

PGCPB No. 07-58

File No. DSP-04004/03

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 March 1, 2007, regarding Detailed Site Plan DSP-04004/03 for Belcrest Center, Phase III, the Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** The subject application is for Belcrest Center, Phase III, a mixed-use development in Subarea 5 of the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone (TDOZ), which is the site of the Metro station. The proposed development for Phase III is for a fourteen-story, 328,574-square-foot mixed-use building of retail and office space, and a 637-space parking garage.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	<b>PROPOSED</b>
Zone(s)	M-X-T
Use(s)	Residential/Retail and Office
Acreage	22.22
Lots	1
Parcels	0
Square Footage/GFA:	
Phase III Retail (proposed):	8,913
Phase III Office (proposed):	319,661
Phase I Retail (approved):	
Phase I Residential (approved):	
Phase II Retail (approved):	
Total Square Footage	328,574
(proposed)	963,890
(All phases):	
FAR Proposed:	1.00
(Based on 22.22 acres or 967,903 square feet)	

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**Other Development Data:**

Parking Required:	See Finding 14 for discussion
Parking Provided:	
Parking structure	
Ground level	37 spaces (replacing existing WMATA spaces)
First level	32 spaces
Second level	69 spaces
Third level	70 spaces
Fourth level	70 spaces
Fifth level	70 spaces
Sixth level	62 spaces
Seventh level	17 space
 Total spaces provided	 637 spaces (includes 12 handicap spaces and 198 compact spaces)
Handicap spaces required	12
Handicap spaces proposed	12 including 3 van spaces
Motorcycle spaces	47
 Loading spaces required	 4
Loading spaces proposed	3 (shared loading proposed)
Loading spaces size	33 feet x 12 feet

3. **Location:** The site is located within the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone (TDOZ). The property is referenced as part of Subarea 5 in the transit district development plan (TDDP). The site is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Belcrest Road and East West Highway (MD 410), within the limits of the City of Hyattsville.
4. **Surroundings and Uses:** The subject site area will be leased by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to Taylor Development and Land Company (TDL), and is part of the Prince George's Plaza Metro Station. Construction is currently underway for previously-approved residential development on the eastern portion of the site (Phase I) and for previously-approved retail development on the northern portion of the site (Phase II). The subject application is for the southwestern portion of the site, to the north and south of the existing train station and tracks. The proposed office will be located north of the train tracks and the parking garage will be south of the tracks. To the south of the Metro property from west to east are the Nicholas Orem Junior High School, an existing single-family residential neighborhood (Queens Chapel Manor), and the American Red Cross office building. To the east, across Belcrest Road, is The Shoppes at Metro Plaza, a 60,000±-square-foot retail shopping center, and an existing church. To the west of the Metro property is a Giant Food store. To the north of the station, across East West Highway, is

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the Prince George's Plaza Mall. To the northeast is the University Town Center, a mixed-use development in the M-X-T Zone.

5. **Previous Approvals:** The site has an approved Conceptual Site Plan, CSP-02001 (PGCPB No. 03-214) by the Prince George's County Planning Board and affirmed by the District Council on February 9, 2004. According to the Subdivision Office, the property is exempt from the Subdivision Ordinance requirements because more than 10 percent of the property is already developed (Section 24-107(c)(7)(D)).

The site has an approved detailed site plan that has been revised twice. The original Detailed Site Plan, DSP-04004 (PGCPB No. 04-101) was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on May 6, 2004, for Phase I. The first revision, DSP-04004/01 (PGCPB No. 04-299) was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on December 16, 2004, for Phase II. The second revision, DSP-04004/02, was approved by the Planning Director as the designee of the Planning Board on March 23, 2006, for additional retail space on the second floor of retail space along MD 410.

