

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	23351 Davis Mill Road, Germantown	Meeting Date:	2/25/2026
Resource:	Contributing Resource Cedar Grove Historic District	Report Date:	2/18/2026
Applicant:	Alexander Chester	Public Notice:	2/11/2026
Review:	Preliminary Consultation	Tax Credit:	No
Permit No.:	1145858	Staff:	Laura DiPasquale
Proposal:	Tree removal, demolition of existing garage, and construction of new garage		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make any revisions recommended by the HPC and return for a HAWP.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource to the Cedar Grove Historic District
STYLE: American Four Square
DATE: 1912



Figure 1: Location of the subject property (shown with a yellow star), which is part of, but discontinuous from, the rest of the Cedar Grove Historic District.

PROPOSAL

This preliminary consultation review seeks feedback on the proposed demolition of an existing wood-frame garage and construction of a new 35-ft wide by 24-ft deep by 12-ft tall three-bay steel garage at the rear of the subject property. The applicant also proposes to remove select trees to accommodate the new construction, and to add gravel paving in front of the new garage.

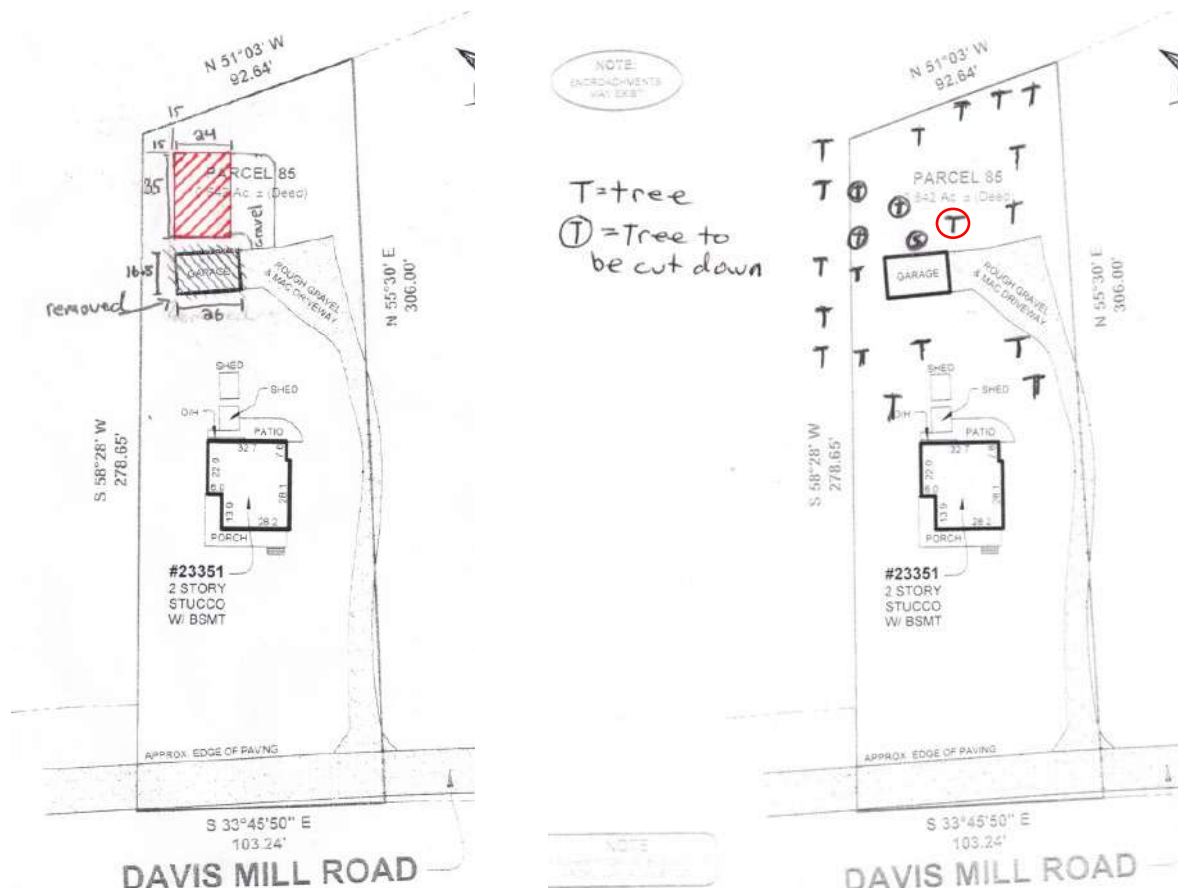


Figure 2: Site plan showing the existing garage to be demolished and proposed new garage (left); Site plan showing existing trees and proposed trees to be removed (right). Staff has added a red circle around a tree not shown for removal, but which falls in the middle of the proposed driveway.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:

When reviewing alterations and new construction with the Cedar Grove Historic District, several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the *Cedar Grove Historic District Amendment (Amendment)*, Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to ensure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
 - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
 - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” The *Standards* are as follows:

- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

STAFF DISCUSSION:

The subject property is described in the Cedar Grove Historic District Amendment as a “two-story stuccoed American Four Square-style house built in 1912... Although non-contiguous with the rest of the district, this resource is historically and architecturally connected.”



Figure 33: View of the subject property from Davis Mill Road (January 2026, Historic Preservation Division).

