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File No. DDS-606

### RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Planning Board has reviewed DDS-606, Naylor Station requesting a departure from design standards 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 June 2, 2011, the Prince George's County Planning Board finds:

Request: The applicant has requested a departure from design standards to Section 27-558(a) of 1. the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the sizes of parking spaces within the parking garage to be reduced below the minimum 9.5 feet by 19 feet required for standard spaces. Specifically, the requested size of the parking spaces is 8.5 feet by 18 feet with 24-foot-wide drive aisles.

#### 2. **Development Data Summary:**

PGCPB No. 11-59

	EXISTING	APPROVED
Zone(s)	M-X-T	M-X-T
Use(s)	Commercial Integrated Shopping Center	Office/Retail
Acreage	14.8	14.8
Parcels	7	8
Gross Floor Area of Retail Uses (sq. ft)	128,130	12,000
Gross Floor Area of Office Uses (sq. ft)	-	1,150,000
Total Gross Floor Area (sq. ft)	128,130	1,162,000

## TREE CANOPY COVERAGE

	Required	Approved
Variance (30%) from the tree canopy		
coverage requirements in Subtitle 25,	64,474 sq. ft.	44,625 sq. ft.
Section 25-128.		

### OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

	REQUIRED	APPROVED
Total Parking Spaces	+	1,630
of which are Parking garage spaces	-	1,500
Surface Parking spaces	-	130
Handicapped regular spaces	27*	16
Van accessible spaces	-	11+
Total Loading spaces	+	7
of which are Office	-	6
Retail	-	1

Notes: +The Zoning Ordinance does not have specific off-street parking and loading numbers for development in the M-X-T Zone. Instead, Section 27-574 and Section 27-583 of the Zoning Ordinance establish procedures for calculating the number of off-street parking and loading spaces, respectively. See Finding 8 below for a discussion of parking and loading requirements in the M-X-T Zone.

+Includes two surface van-accessible handicapped spaces and nine van-accessible handicapped spaces in the parking garage.

- \*The number of parking spaces for the physically handicapped is calculated in accordance with Section 27-566 of the Zoning Ordinance based on the total number of proposed parking spaces.
- 3. Location: The site is located on the northeast side of Branch Avenue (MD 5) and in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Suitland Parkway and Branch Avenue. The property is located in Planning Area 76A, Council District 7, within the Developed Tier.
- Surrounding Uses: The subject property is currently developed with a multi-part masonry 4. shopping center, with a total of approximately 128,130 square feet of enclosed space and associated surface parking lots. The shopping center was developed in phases from 1954 to 1969. To the southwest of the larger site is the variable width right-of-way of Branch Avenue (MD 5), an arterial roadway. Also, along the southwest edge, the site wraps around two separate parcels with frontage on Branch Avenue that are zoned M-X-T and developed with small, single-story, retail buildings. To the southwest, across Branch Avenue, is the Naylor Road Metro Station, on the Green Line, its associated parking and various commercially-developed, M-X-T-zoned properties. The Branch Avenue entrance to the Naylor Road Metro Station is located directly across Branch Avenue from the northernmost existing entrance to the subject property. To the north of the subject property is the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) above-ground Green Line metro tracks and the right-of-way of the Suitland Parkway. To the northeast, the subject property abuts a parcel zoned Multifamily Medium Density Residential (R-18) developed with a multifamily garden apartment complex, Carriage Hill Apartments, beyond which is the Suitland Parkway right-of-way. To the southeast of the larger site are a parcel zoned Open Space (O-S) developed with an elementary school known as Overlook Elementary

School, which fronts on and is served from Curtis Drive; a vacant M-X-T-zoned parcel; and an M-X-T-zoned parcel developed with a liquor store that fronts on Branch Avenue.