6. **Design Features:** The development will consist of a fourteen-story office building with retail on the first floor and an eight-story parking structure. The office building will be located on the north side of the Metro tracks, leaving a ground-floor passage on its southern side for the existing bus and kiss and ride lane of the Metro station. The building will contain two ground-floor retail spaces located on either side of a central lobby and service area, with offices on the upper floors, and a fitness center on the second floor for use by the building tenants. The parking structure will be located on the south side of the Metro tracks, above the existing Metro garage access.

The development will be served by two private access roads. One access road runs from East West Highway south along the western side of the subject property. The other access road, Belcrest Center Way, intersects the western access road to the north of the proposed office building and runs eastward to the north of the office building and Metro station, eventually joining the existing Metro access roads in the eastern portion of the property to connect to Belcrest Road. The garage will be served by ramps linking to the access road on the west side of the subject property. Pedestrian access from the garage to the office building will be provided by a sidewalk parallel to the access road, along the western edge of the exposed Metro tracks. The sidewalk will be sheltered by a breezeway.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **1998 Approved Transit District Development Plan for Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone requirements:** The site plan is in general conformance with the requirements of the TDDP. Requirements of the TDDP that warrant discussion are discussed below:

#### Required findings for Detailed Site Plans in the TDDP:

1. **The Transit District Site Plan is in strict conformance with any Mandatory Development Requirements of the TDDP.**

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The applicant has requested modifications from the development standards for this project. The Planning Board and District Council approved amendments to P-65 and P-66 with Conceptual Site Plan CSP-02001. The detailed site plan does not meet all of the development standards and the applicant requests further amendments to the development standards. The following provides a discussion of the requirements, including amendment requests and a response from staff:

**P70 (page 107, TDDP) - A 100-foot-wide buffer consisting of preservation of existing trees shall be provided along the southern boundary adjacent to the residential uses.**

The 100-foot wide buffer is required along most of the southern boundary adjacent to the residential uses. Due to the lack of sufficient existing trees, most of the buffer area is scheduled for landscape planting and afforestation, except where impracticable due to the presence of previously-approved underground stormwater management pipes. The applicant is proposing that the southwest corner of the parking structure encroach approximately 27.5 feet into the required buffer at the base of the building and 31.1 feet encroachment by overhang of floors 2-8 of the structure. The applicant provides the following justification as stated in a letter dated October 19, 2006 (Gibbs to Estes):

“TDL is requesting a minimal waiver from this 100-foot-buffer requirement. The buffer requirement exists in order to protect the single-family detached homes which front on Oliver Street to the south of the Prince George’s Plaza [sic] Metro Station site. To the rear of the metro station site, the topography rises up a grassy knoll. At the top of the knoll sit a number of single family detached residences. The rears of these single family homes face the metro station site. The fronts of the homes are oriented to Oliver Street. As indicated earlier, the 100-foot-buffer is intended to provide separation from the residential community and development to occur on the Metro station site.

“As can be seen from a review of the Detailed Site Plan filed with this application, the office building itself presents no intrusion into the buffer area. However, there is a minimal intrusion for a minor portion of the parking garage. Specifically, the southwest corner of the parking garage intrudes into the buffer at an angle for a total linear distance of approximately 110 feet. However, the amount of the intrusion varies due to the angle of the parking garage. At its widest location, the buffer is reduced to approximately 72 feet. At its most minimal intrusion, the buffer is approximately 99 feet wide. Again, this intrusion runs for only approximately 110 feet. In total, the southern wall of the parking garage runs for approximately 280 feet. Stated in square feet, the area of encroachment into the buffer area comprises only 1,566 square feet.

“When the Conceptual Site Plan was being processed, TDL believed that a buffer intrusion could be avoided with parking structure. At the time of processing the Conceptual Site Plan, it was known that a portion of the residential units located in the southeast corner of the site would intrude into the 100 foot buffer area. Consequently, a

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waiver was approved for that intrusion. While a buffer intrusion associated with the parking garage was not anticipated, it became obvious that a slight intrusion could not be avoided when the Detailed Site Plan was being drawn. Preparation of the Detailed Site Plan obviously provided much closer analysis and further identified the impact of existing improvements and proposed improvements.

