

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the Prince George’s County Planning Board is charged with the approval of Detailed Site Plans pursuant to Part 3, Division 9 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Prince George’s County Code; and

WHEREAS, in consideration of evidence presented at a public hearing on October 21, 2021, regarding Departure from Design Standards DDS-680 for Suitland Self Storage Zone, the Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** The subject Departure from Design Standards (DDS), DDS-680, for a reduction to the requirements of Section 4.2 of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual) to reduce the width of the landscape strip and require plantings. In conjunction with this DDS, the Planning Board approved a Detailed Site Plan, DSP-20048 (PGCPB 2021-130), for the development of a 110,674-square-foot/999-unit consolidated storage facility.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	APPROVED
Zone	I-1/M-I-O	I-1/M-I-O
Use(s)	Vacant	Consolidated Storage
Gross Acreage	1.99	1.99
Floodplain	0.00	0.00
Right-of-way Dedication	0.00	0.03
Total Net Acreage	1.50	1.50
Consolidated Storage		109,924
Office		750
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	-	110,674 sq. ft.
Parcels	1	1
Green Area (10 percent required)	-	21,626 sq. ft./ 25 percent
Number of Storage Units	-	999

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

Parking and Loading Spaces

Use	Required	Provided
999 storage units @ 1 space per 50 units	20	20
750-square-foot office @ 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet	3	3
Handicap-Accessible*	1	2
Total Parking	23	23**
Loading	Required	Provided
2 spaces for up to 10,000 square feet of gross floor area	2	2
1 additional space for each additional 40,000 square feet of gross floor area (or fraction)	3	3
Total Loading	5	5

Note: *Total required and provided parking includes accessible spaces.
 **The total number of parking spaces provided includes seven compact spaces.

3. **Location:** The subject property is located in the northeast quadrant of the Forestville Road and the I-95/I-495 (Capital Beltway) interchange, approximately 400 feet south of its intersection with Suitland Parkway. More specifically, the property is known as Parcel 153 as shown on Tax Map 089-F3 and is located at 4350 Forestville Road. The property is located in Planning Area 76A and Council District 6.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The property is triangular and is currently vacant. The site is bounded to the north by Forestville Road and by unimproved property in the Limited Intensity Industrial (I-4) Zone beyond; to the south and east by I-95/495; and to the west by the unimproved right-of-way of Old Forestville Road with vacant property in the I-4 Zone and a gas station in the Commercial Miscellaneous Zone beyond. The subject property and the surrounding properties are all within the M-I-O Zone.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The site is subject to Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) 4-20033, which was approved by the Prince George’s County Planning Board on June 17, 2021 (PGCPB Resolution No. 2021-70), for development of 115,000 square feet of industrial development. The site also has a Stormwater Management (SWM) Concept Plan, 48436-2020-00 which was approved on April 23, 2021, and will expire on April 23, 2024.
6. **Design Features:** The subject site is comprised of 1.99 acres of land and is currently undeveloped. When constructed, the property will be served by a single 22-foot-wide driveway connection along Forestville Road. On-site vehicular circulation will be facilitated by a two-way

drive aisle that provides access to 23 parking and 5 loading spaces located on the northern and western sides of the site. The proposed consolidated storage building is three stories, or 36 feet, in height with a gross floor area of 110,674 square feet. The facility includes 999 internally accessed storage units and a 750-square-foot office space.

The consolidated storage facility and parking compound on the west side of the building will be secured by a varied height (ranging in 6 to 8 feet), decorative, estate-style fence, a 6-foot-high chain-link fence with a fabric security mesh located on the back to prevent visibility into the site, and an 8-foot-high security gate. However, it is noted that fences shall not be more than 6 feet in height in the I-1 Zone. Therefore, a condition has been included in the DSP requiring the applicant to reduce the height of fence and security gate to 6 feet, in accordance with Section 27-465 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance.

Parking to serve the use is provided on the north and west sides of the building, with 9 unsecured parking spaces proposed on the north side of the building, and 14 secured parking spaces on the west side of the building, and accessed through a keyed entry gate.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **Departure from Design Standards DDS-680:** Section 4.2 of the Landscape Manual requires a minimum width landscape strip and a required number of plantings along the frontage with Old Forest Road, which is an unplatted right-of-way that has been unused for approximately 50 years and is overgrown. Due to existing site limitations, the applicant has not provided the required landscape strip width and number of planting units on a portion of the boundary equal to approximately 216 feet, or 50 percent of the property's frontage with Old Forestville Road.