The portion of the site included in the DSP, which is a companion case of this DDS, is located at the intersection of Branch Avenue and Suitland Parkway, which is referred to as Phase 1 in previously approved CSP-10005. Most of Phase 1, except the seven-story parking garage at the rear of the site, is separated from Phase 2 by the main driveway to the site from the Branch Avenue entrance. Across the driveway to the northeast is the site for the Phase 2 development.

- 5. **Previous Approvals:** On September 23, 2008, the District Council rezoned the subject property to the M-X-T Zone by the adoption of the 2008 *Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment.* On May 12, 2011, the Planning Board approved Conceptual Site Plan CSP-10005 (PGCPB Resolution No. 11-44) covering the entire site for a mixed-use development consisting of 1,600,000 square feet of office space and up to 32,000 square feet of retail uses with associated parking. On May 26, 2011, the Planning Board approved a Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11001(PGCPB Resolution No. 11-54). On June 2, 2011, the Planning Board approved a Detailed Site Plan DSP-10044 for the first phase of the development. The subject DDS is the companion case of DSP-10044. The site also has an approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan, 8888-2010-00, which is valid through April 10, 2013.
- 6. **Design Features:** Detailed Site Plan DSP-10044, which covers the entire site, proposes to develop the portion identified as Phase 1 of the CSP with a mixed-use project consisting of approximately 1.15 million square feet of office, with a seven-story parking garage, and 12,000 square feet of retail uses. The Phase 2 portion of the site, as referred to in the CSP, has been identified as a site for future development.

The subject site is located at the northwestern tip of the Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan area and also the gateway area from the District of Columbia to Prince George's County. The proposed development is also the first large-scale redevelopment within the entire Branch Avenue Corridor. Therefore, creation of a strong gateway image and establishment of high redevelopment standards for the entire corridor has been the focus of this DSP application.

Four access points have been proposed off Branch Avenue (MD 5). A full access entrance along with the main driveway leading to the service court, which is located in the rear middle part of the site, divides the site into two distinct parts. The northern part adjacent to the Suitland Parkway is Phase 1, which is covered in this DSP and will be developed with a six- to nine-story office complex with approximately 1.15 million square feet of gross floor area. The office complex has a proposed main entrance/main lobby area located close to the build-to line of Branch Avenue which is accessed from the street level. Visitors will finish security clearance in the lobby area and take escalators to the upper level, through an atrium, in order to reach the office area of the building. This entrance is also linked to WMATA's property by crosswalks across Branch Avenue and further through pedestrian paths to the Naylor Road Metro Station on the Green Line. The rest of the building is set back more than 180 feet from the existing curb line in order to satisfy the security requirements of a potential federal tenant. Between the office building and the curb line of

Branch Avenue, there are a proposed retail building, sitting area, plaza area, and bioretention areas. A low masonry wall, which is 50 feet away from the office building, defines the security perimeter for the proposed office complex. Two additional access points are located in the northern section. The northernmost access point is for emergency vehicles only, shown as a right-in/right-out entrance. The one between the emergency access and the main access point to the site is a right-in-only entrance drive. A future vehicle drop-off bay has been shown close to the building's main entrance. A bus stop is located on the other side of Branch Avenue (MD 5).

The southern part of the site has been designated primarily for the second phase of the proposed development in accordance with CSP-10005, except for the rear portion where a seven-story parking structure is located. The parking garage is linked to the office complex by a pedestrian bridge. The rest of the southern part of the site has been identified as the location for future development. The fourth access to the site is located adjacent to the southernmost boundary line, runs along the southeastern edge of the property, connects to the parking garage, and provides access to both the future parking garage and the office building in the second phase.

In addition to renderings of the proposed buildings, architectural elevation views have been provided to show the style and quality of the proposed buildings, as well as other on-site improvements. The office complex elevations and renderings feature a wedge-shaped, modern structure attached to an outer curved façade facing Suitland Parkway that matches the curvature of Suitland Parkway's right-of-way along the site. The outer section of the wedge is nine stories high and the central section of the wedge steps down to six stories in height. The nine-story section of the building fronts on Suitland Parkway and the six-story section has an atrium and is more prominently viewed from Branch Avenue (MD 5). A green roof has been proposed on the perimeter of the six-story section that flanks the central atrium. An additional green roof has been shown on the top of the retail building facing Branch Avenue.