Demolition of Existing Garage

Staff finds that the inventory entry does not describe the existing garage, which is a wood-framed structure with a hipped roof and vertical wood siding. The garage is in poor condition. Staff finds that, although the garage may be contemporaneous to the house, the structure is utilitarian in nature and secondary in significance to the historic house which is specifically described in the Amendment inventory. Therefore, staff finds that the removal of the structure leaves fully intact the Contributing resource and that its demolition would not substantially alter the exterior features of the resource, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and that the historic character of the property would be retained and preserved despite its removal, pursuant to *Standard 2*.



Figure 4: View of the northwest and southwest elevations of the existing garage (left) and southwest elevation (right).



Figure 5: View of the southwest and southeast elevations of the existing garage. The location of the proposed garage is to the far right in the image.

Tree Removal

In addition to the garage demolition, the applicant proposes to remove select trees in the rear yard in order to construct the proposed garage and driveway. Staff notes that the tree survey site plan shows one tree to remain in a location where the proposed gravel driveway would be. Staff has circled that tree on *Figure 2* and visible in the right foreground of *Figure 5*. Staff finds that the removal of select trees at the rear of the property will not have a significant impact on the property, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1).



Figure 6: Photograph showing the trees proposed for removal.

Proposed Garage

The proposed garage is a steel structure with vertical metal siding and a low-slope metal roof. The garage would measure 35 feet in length by 24 feet in depth and be 12 feet tall, with 15-foot setbacks from the rear and side property lines. The garage would have three bays with commercial steel doors.



Figure 7: Renderings of the proposed garage.

With a footprint of 840 sq ft to the main house's approximately 1,174 sq ft footprint, the proposed structure exceeds the footprint allowable by Zoning in the AR zone, which specifies that the cumulative footprint of all accessory buildings on a lot with a detached house may not exceed 50% of the footprint of the principal building, unless the structure is for agricultural use. The property has two other smaller sheds whose square footage has not been identified. The applicant has indicated that they wish to seek a Zoning variance for the size of the structure.

Staff finds that, although the footprint of the proposed structure is large, at approximately 80 feet from the rear of the main block and at 1-story in height, the proposed structure is appropriately scaled and located far enough away from the 2.5-story historic building to maintain its character and that of the site and setting, identified as key to new construction on historic sites in the Secretary of the Interior's *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, which extrapolate on the more succinct *Standards for Rehabilitation*.¹

Regarding the design of the proposed structure, staff finds that gable-roofed utilitarian accessory structures are common in rural parts of the county, but that the roof pitches of these structures tend to be greater than that of the proposed structure (see *Figures 8-11* below). Staff suggests that the applicants increase the roof pitch to a minimum of 3/12, include a slight roof overhang, and add corner boards to the structure to create more traditional proportions, massing, and design, such as those found in *Figure 12*. Staff generally supports the use of steel siding on an accessory structure in this location, and the use of metal roofing, but recommends that the siding and roofing be differentiated from one another, as traditional rural outbuildings tended to have standing-seam metal roofs with wider panels and horizontal or vertical wood siding with narrower profiles.

¹ *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf>



Figure 8: Birdseye view of the subject property (outlined in blue) showing the neighboring properties, all of which fall outside of the Cedar Grove Historic District boundaries.



Figure 9: 23411 Ridge Road, a Contributing resource in the Cedar Grove Historic District. The HPC approved the gable-roofed accessory structure on the left of the image in 2022. For reference, the sides of this structure are 8 feet tall and the peak of the roof is an additional 7 feet, for a total of 15 feet. [23411 Ridge Road, Cedar Grove - 986499 - Approval.pdf](#)



Figure 10: Google Streetview of the commercial buildings south across Davis Mill Road from the subject property, which fall outside of the district boundary.



Figure 11: The Contributing Cedar Grove Store property at 23412 Ridge Road (left) and adjacent service station, which falls outside of the district boundary.



Figure 12: Examples of three-bay garages with 3/12 or greater pitched roofs, differentiated roofing, and corner boards.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based upon the HPC's comments and return with an Historic Area Work Permit application.

Staff Requested HPC Feedback

- Appropriateness of the demolition of the existing garage.
- Appropriateness of the proposed location of the garage.
- Appropriateness of the size and scale of the proposed garage.
- Appropriateness of the materials and design of the proposed garage.
- Appropriateness of an attached garage addition in lieu of a freestanding garage.
- Appropriateness of the proposed tree removal.
- Any other comments.

Staff Recommended Materials for HAWP

- Existing and proposed site plans including dimensions for proposed gravel hardscaping.
- Updated tree survey.
- Updated dimensioned elevation drawings.
- Materials specifications.

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

Single family home (2240 sqft) on a long rectangular lot (approx 100ft wide by 285ft long) Front of home is located 97ft from road. Left side of lot abuts Upper Seneca Baptist Church's parking lot. 19ft of grass and 56ft of asphalt running the entire length of the property. Rear of property abuts church's rear parking lot. 37ft of grass and 55 feet of asphalt running the entire rear of property. Right side of property has a thick tree line separating it from 23345 Davis Mill Rd. Homes are side by side. Rear yard of 23345 Davis Mill Rd has 2 out buildings, a single large car garage, and a separate 2 car garage. Across the street is Grey Goose Farm a landscaping company.

There is a single car garage in the rear of 23351 Davis Mill Rd that is in very poor/dangerous condition and will be demolished prior to building the 3 car garage further back on the property.

The property has a very flat grade and will need very minimal grading for the concrete.

Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:

Pouring a 6 inch slab of concrete and erecting a 3-car 35x24x12 steel building in the far left corner of my lot. The 3 garage doors will be 10x10 in size.

