Daniel Meijer
929 Gist Avenue
Silver Spring Maryland 20910

May 27, 2002

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2002 MAY 30 AM 11: 23

Mr. Geoffrey H. Griffis
Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W., Room 210
Washington D.C. 20001

RE: BZA Application No. 16878

Dear Chairman Griffis & Board Members,

The proposed zoning "Special Exception" (BZA case # 16878) will have a severe negative impact on local traffic and parking. The use is effectively the conversion of a single-family home to 100% office uses in an R-5-A residential area. The applicant claims nine on-site "parking spaces". If these existed, they would be insufficient for the actual proposed use. The nonprofit organization that is to occupy this dwelling currently lists on its web site eighteen staff members, four consultants and "the ongoing support of interns and fellows" (exhibit 1). This doesn't even begin to include visitors, especially since the company's web site states that the company offers "free parking for visitors" (exhibit 2).

However, there does not appear to be any actual on-site "parking spaces"; only a back yard circular driveway that is accessible by a very narrow one-way street (see photo). A narrow driveway may be adequate for single-family residence parking, but vastly insufficient & impractical for the proposed office use.

Neither are there adequate off-site parking spaces, a vastly inferior kind of parking for this proposed use. The only off-site parking spaces are a few spaces directly in front of the house (available only during non-rush hours). The rest of the frontage of the property consists of a "no parking" zone (due to a fire hydrant). Beyond that point there is only very limited residential permit street parking, used by the residents of adjacent apartment complexes. There is no parking allowed on the opposite side of this street.

The application attempts unsuccessfully to mitigate some of the traffic and parking problems by claiming that the "Metro-rail station is accessed through a walkway at the southeastern corner of the Property." (Statement of Reasons, p.1). The applicant's "plat" map indicates to a "pass through walkway to metro parking lot." (their exhibit # 3, copy attached). This appears to be an attempt, pursuant to section 2107, to demonstrate a "direct connection to a Metrorail station" to "reduce or eliminate the amount of required parking spaces for nonresidential buildings." However, this representation does not appear to be accurate, as there is no route as claimed. There are only other people's properties and an implied route through these properties, which is ultimately blocked by a fence (see photo).

There is a way, however, that these representations could actually be implemented. The land upon which the claimed walkway is located is adjacent to the original proposed route of the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT). This portion of the trail can directly link the Takoma metro station from the back of this property (see map). This proposed trail route would provide a legally sanctioned perpetual access to the metro and thus addresses the deficiencies in the application's traffic and parking impacts to the neighborhood.

For the above reasons, I am requesting that the Board condition this Special Exception upon the approval and implementation of this specific portion of the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) - from the back of the Cady house lot (directly) to the Takoma Metro station.

Sincerely,

Daniel Meijer

BZA
Case No. 16878
Exhibit No. 22

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16878
EXHIBIT NO.22

Exhibit 1

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Our Staff & Consultants

Double-click anywhere to return to the top of the page.

The Forum for Youth Investment is fortunate to have a diverse and amazing staff of talented young professionals (most of the staff is under 35) who come to the Forum from research, policy, practice, advocacy and journalism with degrees and/or professional experience in education, community youth programming, juvenile justice, health and communications. The Forum's horsepower is further strengthened by the contributions of several senior consultants, and by the ongoing support of interns and fellows.

