

Kenridge Special Use Permit

DATE: August 21, 2023

Narrative of Proposal:

The Kenridge Homeowners Association is seeking to amend condition #6 of the special use permit conditions of the Kenridge Development, originally approved under SP2004-00052 and later amended with SP2009-00006 and SP2012-00013. The proposed change to the condition, as outlined below, will modify the buffer screening for the development and eliminate the requirement for the underground sprinkler system. The reason for this modification to the special use permit condition is to ensure long term viability of the landscaping buffer verses a construction screening buffer, and to allow a landscaping buffer that is more consistent with the Charles Stick Conceptual Diagram of Perimeter Screen and Privacy Planting that was part of the original Special Use Permit Application (SP2005-00052). With the Kenridge development now an established community in Albemarle County, flexibility in the perimeter landscaping condition is needed for the overall success of the landscaping buffer, safety of the properties, and feasibility to re-establish the perimeter landscaping where the current required perimeter landscaping buffer has failed. The Kenridge HOA together with the property owners are submitting this Special Use Permit amendment for the modification to the landscaping buffers. As shown on the application plan, most of the buffer landscaping screening is located on private lots within the Kenridge Development. The HOA board has presented this modification to the approved conditions along with the application plan and buffer planting design to the residents within the Kenridge neighborhood, and they are supportive of the change and are accepting the proposed modification to the condition and buffer screening design. The residents are prepared to make the modifications to the buffer screening on the individual lots, as necessary or required, once the special use permit has been approved.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

The Kenridge property is currently zoned C-1 commercial and is within the Albemarle County Entrance Corridor. A special use permit was approved on the property for a residential neighborhood in 2005, see Figures 1 and 2 for the Comprehensive Plan and Rezoning Map. The site is located along Route 250, across from Birdwood and adjacent to the railroad tracks. To the north of the property is Farmington Country Club, to the west is Boxwood, and to the east is White Gables (see Figure 3 for regional context map). The only environmental features on the site are some critical slopes from the construction of the development, see Figure 4. Most of the property was disturbed for the construction of the neighborhood and there are no existing natural environmental features on the site, other than the existing natural landscaping buffer along Route 250. The Kenridge development was completed in accordance with the approved Special use permit, and the development is consistent with the Comprehensive plan for the property. See the attached approved special use permit application, that was approved with SP2004-52, see attached Figure 5.

Background Due Diligence information & Timeline:

1) Kenridge Special use permit (SP2004-52):

- The screening for the Kenridge project was originally designed by Charles Stick and included on an application plan within the Special use permit for the Kenridge project (SP2004-52), attached Exhibit A. The original design proposed a mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees around the perimeter of the property on the Northern, Eastern, and Western boundary line.
- During the Special use permit process and included in the Conditions of approval, this perimeter landscaping exhibit is referenced for the required landscaping associated with the Kenridge project. However, the condition of approval outlines the specifics of the perimeter landscaping by requiring "The continuous Evergreen Trees noted as Leyland Cypress hedge along the north, east, and west sides of the project shall be installed at 10' to 12' in height after lot grading but prior to issuance of a building permit for any dwelling unit construction. The Leyland Cypress hedge also shall be planted on Eight (8') foot centers. Underground irrigation shall be provided for all the planting areas."
- This requirement of the continuous evergreen buffer (as opposed to a mixture of a deciduous and evergreen screening buffer) appeared to evolve between the time of the design of the plan (May 12, 2005) and the approval of the Special Use Permit (October 5, 2005).
- The condition appears to be the result of a negotiation between the owner/developer of the Kenridge project and the surrounding neighbors to ensure the project is screened during and after construction. However, it is unknown if Charles Stick or another landscape architect was consulted when this condition was created to ensure the success of the screening buffer and survival of the screening trees, based on this design.

