



# HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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## TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

### Final Plan Amendment for the Village of Harper's Choice

Planning Board Meeting of September 15, 2022

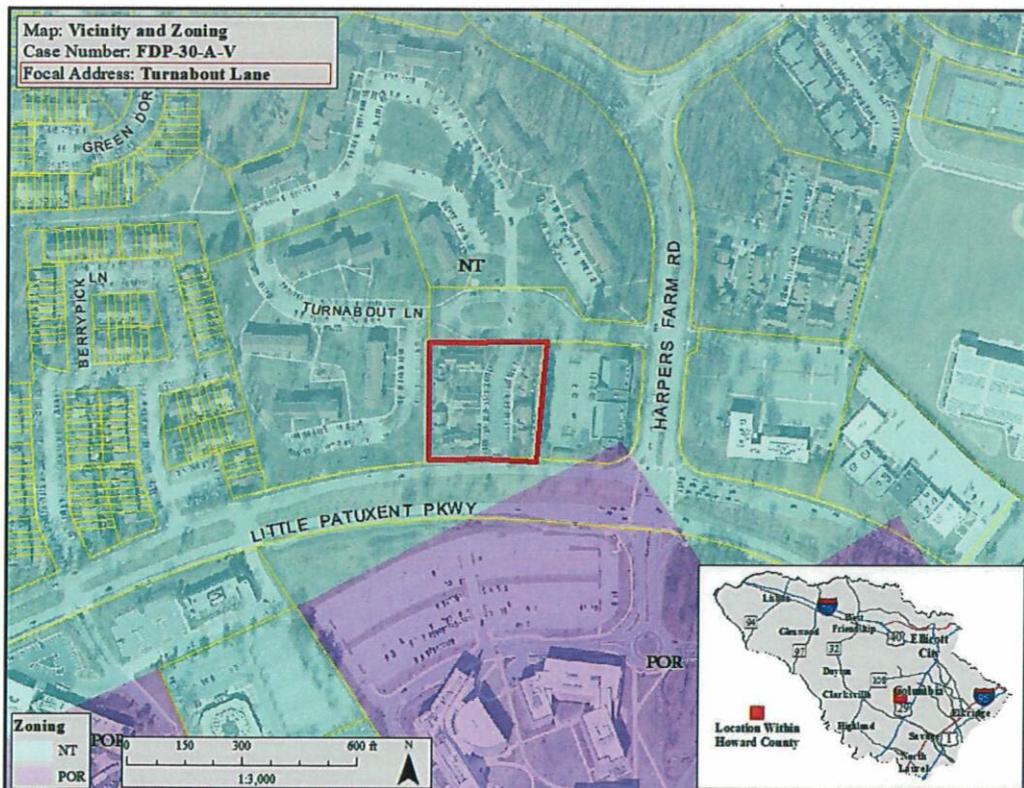
**Case No./Petitioner:** FDP-30-A-V, Howard Research and Development Corporation, on behalf of Enterprise Community Homes Housing, LLC

**Project Name:** Final Development Plan for Village of Harpers Choice, Section 3, Area 2. The amendment is specific to Lot 18, Ranleigh Court Apartments

**DPZ Planner:** Jill Manion, Planning Supervisor  
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**Request:** A final development plan amendment (FDP-30-A-V). Request to amend the FDP to increase the maximum permitted height for structures on Lot 18 from 40 feet to 60 feet from the highest adjoining ground level elevation upon the lot.

**Location:** Lot 18 (Tax Map 29, Parcel 262) is located on the north side of Little Patuxent Parkway, west of the Harpers Farm Road intersection in the Village of Harpers Choice. The apartment complex is accessed via a private drive named Turnabout Lane on the north side of the property.



### **Vicinal Properties:**

**North:** Turnabout Lane, which is a private access place for several apartment buildings. Apartments are located to the north of the driveway (FDP 29, Lot 1, Apartments)

**South:** Little Patuxent Parkway. The Howard County Community College Campus is on the south side of Little Patuxent Parkway.

**East:** Commercial Office Building (Employment Center Commercial, FDP 48).

**West:** Apartments (FDP-30-A-V, Lot 17, Apartments).

### **Site History:**

- **FDP-30:** The property was identified as Lot 18 and designated for Apartment Use with the initial Final Development Plan and was recorded in the Howard County Land Records on February 23, 1968 in Plat Book 14, Folio 37-43.