SENIOR STAFF

Karen Pittman, Executive Director
Karen@iyfus.org

Merita Irby, Deputy Director
Merita@iyfus.org

STAFF

Aisha Cooper, Program Associate
Aisha@iyfus.org

Alicia Wilson, Program Coordinator
Alicia@iyfus.org

Carole McGeehan, Communications Manager
Carole@iyfus.org

Erica Denner, Web Coordinator
Erica@iyfus.org

Galen Irby, MIS Manager
Galen@iyfus.org

Georgette Offer, Operations Coordinator
Georgette@iyfus.org

Joel Tolman, Program Coordinator
Joel@iyfus.org

Melinda Jabbie, Executive Assistant
Melinda@iyfus.org

Nicole Yohalem, Manager of Learning & Research
Nicole@iyfus.org

Patrice Ford, Special Advisor to the Deputy Director
Patrice@iyfus.org

Rosa Pittman, Receptionist
Rosa@iyfus.org

Tara Marshall, Fellow
TaraM@iyfus.org

Ta'Wana Ward, Administrative Assistant
Tawana@iyfus.org

Thaddeus Ferber, Special Advisor to the Executive Director
Thad@iyfus.org

Tran-Chau Le, Intern
Tran@iyfus.org

Virginia Ebbert, Information Specialist
Virginia@iyfus.org

CONSULTANTS

Jean Thomases, School & Community Learning Environments Consultant

Jeanie Phillips, Library Consultant
Jeanie@iyfus.org

Lisa O'Brien, Communications Consultant
Lisa@iyfus.org

Pam Stevens, Consultant

Exhibit 2

the forum
FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

Helping organizations that invest in **youth**, invest in **change**

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- **our organization**
- our approach
- our work
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- our ideas

What's New?

Contact Us

The Forum for Youth Investment
7014 Westmoreland Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912
USA

Telephone: 301.270.6250
Fax: 301.270.7144

Email: General correspondence should be addressed to youth@iyfus.org. Please use the preceding email address for general correspondence. Specific staff can be contacted using their first name (e.g., firstname@iyfus.org). If you have any questions or comments about this Web site, please send your message to webmaster@iyfus.org.

OFFICE LOCATION

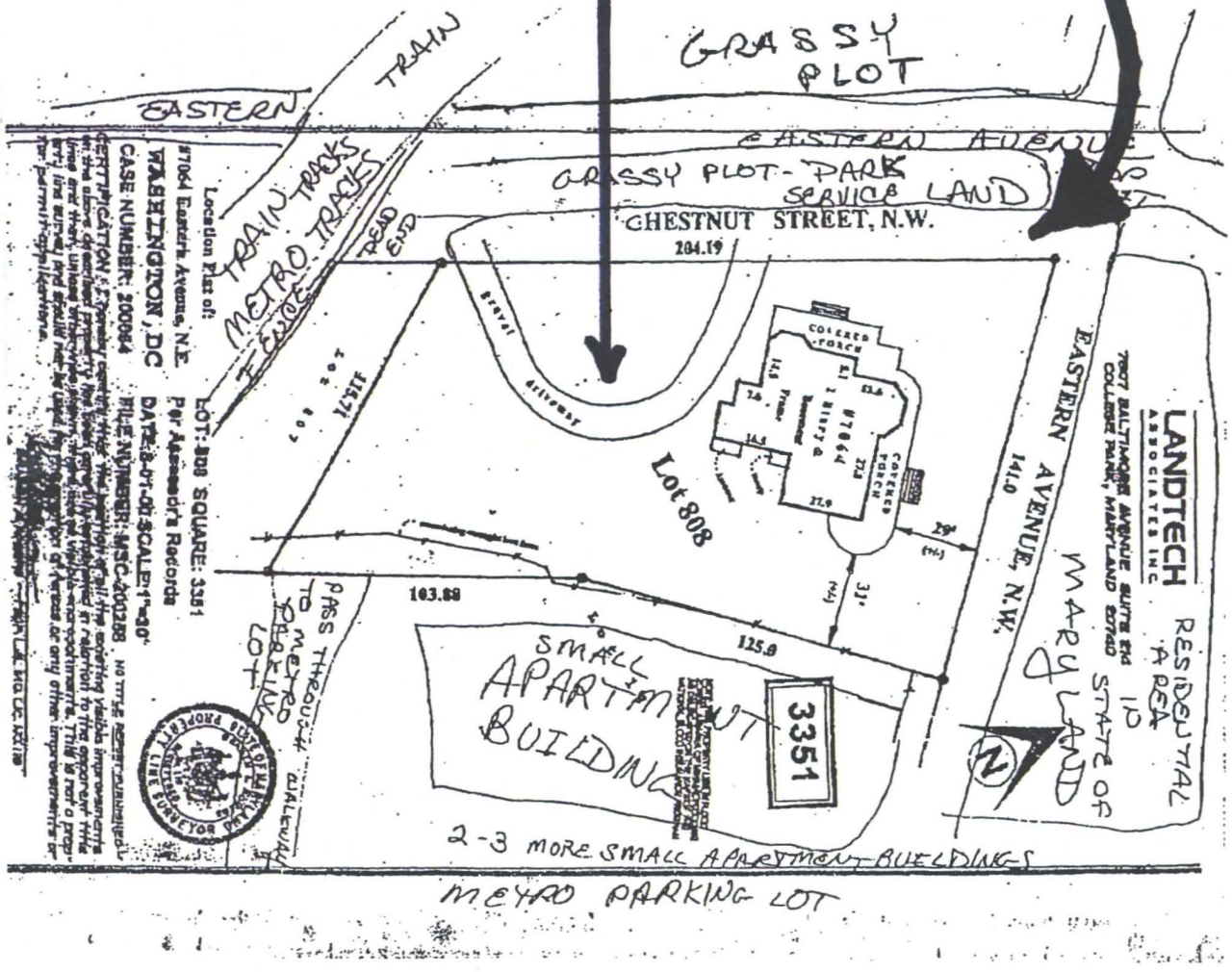
Our offices are located in Takoma Park, Maryland, 2 blocks across the dividing line between Maryland and Washington, DC; 4 blocks from the Takoma Park Metro Station. The offices are located directly behind the main block of stores in Old Town Takoma and are accessible off of Westmoreland Avenue. Free parking is available for visitors.