2) Kenridge Final Site Plan (SDP2005-00125):

- The Landscape Architect hired to design the final site plan for the Kenridge project designed the landscaping site plan in accordance with the Special Use permit condition, attached Exhibit B. (81) Leyland Cypress Trees were specified along the western property line, (53) Leyland Cypress Trees were specified along the eastern property line, and mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees were designed along the northern property, adjacent to the railroad.
- In addition to the (81) Leylands along the western property line and (53) Leylands along the eastern property line, additional deciduous trees were proposed between the evergreen buffer and the proposed homes. These deciduous trees were not required by the conditions of the Special use permit, but were consistent with the mixture of plantings in the buffer as shown on the Charles Stick landscape application plan from the original Special Use permit application. However, the intensity of these deciduous trees was far more densely planted than the exhibit.
- Overall, the proposed landscaping with the approved site plan provided a total landscaping coverage was over 4 times the required tree canopy coverage required by the Albemarle County zoning code. This was not a requirement of the special use permit.
- An underground dripline was also installed with the perimeter Leyland Cypress trees and was active during the first years of construction activity on the site.

- In 2009, a site plan amendment was approved for the grading and landscaping behind lots 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (SDP2009-00015). This created basement units for these homes, and also added additional landscaping along the sloped bank behind the homes.

3) Kenridge Letter of Revision to SP 2004-52 :

- In 2009, a letter of revision was approved for the Kenridge project, adding additional screening along the northern property line, as negotiated between the owner/developer and the County of Albemarle.
- The design added additional evergreen screening trees to (3) areas, behind lots 22, 23 and 24, behind lots 18, 19 and 20, and at the end of Colridge Drive.
- The landscaping areas behind units 22-24 and units 18-21 specified for the additional Leyland Cypress evergreen trees are not large enough to accommodate these trees. The existing retaining walls, the utilities, and the limited space in these areas prevent the root system of the trees from growing and taking root.

Current Field Conditions:

1. The majority of the buffer landscaping within the Kenridge development is over 15 years old. Most of the landscaping buffers within the Kenridge development are located on individual properties, with only a limited amount of buffer landscaping located within HOA owned open space areas dedicated to stormwater management facilities. While portions of the landscaping buffer are healthy and thriving (mainly along the Northern property line adjacent to the railroad), large portions of the landscaping buffer (particularly along the Western and Eastern property line) have deteriorated or failed.
 - a) A number of Leyland Cypress trees have been removed due to disease and insect damage.
 - b) Some Leylands have been removed due to the propensity of toppling over in the high winds with the shallow root system and location of the trees on the property. There is also a concern about the remaining existing Leyland Cypress trees causing structural damage to the homes and structures during storms and high winds.
 - c) Many Leyland Cypress trees have been removed due to the initial required spacing. Leyland Cypress trees planted at an initial height of 10'-12' can get as high as 40 feet to 60 feet within 10 year, which most of them have done. The issue is that a tree this size also can grow out to a width of 20' to 25'. This width exceeds the required spacing allotted for the evergreen trees in the required design parameters from the special use permit. The crowding of the existing Leyland Cypress trees has also required the removal of many of the buffer trees.
2. **Existing Buffers**
 - a) **Western property line** – Out of the original (81) proposed Leyland Cypress trees along the western property line, only (14) still remain. These (14) Leyland Cypress trees are located on lots 59 through 60. In addition to the existing (14) Leyland Cypress trees, (33) new evergreen trees have been planted along the buffer. These evergreen trees are primarily Green Giant Arborvitae trees and have been spaced out in a staggered row (approximately 10' spacing) to allow adequate room for growth. However, there are also sections that currently have limited to no screening, such as the area behind lots 55 and 56, and behind lots 49 and 50. (See attached pictures 1-4)

- b) **Eastern property line** – from the original (53) Leyland Cypress trees along the buffer, (31) of them remain. These are located behind lots 5 through 10. In addition to the (31) existing Leyland Cypress trees, (20) new evergreen trees have been planted along the buffer. These evergreen trees are primarily Green Giant Arborvitae trees and have been spaced out in a staggered row (approximately 10' spacing) to allow adequate room for growth. (See attached pictures 5-8).
- c) **Northern property line (along the Railroad)** – The northern property line screening has been the most successful landscape buffer of the (4) areas. This landscaping buffer was a true mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees and the staggered rows of the buffer landscaping allowed for full growth of the trees and the root systems. This area has established a nice buffer along the railroad and is consistent with the approved landscaping plan and landscaping application plan from the original Special use permit. (See attached pictures 9-12).
- d) **Northern property line (additional landscaping from the SUP LOR in 2009)** – Out of the (3) areas of additional landscape buffer and screening from the LOR in 2009 (Exhibit C), only the evergreen landscaping at the end of Colridge Drive is successful and thriving. The majority of the evergreen trees behind lots 22 – 24 and behind lots 20 -21 have been removed, with only (8) evergreen trees behind 18 and 19 remaining. These remaining (8) Leyland Cypress trees are approximately 30-40 feet in height, and are located on top of the existing retaining wall.