The current single car garage, which is in extremely poor condition, will be demolished and debris removed.

Work Item 1: Tree Removal and Current Garage Demolition

Description of Current Condition:

There are numerous trees in the rear yard of property. In left rear corner of property, where where 3 car garage is to be built, there are 10 trees 4 of which will need to be removed.

There is single car garage that is in very poor condition and damaged.

Proposed Work:

Removal of 4 trees. Three are small thin pine trees and one is an over grown shrub.

Demolish and remove all debris from original single car garage.

Work Item 2: Excavation and Concrete

Description of Current Condition:

The area where 3 car garage will be built is flat. There are no major rocks. There is no issue with water run off. There is nothing impeding a 6 inch deep excavation or 24ft x 35ft.

Proposed Work:

To have a concrete company excavate for a 6 in concrete pad of 24 feet by 35 feet and pour concrete for the building.

Work Item 3: Steel 3 Car Garage

Description of Current Condition:

Flat empty soil in left rear corner of property.

Proposed Work:

Erect a 24 foot deep, 35 foot length, and 12 foot tall steel building on concrete slab.

Three 10 foot by 10 foot garage doors on the 35 foot side facing into the property and a 3 foot by 7 foot door for resident to enter structure located facing the rear of the house.

NOTE:
ENCROACHMENTS
MAY EXIST

Existing Site Plan

N 51°03' W
92.64'

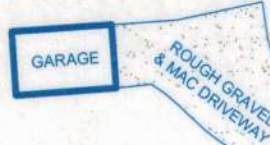


L. 8280, F. 513

PARCEL 85
0.642 Ac. ± (Deed)

S 58°28' W
278.65'

N 55°30' E
306.00'



#23351
2 STORY
STUCCO
W/ BSMT

APPROX. EDGE OF PAVING

S 33°45'50" E
103.24'

DAVIS MILL ROAD

NOTE:
PROPERTY MAY BE SUBJECT TO
A ROAD-WAY ACQUISITION

LOCATION DRAWING OF:
#23351 DAVIS MILL ROAD
PARCEL 85 TAX MAP FW11
N/F PROPERTY OF
CHRISTOPHER RUEGG & ANIKI STEENSEN
LIBER 8280 , FOLIO 513
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
SCALE: 1"=50' DATE: 11-28-2018
DRAWN BY: CP(JCW) FILE #: 189572-748

- LEGEND:**
- X- FENCE
 - B/E - BASEMENT ENTRANCE
 - B/W - BAY WINDOW
 - BR - BRICK
 - BRL - BLDG. RESTRICTION LINE
 - BSMT - BASEMENT
 - C/S - CONCRETE STOOP
 - CONC - CONCRETE
 - D/W - DRIVEWAY
 - EX - EXISTING
 - FR - FRAME
 - MAC - MACADAM
 - G - GATE
 - O/H - OVERHANG
 - PUE - PUBLIC UTILITY ESMT.
 - PIE - PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT ESMT.
- COLOR KEY:**
- (RED) - RECORD INFORMATION
 - (BLUE) - IMPROVEMENTS
 - (GREEN) - ESMTS & RESTRICTION LINES

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Serving D.C. and MD.

14604 Elm Street, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Phone: 301-888-1111 Fax: 301-888-1114
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SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE

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DULEY & ASSOC.

WILL GIVE YOU A 100% FULL CREDIT TOWARDS UPGRADING THIS SURVEY TO A "BOUNDARY/STAKE" SURVEY FOR ONE YEAR FROM THE DATE OF THIS SURVEY.