“First, it must be remembered that TDL is dealing with a site which already includes improvements. Specifically, the site functions as an existing WMATA station. The existence of the WMATA tracks, train storage facilities, surface parking, driveways, Metro station parking garage and associated ramps, have all provided considerable constraints and impact in planning the air rights developments of this property. The location available for the office building and its parking structure created particular problems. As noted earlier, the conceptual site plan approved the office building to be located between the retail space fronting on East West Highway and the WMATA railroad tracks. WMATA will not allow any improvements constructed over their tracks. Therefore, the sole remaining space for the parking structure was the area south of the railroad tracks and north of the 100 foot buffer. In addition to the existing WMATA tracks, a further constraint was the proposed stormwater management facility which usurps virtually all of the area immediately south of the proposed office parking structure. The existence of the stormwater management facility afforded no flexibility in terms of designating an odd shaped office parking structure which would allow it to remain outside the buffer area.

“It is also important to note that the residences along Oliver Street are situated at a substantially higher elevation than the subject property. From visual standpoint, the applicant believes this difference in elevation mitigates against the need to provide the full 100-foot buffer, given the fact that the grade difference affects the view which Oliver Street residents will have when looking northward from their property onto the TDL development site. We submit that the minimal impact into the buffer presented by the proposed location of the parking garage will have very little impact upon the residents of Oliver Street who are intended to be protected by the buffer. This is particularly true with it is considered that the minimal area of encroachment occurs primarily across from Lot 10 within the residential community. Lot 10 is the last residential home constructed along Oliver Street before arriving at the Nicholas Orem Junior High School site. Therefore, while no buffer intrusion would be the optimum objective, the minimal intrusion being proposed will, in reality, have only a minor impact on one lot along Oliver Street.

“Finally, while the applicant understands that the Transit District Overlay Zone Text document created the 100 foot buffer, application of the Landscape Manual, which provides setbacks and buffers based upon the presumed impact which adjoining uses will have on one another, would not require such a large buffer. For example when office uses abut single family detached residential uses, a “C” buffer yard is required, thus

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necessitating a minimum 40 foot set back and 30 foot landscaped yard. When retail uses abut single family detached residential uses a "D" type buffer yard is required, thus necessitating a minimum 50 foot building setback and 40 foot landscaped yard.

"The applicant believes the Landscape Manual analogy is appropriate in this instance. As described above, the setback of the parking garage will be, at its closest, more than 70 feet from the adjoining residential lot lines. Further, existing trees within the buffer area will by and large be allowed to remain. The existing trees will be supplemented with additional plantings. The planting yard will range from approximately 75 feet to 120 feet along the southern end of the parking garage. Clearly, both the set back and landscape yard being proposed greatly exceeds what the Landscape Manual requirements would be.

"In view of all the above, the applicant respectfully submits that it would be appropriate to approve this minimal waiver from the 100 foot buffer requirement."

The applicant provided additional justification in another statement dated February 7, 2006:

"As I explained in my initial justification, there is a slight encroachment of the parking garage along its southwest corner into the 100 foot buffer area. The encroachment is only approximately 27 feet into the buffer. The entire 100 foot buffer exists along most of the boundary of the parking garage for the office building.

"As you are aware, the homes constructed on Oliver Street are at a substantially higher elevation than the first level of the parking garage. In fact, those homes look down on the entire Belcrest Center site. Initially, we had proposed a substantial evergreen hedge to be planted along the extreme southern property boundary of the Belcrest Center site, at the top of the hill behind the homes along that portion of Oliver Street abutting the office site. After consultation with you, it was determined that the planting/screening areas should be enhanced. Accordingly, we have submitted revised plans which propose a 6 foot high privacy fence to be constructed along that portion of our southern property boundary coincident with the office development. This will result in the 6 foot high privacy fence being installed along the southern boundary of those homes impacted by the parking garage.

