



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
www.pgplanning.org

PGCPB No. 2023-40

File No. DDS-681

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Planning Board has reviewed Departure from Design Standards Application No. DDS-681, CMFI Tabernacle of Praise, requesting APPROVAL in accordance with Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code; and

WHEREAS, a new Zoning Ordinance, Subtitle 27, Prince George's County Code went into effect on April 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the subject property is within the Rural Residential (R-R) Zone; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 27-1903(c) of the Zoning Ordinance, except as otherwise provided in this Section, proposals or permit applications of any type for properties in all other zones of the County may utilize the prior Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations for development of the subject property; and

WHEREAS, therefore, the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission reviewed this application under the Zoning Ordinance in existence prior to April 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, after consideration of the evidence presented at the public hearing on April 6, 2023, the Prince George's County Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** This departure from design standards (DDS) approves a 13-foot departure, to reduce the driveway width from 22 feet to 9 feet.

Section 27-560 provides design standards for site plans, related to interior driveway widths. Regulations state that the width of a one-way driveway, adjacent to 90-degree angled parking spaces, should be 22 feet. The approved driveway width is 9 feet.

Section 27-563 of the prior Zoning Ordinance discusses the requirements of a driveway connection to a street for a parking lot and states that the driveway shall be at least 11-feet-wide for each lane, exclusive of curb return and gutters. The subject application includes a 20-foot entrance driveway, with 10 feet allotted for each lane of traffic.

The project scope consists of using the main 4,678-square-foot building as a place of worship, and the auxiliary 1,740-square-foot building as a parsonage. Four additional parking spaces are approved, to meet the minimum required parking standards for a place of worship, which is seven parking spaces. The site will contain eight parking spaces in total. Modification to the property includes adjusting the driveway and parking areas to accommodate the new use by widening the existing driveway entrance from 9 feet to 20 feet, as well as paving and striping the 4 additional parking spaces. The driveway entrance will accommodate two-way traffic. The one-way drive aisle, surrounding the place of worship, will remain as 9 feet.

2. **Development Data Summary:** The following chart summarizes the approved development for the overall CMFI Tabernacle of Praise property, which will remain unchanged by this application.

	EXISTING	APPROVED
Zone	RR (Prior R-R)	RR (Prior R-R)
Use(s)	Residential	Proposed Place of Worship
Total Acreage	5.50	5.50
Number of Lots	1	1
Parcels	0	0
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	6,418 sq. ft.	6,418 sq. ft.

3. **Location:** The subject site consists of one lot located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Old Chapel Drive and Old Chapel Road. The property is known as Lot 45, as shown on Tax Map 37, Grid C2, and is in the Rural Residential (R-R) Zone.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject site is bounded on the north and east by single-family detached residences in the R-R Zone. The subject property abuts Old Chapel Road to the south and across Old Chapel Road are single-family detached residences in the R-R Zone. To the west, the site abuts the Pennsylvania Railroad track and, beyond the railroad track, is the High Bridge Elementary school, vacant land, and single-family residences, all within the R-R Zone.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The subject property was conveyed by deed on October 29, 2020, recorded amongst the Prince George's County Land Records as Liber 44304 folio 141, and is platted. The site has an approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI-087-14), which was issued on January 22, 2015; however, the NRI expired on January 22, 2020.
6. **Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance Requirements:** The criteria for approval of a DDS are set forth in Section 27-239.01(7) of the prior Zoning Ordinance, which states the following:

(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;**

This application will widen the entrance driveway from 9 feet to 20 feet. In addition, a portion of the driveway, along the eastern property boundary, will be reconstructed.

The site has access via Old Chapel Road and the driveway will provide two-way travel upon entering the site, where it then transitions to a one-way loop. The

applicant will add one-way directional signage to facilitate vehicular movement on-site. The building and parking areas will be provided in the northern area of the site to be accessed from the one-way portion of the driveway. A total of 8 parking spaces are approved, which satisfies the parking requirement for the approved church capacity of 25 people.

The Planning Board has reviewed the submitted vehicle turning plan, which resulted in modifications to the site that included a larger area of pavement to the west of the building. The large pavement area is necessary to facilitate the required radius for vehicles to safely access the parking spaces as well as additional paving on the two-way portion of the driveway which, in total, is approximately 20 feet wide. Given the modifications to the plans, the Planning Board believes that the parking spaces will be able to function as their intended purpose and will allow for safe maneuvers to the parking areas provided.

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

The departure is the minimum necessary, given the location of the existing structures that are to be utilized on-site. This application approves a 20-foot-wide bi-directional driveway, with a 9-foot-wide one-way driveway loop for the approved church. While the driveway does not meet the design standards for width, the Planning Board believes that the applicant has demonstrated, by way of the vehicle turning plan, that this is the minimum required for the site to function for its intended purpose and is acceptable.

(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 is the minimum necessary to alleviate the constraints that are unique to this site. The current structures on the property have been in existence since the 1970s. Strict adherence to the code would require demolition and relocation of the existing structures to accommodate the need for a 22-foot-wide drive aisle. The approved improvements to the site, a 20-foot-wide bi-directional driveway facility and a 9-foot-wide one-way driveway facility to support the operations of a church, are adequate.