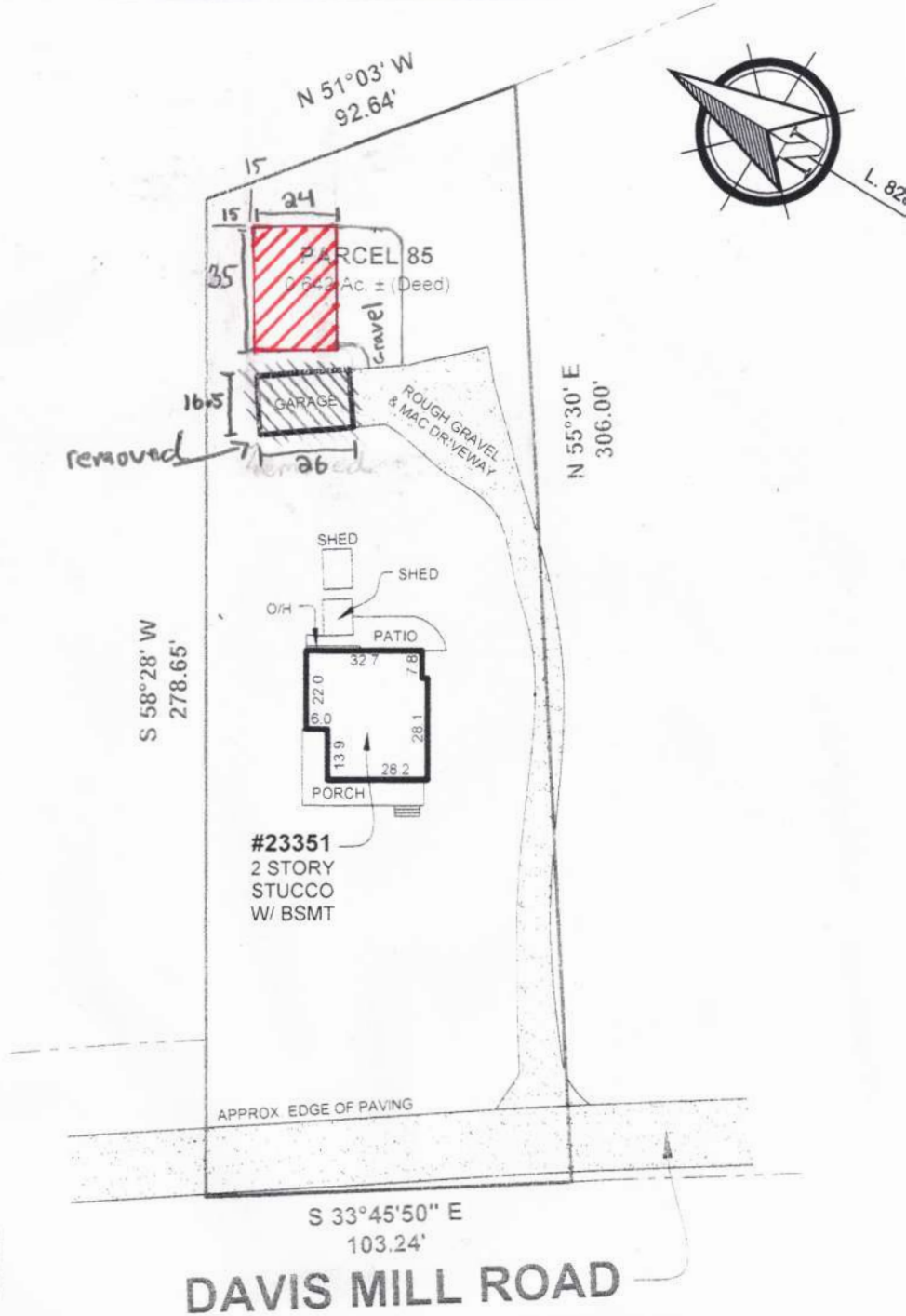
(EXCLUDING D.C. & BALT. CITY)



CASE #: 18-62100FS

Proposed Site Plan

NOTE:
ENCROACHMENTS
MAY EXIST



NOTE
PROPERTY MAY BE SUBJECT TO
FUTURE ACQUISITION

LOCATION DRAWING OF:
#23351 DAVIS MILL ROAD
PARCEL 85 TAX MAP FW11
N/F PROPERTY OF
CHRISTOPHER RUEGG & ANIKI STEENSEN
LIBER 8280, FOLIO 513
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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 - PUE - PUBLIC UTILITY ESMT.
 - PIE - PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT ESMT.
- COLOR KEY:**
(RED) - RECORD INFORMATION

SCALE: 1"=50' DATE: 11-28-2018
DRAWN BY: CR/ICWA FILE #: 180573-748

A Land Surveying Company



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14604 Elm Street, Upper Marlboro, MD

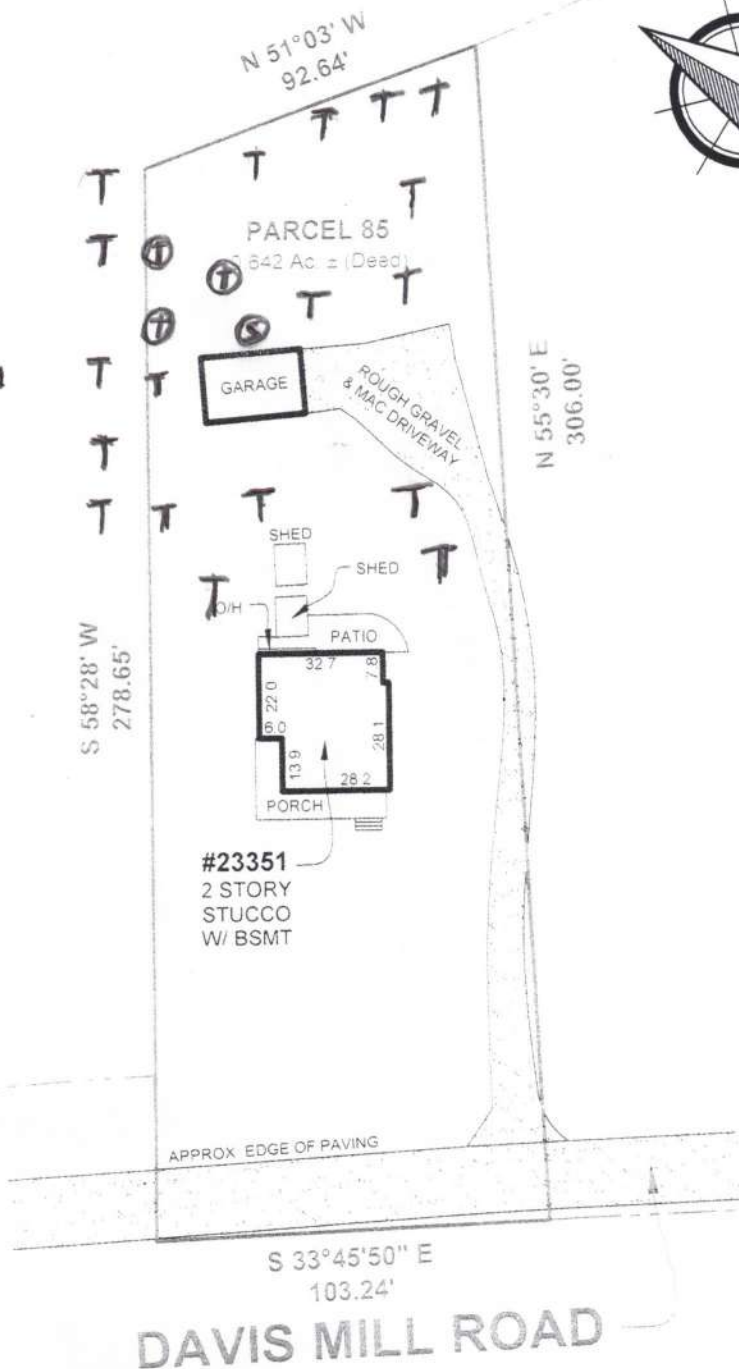
Phone: 301-888-1111 Fax: 301-888-1112
Email: orders@duley.biz On the web: www.duley.biz

