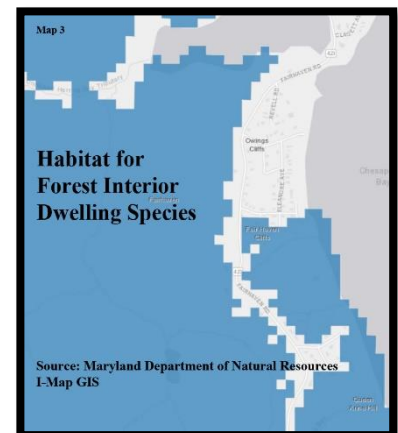
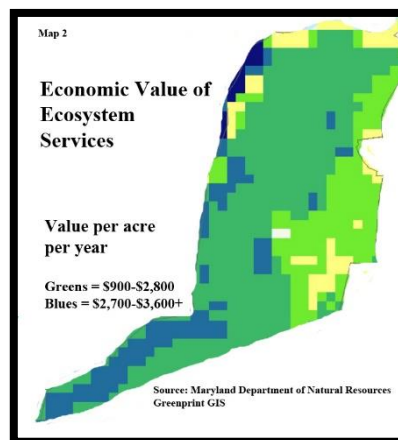
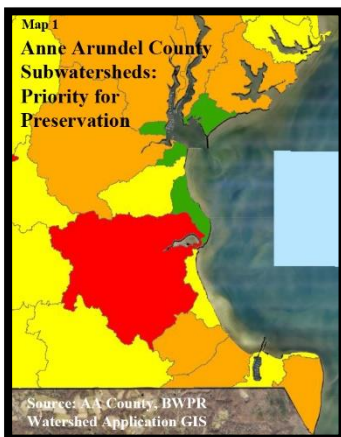
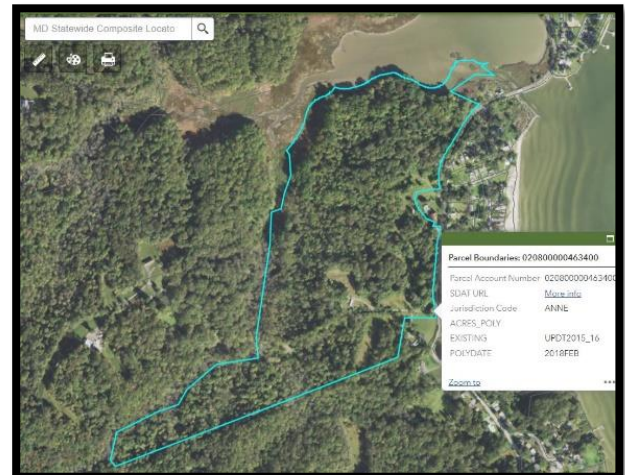


To: Office of Planning and Zoning  
 From: Kathy Gramp on behalf of the Advocates for Herring Bay (AHB)  
 Date: April 13, 2023  
 Re: Comments and questions on the proposed subdivision known as Parcel 45 – Eversfield, as described at a community meeting held on March 30, 2023

The Eversfield property is a keystone parcel in the Herring Bay watershed. It is an exemplar of Green Infrastructure, deserving of an investment by Anne Arundel County to preserve its ecologically valuable forests and wetlands. AHB urges the county to use the opportunity posed by the subdivision of the property to collaborate with the owners on mutually beneficial options for safeguarding those habitats. As discussed below, we also have comments on some of the features of the proposed subdivision plan.

**Background on the ecological features of the property.** The Eversfield property is in a subwatershed that has been ranked as high priority for preservation by Anne Arundel County’s watershed assessments (the area shaded in red in Map 1)<sup>1</sup>. As shown in Map 2, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimates that the economic value of the ecosystem services of most of the Eversfield acreage ranges from about \$900 to \$2,800 *per acre per year*, reflecting the importance of its forests, headwater streams, and diverse mix of wetlands. This steeply sloped property borders the southern edge of a large estuarine wetland (shown in the photo), and much of the parcel is in a Resource Conservation Area in the Critical Area.

Because the Eversfield property is part of a large network of forest, it provides habitat for Forest Interior Dwelling Species (DNR’s mapping of FIDS is shown in map 3). Observations taken near the Eversfield property in 2022 noted several FIDS bird species, including Kentucky Warblers and Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers<sup>2</sup> (see Attachment 1 on page 3). The woodlands and streams also are known for the sounds of barred and screech owls as well as a diverse range of amphibians. Beavers, otters, and other mammals are known to inhabit the wetland areas.



<sup>1</sup> See Anne Arundel County, [Herring Bay, Middle Patuxent, and Lower Patuxent Watershed Assessment](#), June 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The [e-bird observations](#) listed in Appendix 1 were taken on a parcel about 1,500 feet from the Eversfield parcel.

Given the environmental significance of the Eversfield parcel, AHB urges Anne Arundel County to take the following actions in response to the proposed subdivision plan:

**1. Offer to compensate the owners for conservation easements** placed on ecologically valuable acreage. This is a prime opportunity for Anne Arundel County to make good its commitment in the Green Infrastructure Master Plan to conserve 5,000 acres by 2030. The subdivision process gives the county and the owners a venue for exploring forest conservation options before the sites are developed. In addition, analyzing the contours of possible easements at this stage may allow for a more accurate assessment of their value and ultimately result in more effective protection.