The office building is designed in modern institutional building vocabulary with various fenestration patterns. The building is finished with architectural grade, sand-blasted, light color masonry blocks in combination with glass. Additional dark-toned bands, in a similar color along the window line, have been used to embellish the façade and provide visual interest. A combination of primarily punched openings and a small portion of ribbon widows has been shown on the elevations. The ribbon windows are used on the two corner portions of the elevations of the nine-story part of the building where curved lines meet straight lines. Some ribbon windows are also shown on the six-story part, especially the elevation oriented toward Branch Avenue. An elevated base portion has been shown on the elevations. The main entrance to the office building is designed in an all-glass, two-story structure as a natural extension of the large office building. The location of the main entrance close to the build-to line of Branch Avenue and its transparent glass design make the entrance a visually prominent part of the site's Branch Avenue frontage. A marked sidewalk leading to the entrance connects the office building to the WMATA Naylor Road Station across the street, approximately 500 feet away.

> The parking garage serving the office complex is a typical, seven-story, boxy garage building with plain concrete finishing. Since the parking garage backs to the existing apartment complex known as Carriage Hill to the northeast of the subject site, additional building decoration or screening will be needed in order to minimize the visual and possible noise impacts on the apartment buildings. At full build-out of the site, two buildings will be located between the parking garage and the site's frontage of Branch Avenue (MD 5). Therefore, the parking garage will not be visible from Branch Avenue. The parking garage has been set back 30 feet from the property line due to the Section 4.7 bufferyard building setback requirements of the Prince George's County Landscape Manual. A 20-foot-wide landscape strip is required to be installed with 80 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. However, given the height of the garage and in order to break the sterile appearance of the concrete structure, additional elevation treatments should be provided. The possible solutions included changing the pattern of the openings to a more punched-out style instead of the proposed ribbon-style wide openings, or providing green screen, especially for the upper levels to soften the hard surface of the building, or a combination of either methods, or other equivalent design solutions. At full build-out, the garage will not be visible from Branch Avenue. Since Phase 2 will not be put in place right away, the appearance of the parking garage after the completion of the first phase is a concern of the staff. The Planning Board requires, in the approval of the detail site plan, the applicant to provide additional elevation treatments on the parking garage facing the existing multifamily development site and the interim elevation that is visible from Branch Avenue (MD 5) before the second phase, to be reviewed by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board prior to the issuance of building permits for the parking garage.

> The retail building proposed in this application is a five-bay structure located along the build-to line of Branch Avenue (MD 5). The building has a two-story appearance with a functional one-story floor plan to meet the intent of the sector plan to create an active store frontage along Branch Avenue and a continuous street wall in proportion to the width of the right-of-way. The elevation is finished with brick with precast trim and storefront glazing. Due to security considerations for a potential federal tenant, the retail building is designed as a stand-alone building outside of the security wall. A wide driveway and surface parking are located between the retail building and the office building. An optional retail building location (Option B), which is set back about 62 feet from the build-to line and is outside of the easement of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), has been included in this DSP.

The retail building, in the current location as shown in the DSP, is sited over an easement owned by the SHA to meet the build-to line requirement of the sector plan. The applicant intends to purchase the easement and SHA is in a position to sell it because enough space has been preserved within the right-of-way of Branch Avenue (MD 5). However, the process of selling the public easement is lengthy and time consuming. The applicant may not be able to obtain the easement rights in a timely fashion in order to move the project forward. For this reason, the applicant proposes an alternative option (Option B), which moves the retail building outside of the easement and 20 feet closer to the office building, and results in one row of surface parking being located in front of the retail building. An additional low masonry wall matching the building in color, material, and landscaping, as suggested in the CSP approval, has been provided to screen the cars and meet the intent of the sector plan regarding the Branch Avenue frontage. The Planning Board

encourages the applicant to work closely and diligently with SHA to obtain the easement rights, so that the retail building will be able to be located at the build-to line as shown.