CASE #: 18-62100FS

Proposed Tree Removal

NOTE:
ENCROACHMENTS
MAY EXIST

T = tree
Ⓣ = Tree to
be cut down



NOTE:
PROPERTY OF THE SURVEYOR
ENCLOSURE

LOCATION DRAWING OF:

**#23351 DAVIS MILL ROAD
PARCEL 85 TAX MAP FW11**
N/F PROPERTY OF
CHRISTOPHER RUEGG & ANIKI STEENSEN

LIBER 8280, FOLIO 513
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

SCALE: 1"=50' DATE: 11-28-2018
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DULEY & ASSOCIATES, INC.

WILL GIVE YOU
FULL CREDIT TO
UPGRADING







12'

Sidewall B
35'

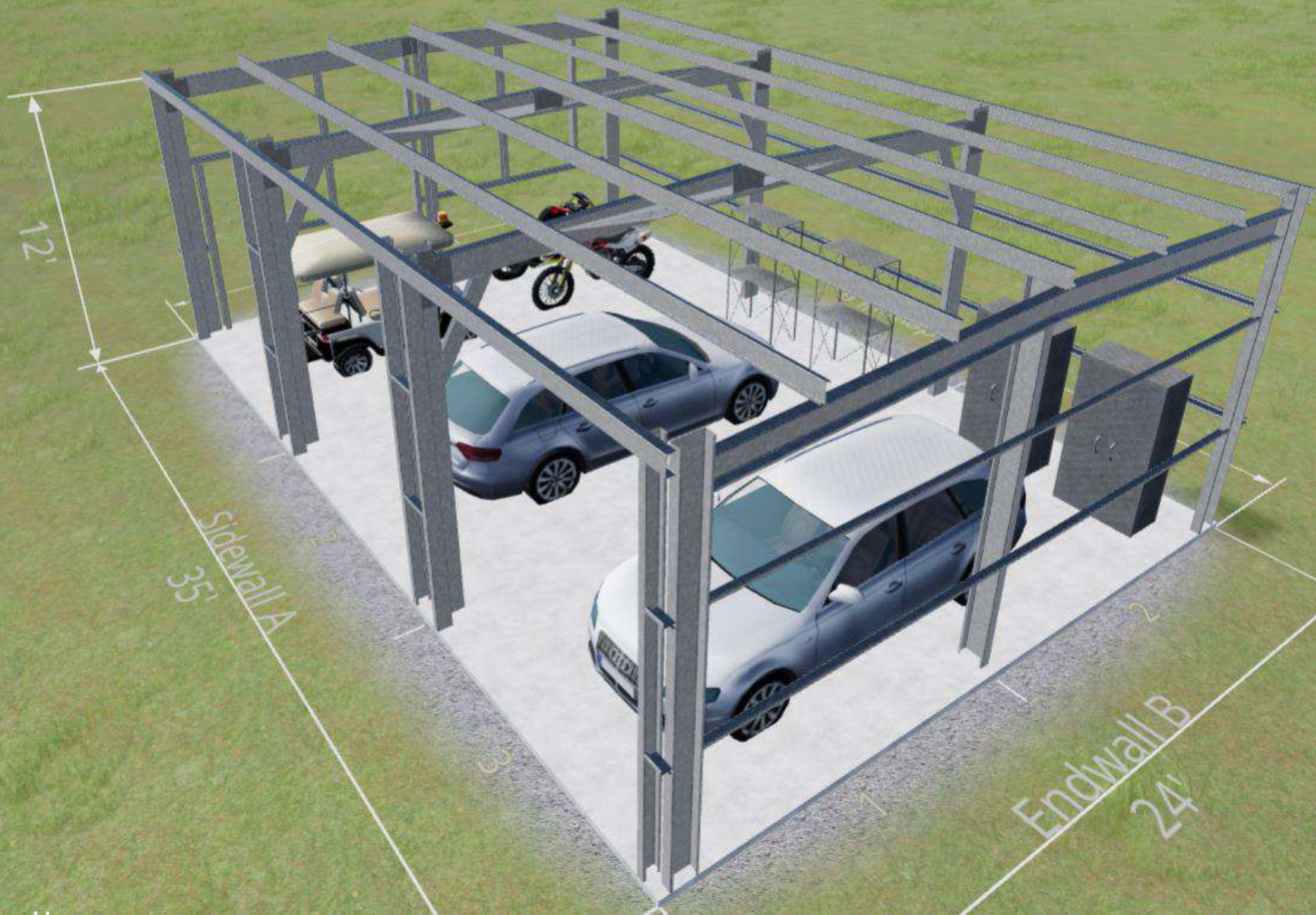
Endwall A
24'







12'