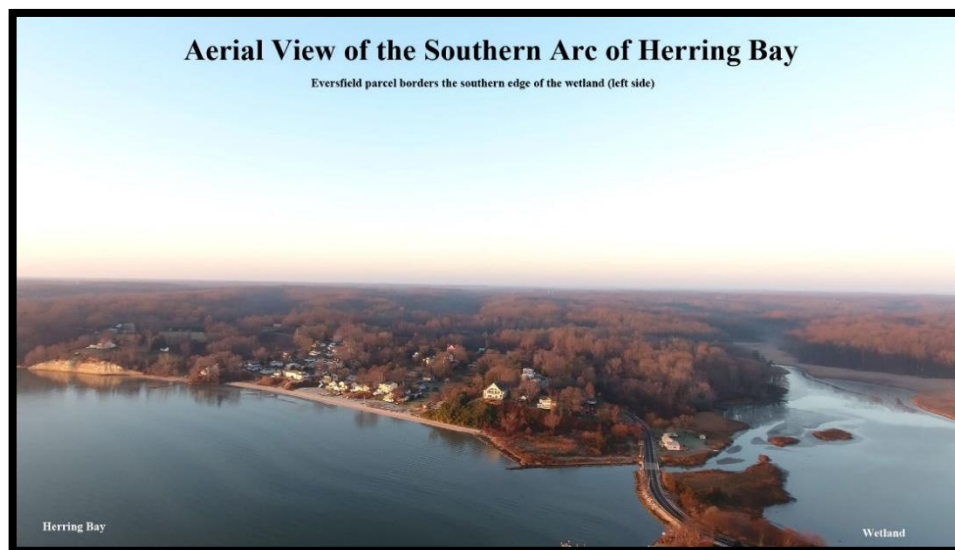
AHB does not know whether the owners will be interested in voluntary measures, but we believe it is incumbent on the county to act now to try to conserve these habitats. Further, as noted in our comments to the Planning Advisory Board on the Green Infrastructure Master Plan, we urge the county to consider innovative approaches compensating those who own acreage like the Eversfield parcel, where the economic value of the ecosystem services is very high.<sup>3</sup>

**2. Affirm protective designs in the subdivision plan** that will minimize forest loss and fragmentation and reduce the risk of erosion and runoff that could adversely affect streams and wetlands. One way the plan aligns with those goals is by proposing to use existing driveways for access to the four development sites. Similarly, approving homesites near the location of the perc-tests would minimize impacts on the parcel's steep slopes and stream buffers.

Some issues raised during the community meeting need further clarification. For example:

- The presenter noted that the owners may be eligible to create additional lots in the future. If more than four lots are possible under current law, we urge the county to factor the additional development rights into its review of this subdivision plan to ensure that the cumulative impact of siting more homes or other facilities is managed on a holistic basis.
- The presenter suggested that some of the acreage outside of the Critical Area may be put under a forest conservation easement. If so, the county should ensure that the easement includes the acreage with the highest ecological value.

Thank you for considering our information and views. AHB looks forward to working with the county on this and other efforts to conserve and enhance the ecological resources of the Herring Bay watershed.



<sup>3</sup> See AHB's November 2021 [comments to the Planning Advisory Board](#) on the draft Green Infrastructure Plan.

## Attachment 1

Observations of bird species on a parcel located about 1,500 feet from the Eversfield parcel, May 2022

**eBird** Submit Explore My eBird Science About News Help

CHECKLIST S111368467

Thu **26 May 2022** 6:05 PM

Hidden Valley Rd (Private) Anne Arundel County, Maryland, United States

**Mikey Lutmerding**  
Jo Lutmerding · Phoebe Lutmerding · Wren Lutmerding

Traveling Complete  
7 1 hr, 22 min 0.95 mi

**31** Species observed 77 individuals

- 1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker
- 2 Downy Woodpecker
- 2 Hairy Woodpecker
- 1 Pileated Woodpecker
- 2 Eastern Wood-Pewee
- 5 Acadian Flycatcher
- 2 Eastern Phoebe
- 1 Great Crested Flycatcher
- 5 Red-eyed Vireo
- 1 American Crow
- 2 Carolina Chickadee
- 4 Tufted Titmouse
- 1 Tree Swallow
- 1 White-breasted Nuthatch
- 3 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- 4 Carolina Wren
- 1 Gray Catbird
- 1 Eastern Bluebird
- 4 Wood Thrush
- 5 Cedar Waxwing
- 8 Red-winged Blackbird
- 1 Brown-headed Cowbird
- 1 Ovenbird
- 1 Kentucky Warbler
- 4 Common Yellowthroat
- 2 Northern Parula
- 1 Blackpoll Warbler
- 2 Scarlet Tanager
- 5 Northern Cardinal
- 3 Indigo Bunting