Three monumental entrance signs have been proposed in the DSP. The two larger sign faces are measured at 20 square feet each and the smaller sign face is measured at 16 square feet. The height of all three signs is lower than six feet. Both the sign face area and height are consistent with the sign design standards approved in the CSP for the site. In addition, building-mounted signs have been proposed for both the office and retail buildings. Each storefront has one primary identification sign which is located below the bottom of the second floor windows. Banner signs are also shown on both ends of the retail building.

7. Departure from Design Standards DDS-606 from the requirements of Section 27-558(a) of the Zoning Ordinance: Section 27-558(a) of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following requirements:

The size of parking spaces shall be as follows:

TYPE OF SPACE	MINIMUM SIZE (IN FEET)	
Standard car spaces:		
Parallel	22 by 8	
Nonparallel	19 by 9 1/2	
Compact car spaces:		
Parallel	19 by 7	
Nonparallel	16 1/2 by 8	

Pursuant to Section 27-239.01(b)(7)(A) of the Zoning Ordinance, in order for the Planning Board to approve a departure from design standards, it must make the following findings:

(i) The purposes of this Subtitle will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal;

The departure requested is for spaces within the proposed parking garage. Provision of structured parking within the core area of the sector plan is the preferred parking option highly recommended by the sector plan. A total of 1,630 parking spaces have been provided with the DSP. Except for 130 surface parking spaces which are standard size in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, 1,500 spaces are located within the proposed parking garage and will be 8.5 feet by 18 feet. By reducing the size of each parking space, an estimated five percent more parking spaces will be achieved in the parking garage which will result in fewer surface parking spaces. The purposes of this Subtitle will be better served by the proposal.

# (ii) The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request;

The applicant is asking for approval of spaces that are one foot narrower and one foot shorter than a standard size space for 90-degree parking in the locations specified above, but provides drive aisles that are two feet wider than the minimum required 22 feet. All spaces proposed with dimensions smaller than a standard space size qualify as compact spaces, as defined by the Zoning Ordinance. Compact spaces are allowed for up to one-third of the total spaces required for the site. The total number of spaces required for the site as proposed is 1,500 spaces. Compact spaces are allowed for 489 spaces. The applicant is essentially asking for relief for a total of 1,011 spaces above the allowed number of compact spaces, or 62 percent of the total spaces provided for the site. However, the applicant has also provided for wider aisles in the parking garage. The wider the aisle width provided, the more room there is for vehicle maneuvering on the site. The applicant has proposed a parking space size that is a typical size endorsed in a lower-turnover parking structure such as this one in the research report entitled "The Dimensions of Parking" published by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and the National Parking Association's (NPA) "Parking Standards" (Fourth Edition, 2000). The requested departure is consistent with the minimum module sizes recommended by the ULI and NPA. The reduced parking space sizes will be the smallest practical size that these authorities recommend for functionality reasons, and that, therefore, the departure is the minimum necessary.

# (iii) The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances which are unique to the site or prevalent in areas of the County developed prior to November 29, 1949;

The departure request does not reference pre-1949 impacts; however, it is reflective of the prevailing best practice in the design of parking spaces within parking structures as it is the minimum allowed by the ULI and NPA. As previously discussed, the site is located within the core area of the 2008 Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan, which recommends compact urban development for the area because it is located in close proximity (less than 500 feet) to the Naylor Road Metro Station.

