



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

May 2, 2008

Rear Admiral Richard R. Jeffries
Medical Corps, U. S. Navy
Commander, National Naval Medical Center
8901 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20889

Dear Admiral Jeffries:

The Montgomery County Planning Board reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) activities at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, Maryland at its regularly scheduled meeting of May 1, 2008.

The Board is pleased with the Navy's recognition of the needs expressed by the Board during its review of the DEIS and that many of these issues were addressed to a large extent in the FEIS. The request for funding through the Defense Access Road (DAR) program for construction of the turn lanes at NNMC gates to reduce congestion and queuing on adjacent streets, construction of a Kiss and Ride area, and, especially, funding of a new Medical Center Metro station entrance on the east side of Rockville Pike are encouraging. These are some of the priorities that the Board identified and we are pleased to see that the Navy is working toward funding of these important projects.

Your support for DAR certification of these projects is greatly appreciated as it will be critical to secure federal funding for these projects. The Board requests that all necessary steps be taken to achieve DAR certification by the Department of Defense and that the members of Congress be informed that this funding is crucial for our community.

In two areas, parking and off-base housing needs, we still need additional information from you so we can effectively address implications for both your campus master plan and plans for our adjacent communities and nearby areas. Detailed information on this subject will help us to provide you with realistic and constructive suggestions. While the FEIS identified strategies to mitigate trips, as defined and required by law, we share a common interest in ensuring that the NNMC ultimately exceeds minimum requirements and provides the highest quality access to health care for our servicemen and women. To this end the Planning Board has two requests:

We request that the Navy provide detailed information about the number, allocation, and accumulation forecasts for on-campus parking spaces for visitors, patients and employees in the upcoming master plan update. This information will help us reach an informed assessment of the parking needs and how parking and transportation demand management

strategies for employees can help achieve our goal of reducing traffic in the area while retaining needed accessibility for patients and visitors. The Board also suggests strongly that the NNMCM master plan include detailed information on housing and lodging needs within the campus as well as the need for off-campus short-term housing for patients and their families or friends. This information has been missing from the DEIS and FEIS. Without this information, our community planners are unable to assess the impact of BRAC on area land use and plan for adequate housing for those who may need temporary lodging.

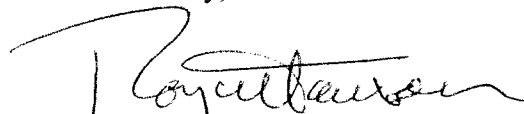
Cultural resources are expected to be negatively impacted by the selection of Alternative One as the Preferred Alternative due to the proposed demolition of historic Building 12. However, the Navy should be commended for the sensitivity of the design for proposed Buildings A and B at the property. Our Historic Preservation staff will continue coordination with you under the Section 106 consultation process. The Board strongly recommends that the intent of local laws be followed in mitigating all adverse impacts associated with BRAC, including the erosion and sediment control and forest conservation activities described in the FEIS. We look forward to continuing our coordination with you, the Maryland Department of Planning, and the National Capital Planning Commission, in the continuing review of submittal materials for local plan consistency, per Title V of the National Capital Planning Act and Section 7-112 of the Regional District Act.

We agree with the County BRAC Implementation Advisory Committee that in addition to establishing a community liaison officer at the medical center, the important work of the Defense Department in expansion of the medical center will be facilitated and enhanced by working with a community advisory group. Our long experience with such groups commends them to you as an invaluable connection to affected communities that can facilitate accurate communication to local publics and provide helpful ideas and advice on the wide range of issues that arise in the implementation of large projects such as yours.

Finally, the Board is looking forward to review and comment on your NNMCM Master Plan currently being updated. In that plan, the Board will look for a comprehensive Transportation Management Plan that takes into consideration reduction of parking spaces and incentives for use of mass transportation for NNMCM employees to reduce traffic congestion on our roadway system.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We look forward to staying informed of, and involved in, the BRAC implementation process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Royce Hanson", with a stylized, flowing script.

Royce Hanson
Chairman