"The privacy fence will be of durable man-made material. The evergreen hedge will still be installed on the Belcrest Center side of the privacy fence. However, the evergreens will be staggered and deciduous trees will be interspersed. The evergreen hedge will consist of individually planted evergreens which will be 6 feet in height at the time of planting. Ultimately, it is anticipated that they will mature to a height of 20 to 30, feet thus providing substantial additional visual screening.

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“As the hill slopes down from the homes along Oliver Street, there is existing vegetation which will be preserved. These consist of large canopy deciduous trees and some evergreens. In addition, my client is proposing to add new deciduous trees along this slope. Additionally, parts of the buffer area will now be treated as reforestation area.

“While Mandatory Development Requirement P70 only requires that the 100 foot buffer consist of ‘preservation of existing trees’ these changes will result in additional trees being planted within the buffer area. Significantly, at the lower part of the buffer (adjacent to the parking garage structure) shrubs will also be planted in order to further increase planting within the buffer. These shrubs will be installed over the existing stormwater pipe which has been installed pursuant to an earlier permit within the buffer.

“My client believes that the combination of the privacy fence and the additional plantings result in a buffer area which is substantially improved and much more effective than the original 100 foot buffer requirement in P70.”

Comment: The first floor of the proposed garage will encroach approximately 28 feet into the required buffer; the upper floors of the garage extend further and will encroach approximately 31 feet. The staff's opinion on this issue is that the proposed combination of privacy fence placed at the rear property line of the residential lots and landscaping, which includes afforestation with large-size plant materials, will provide an adequate buffer and will mitigate the encroachment. However, staff recommends a condition of approval that assures that the plantings will satisfy both the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance as well as the requirements of Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual.

**P6 Unless otherwise noted, the term “parking” as used in these requirements, shall refer only to surface parking. Parking provided in or below a structure that is used, built or redeveloped for a use or uses approved under the provisions of this plan shall be considered surface parking as used in these requirements. *Unless stated otherwise in this plan, all existing County requirements relating to parking and loading as required by Subtitle 27, Part 11, of the Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance shall be applicable. (emphasis added)***

Comment: The proposed development as shown on the detailed site plan complies with the Parking and Loading regulations with one exception. The applicant is requesting an amendment to the standards relative to the size of the standard parking spaces located in the parking garage. The specific nature of the request is addressed in the applicant's justification statement dated February 8, 2007:

“This request relates to the dimensions of parking spaces which will be required to be provided within the parking garage which will serve the office building being approved as a part of this detailed site plan. The applicant proposes to provide standard size parking spaces which are 9 feet x 18 feet. Normally, Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that standard parking spaces be 9½ feet x 19 feet. Compact parking spaces are

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allowed to be 8 feet x 16.5 feet. One third of the total required parking spaces are allowed to be compact spaces. Driveway aisles within parking compounds proposed for two-way traffic are required to be 22 feet wide. Mandatory Development Requirement P6 provides that the term 'parking' is only intended to refer to surface parking. Mandatory Development Requirement P6 goes on to state that generally, the requirements of Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance apply to 'parking and loading.'

"The applicant is proposing to provide all parking for the office building in a structured parking garage. Therefore, the term 'parking' does not apply to any of the parking being provided by the applicant for the office building. Consequently, the requirements of Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance, including the dimensions for parking spaces, should be deemed to be inapplicable. Therefore, the applicant's proposal to provide standard sized parking spaces which would be 9 feet x 18 feet as opposed to 9½ feet x 19 feet, can be provided without any waiver from Mandatory Development Requirement P6 given the fact that the parking being provided is not required to comply with Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance.

