

REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTIONS REVIEW – 2007 EASTERN SEABOARD EDITION

MAPLE LAWN

Maple Lawn, Maryland

It's been a long road to Maple Lawn, Md.

Approved as a qualifying site under Howard County's mixed-use overlay zoning ordinance – originally adopted by the county in 1993 – the initial 508-acre neighborhood development site that would become Maple Lawn represented the combination of multiple properties with multiple ownership into one single entity.

According to Matt D'Amico, ASLA, principal with architect Design Collective, Inc., the master plan for Maple Lawn was intensely examined after the original design plan was submitted in 1998. The development will eventually include 1,340 residential units and 1.8 million square feet of commercial space on a total of 607 acres located 20 miles south of Baltimore and 20 miles north of Washington, D.C.

"It's a mixed-use pedestrian oriented community based on 19th-century town planning principles," said Charlie O'Donovan, vice president with Greenebaum and Rose Associates, Inc. "It's a traditional neighborhood development. It follows all the tenets of new urbanism."

"With design starting in 1998, the new town master plan for Maple Lawn endured nearly two years of intense public scrutiny and opposition, including an eight-month-long intensive public hearing," D'Amico said. "The approval in this case was not dependent upon a rezoning nor a special exception, but rather, was to be a simple procedural hearing to determine compliance with the prescriptions of the existing overlay zoning ordinance. The Maple Lawn master plan was finally approved in December 2000, rewarding the developer for remaining true to the principles and intent of the mixed-use zoning."

Construction began on the first neighborhood, Midtown, in 2001. At the same time, the general contractor, Chesapeake Contracting Group, went to work on the business district as envisioned by the architects at Design Collective.

The project continues to evolve, with phased completions planned through 2015. According to O'Donovan, the estimated cost of the entire development will be roughly \$1.55 billion.

As of May 2006, he said Maple Lawn had 95 occupied homes, along with one occupied retail center and one occupied commercial office building.

Though battles have been waged over ordinance compliance and density since its inception



Retail 1, Business District



Office Building 1, Business District



Cottages



Community Center, Midtown Neighborhood



Community Center, Midtown Neighborhood



Garden Neighborhood



Midtown Neighborhood



Hillside Neighborhood

in the mid 1990s, O'Donovan said the entire project is true to the intent of Howard County's mixed-use zoning ordinance, and that it embodies the spirit of the state's Smart Growth policy. He said Maple Lawn will pay dividends for the county well into the future.

"It's a huge fiscal benefit to Howard County," O'Donovan said. "It is extraordinarily beneficial to the county, and a lot of that is because of the house values that are being achieved in each jurisdiction."

O'Donovan praised the architects with Design Collective for their vision along the road to Maple Lawn. "They were instrumental in the overall vision for Maple Lawn. They encouraged us to use a traditional neighborhood development," O'Donovan said. "They were instrumental in reviewing the buildings produced for compliance with the design guidelines. They did a great job. It's going to be a great place when it's finished."

FACTS & FIGURES

Owner: Greenebaum and Rose Associates, Inc., Baltimore, MD

Type of Project: New mixed-use development

Architect: Design Collective, Inc., Baltimore, MD

General Contractor: Chesapeake Contracting Group, Reisterstown, MD

Size: 607 acres

Cost: \$1.55 billion (estimated total)

Construction Time: Phased completion through 2015

The Need: A new mixed-use development for Howard County, offering residential neighborhoods and commercial office and retail space

The Challenge: Remaining true to the principles of "smart growth", and withstanding intense public scrutiny