Proposed Buffer Modifications:

The Kenridge Homeowners Association is proposing the following changes to condition #6 of the Special Use Permit. The change will allow for flexibility with the landscaping privacy buffer, based on existing conditions along the perimeter boundaries, and will be consistent with the original Charles J Stick perimeter screen and privacy planting plan design. Below is a summary of the proposed changes:

1. Western Property Line (Lots 49-58) – Buffer Area 1:

Lots 48 to 58: Replace the approved/required Leyland Cypress Hedge along the western property line at 8 foot centers to a staggered evergreen hedge along the property line, planted 10'-12' on center. The species of this evergreen buffer shall be either Leyland Cypress, Green Arborvitae, or Nellie Stevens Holly. The spacing modification will allow for full growth of the evergreen tree for a healthy screening tree and root system. Different evergreen tree species than the Leyland cypress tree will allow for a deeper root system and trees that are more tolerant to insects and diseases, but the homeowner may also install a Leyland Cypress tree, if preferred. The replacement trees shall be installed at a minimum height of 8 feet to 10 feet. At the discretion of the homeowner, additional landscaping understory trees and scrubs may be planted the rear yards of the homes, in accordance with current HOA guidelines and regulations. These plantings would not be required by the County for buffer screening, it but would add to the overall landscaping buffer along the property line. The spacing of the evergreen trees may be adjusted to accommodate existing trees and landscaping on the adjacent property when the proper spacing can not be achieved.

2. Western Property Line (Lots 59-60) – Buffer Area 2:

Lots 59 and 60: Retain the existing Leyland Cypress screening tree Hedge or replace the existing Leyland Cypress trees with a staggered evergreen hedge along the property line, planted 10'-12' on center. The species of this evergreen buffer shall be either Leyland Cypress, Green Arborvitae, or Nellie Stevens Holly. The spacing modification will allow for full growth of the evergreen tree for a healthy screening tree and root system. Different evergreen tree species than the Leyland cypress tree will allow for a deeper root system and trees that are more tolerant to insects and diseases, but the homeowner may also install a Leyland Cypress tree or keep the existing Leyland Cypress trees, if preferred. The replacement trees shall be installed at a minimum height of 10 feet to 12 feet. These (2) lots are the closest in proximity to the adjacent residential house, and keeping these screening trees or replacing them with 10'-12' trees will provide the required buffer screening in this location adjacent to the home.

3. Eastern Property line – Buffer Area 3:

Replace (at the discretion of the property owner) the existing single row of Leyland Cypress Hedge along the eastern property line at 8-foot centers to a single row or staggered row of evergreen trees along the property line. The single row of evergreen trees shall be planted at a spacing of 14 feet and a minimum of 5 feet to 8 feet in height. The single or staggered row of evergreen trees shall be spaced 14 feet on center. The species of the evergreen buffer shall be flexible, allowing for different species other than the Leyland Cypress tree. Other evergreen trees may include Green Giant Arborvitae, Baby Giant Arborvitae, Nelly Stevens Holly, Magnolia, and other evergreen screening trees. The spacing modification will allow for full growth of the evergreen tree for a healthy screening tree and root system. Different evergreen tree species than the Leyland cypress tree will allow for a deeper root system and trees that are more tolerant to insects and diseases. The replacement trees shall be installed at a minimum height of 5 feet to 8 feet. The homeowners shall also have an option to install deciduous trees or understory trees along with the evergreen hedge (deciduous trees with a minimum of 40' spacing and understory trees with a minimum spacing of 20 feet). This design is in keeping with the approved Landscaping plan from the original Special use permit and would provide screening and tree canopy along the boundary in conjunction with the evergreen screening buffer. Additional Landscaping may be planted along the sloped bank behind these units, at the discretion of the homeowner and approval of the HOA. The additional landscaping shall include understory trees and shrubs with deeper root systems that can grow along the sloped banks. These plantings would not be required by the County for buffer screening, but it would only add to the overall landscaping buffer along the property line. Finally, the perimeter landscaping requirements along the Eastern property line shall allow flexibility for adjustments based on existing conditions and the existing landscaping on the White Gables property. The spacing of the evergreen trees may be adjusted to accommodate existing trees and landscaping on the White Gables property when the proper spacing can not be achieved.