"Even if Mandatory Development Requirement P6 were deemed to require structured parking to meet the dimension requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant believes a waiver from that requirement is justified in this instance. Assuming that the design requirements of Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance apply, the applicant will be allowed to provide one third of its spaces as compact spaces. The remaining two thirds would be standard spaces. The applicant submits that it should be authorized to provide all standard sized spaces with dimensions of 9 feet x 18 feet. All two-way drive aisles will continue to be 22 feet in width. Given the size of cars being driven by commuters today, a standard size parking space measuring 9½ feet x 19 feet is simply not needed. Today, many commuters drive compact cars. There are many more compact cars on the road than there are full size cars. Further, even full size cars are smaller today than in previous years. Finally, while there was a time when SUVs were exceedingly popular, the price of gasoline has over the last few years has resulted in fewer SUVs being sold. In addition, many SUVs being designed today are smaller than in prior years. Given all the above, the applicant believes that standard size spaces which are 9 feet wide and 18 feet long are more than sufficient to accommodate today's parking needs.

"In view of all the above, the applicant submits first that a waiver for Mandatory Development Requirement P6 is not required because structured parking is not deemed to be 'parking.' It is only 'parking' which is required to comply with the standards of Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance. Even if that interpretation of P6 is not applied, a waiver from Mandatory Development Requirement P6 is justified in this instance."

In regard to another request by the applicant to share loading spaces, which does not constitute an amendment, but is permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, in a justification statement dated February 7, 2007, the applicant provides the following:

"In addition, please accept this correspondence as a request to authorize the sharing of

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loading spaces. Section 27-583(a) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that the number of loading spaces required in the M-X-T Zone is to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Board at the time of the detailed site plan approval. Section 27-583(b) also provides that the Planning Board may reduce the number of normally required loading spaces when sharing of loading spaces demonstrates that the total required number of loading spaces is not necessary. The applicant believes such a situation exists in this instance.

“The proposed office building will have 8,913 square feet of retail space on the first floor. This would normally result in one required loading space. The remaining 266,086 square feet of office space generates a need for 3 loading spaces. Therefore, under strict application of the Zoning Ordinance, a total of 4 loading spaces would normally be required. The applicant is proposing to provide 3 loading spaces in lieu of the normal 4. We believe it is reasonable to assume that since the retail space is limited and since it is located within the office building, there will be ample opportunities for shared use of loading spaces between the retail use and the office use. In particular, deliveries requiring utilization of loading docks are minimal for office buildings. While deliveries do occur, they do not occur throughout the day, or for that matter, every day. Consequently, in the applicant's experience these loading spaces remain vacant during most of the day. Further, any large scale deliveries and/or situations where tenants are moving, can be scheduled and coordinated to take place during off-hours. Retail deliveries will often occur early in the morning or late in the evening. Further, retail deliveries for small retail spaces such as are being proposed in this building, normally will occur through the use of panel trucks. These types of deliveries require only a short term utilization of the loading space.

“In summary, it is the applicant's belief that 3 loading spaces will be more than sufficient to accommodate all of the loading needs for this site. Therefore, based upon the authorization contained in Section 27-583 of the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant requests that it be allowed to share loading spaces and provide only 3 spaces as opposed as to the normal requirement of 4 spaces.”

Comment: The reduction of the dimensions of parking spaces from 9.5 x 19 to 9 x 18 within the parking structure is in keeping with previous relief granted for other applications within the Transit District. The Prince George's Plaza TDOZ promotes dense urban development near the Metro. Since parts of the area were developed as a more suburban concept, the request to reduce the parking space size by six inches in width and one foot in length is a consequence of compact development at the Metro station and the desire to increase parking spaces close to the Metro station in order to accommodate commuter traffic. Staff supports the request to reduce the size of standard parking spaces to 9 feet by 18 feet.

In regard to the sharing of loading spaces, considering the small amount of retail space proposed, the staff also supports the applicant's request to allow the joint use of proposed loading areas and to reduce the number from four to three loading spaces. In addition, there is proposed on-street parking along Belcrest Center Drive in front of these retail establishments, which could be used

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as temporary loading areas, especially during the early hours when most deliveries normally occur.

