

# Memo

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Susan Hauver, Planning and Zoning Administrator  
**Date:** January 22, 2015  
**Re:** Parkside Preliminary Subdivision Plan

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The proposed Parkside subdivision is located on the Graham property on the south side of Biggs Ford Road, to the east of the adjacent to the Westfield development (Kenneth Drive). The property is zoned R-1 Residential, which allows single family dwellings on 22,000 square foot (approx. ½ acre) lots. The minimum lot width in the R-1 District is 100 feet.

A 24 lot subdivision is proposed on the 26.985 acre property. Lot yield is significantly reduced by the 100-year floodplain along Glade Creek, which borders the property on the south side. Also, the Town Design Manual notes that “Direct access to homes is discouraged only to collector roads”, so all the lots in the proposed development are accessed from the interior streets, instead of Biggs Ford Road. The Town Zoning Ordinance also requires that every lot front on at least 50 feet of public road.

Given the constraints of the floodplain, the shape of the property, the collector road, the dimensional requirements of the zoning and stormwater management requirements, the applicants have designed a subdivision which maximizes development potential. Staff would note the following issues and comments:

1. The Town engineer notes that the “Design Manual requires a minimum tangent length of 100’ between reverse horizontal curves. Graham Court has only 52’ feet of tangent length.” The 52’ segment is along the frontage of Lot 3. The curve allows the lot width to be measured on an angle (lot width is measured at the front yard setback line). This is the only way that the lot meets the 100 foot lot width requirement. Straightening the curve would result in the loss of a lot or lots. The reduction in the tangent requirement would require a modification of the design manual requirements.

2. Lot 8 meets the lot frontage requirement of 50 along the cul-de-sac. However, most of the frontage is also within a sewer line easement extending through the lot to reach the existing sewer line on Kenneth Drive. The property owner would be required to keep the easement area clear of any plantings or fencing. This is impractical and would be difficult to enforce, particularly as the lot changes hands over time.
3. Lots 16, 17 and 18 do not have 50 feet of frontage on Sheeley Terrace, from which they would gain access. The frontage requirement is met with frontage on Biggs Ford Road. Lots 17 and 18 have 21 and 18 feet of frontage on the cul-de-sac, respectively.
4. The names of the streets were not accepted by the County, so new street names are needed.
5. The Town Engineer notes that the Design Manual requires that the water line be looped. The applicant has agreed to make the change.
6. Biggs Ford Road will need to be widened and improved with curb, gutter and sidewalks. The plan shows the improvements stopping at the boundary of the 100 year floodplain in the northeastern corner of the property. The applicant noted that the improvements in the floodplain area would be too expensive to undertake.
7. To meet the open space requirements, the applicant is proposing a butterfly garden at the end of Graham Court and community gardens on the south side of Glade Creek near Walkersville Community Park. The community garden would be accessed from the development by way of a walking path leading to the park where there is a bridge over the creek. Vehicular access to the garden would be via the park from Kenneth Drive. Gardeners would still need to walk some distance to get to the garden from the parking lot. If the Town community gardens at Heritage Farm Park are typical, gardeners tend to transport a lot of equipment and materials to the garden and would prefer to park a vehicle very close to the garden. It also seems that the lots in the development are large enough for homeowners to have a garden in their yard.
8. The walking path along Glade Creek shown on an earlier plan was removed since a sidewalk is required along Biggs Ford Road.
9. When the concept plan was presented to the Commission in 2014, there was some discussion of access to the property being gained from an outlot on Kenneth Drive. Although shown on the Westfield subdivision plan as providing access to this property, the land was never dedicated to the Town as a right-of-way. It is not clear who owns the land at this point.

10. The Town engineer noted that the plans indicate that “precautions need to be taken if any sites are within 100’ of the “wet soil boundary.” In a response the applicant states that the wet soil boundary follows the 100 year floodplain. The 100’ boundary should be shown on the plan since it intrudes over the building envelope on several lots are within 100 feet of the floodplain boundary. The plan notes that gravity drains would be needed if the houses on these lots have basements.
11. The property is designated W-1 (within the service area), S-5 (service in 7-10 years) on the Frederick County Water and Sewerage Plan, thus requiring a plan amendment.
12. The stormwater management concept plan still needs Frederick County approval. It is unclear from comments whether any significant changes to the subdivision design will be required.