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

As shown on the site plan and mentioned above, the approved entrance driveway is approximately 20 feet wide. The vehicle turning plan displays the typical design vehicle classification for the site and demonstrates that 20 feet provides the minimum distance required for two vehicles to safely pass while entering or

exiting the site. The vehicle size used for the vehicle turning plan is 6.5-feet-wide, which is the standard width of a passenger vehicle that would be accessing the site for its intended use as a place of worship.

The vehicle turning plan also shows the approved signage to be located throughout the site. There will be a 5 mile per hour (mph) sign near the driveway entrance. The 9-foot-wide driveway loop will contain a yield sign, one-way signs, a 5-mph sign, a stop sign, and a do not enter sign to facilitate traffic. The applicant will also provide a 6-foot wooden fence along a portion of the eastern property boundary.

The Planning Board believes that, as designed, safe access is provided to and from the site. In addition, the site is designed to allow all turning movements and directional travel to be completed on-site, without conflicts.

7. **2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The approved development is subject to the Landscape Manual. Specifically, Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets; and Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, are applicable to this site.

The Landscape Manual designates a place of worship as a compatible, medium-impact use with moderate effects on adjacent properties. Such a designation requires a Type C bufferyard to mitigate the impacts of the approved use. A Type C bufferyard requires a minimum building setback of 40 feet, minimum landscape yard of 30 feet, and 120 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. The submitted landscape plan complies with the stated requirements. The applicant also proposes 324 feet of 6-foot-high board fencing to provide additional visual buffering of the uses.

The Planning Board found that the combination of existing trees, landscape plantings, and fencing will adequately buffer the site, mitigating the medium-impact place of worship use.

8. **Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance:** The approved development is eligible for a letter of exemption from the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO), since the project will result in clearing of less than 5,000 square feet of woodlands. The site has an approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI-087-14), which was issued on January 22, 2015; however, the NRI expired on January 22, 2020. No regulated environmental features (REF) or County-regulated 100-year floodplain are mapped within the approved limits of disturbance.
9. **Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** Subtitle 25, Division 3, of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, requires a minimum percentage of tree canopy coverage (TCC) on developments that request more than 5,000 square feet of disturbance. The property is zoned R-R and shall provide a minimum of 15 percent of the gross tract area to be covered by tree canopy. The property is 15.5 acres in size and results in a TCC requirement of 2.325 acres (101,277 square feet). Therefore, the total TCC included on the property, 5.76 acres (250,905.6 square feet), exceeds the requirement for TCC.

10. **Referrals:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized, as follows, and are incorporated herein by reference:
- a. **Historic Preservation**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the memorandum dated January 13, 2023 (Berger, Stabler, Smith, and Chisholm to Lockhart), which concluded that a search of current and historic photographs, topographic and historic maps, and locations of currently known archeological sites indicates the probability of archeological sites within the subject property is low.
 - b. **City of Bowie**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the memorandum dated January 31, 2023 (Meinert to Lockhart), which noted that the proposal has no impact on the City of Bowie.
 - c. **Permit Review**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the memorandum dated February 02, 2023 (Shaffer to Lockhart), which noted that site plan revisions are needed, prior to certification of the subject application. These revisions have been included as conditions herein.
 - d. **Environmental Planning**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the memorandum dated February 06, 2023 (Juba to Lockhart), which provided an analysis of the subject application, and no environmental issues were identified.
 - e. **Urban Design**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the email dated March 08, 2023 (Burke to Lockhart), which noted that the landscape plan conforms to the Landscape Manual and TCC requirements, as included in Findings 7 and 9 above.
 - f. **Transportation**—The Planning Board has reviewed and adopts the memorandum dated March 09, 2023 (Patrick to Lockhart), which provided an analysis of the subject application's conformance with the 2009 *Approved Master Plan of Transportation* and the Zoning Ordinance.

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 APPROVE the above-noted application, subject to the following conditions:

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.

- 1. Prior to certification, the departure site plan shall be revised, as follows:
 - a. Provide the dimensions of the driveway apron.

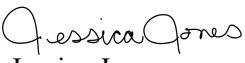
- b. Provide the dimensions of the handicap parking space and striped access aisle. The handicap parking space provided on-site must be van-accessible and dimensioned at either 8 feet by 19 feet, with an 8-foot-wide striped access aisle; or 11 feet by 19 feet, with a 5-foot-wide striped access aisle.
- c. Provide a parking schedule demonstrating the required and provided parking.
- d. Provide a fence detail for all fencing on the property.
- e. Notate the height of existing buildings.
- f. Provide bikeway signage, within the right-of-way, along the subject site's frontage of Old Chapel Road, unless modified with written correspondence by the operating agency.
- g. Provide the signage details for all signage on the property.

* * * * *

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 Geraldo, seconded by Commissioner Doerner, with Commissioners Geraldo, Doerner, Bailey and Shapiro voting in favor of the motion, and with Commissioner Washington absent at its regular meeting held on Thursday, April 6, 2023, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 27th day of April 2023.

Peter A. Shapiro
Chairman

By 
Jessica Jones
Planning Board Administrator

PAS:JJ:DL:jah

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY



David S. Warner
M-NCPPC Legal Department
Date: April 24, 2023