**S22 All parking structures shall provide a minimum of 5 percent of the total parking surface area in green space. The green space shall be planted with shade trees and shrubs. Tree planter boxes shall contain a minimum of 500 cubic feet of soil per tree, provide drainage and have an irrigation system.**

The applicant provided the following justification in statement dated October 19, 2006:

“TDL is also seeking a waiver from this development requirement. Application of this development requirement would necessitate the provision of landscaping on the top deck of the parking structure. It should be noted that this identical requirement received a waiver when the Detailed Site Plan for the residential units within Belcrest Center was approved.

“We believe that certain circumstances exist which warrant approval of this waiver request. My client does not believe that it is practical or desirable to provide the 5 percent green area on the top of the parking structure for the office building. We believe that the following conditions justify a waiver from that requirement:

- “a. The parking structure will consist of seven levels of parking stalls and two ramp levels for a total of nine levels of elevation. This puts the top deck of the proposed parking structure at height which will prevent neighboring users from viewing the surface of the top deck of the parking compound. Therefore providing green area on the top of the parking structure will not provide visual relief for any neighboring property owners or users.
- “b. Given the extreme heat condition which will exist on the top deck during summer months, the likelihood is that shrubs or trees in planters will fail to survive the summer months. My client’s architect and land planner have both indicated that this is a typical experience in other projects where plantings have been installed on roofs of buildings or on the top decks of parking structures.
- “c. As can be seen from a review of the landscape plan there will be substantial landscaping installed between the parking structure and the residential units to the south. Included in this landscaping is a row of evergreen trees which TDL proposes to install along the rear property line of the residential units adjacent to the parking structure. These plantings are above and beyond the requirements of the Landscape Manual and will serve to provide a further attractive visual barrier between the residences and the parking garage.
- “d. It should be noted that the parking structure for the office building will be adjacent to the parking structure to the metro station. There are no trees or shrubs installed on the top deck of the metro parking structure.

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- “e. A high level of detail has been devoted to landscaping and other amenities to be provided throughout the entire development. The large stormwater management pond which exist in the southeast corner of the site is to be improved into a public amenity which will create aesthetically pleasing views for both the residents along Oliver Street and visitors to Belcrest Center. The developer of the residential units has made a commitment to install some type of public art or memorial to overlook this stormwater management pond in order to further enhance visual amenities. Other works of public art are to be commissioned through competition by TDL and to be installed at other locations in this mixed-use development project, thus adding to the overall attractiveness of the project.

“Given all the above, the applicant believes that a waiver from the requirement of S22 to provide a green area on the top deck of the parking structure should also be granted as requested.”

Comment: Because of the height of the parking garage and other concerns outlined above, the required green area probably will not contribute to improving the esthetics of the structure from the ground level. Furthermore, no dwelling units are situated such that they will look down on the top level of the parking garage. In keeping with previously granted relief from this provision for other sites within the Transit District, including Phase I of the subject site, the staff recommends the approval of this request.

In addition to the amendments requested above, the following mandatory requirements are provided below for discussion:

#### **Relevant Mandatory Development Requirements**

**S3 (TDDP, page 29): “All primary and secondary pedestrian walkways shall be well-lighted to a minimum standard of 1.25 footcandles.”**

Comment: The photometric plan and the lighting information indicate that some areas, including the walkway leading north from the parking structure, do not meet the requirement above. Therefore a condition of approval is necessary to amend the lighting plans to provide a minimum standard of 1.25 footcandles in all areas intended for pedestrian use.

**S4 (TDDP, page 29): “All proposed development shall have direct, safe pedestrian links provided between the transit district uses, the primary walkway system, and ultimately to the Metro station.”**

Comment: The plan is in compliance with this requirement. Pedestrian links are proposed that will lead from the parking garage to the office and retail building and then cross Belcrest Center Way to connect to the primary walkway system in Phase II of the development. A crosswalk across the access road on the western edge of the property will lead toward the existing Giant

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Food and other development to the west. A sidewalk along the southern side of the bus/kiss and ride lane will link the transit district uses to the Metro station.

**S7 (TDDP, page 30): “Landscape screens and buffers shall be used only where they do not impose a problem for pedestrian safety.”**

Comment: The plan’s use of landscaping does not pose any problems for pedestrian safety.