The subject site and the vicinity are developed with a suburban land use pattern consisting of expanses of surface parking lots. Lacking pervious area, among many other factors, contributes to a dilapidated appearance of the existing neighborhood. To promote redevelopment and revitalize the area with high-quality, sustainable development is the goal of the sector plan. Structured parking is the preferred parking option recommended by the sector plan. The current parking space size is for surface parking spaces. There are no standards for spaces within a parking garage in the Zoning Ordinance. Allowing a smaller parking space size in the parking garage will result in more parking spaces in the garage and leave fewer surface parking spaces on the site. The fewer the surface parking spaces, the less impervious surface, which meets the sector plan's intent of revitalizing the area including improving the environment. As such, the departure is necessary to meet the project's parking needs and to alleviate circumstances which would hamper achievement of the best possible transit-oriented development in the Branch Avenue Corridor area of the county.

(iv) The departure will not impair the visual, functional, or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.

The subject site is located in the southeast quadrant of Branch Avenue (MD 5) and the Suitland Parkway. The site is bounded on two sides by the rights-of-way. On the other two sides, the site abuts a multifamily development and an elementary school. The requested departure is for the parking space size within the proposed parking garage. The parking involved will not be visible from outside the garage. All of the parking needs of the proposed development will be satisfied with a combination of a multi-story parking garage and surface parking spaces on the site. Therefore, the departure will not impair the visual, functional, or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.

Based on the above findings, the Planning Board approves the departure from design standards for the size of parking spaces within the proposed parking garage.

- 8. Referral Agencies and Departments: The subject DDS application was referred as a companion case of DSP-10044 to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:
  - a. Community Planning South Division—The Planning Board finds that the application is consistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for Developed Tier centers and corridors, and conforms to the mixed-use, high-density land use recommendations of the 2008 Approved Branch Avenue Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment.

Overall, the design of the proposed development meets the sector plan's design standards and guidelines with two exceptions. Given the security requirement of the potential tenant, deviation from the strict application of the design standards and guidelines becomes necessary. Although the application proposes a one-story retail building fronting Branch Avenue (MD 5), as opposed to the minimum of four stories required by the plan, the design, volume, and articulation of the building gives the appearance of a multi-story structure that relates to the adjacent buildings in terms of materials and architecture. The sector plan calls for vertical mixed-use with retail on the ground level along Branch Avenue. This application provides street-level retail along Branch Avenue with street-front pedestrian amenities including paved plazas to encourage activity at the street level for socialization and gatherings. This application provides the office concentration that is envisioned for the Naylor Road Metro Station core area.

Policy 3, Strategy 5 of the Design and Appearance chapter of the sector plan calls for establishment of a build-to line (BTL) that is a minimum of 20 feet and a maximum of 25 feet between the back of the road curb and building wall to accommodate a storefront walk, outdoor café, etc. However, SHA has authority over Branch Avenue, including ownership of an easement on this property. SHA and the applicant are negotiating the

release of the easement which will take some time to resolve. As a result, two options for the retail building are proposed. Option A is within the SHA easement and brings the retail building closer to the street, with parking behind the building, consistent with the sector plan vision. Option B has a deep building setback, beyond the easement line, with parking in front screened by landscaping and pedestrian-friendly low walls. The Planning Board prefers Option A over the less desirable Option B, which should only be considered if agreement with SHA cannot be reached prior to obtaining building permits. Consideration should be given to project phasing that includes the retail building in a later phase, to allow time for easement resolution prior to applying for building permits.

b. **Transportation Planning Section**—The Planning Board finds that, since the proposed development is a portion of the overall development as approved in CSP-10005, it is determined that the approval of this DSP will not violate the peak-hour vehicle trip caps as approved in the CSP and the pending Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-11001.

Both the MPOT and sector plan recommend continuous sidewalks and bicycle facilities along Branch Avenue (MD 5) and in the vicinity of the subject site in order to facilitate transit-oriented development and multimodal access to Metro. The Planning Board analyzed detailed recommendations within the sector plan regarding pedestrian access and safety along Branch Avenue and to Metro, and the policies within the MPOT related to pedestrian access and the provision of sidewalks within designated centers and corridors, as well as other areas in the Developed and Developing Tiers.