4. Northern Property Line – Buffer Area 4:

The requirement of the additional screening buffer associated with the Special Use permit LOR in 2009 behind Lots 18 to 24 shall be eliminated. With the establishment of the approved landscaping buffer along the rear property line over the last 10 – 15 years, the necessity for additional screening along the rear property line of these units is not

necessary. The canopy has filled in well along the property line, and provides the screening as originally contemplated in the Special use permit application plan. In addition, the added screening areas with the LOR behind lots 18-24 is very constricted with the existing retaining walls, utilities, and proximity to the homes. The HOA shall maintain the existing landscaping buffer along the northern property line and replace trees as necessary if dead.

Replacement trees can be of like species or may be an evergreen screening tree, spaced 14' on center and at a planting height of 6'-8'.

5. Northern Property Line – Buffer Area 5:

The existing landscaping within the open space along Route 250 shall remain. Any dead or dying tree shall be replaced with a minimum of a 3" caliper tree. This area is not part of the changes to the special use permit buffer plan.

Summary:

The Kenridge Homeowners Association and the residents of the Kenridge neighborhood area proposing the following change to Condition #6 of the Special Use Permit due to the factors as noted in this narrative report. The proposed new condition will allow for flexibility with the perimeter landscaping to ensure long-term viability of the buffer. The following is the proposed condition:

Condition #6: Screening adjacent to the railroad right-of-way and along the west and east sides of the project shall be provided and maintained as conceptually depicted on the Kenridge Amendment Application Plan, dated August 21 2023, prepared by Collins Engineering. Per the landscaping requirements specified within the Amended Application Plan, the continuous buffer of evergreen trees shall be installed in a staggered row along the western property boundary, and either a single row or staggered row along the eastern property boundary and northern property boundary. Spacing of the perimeter buffer may be adjusted along the Eastern & Western boundary lines to accommodate existing conditions and proper landscaping spacing from the existing perimeter landscaping on the adjacent properties. Additional changes and modifications to the perimeter buffer screening may be allowed as deemed acceptable to the Director of Planning.

FIGURE 3: CONTEXT MAP

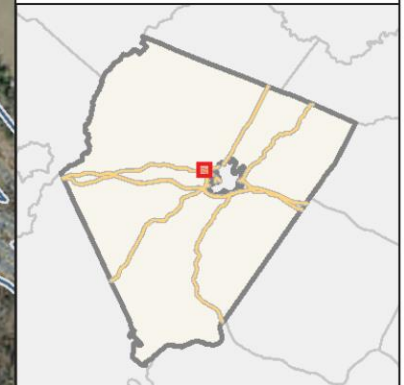


Legend

(Note: Some items on map may not appear in legend)

