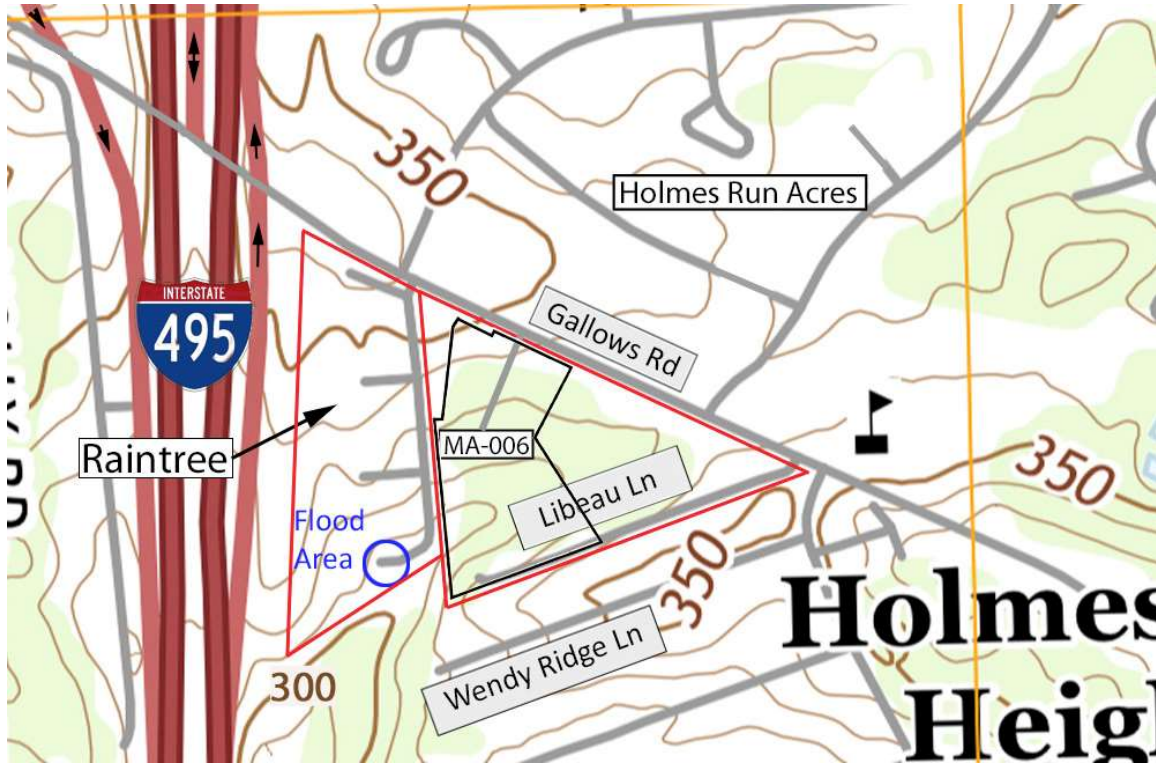


2023 Site Specific Plan Amendment Process
Comments on CPN22-MA-006, Madison Acquisitions, LLC
R-2 to PDH-4 at Gallows Road and Libeau Lane

Raintree Homeowners Association
3406 Wheatwheel Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
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The Raintree Homeowners Association appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments on the proposal to replan subject property from R-2 to PDH-4. As shown in the graphic above, the association's property lies immediately west of subject property. Subject property challenges development in four principal dimensions: topography, storm water management, traffic, and compatibility in scale with surrounding residential developments.

Topography: North to south along the western boundary of the property, the elevation drops from 350 ft to 306 ft in a distance of 640 ft, a steep slope of 1:14. The slope east to west on the southern portion of the property is similarly steep. The applicant's suggestion to build 20 homes on the property each with a finished area of 3000-4000 sq ft plus an integral two-car garage seems incompatible with the topography short of massive regrading and tree loss as well as ubiquitous retaining walls.