Upper Seneca Baptist Church

23351

23345



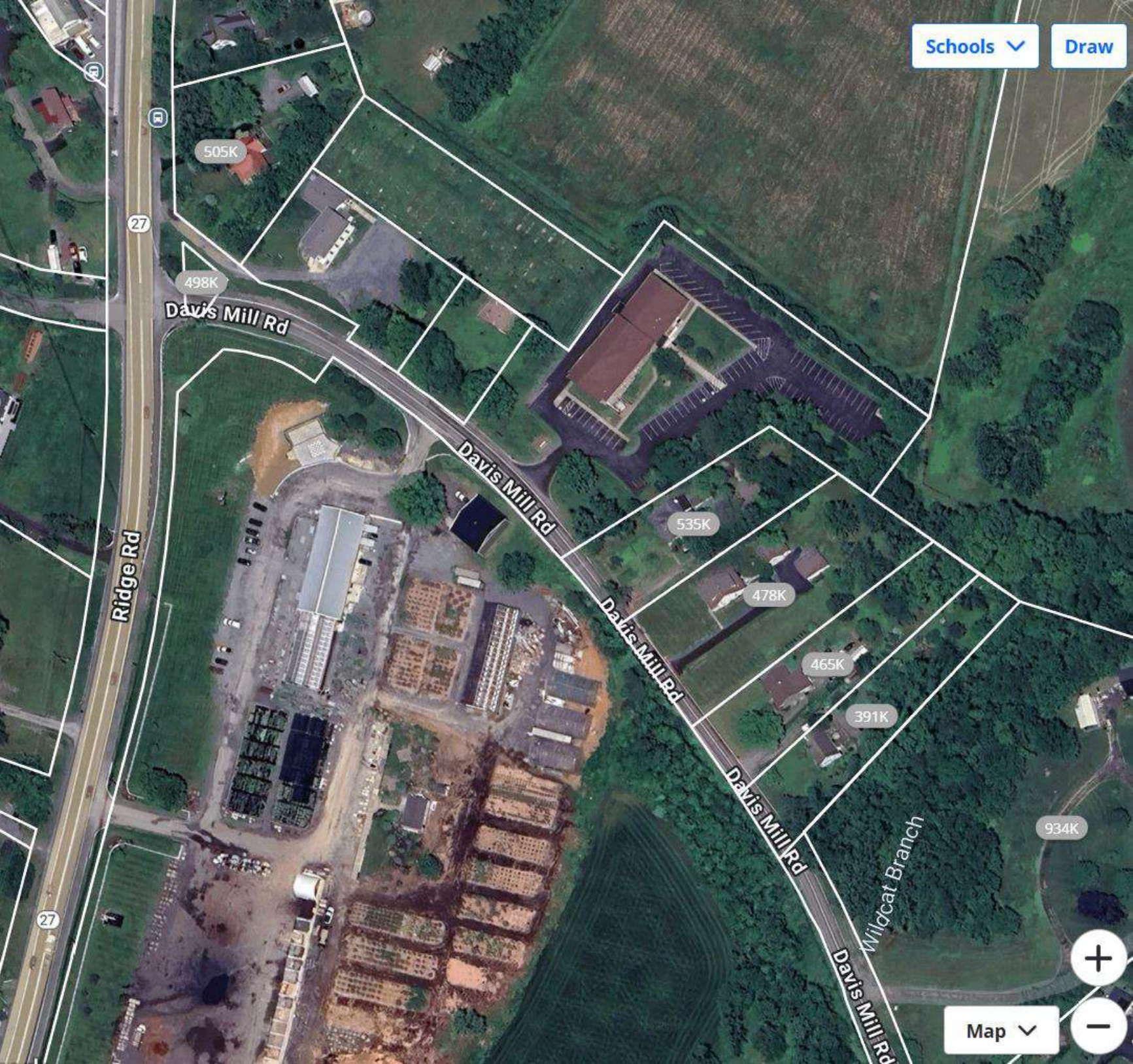
⊕ Christ Lutheran Church

⊕ Upper Seneca Baptist Church



Schools ▾

Draw



27

27

Ridge Rd

Davis Mill Rd

Davis Mill Rd

Davis Mill Rd

Davis Mill Rd

Wildcat Branch
Davis Mill Rd

505K

498K

535K

478K

465K

391K

934K

27

Map ▾

+

-

Montgomery County Zoning (last amended: June 18, 2024 [H-150](#))