The applicant's Alternative Compliance application, AC-05014-01, was recommended for disapproval by the Planning Director. Therefore, the applicant requests a DDS from Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets, of the Landscape Manual.

Section 27-239.01(b)(7) of the Zoning Ordinance contains the following required findings for the Planning Board to grant the departure:

- (A) **In order for the Planning Board to grant the departure, it shall make the following findings:**
- (i) **The purposes of this subtitle will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal;**

The site is bound on all sides by the physical constraints of adjacent roadways that have been constructed on the adjacent properties and by the development of the subject property. Strict compliance with the requirements of the Landscape Manual cannot be effectively applied without redesigning the site. The applicant is proposing a solution to

meet the landscaping requirement on the property by proposing a fence along the portion of the right-of-way where landscaping requirements outlined in Section 4.2 of the Landscaping Manual cannot be met, and providing the required amount of planting on the remaining portion of the western boundary with Old Forestville Road, as shown on the DSP.

The applicant has indicated that they have tried to vacate the right-of-way of Old Forestville Road, but have had difficulty vacating the right-of-way due to ownership issues. In addition, it is noted that the western boundary is the subject of prior approvals for alternate setbacks. In 2006 the Board of Appeals approved Variance V-14-2006, and found that granting relief from the required setback would not substantially impair the intent, purpose, and integrity of the General Plan or master plan, and denying the request would result in a peculiar and unusual practical difficulty upon the owner of the property. Therefore, due to these reasons staff agrees that the proposed improvements to the property will equally serve the purposes of this subtitle.

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

Given the character of Old Forestville Road, its alignment with I-95/I-495, in combination with the unimproved state of the roadway it may not be used for public purposes as a roadway, and therefore the departure is the minimum necessary given the circumstances.

The applicant is proposing a 6-foot-high fence and landscaping to screen the use, and define the property boundary in accordance with the purpose of Section 4.2 of the Landscape Manual. Further, the fence and additional landscaping will improve the site and enhance the business's commercial viability by improving its aesthetic appeal. Given the applicant's proposed treatment of the boundary and the current state of the right-of-way, staff agrees that the applicant has minimized the impacts to the extent practical.

(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 1949;

The subject property is currently vacant and is unimproved; therefore, this does not apply.

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

The applicant's statement of justification indicates that given the unique circumstances associated with the location of the requested departure along the unimproved right-of-way of Old Forestville Road, the existing and proposed landscaping, in addition to the proposed fence, will effectively screen the visual impact of the consolidated storage facility and define the edge. The site improvements, as conditioned, will improve the environmental quality of the site and reduce the visual impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

- (B) **For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements in paragraph (7)(A), above, that there is no feasible proposal for alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.**

With respect to the specific departure requested, the applicant cannot provide a feasible proposal for alternative compliance that would exhibit equally effective design characteristics. The applicant proposed AC-05014-01, which was recommended for disapproval.

Based on the analysis above, the Planning Board finds the departure request acceptable and approves DDS-680, to allow a departure from the Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets on the west boundary line, and approve a reduction in the required width of the landscape strip from 10 feet to 0 feet and provide a reduction in the required amount of plant material.

8. **2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** Development proposed by this DSP amendment is subject to Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets; Section 4.3, Parking Lot Requirements; Section 4.4, Screening Requirements; Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses; and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements. The Planning Board finds that the proposal generally conforms with the applicable requirements of the Landscape Manual, with the exception of Sections 4.2 and 4.4, as discussed in PGCPB-130. A condition has been included in the DSP requiring the applicant to screen the transformer on the northwest portion of the site from the public right-of-way of Forestville Road.

The Planning Board reviewed AC-05014-01 and did not find the applicant's proposal to be equally effective as normal compliance with Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets of the Landscape Manual, as discussed in the report for AC-05014-01. Therefore, the Planning Board disapproves AC-095014-01 and finds the subject application, DDS-680, acceptable, as discussed in Finding 7 above.

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:

1. APPROVE Departure from Design Standards DDS-680 to reduce the width of the landscape strip required by Section 4.2 of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* from 10 feet to 0 feet and provide a reduction in the required amount of plant material.

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

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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 Washington, seconded by Commissioner Geraldo, with Commissioners Washington, Geraldo, Bailey, Doerner and Hewlett voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Thursday, October 21, 2021, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 18th day of November 2021.

Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman


By Jessica Jones
Planning Board Administrator

EMH:JJ:NAB:nz

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY



David S. Warner
M-NCPPC Legal Department
Date: November 2, 2021