



## *Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs*

### *Office of the Secretary*

LARRY HOGAN  
GOVERNOR

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD  
LT. GOVERNOR

GEORGE W. OWINGS III  
SECRETARY

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Bridget Donnell Newton  
City of Rockville  
111 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mayor Newton,

Let me begin by thanking you and your staff, City of Rockville Council Members and especially the Town Manager, Robert (Rob) DiSpirito, for the constructive discussions provided during our meeting at the Redgate Golf Course and the follow-up telephone conversations concerning the acquisition a minimum of 10 acres of the Redgate property for a veterans' facility over the past several months.

As we informed those present at the golf course meeting and with Mr. DiSpirito, we have also been in conversations with the Maryland Department of General Services (DGS) for 20 acres of land at the Maryland State Springfield Hospital located in Carroll County for a larger veterans' home.

On 6 March I met with Sharon Murphy, Director of Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, DGS, and Paula Langmead, CEO of the Springfield Hospital Center along with Department of Management and Budget personnel at the Springfield site where we performed a site visit and discussed the details of our plan for a second veterans home as we did at Rockville in August.

We received some good news in that we will be able to use a recent feasibility study for the proposed facility, thereby reducing the timeline by several months. This study, coupled with the fact that the state owns the property, means we will be able to submit our grant application for a new home next year.

We have discussed the issue Mr. DiSpirito mentioned to us concerning the ability to revert the 10 acres back to the City of Rockville if the property and facility were determined to be excess state property in the future or ceased to be used for the purpose originally intended. DGS informed us that it is highly unlikely that the state would revert the property back to the City.

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As a result of our meeting at Springfield and DGS' opinion on reverting the property back to Rockville, a decision has been made that it would be in the best interest of both the City of Rockville and the Department that we end the discussion of obtaining any property on the Redgate Golf Course for a veterans' facility. It was certainly not the conclusion we anticipated when first approaching the City. In fairness to your City Madam Mayor, the State could not let the City continue to languish while we tried to work it out on our end. This was to be discussed at the meeting I was to attend immediately prior to the pandemic lockdown of Friday, 13 March.

Again, thank you for the time and goodwill demonstrated by the City of Rockville government personnel to help us find a location for a veterans' facility.

Sincerely,

George W. Owings III  
Secretary

CC: The Honorable Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Executive  
The Honorable Monique Ashton, Councilmember  
The Honorable Beryl L. Feinberg, Councilmember  
The Honorable David Myles, Councilmember  
The Honorable Mark Pierzchala, Councilmember  
Betsy Luecking, Commission on Veterans Affairs