

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Planning Board has reviewed DPLS-302, Collington Center, Lot 3, Block A requesting a revision to add a free standing building to be used for a laboratory to conduct testing and a marketing research facility. This Departure from Parking and Loading Standards is being processed concurrently with the proposed Specific Design Plan, SDP-8509/02 in accordance with Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code; and

WHEREAS, after consideration of the evidence presented at the public hearing on September 29, 2005, the Prince George's County Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** This Departure from Parking and Loading Standards is being processed concurrently with the proposed Specific Design Plan, SDP-8509/02 for Lot 3, Block A, which includes a revision to add a free standing building to be used for a laboratory to conduct testing and a marketing research facility. This building will be added to the existing site, which houses the main headquarters of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Research Center, Inc. See Finding No. six for a discussion of the departure.

2. **Development Data Summary**

Zone:	E-I-A
Gross Lot Area (Lot 3)	25 acres
Existing Building Area (Phase One)	39,850 sq. ft.
Proposed Building Area (Phase Two)	43,524 sq. ft.
Proposed Building Area (Phase III)	10,120 sq. ft.
 Total square footage for the site	 93,494
 FAR Permitted 0.45	 0.45
FAR Provided	0.09
 Green Space required	 20 percent
Green Space provided	82 percent
 Building Height Permitted	 3 stories for warehouse uses 10 stories for office uses
Building Height Proposed	1 story with mezzanine
 Parking spaces required	 229
Parking spaces provided	150
 Loading spaces required	 3
Loading spaces proposed	3

3. **Location:** The subject site is located on the east side of Prince George's Boulevard and on the west side of US 301 at 400 Prince George's Boulevard. The subject site is in Collington Center, a 708-acre employment park in the E-I-A Zone, which is part of a larger 1,289-acre employment park comprising Collington Corporate Center and Collington South. The subject lot consists of 25 acres. The adjacent properties to the north are vacant and the adjacent property to the south is developed with an office use.
4. **Surrounding uses:** The adjacent properties to the north are vacant and the adjacent property to the south is developed with an office use.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The District Council approved Basic Plan Amendments A-6965, A-9284, and A-9397 on March 2, 1989, for the entire Collington Center. The Planning Board approved Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-8712 (PGCPB No. 88-224) on May 19, 1988, for the Collington Center. The Planning Board approved CDP-9006, which revised CDP-8712 (PGCPB No. 90-455), on October 18, 1990. The Planning Board approved CDP-9006/01 (PBCPB No. 90-455), deleting a condition of approval requiring recreational facilities on October 18, 1990. The Planning Board approved CDP-9006/02. Specific Design Plan SDP-8509 was approved by the Planning Board on July 16, 1985. Specific design plan SDP-8509/01 was approved by the Planning Board on May 9, 2002.
6. The applicant proposes to replace a previously approved laboratory space of 8,384 square feet with a 43,324-square-foot lab/testing facility for market research of testing products, and additional parking and loading facilities. This building may take over other facilities that were included in the previously approved, but not built, conference center. This application for DPLS-302 is based on the existing office building and the proposed laboratory; it does not include the previously approved conference center because that facility and its associated parking facilities have not been built and may not ever be built. A total of 229 parking spaces are required for Phase One (the existing office building) and Phase Two (the laboratory) and 158 spaces are provided, leaving the need for a departure of 71 spaces.

**(A) Section 27-588(b)(8) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that in order for the Planning Board to grant the departure, it shall make the following findings:**

1. **The purposes of Section 27-550 will be served by the applicant's request.**

The purposes of Section 27-550 are:

- (1) **To require (in connection with each building constructed and each new use established) off-street automobile parking lots and loading areas sufficient to serve the parking and loading needs of all persons associated with the buildings and uses;**
- (2) **To aid in relieving traffic congestion on streets by reducing the use of public streets for parking and loading and reducing the number of access points;**
- (3) **To protect the residential character of residential areas; and**

**(4) To provide parking and loading areas which are convenient and increase the amenities in the Regional District.**

Although the parking space and loading space departures seem substantial, they will remain in harmony with the above purposes.

With regard to the 71-space parking reduction, there is substantial information to show that the requirement for 229 spaces is unnecessary at this location. The applicant provides the following argument in the justification statement for this departure:

“This is a request for a DPLS to reduce the number of required parking spaces by 71 in order to permit the development of a laboratory/testing/market research building at NAHB’s National Research Center. The departure is desirable because of the rather unique staffing arrangements and conference hosting practices of the Research Center. The justification for the requested departure consists of four principal points:

- “a. The proposed laboratory/testing/market research building will be utilized on a part-time, as-needed basis, by current NAHB Research Center employees;
- “b. The market research portion of the new facility will provide four different venues, which are intended to be occupied one venue at a time, i.e., with participants moving from one to another;
- “c. A large proportion of the Research Center employees travel regularly and are often not on the premises during the typical work week; and
- “d. A parking utilization survey revealed that the maximum number of parking spaces used in a typical workday at the Research Center is 56.7 percent of the Zoning Ordinance requirement.