Parcel Info

□ Parcels



GIS-Web
Geographic Data Services
www.albemarle.org/gis
(434) 296-5832

FIGURE 4: ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MAP

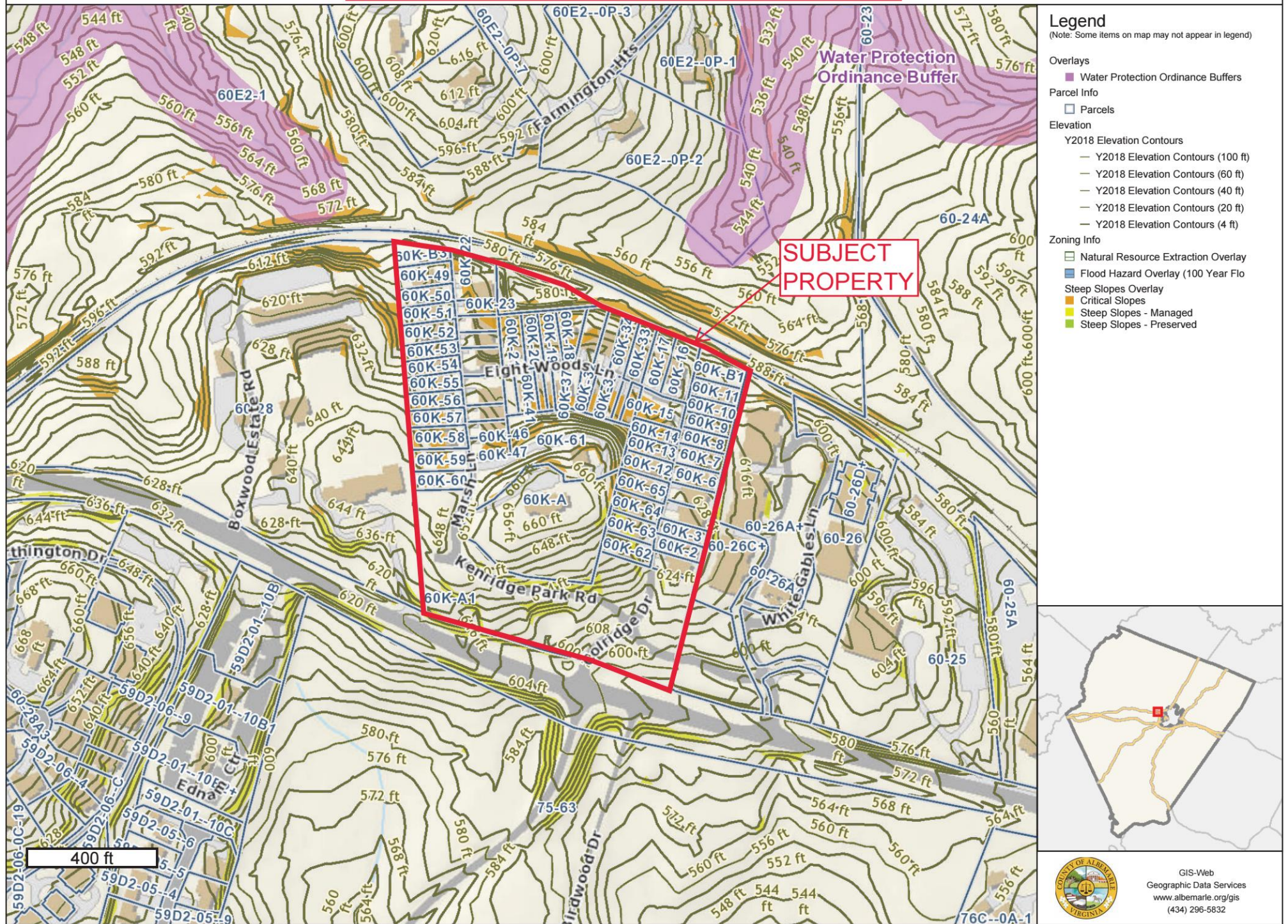
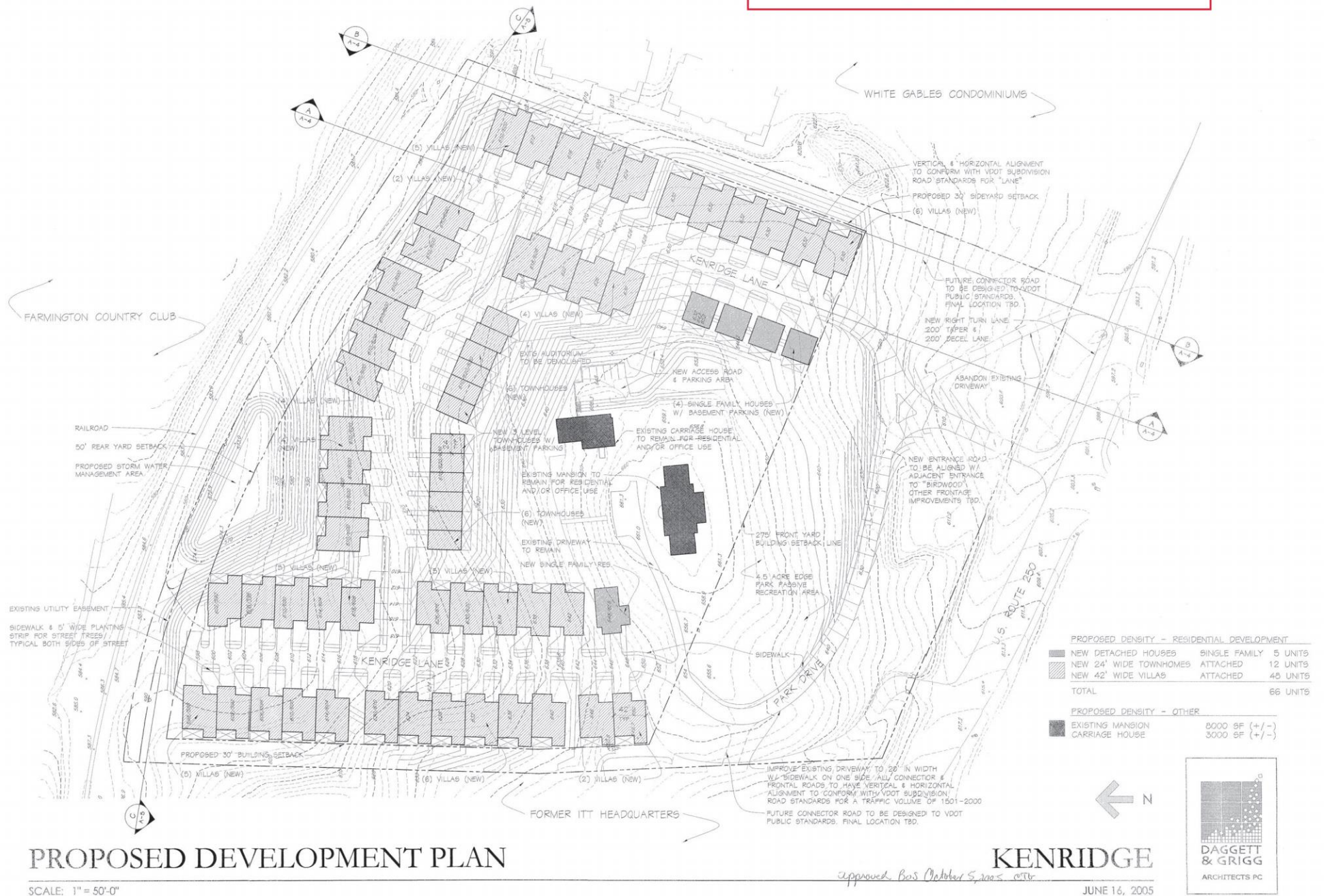