Details

Layers

Info

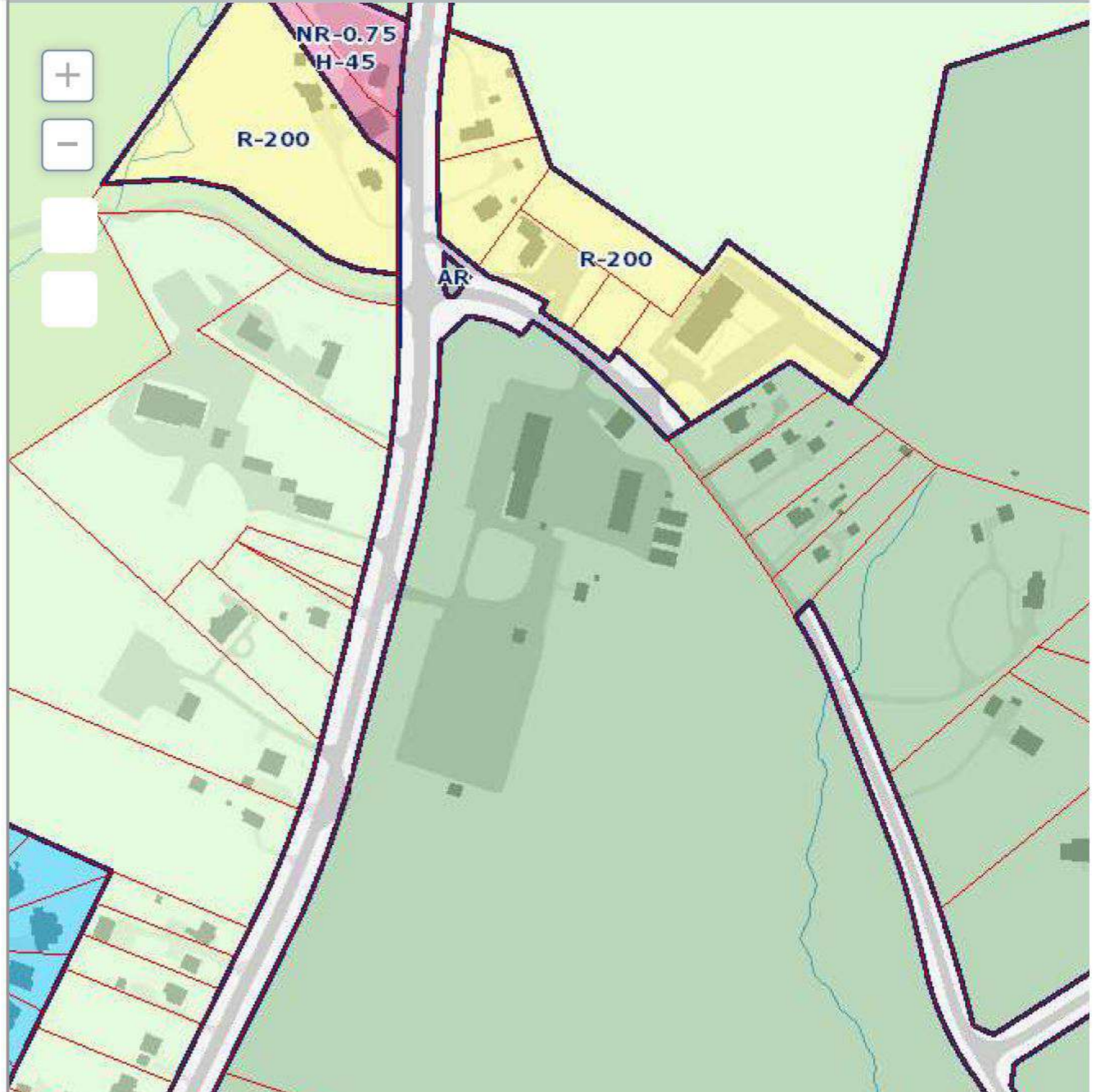
Dev. Info

Print

Measure



Property Info	
Location:	Latitude: 39.2405 Longitude: -77.2389
ACCT #:	00030440
Parcel , Lot , Block:	P067 , N/A , N/A
Address:	23404 RIDGE RD GERMANTOWN, 20876
Legal Description:	LOCUST HILL ETC
Landuse:	Parks
WSSC Grid:	232NW11
Zoning Info	
Zone:	RC
Overlay Zone:	N/A
TDR Overlay:	N/A
Allowable Use Table:	View PDF
Map Amendments:	G-266 G-710 G-956
Other Legislative Districts	
<u>Septic Tier:</u>	Tier 2: Sewer planned
Water/Sewer Categories:	W-1 / S-1
Municipality:	N/A
<u>Master Plan:</u>	CLARKSBURG MASTER PLAN
<u>Historic Site/District:</u>	N/A
Parking District:	N/A
Urban District:	N/A
Central Business District:	N/A
<u>Special Protection Area:</u>	N/A
Watershed:	Little Seneca Creek
<u>Enterprise Zone:</u>	N/A
<u>Arts & Entertainment District:</u>	N/A
<u>Special Tax District:</u>	N/A
<u>Bike/Pedestrian Priority Area:</u>	N/A
<u>Urban Renewal Area:</u>	N/A
<u>Metro Station Policy Area:</u>	N/A
Priority Funding Area:	N/A



Montgomery County Zoning (last amended: June 18, 2024 [H-150](#))

Details

Layers

Info

Dev. Info

Print

Measure

Property Info

Location: Latitude: 39.2400
Longitude: -77.2328

ACCT #: [00923535](#)

Parcel, Lot, Block: P085, N/A, N/A

Address: [23351 DAVIS MILL RD](#)
[GERMANTOWN, 20876](#)

Legal Description: RES ON LOCUST LEVEL

Landuse: Single Family Detached

WSSC Grid: 232NW11

Zoning Info

Zone: [AR](#)

Overlay Zone: N/A

TDR Overlay: N/A

Allowable Use Table: [View PDF](#)

Map Amendments: G-266 [G-956](#)

Other Legislative Districts

Septic Tier: [Tier 4: Conservation Area](#)

Water/Sewer Categories: [W-1](#) / [S-6](#)

Municipality: N/A

Master Plan: [AGRICULTURAL & RURAL OPEN SPACE](#)

Historic Site/District: [CEDAR GROVE HISTORIC DISTRICT](#)