DIRECTIONS

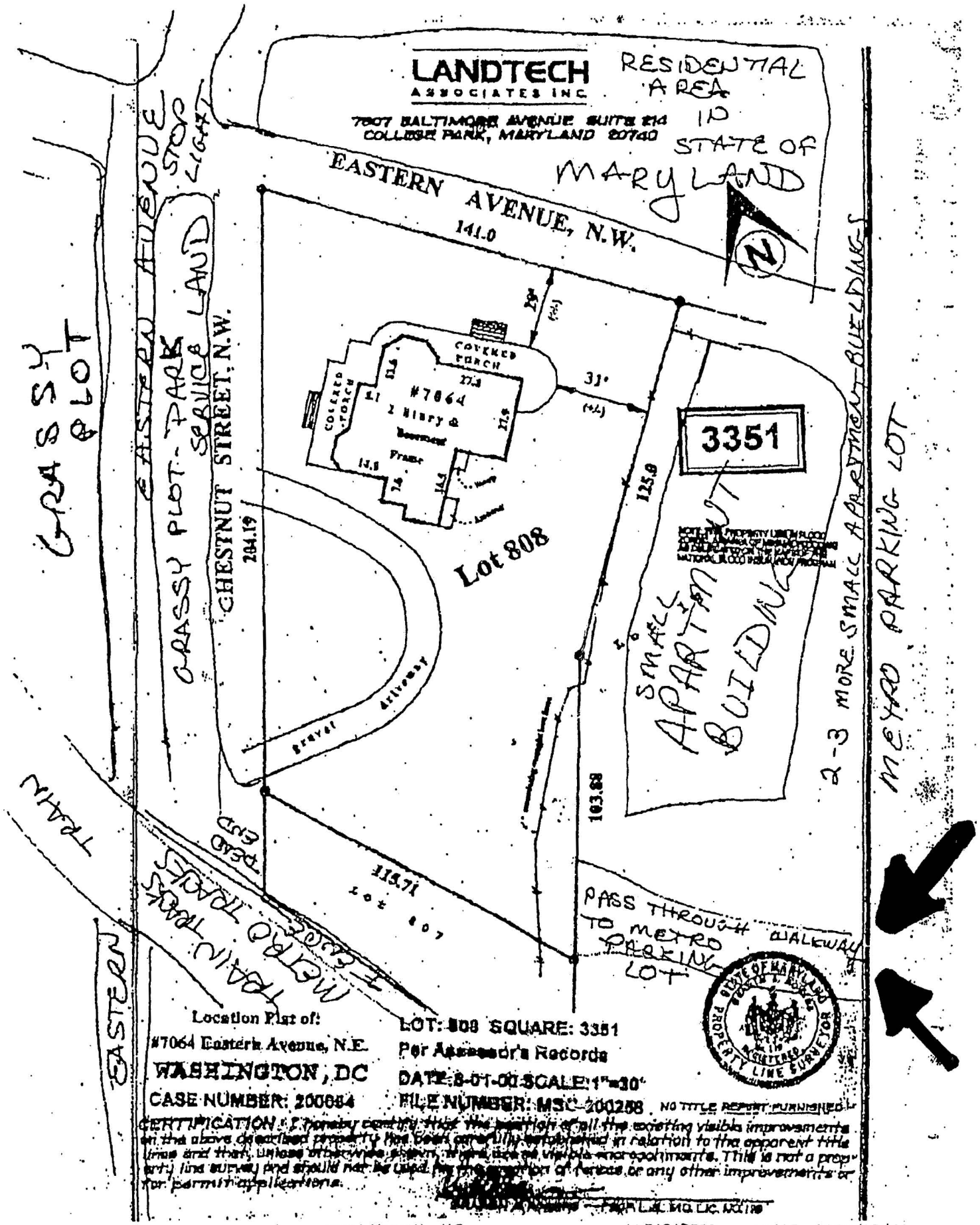
Please call 301.270.6250 and ask for driving directions.