FIGURE 5: APPROVED APPLICATION PLAN WITH SP2004-52



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"

KENRIDGE

approved BOS October 5, 2005 ctb

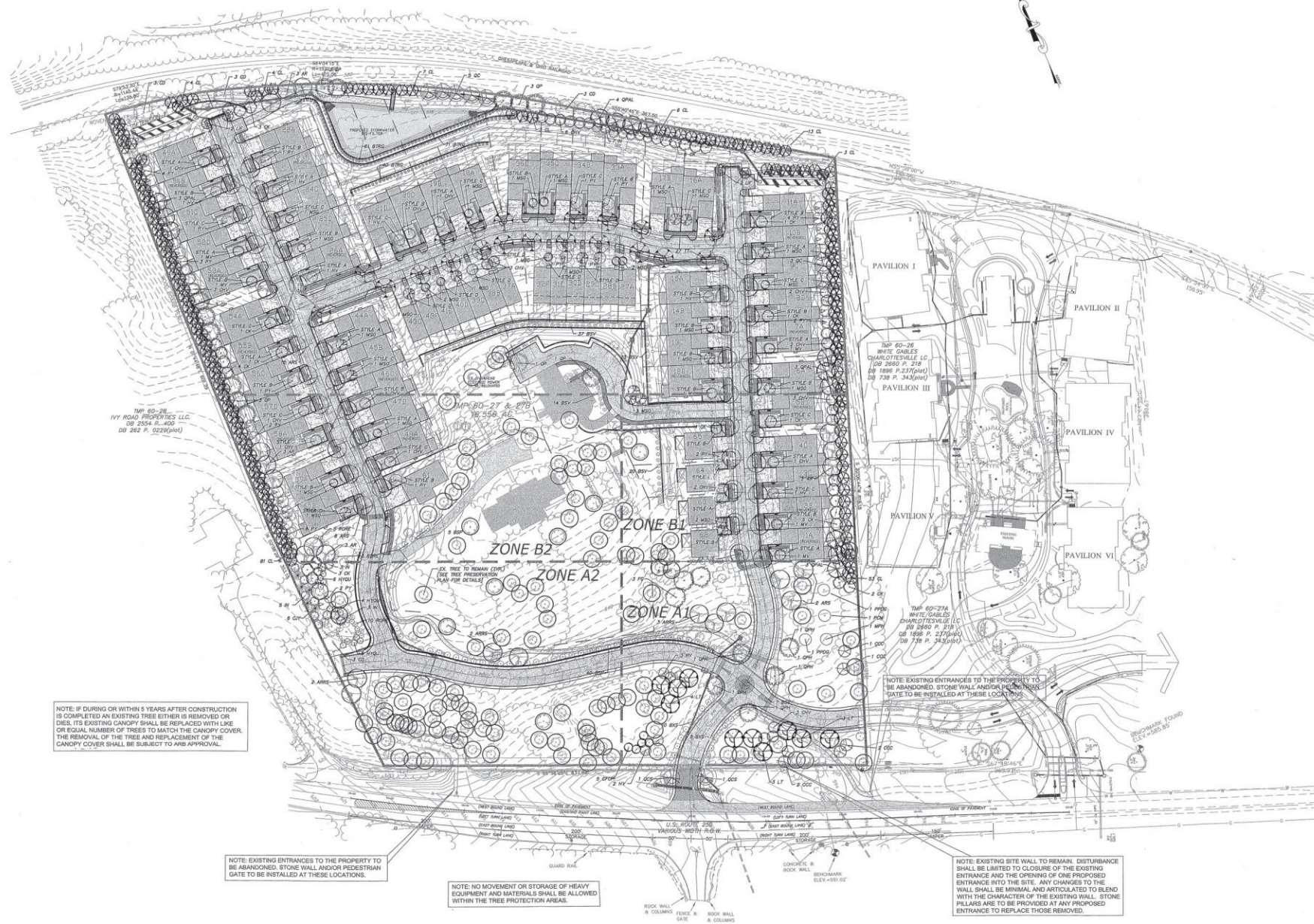
JUNE 16, 2005
A-1



SP-2004-00052

MAY 12, 2005
A-1

EXHIBIT B: APPROVED LANDSCAPING PLAN WITH SITE PLAN



COLLINS ENGINEERING

KENRIDGE
SAMUEL MILLER DISTRICT - ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA
LANDSCAPE PLAN

800 EAST JEFFERSON STREET, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902
PHONE 434-392-1151 FAX 434-245-0305



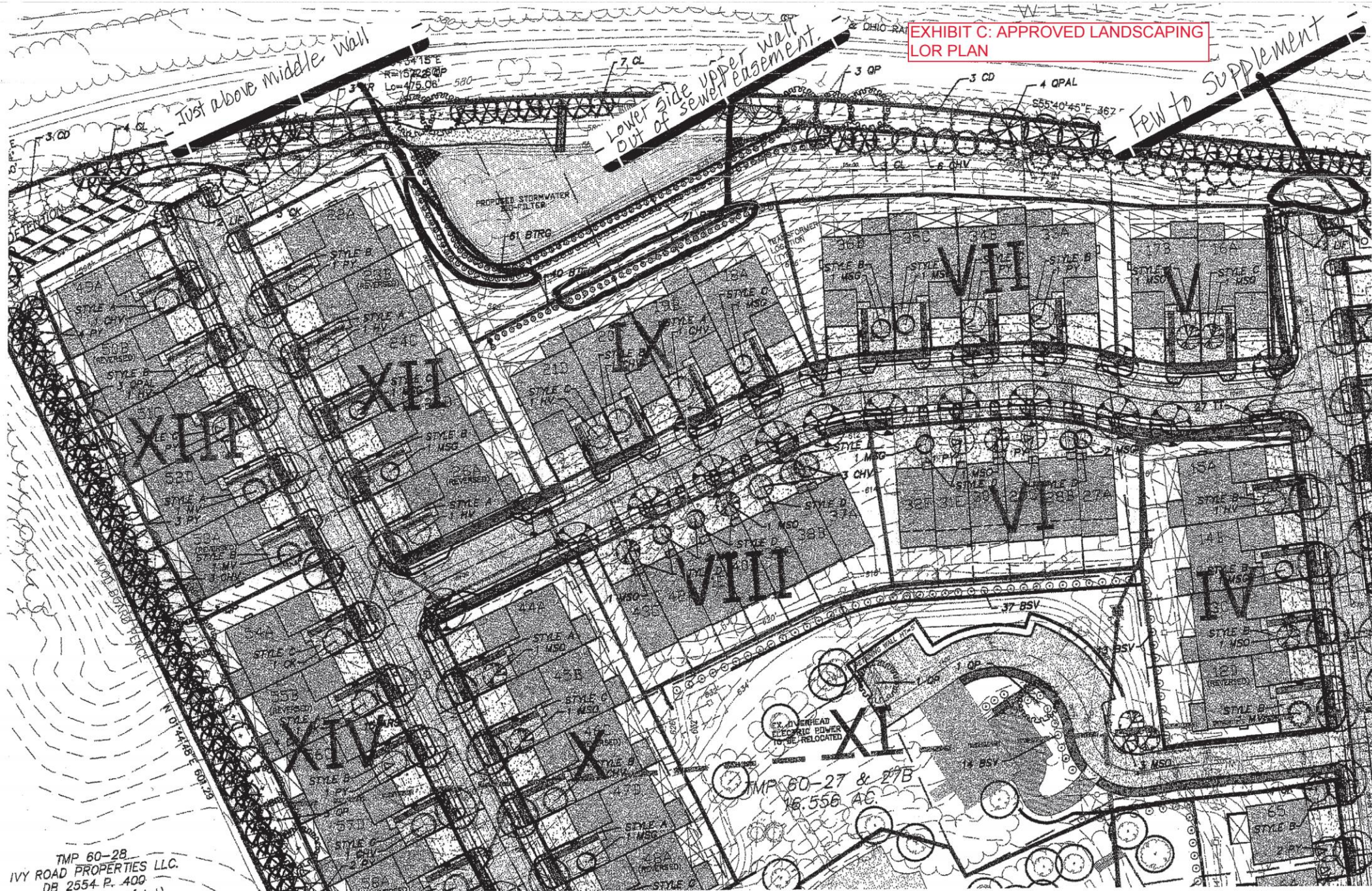
DATE	REVISION DESCRIPTION
12.15.05	PER COUNTY COMMENTS
03.09.06	PER COUNTY COMMENTS
05.14.06	PER COUNTY COMMENTS
05.14.06	PER AFB AND COUNTY COMMENTS
10.11.06	PER AFB AND COUNTY COMMENTS