Storm Water Management: All of the runoff from subject property drains toward Raintree. In fact, all of the property inside the nine-acre area bounded by Gallows Rd, Libeau Ln, and Raintree drains onto Raintree, some of it first draining onto subject property. The county map on which the above graphic is based labels the point at which this runoff reaches Raintree a “Flood Area,” and the area has flooded in the past. Currently, the runoff is directed to a culvert that runs underneath homes in the Raintree community to an outfall at the southwest corner. The development concept submitted by the applicant would greatly increase the area of impervious surface with roof tops and pavement. If the site is replanned from R-2 to PDH-4, the following note should be added to the Comp Plan.

Location and topography of the site present unique challenges for storm water management. A significant increase in impervious surface area will require control measures “far beyond” current county codes.



Traffic: Subject property is surrounded on the north, east, and south sides by single family detached homes in Holmes Run Acres and along Gallows Rd and Wendy Ridge Lane. Raintree on the west is a community of single family attached homes. The Woodburn Elementary School is across the street on Gallows. A principal traffic generator in the area is INOVA’s flagship, the 923-bed Fairfax Medical Campus close by just west of I-495. A second major traffic source is the 1.4 million sq ft INOVA Center for Personalized Health on Gallows directly opposite the Fairfax Medical Campus. Additional traffic on Gallows is traveling to/from Arlington Blvd and Lee Highway, which intersect with Gallows farther to the west and north.

Currently, Raintree residents experience difficulty accessing Gallows Rd during heavy traffic periods. Mile-long west-bound traffic queues build up behind the series of traffic lights at the ends of the three I-495 exit ramps. Under these conditions, left turns out of Raintree are all but impossible, and right turns can be difficult due to a nearly continuous stream of traffic coming from the left. While, as one would expect, the exit-ramp traffic lights break up the traffic stream coming from the west on Gallows, traffic on the north-bound exit ramp on the east side of I-495 can turn right-on-red and frequently fills in the gaps. Exiting Raintree under heavy traffic conditions can be stressful and dangerous.



The applicant's development concept would exacerbate this difficult situation. Libeau Ln is a dirt road, in spots barely one-lane wide. The only access to subject property is on Gallows Rd. Adding an access point for 20 homes barely 300 ft east of Raintree would introduce potential competition for Raintree residents trying to turn right onto Gallows. Currently, the only access points along the south side of Gallows Rd between Raintree and Libeau Ln, a distance of 1100 ft, are private driveways of nine single family detached homes. The development concept's suggestion to eliminate three of these driveways while introducing its own access road serving 20 homes and only 300 ft east would aggravate current traffic issues.



Scale of Development: Policy b of Objective 14 in the land use section of the Policy Plan encourages “infill development in established areas that is compatible with existing ...land use and that is at a compatible scale with the surrounding area.” Subject property is surrounded by single-family residential developments with two-story homes of modest height. The applicant's development concept suggests large homes up to 35 ft tall, possibly constructed on high retaining walls, looming over currently established neighbors. The photos above show examples of such

large homes that were recently constructed in the Hudson Quarter (infill) subdivision on Sleepy Hollow Rd a mile or so south of Seven Corners. The retaining walls are 10 ft high, and the homes turn their ugly backs on and loom over their neighbors across the street. Current neighbors of subject property are particularly vulnerable to such blight because any development will be constructed on their property lines. There will be no Sleepy Hollow Rd to provide a measure of separation. The development on subject property should be compatible in scale with surrounding neighborhoods.

Plan Change to PDH-4. The association believes that residential development is the preferred option for subject property and, separated from the applicant's development concept, would not oppose a Comp Plan change from R-2 to PDH-4. However, as outlined above, the association has serious concerns regarding the development concept and opposes a Plan change to expedite its implementation. Further pursuit of the development concept should be relegated to the conventional re-zoning process, including a final development plan and concurrent Plan amendment. The RZ/FDP process would address and hopefully resolve the concerns raised herein.

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