“These points are discussed in detail below.

**“III. JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST**

“The 43,324-square-foot laboratory/testing/market research building will contain 27,300 square feet of laboratory/testing/mezzanine space, 2,280 square feet of office space, and two levels of live observation, video viewing, and conference facilities consisting of approximately 13,744-square-foot GFA. These state-of-the-art facilities will provide several venues for visitors to engage in the marketing and testing of building materials and systems. However, these separate venues will not be occupied concurrently. Rather, groups will utilize them one at a time, moving from conference room to focus group to viewing live demonstrations to viewing video presentations. The lab/testing space, offices and auditorium will be located on the first floor. The focus group conference rooms will be

located on a portion of the first and second floors. A large part of the second floor of the building will be built out as a mezzanine.

“The NAHB Research Center conducted a utilization survey of its 104-space parking lot for two weekdays in spring 2005, which is attached. As indicated by these parking counts, the existing parking lot was used by up to 59 vehicles during the typical workday. This represents the maximum utilization of parking for the entire day, during the survey period. According to the NAHB Research Center, one factor in the underutilization of their parking lot is due to the fact that a large number of employees frequently travel in the course of performing their jobs.

“Another reason for granting the departure is the fact that the proposed laboratory/testing/market research building will not be used full time, but will be staffed by employees from the existing office building, on an as needed basis. Specifically, six employees from the existing office building will use the office and conference facilities in the lab/testing building approximately up to 33 percent of the time for the development of marketing programs for new test products. The lab will also be staffed by existing employees on an as-needed, part-time basis. Further, the large amount of lab/testing space and mezzanine space will be utilized by relatively few employees, which translates into even less parking demand per floor area for the lab/testing building

“The parking utilization rate for the existing Research Center is 56.7 percent (59 maximum spaces are utilized/104 spaces are required). Applying the 56.7 percent utilization rate to both the existing Research Center office building and the proposed laboratory/testing/market research facility reduces the Zoning Ordinance requirement for these two uses from 229 to 130.

“The applicant is proposing to provide a total of 158 spaces (104 existing spaces + 54 spaces proposed) for both of these uses (the existing office building and the proposed laboratory/testing/market research facility), which equals a 69.0 percent utilization rate (158/229) of the Zoning Ordinance requirement, higher than the historical parking utilization at the Research Center.”

**2. The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.**

The staff recommends that the plans be changed to utilize Section 27-559, Compact Car Spaces, which allows for up to one-third of the required spaces to be compact car spaces. This will reduce the amount of the departure, by allowing additional spaces to be added to the parking compound.

**3. The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances, which are special to the subject use, given its nature at this location, or to alleviate circumstances, which are prevalent in older areas of the county, which were predominantly developed prior to November 29, 1949.**

This departure is necessary to alleviate circumstances that are special to the subject use, as this project is a research center for NAHB, and many of the employees that currently work at this site will use the additional space proposed as the new building. Research for home building products can take up more space that may typically be used for other

laboratory uses, because of the scale of the products being produced.

- 4. All methods for calculating the number of spaces required have either been used or found to be impractical.**

This application has considered all possible means for calculating the number of required spaces.

- 5. Parking and loading needs of adjacent residential areas will not be infringed upon if the departure is granted.**

This project is not adjacent to residential properties.

**(B) In making its findings, the Planning Board shall give consideration to the following:**

- 1. The parking and loading conditions within the general vicinity of the subject property, including numbers and locations of available on- and off-street spaces within 500 feet of the subject property.**

On-street parking is available on Prince George's Boulevard, but is not anticipated to be needed since the current rate of parking space use on the current site is only 56.7 percent.

- 2. The recommendations of an area master plan, or county or local revitalization plan, regarding the subject property and its general vicinity.**

The Community Planning Division has researched the master plan and has found that the master plan does not have any specific recommendations for the subject property.

- 3. The recommendations of a municipality (within which the property lies) regarding the departure.**

Not applicable.

- 4. Public parking facilities which are proposed in the county's Capital Improvement Program within the general vicinity of the property.**

None are proposed.

Based on the preceding evaluation of the required findings for the Departure from Parking and Loading Spaces, staff believe that approval of the application is amply justified.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code, the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission adopted the findings contained herein and APPROVED the above-noted application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appeal of the Planning Board's action must be filed with the District Council for Prince George's County, Maryland within thirty (30) days of the final notice of the Planning Board's decision.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the action taken by the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on the motion of Commissioner Vaughns, seconded by Commissioner Eley, with Commissioners Vaughns, Eley, Squire and Hewlett voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, September 29, 2005, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 27th day of October 2005.

Trudye Morgan Johnson  
Executive Director

By Frances J. Guertin  
Planning Board Administrator

TMJ:FJG:SL:rmk

(Revised 8/9/01)