This FDP was amended four times between August 18, 1968 and July 8, 1987 to address clerical errors and adjust permitted residential uses on specific lots. There were no changes to the land use designation or permitted height for structures on Lot 18 within these amendments. These amendments to FDP 30 were recorded in the land records as:

- **FDP-30- A:** PB 14, Folio 97-103, minor changes to permitted use criteria section for single-family attached, and replace handwritten criteria on the original recorded FDP with type-lettering.
  - **FDP-30-A-I:** PB 16, Folio 71-77, which subdivided Lot 2 into 2A, 2B and 2C, revised the permitted land use on Lot 2B from open space to SFA, and amend credited open space
  - **FDP-30-A-II:** PB 16, Folio 170-177 which re-recorded the changes from PB 16, 71-77 and clarified the wording under apartment unit permitted uses to state that the density calculation cannot exceed an average of 15 dwelling units per acre "between all the land zoned for apartment uses in this (FDP-30) development phase."
  - **FDP-30-A-III,** PB 3054A, Folio 913-919, which amended 2.395 acres of land previously designated for single-family attached development to single-family medium density.
  - **FDP-30-A-IV** was recorded on April 21, 1989 at Plat number 3054A-1050 to 1056. The purpose of that amendment was to add 0.191 acres of non-credited open space to Lot 19 and update the land use charts accordingly. There were no amendments related to Lot 18.
- **Plat Book 13, Folio89:** Lot 18 was created through a subdivision plat, which was recorded in the Howard County Land Records on April 10, 1968.
  - **SDP-68-006:** The property was approved for the development of 41 apartments on April 9, 1969. There was a subsequent site development plan (SDP-74-031) to add play areas to this lot and other apartment properties in the Village of Harpers Choice, which was approved on October 30, 1973.
  - **ZB1120M:** On October 5, 2020, the Howard County Zoning Board signed a Decision and Order approving a 300-unit increase to the Columbia Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) which was to be spread across five (5) apartment properties proposed for redevelopment. The subject property is identified as one of the five properties to receive an increase of density.
  - **ECP-22-054:** An Environmental Concept Plan (ECP) was approved on May 19, 2022 for Lot 18 to demolish the existing apartment units and replace them with a 4-story apartment building consisting of 111 units and associated site improvements. ECP's are conceptual plans which propose a site layout in context with property conditions, and to provide an initial proposal for stormwater management under the State regulatory framework. Approval of an ECP does not constitute an approval of the overall development plan.
  - **SDP-22-051:** A site development plan for an 82-unit, 4-story apartment building has been submitted for review by the County. A request for revised plans was issued on August 27, 2022. A 45-foot-tall apartment building with an additional 4-foot parapet is proposed on the SDP. Once the SDP finishes technical review, Planning Board will review and issue a decision on it.

**Description and Purpose of the Proposed Final Development Plan Amendment:**

The current amendment proposes to increase the building height for structures on Lot 18, which are currently limited to 40 feet in height from the highest adjoining ground elevation, to a maximum of 60 feet to the highest adjoining ground elevation (a 20-foot increase). While the existing structures on Lot 18 are approximately 26 feet in height, the current approved site development plan (SDP-68-006) permits a maximum height of 39'6". The increased allowable height proposed with this amendment is to accommodate redevelopment of the site with a new, updated apartment building. The subject property is one of five properties identified in ZB1120M to receive additional density as part of an effort to upgrade aging apartment sites.

The proposed building height increase is limited to Lot 18. The FDP currently permits a maximum height of 60 feet for structures on Lot 11 and all other apartment properties within this FDP phase are limited to 40 feet. The SDP currently in review by the county proposes a 45-foot-tall structure with up to 4 additional feet of parapet. Section 128.A.3.a of the Zoning Regulations permits a maximum of a 4-foot parapet to extend beyond maximum height restrictions in any zoning district.

Procedures for the amendment to Final Development Plans is provided in Section 125.0.F.1 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations, which states that a Final Development Plan Amendment may be proposed by the original petitioner, Howard Research and Development. The County has received a letter from Howard Research and Development proposing the amendment on behalf of the property owner/developer, Enterprise Community Homes Housing, LLC.

Section 125.0.F.1 states that amendments to a Final Development Plan (FDP) shall be reviewed in accordance with Section 125.0.D of the Zoning Regulations, which governs procedures for the approval of Final Development Plans in the New Town Zoning District. Section 125.0.D.2 requires a Final Development Plan to be considered at a public meeting.

  
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Amy Gowan, Director  
Department of Planning and Zoning