The largest portion is within the proposed Forest Conservation easement and will remain undisturbed. There are smaller areas of steep slopes within the LOD totaling 23,524 SF (21,004 SF on site and 2,520 SF in the private right-of-way). The plans have been reviewed by the Howard County Soil Conservation District to ensure the current best practices for sediment and erosion control will be implemented during construction. Before permits and grading can begin, the project must complete the subdivision process, record the plat, and submit a detailed site development plan that will further refine the plan and meet the regulations.

The area of forest removal is the minimum necessary to develop the site. Open Space Lot 8 retains 2.96 acres of forest placed in a Forest Conservation Easement. The provided easement meets 100% of the Forest Conservation obligation on site.

There are 34 specimen trees on the site including the area of the private right-of-way. Of these, 9 will be removed and mitigated with the planting of 18 native trees with a DBH of 3” or greater.

2. Buildings, parking areas, roads, stormwater management facilities and other site features are located to take advantage of existing topography and to limit the extent of clearing and grading.

The proposed subdivision utilizes the eastern portion of the lot, closest to the existing access for placement of the building lots. By clustering the lots along the eastern property boundary, the lots avoid

PB 462, SP-24-003 Timber Woods

most of the steep slopes and clear the minimal amount of forest. The SWM facility is located in an area that is partially open and takes advantage of the natural topography. In addition, retaining walls in a stepped formation further reduces grading into the existing steep slopes and forest areas. The access drive through the private right-of-way is existing gravel and asphalt. The proposal uses the same access. The driveway will be upgraded and stabilized, and provide storm water management. Using the existing access minimizes disturbances and the development will improve the existing conditions.

3. Setbacks, landscaped buffers, or other methods are proposed to buffer the development from existing neighborhoods or roads, especially from designated scenic roads or historic districts.

The development is naturally setback from the existing roadways by the steep slopes and forested area to the west and the existing homes on the east perimeter that access College Avenue. In addition, there is a 100' scenic road buffer applied to the development. The closest new home proposed, on Lot 3, will be beyond the 100' buffer. Landscaping is proposed to meet the 2026 Landscape Manual. Visual assessment presented at the Scenic Road review of the project demonstrated that the new homes will not be visible from the public road due to the grade change and natural setback.

DocuSigned by:

Lynda Eisenberg

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8/20/2026

Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, Director

Date

Please note that this file is available for public review by appointment at the Department of Planning and Zoning's public service counter, Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.