

August 5, 2016

Mr. Andrew E. Streagle, RLA  
A. Morton Thomas and Associated, Inc.  
800 King Farm Boulevard  
Rockville, Maryland 20580

Re: Spring Grove Turf Fields  
Forest Buffer Variance  
Tracking # 01-16-2292

Dear Mr. Streagle:

A request for a variance from Article 33, Title 3, a law for the Protection of Water Quality, Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains was received by the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS) on July 22, 2016. If granted, the variance would allow 4,687 square feet of disturbance to an open area that would be Forest Buffer for the removal of a portion of existing asphalt loop road and the extension of underground electrical and telephone utilities.

The Forest Buffer to be impacted has been applied to an Order I, Use I tributary of the West Branch of Herbert Run as part of Baltimore County's redevelopment of a portion of the Spring Grove State Hospital complex for the creation of both a synthetic turf and a natural turf field. The Forest Buffer was designed in accordance with the full extent of the design standards cited in Section 33-3-111. The project will ultimately result in a decrease of 2.85 acres of impervious surface draining to the stream. The redevelopment project will also provide considerable landscape plantings.

This Department has reviewed your request and the alternate designs submitted and has determined that a practical difficulty exists, in that both the structures and uses of the buffer area predate the Forest Buffer law and that relocating these fairly passive disturbances outside of the Forest Buffer would be burdensome and have little, if any, effect on water quality. We further find that the potential for impacts to water quality as a result of this proposal would be minimized by the proposed decrease of impervious area and extent of remaining functioning buffer. Therefore, we will grant this request in accordance with Section 33-3-106(a)(1) of the Baltimore County Code, with the following conditions:

1. The project shall install and maintain sediment control measures in accordance with approved grading and erosion and sediment control plans.

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2. The following notes must appear on all subsequent plans submitted for this project:
  - “A variance was granted on August 5, 2016, by the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability from the Law for the Protection of Water Quality, Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains. The Forest Buffer Easement shown hereon is reflective of the fact that this variance was granted. Conditions were placed on this variance to reduce water quality impacts.”
  - “There shall be no clearing, grading, construction or disturbance of vegetation in the Forest Buffer Easement except as permitted by the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability.”
3. This variance approval does not exempt future redevelopment of this site from complying with Baltimore County’s laws for the Protection of Water Quality, Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains and for Forest Conservation.

It is the intent of this Department to approve this variance subject to the above conditions. Any changes to site layout may require submittal of revised plans and a new variance request

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Mr. Michael S. Kulis at (410) 887-3980.

Sincerely yours,

Vincent J. Gardina  
Director

VJG/msk