12.15.05
DRAWN BY
DESIGNED BY
CHECKED BY
SCALE
1" = 50'

PROJECT: 03/01/06 - Kenridge
SHEET: 22 of 28
DATE: 12.15.05
DRAWN BY: S. COLLINS
DESIGNED BY: S. COLLINS
CHECKED BY: S. COLLINS
SCALE: 1" = 50'

JOB NO.
SHEET NO.
22 of 28

EXHIBIT C: APPROVED LANDSCAPING
LOR PLAN



TMP 60-28
IVY ROAD PROPERTIES LLC.
DB 2554 P. 400



Picture #1: Western Boundary



. Picture #4: Western Boundary



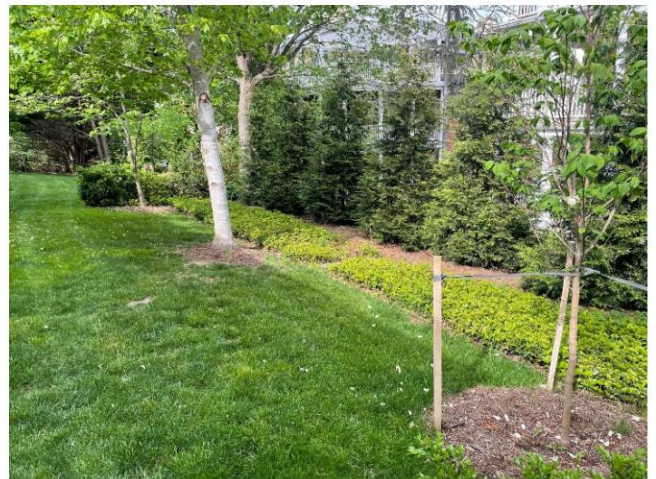
Picture #2: Western Boundary



Picture #5: Eastern Boundary



Picture #3: Western Boundary



Picture #6: Eastern Boundary



Picture #7: Eastern Boundary



Picture #10: Northern Boundary



Picture #8: Eastern Boundary



Picture #11: Northern Boundary



Picture #9: Northern Boundary



Picture #12: Northern Boundary