Parking District: N/A

Urban District: N/A

Central Business District: N/A

Special Protection Area: N/A

Watershed: Upper Great Seneca Creek

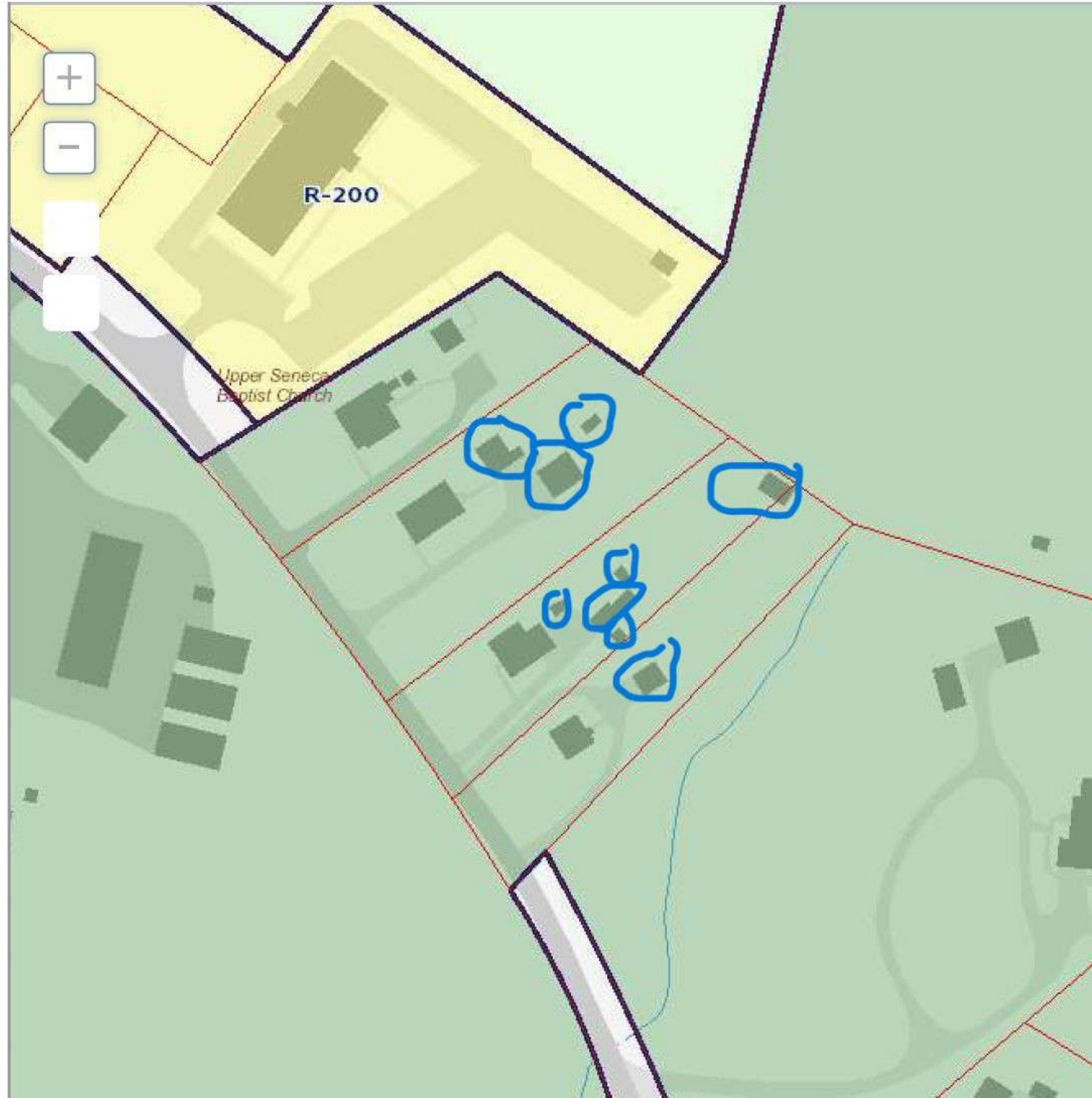
Enterprise Zone: N/A

Arts & Entertainment District: N/A

Special Tax District: N/A

Bike/Pedestrian Priority Area: N/A

X



[Details](#)
[Layers](#)
[Info](#)
[Dev. Info](#)
[Print](#)
[Measure](#)

Property Info	
Location:	Latitude: 39.2400 Longitude: -77.2328
ACCT #:	00923535
Parcel , Lot , Block:	P085 , N/A , N/A
Address:	23351 DAVIS MILL RD GERMANTOWN, 20876
Legal Description:	RES ON LOCUST LEVEL
Landuse:	Single Family Detached
WSSC Grid:	232NW11
Zoning Info	
Zone:	AR
Overlay Zone:	N/A
TDR Overlay:	N/A
Allowable Use Table:	View PDF
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Other Legislative Districts	
<u>Septic Tier:</u>	Tier 4: Conservation Area
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<u>Municipality:</u>	N/A
<u>Master Plan:</u>	AGRICULTURAL & RURAL OPEN SPACE
<u>Historic Site/District:</u>	CEDAR GROVE HISTORIC DISTRICT
<u>Parking District:</u>	N/A
<u>Urban District:</u>	N/A
<u>Central Business District:</u>	N/A
<u>Special Protection Area:</u>	N/A
<u>Watershed:</u>	Upper Great Seneca Creek
<u>Enterprise Zone:</u>	N/A
<u>Arts & Entertainment District:</u>	N/A
<u>Special Tax District:</u>	N/A
<u>Bike/Pedestrian Priority Area:</u>	N/A





















PRIVATE
PROPERTY





X X