Photo of the narrow public street that connects rear circular driveway



Applicants Exhibit 3



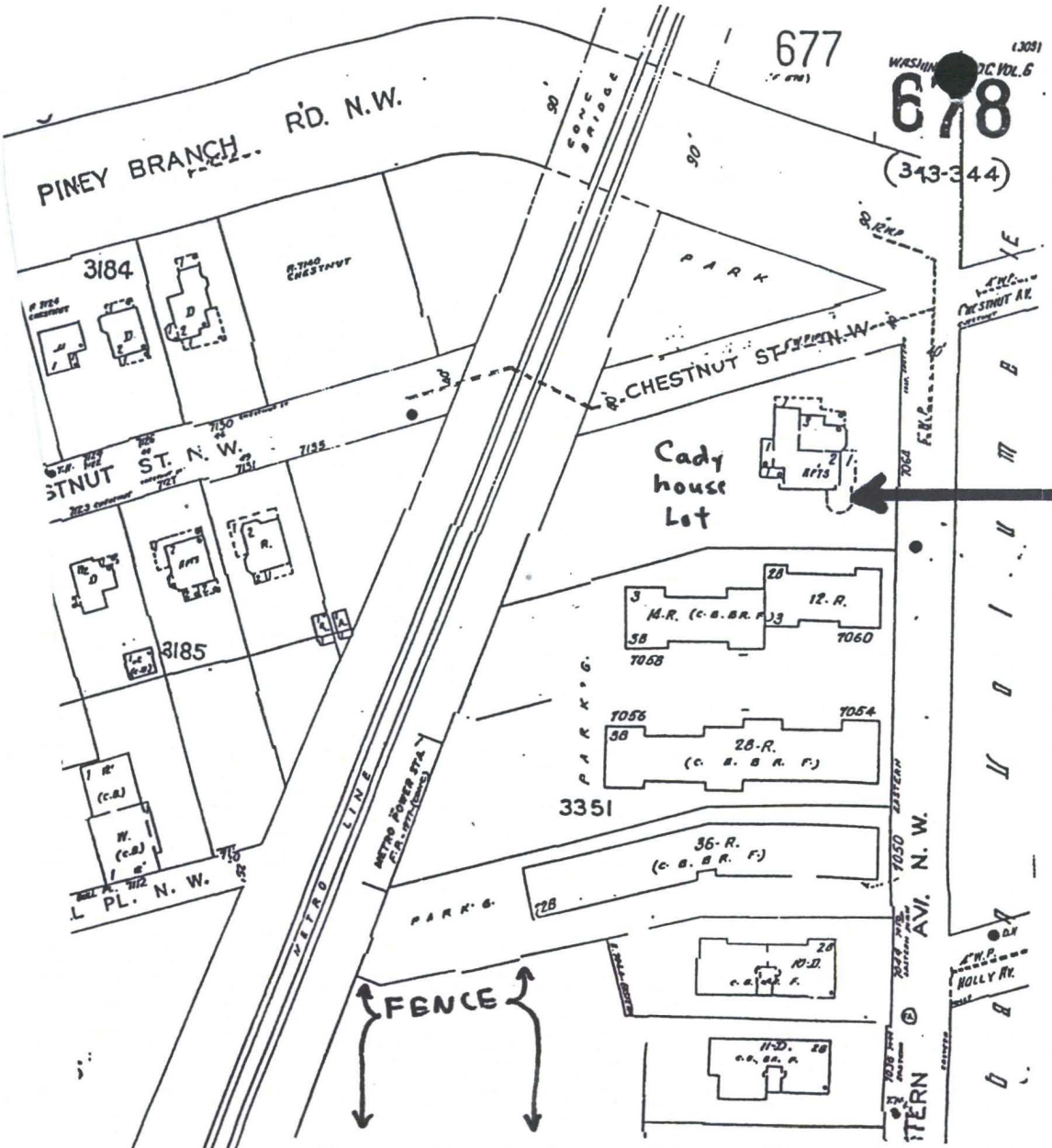
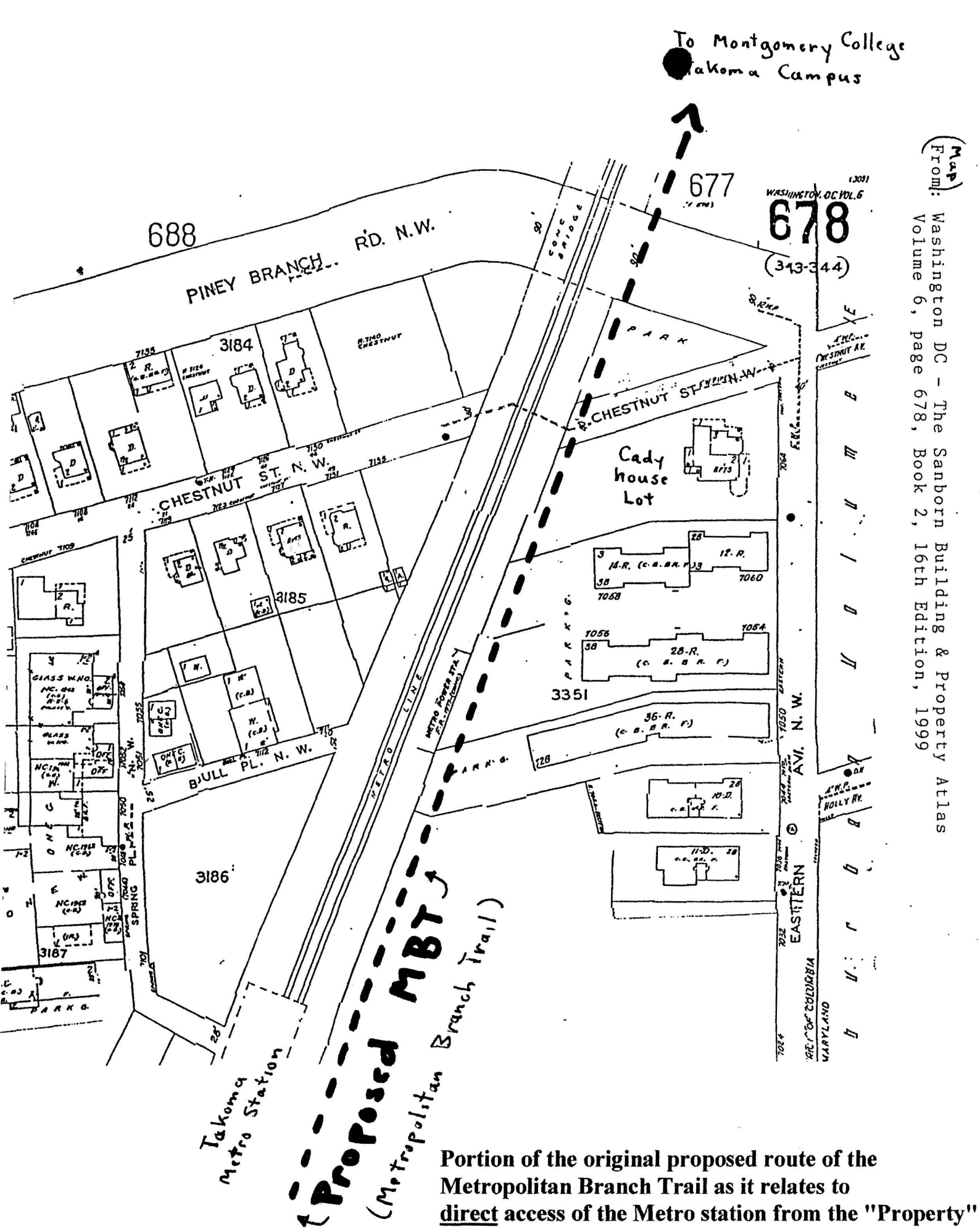