The subject application reflects streetscape improvements along the entire frontage of Branch Avenue. These improvements include new street lighting, benches, street trees and landscaping, and wider sidewalks, which meet the intent of the master plan along Branch Avenue. Restriping for designated bike lanes can be considered by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) as part of road resurfacing or streetscape improvements along the corridor. Additionally, all other improvements for pedestrians and bikes were reviewed for adequacy.

The Planning Board finds that, from the standpoint of nonmotorized transportation, this plan is acceptable, fulfills the intent of applicable master plans and functional plans, meets prior conditions of approval, and satisfies the finding required for a detailed site plan as described in Section 27-285 of the Zoning Ordinance, subject to several conditions of approved in this resolution.

- c. Subdivision Review Section—The DSP and DDS have no additional subdivision issues.
- d. Historic Preservation Section—The Historic Preservation Commission concluded that the subject application plans for a complex of buildings that, when completed, will significantly enhance an important but underdeveloped site close to the Naylor Road Metro Station. There is no test for architectural compatibility to use when judging an early 21st century office and commercial complex against the historic integrity and significance

of a mid-20th century parkway that is a transportation-related and scenic corridor. The contemporary architectural expression selected for the project reflects the time in which it will be built. Nevertheless, the Naylor Station project is designed to minimize its impact on the adjacent parkway. To the extent that the project will be partially visible from the parkway at certain times of the year and from certain vantage points, the project layout with larger buildings located away from the openness of the Branch Avenue (MD 5) intersection will allow much of the project to be buffered by trees within the parkway and/or the Metro tracks. The green elements of this project represent a significant improvement over the current structure and its substantial paved and unlandscaped parking area. Taken as a whole, this project is poised to be a substantial amenity and a notable visual landmark within what will become an increasingly important parkway intersection and a gateway to Prince George's County. The Planning Board accepts the HPC's recommendation of approval.

- e. **Permit Review Section** All standard parking spaces are 9.5 feet by 19 feet.
- f. Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T)—In a memorandum dated April 8, 2011, DPW&T indicated that both the Suitland Parkway and Branch Avenue (MD 5) are state-maintained roadways and coordination with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is required. Sidewalks are required along all state roads that have concrete curb and gutter in accordance with current DPW&T standards and specifications. They also confirmed that the site plan is consistent with approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 8888-2010-01, dated March 28, 2011.
- g. Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)—The applicant provided a letter dated April 8, 2011 documenting that they have commenced the process necessary to purchase the SHA easement along Branch Avenue (MD 5). However, at the time of the hearing, comments from SHA had not been received.
- h. National Park Service (NPS)—At the time of the hearing, comments had not been received from NPS.
- i. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)—In an e-mail dated May 12, 2011, WMATA provided comments regarding the proposed development's impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the vicinity of the Metro station. None of their comments directly affect the development within the limits of the DSP, but rather have to do with impacts and improvements within the public rights-of-way that were reviewed with the traffic impact study.
- j. Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)—In a memorandum dated April 15, 2011, WSSC provided standard comments regarding on-site utilities and hydraulics. They indicated that an existing active eight-inch water main and eight-inch sewer main are available to serve the proposed site.

- k. Verizon—At the time of the hearing, comments had not been received from Verizon.
- 1. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)**—At the time of the hearing, comments had not been received from PEPCO.

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 Cavitt, seconded by Commissioner Vaughns, with Commissioners Cavitt, Vaughns, Clark, Squire and Parker voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 2. 2011, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June 2011.

Patricia Colihan Barney Executive Director

By

Gessica Gores
Jessica Jones

Planning Board Administrator

PCB:JJ:HZ:rpg

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

M-NCPPC Legal Department