Photo & location of one fence that blocks direct access to Metro station from the Property



Map from:
Washington DC
The Sanborn Building & Property Atlas
Volume 6, page 678
Book 2, 16th Edition, 1999



(Map From): Washington DC - The Sanborn Building & Property Atlas Volume 6, page 678, Book 2, 16th Edition, 1999

Portion of the original proposed route of the Metropolitan Branch Trail as it relates to <u>direct</u> access of the Metro station from the "Property"

This three page fax (including this one) **to Susan Madden**

Dear Susan,

I would like Montgomery College to issue a letter of concern regarding the selection of a proposed hiker/biker trail from the Takoma Park campus towards the Takoma Metro station. Only the original proposed route would allow students and staff a direct pedestrian link to this Metro stop. See map (figure M) found on page 45 of the DC Takoma Central District Plan (copy attached). The other recently proposed alternative routes do not. Some of these routes actually divert the path users from this station.

Why is this important to the College? As you know, this campus expects influx of DC students due to the in-state tuition benefits that were recently enacted by Congress. Unless public transportation facilities are convenient, these & many other Montgomery College students will be inclined to drive to this campus. This translates into traffic congestion and parking problems for the College and surrounding community.

Attached is a letter from a DC Council Member to the DC Planning Director on the matter of the hiker/biker trail alignments. It would be very helpful if Montgomery College would also write the DC Planning Director with their perspective on this important transportation/planning decision given the effect it will have on Takoma Park Campus traffic patterns and parking facilities as student enrollment increases.

Thank you for considering this request,

Daniel Meijer
(301) 585-1458

Montgomery College

Campuses at Germantown
Rockville
Takoma Park

SUSAN COTTLE MADDEN
Director of Government Relations
Office of the President

Suite 300
900 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

(301) 279-5275
FAX (301) 279-5260
smadden@mc.cc.md.us

2107 EXCEPTION TO THE SCHEDULE OF REQUIREMENTS: OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL EMPLOYMENT AREA

2107.1 The Board of Zoning Adjustment is hereby authorized to reduce or eliminate the amount of required parking spaces for nonresidential buildings or structures located outside the Central Employment Area: Provided, that the building or structure is provided with a direct connection to a Metrorail station currently in operation or for which a construction contract has been awarded.



(Emphasis Added)

2107.2 The parking spaces normally required are not necessary to serve the use located in the building or structure. In determining whether the parking spaces are necessary, the Board shall give consideration to the following:

(a) The nature and location of the building or structure and the nature and location of the connection to Metrorail;

(b) The maximum number ofstudents, employees, guests, customers, or clients who can reasonably be expected to use the proposed building or structure at one (1) time;

(c) The amount of traffic congestion existingor which the building or structure can reasonably be expected to create in the neighborhood;

(d) The quantity of existing public, commercial, or private parking, other than on-street parking, on the property or in the neighborhood which can reasonably be expected to be available when the building or structure is in use; and

(e) The availability of public transportation service in the area, or a ride-sharing program approved by the District of Columbia Department of Public Works.

2107.3 If the applicant relies on a ride-sharing program, the applicant shall demonstrate to the Board that the program shall continue as long as the use continues.

2107.4 Prior to taking final action on an application under this section, the Board shall refer the application to the District of Columbia Department of Public Works for review and report.

2108 REDUCTION OF PARKING SPACES: AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD

2108.1 The Board of Zoning Adjustment is hereby authorized to reduce the amount of parking spaces required for nonresidential uses by §2101.1 pursuant to the provisions of this section.

2108.2 The amount of required parking spaces shall not be reduced by more than twenty-five percent (25%); Provided, that for a use which is in the category of "All