**S9 (TDDP, page 31): “At the time of the first Detailed Site Plan submission, the M-NCPPC Urban Design Staff shall select and specify the streetscape elements which shall constitute the streetscape vocabulary for all future development in the transit district, such as lighting fixtures, benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, sign posts, planters, building awnings, paving pattern(s) and materials.**

Comment: The DSP proposal does not contain adequate information specifying the details or location of streetscape elements. The proposed street furnishings should be in conformance with the previously established standards of the transit district. The proposed street trees along Belcrest Center Way are London Plane Trees, which will be consistent with the street trees along East West Highway.

**S11 (TDDP, page 31): “All street trees shall be limbed up to a minimum of 6 feet above grade.”**

**S12 (TDDP, page 31): “All tree pits for street tree planting shall be designed in accordance with Figure 10, or the most current technology.”**

Comment: The landscape plan proposes London Plane Trees along the sidewalk on Belcrest Center Way, but does not provide a separate planting detail specifically for street trees. An appropriate planting detail or landscape note should be added specifying that street trees will be limbed up to a minimum of 6 feet above grade.

**S13 (TDDP, page 31): “All major pedestrian crossings, such as crossings that traverse more than three lanes of traffic, shall have a contrasting pavement material. Crossings are to conform to all Road Code standards and conform with Figure 7.”**

Comment: Crosswalks of stamped concrete are proposed to cross the bus/kiss and ride lane, Belcrest Center Way, and the access road.

**S14 (TDDP, page 35): “Building materials shall be high quality, enduring and distinctive. Exterior building materials, such as pre-cast concrete, brick, tile and stone, are encouraged.”**

Comment: The exterior of the proposed office/retail building will be principally constructed with pre-cast light terra cotta concrete and blue-tinted glass, with charcoal composite panels along the

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center part of the ground floor façade. The parking structure will be constructed with light grey cast-in-place concrete, using clear glass windows in the stairway/elevator area.

**S25 (TDDP, page 39): “All lighting shall have a minimum level of 1.25 footcandles, and shall be provided for all outdoor spaces, plazas, parking lots, etc., for the safety and welfare of all users.”**

Comment: There are several places where the site lighting fails to meet this requirement, notably on the walkway between the parking structure and the office building. As a condition of approval, the applicant should revise the lighting plan to meet this minimum light level for all pedestrian areas.

**P2 (TDDP, page 40): “All development/redevelopment shall have a sign plan approved by the Planning Board at the time of Detailed Site Plan. This plan shall provide the sign location(s), size, color, lettering style, construction details and material specifications including the method of illumination.”**

Comment: The plans indicate signage for the retail spaces at the first floor level and a logo of the development company near the front door.

**P3 (TDDP, page 40): “No signs shall be located on a penthouse, chimney or other architectural accessory and/or decorative building features.”**

**P4 (TDDP, page 40): “No part of any sign shall extend above or beyond the perimeter of the building wall or roof.”**

Comment: No signs are proposed for such locations.

**S29 (TDDP, page 41): “The location and number of bicycle lockers, racks and other features shall be determined at Detailed Site Plan review.”**

**S30 (TDDP, page 41): “All new retail development shall provide four bicycle racks per 10,000 gross square feet of floor space with each rack holding a minimum of two bicycles.”**

Comment: The landscape plan currently shows two sets of bicycle racks, one at the northeast corner of the office building and the other in the northwest corner of the parking structure. Each set of racks has space for six bicycles.

**S32 (TDDP, page 69): “Prior to the final inspection and sign-off of permits by the Sediment/Stormwater or Building Inspector, any storm drain inlets associated with the development and all inlets on the subject subarea shall be stenciled with “Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage.” The Detailed Site Plan and the Sediment Control Plan (in the sequence of construction) shall contain this information.”**

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Comment: The detailed site plan calls for the required labeling of storm drain inlets.

#### **Site-Specific Requirements for Subarea 5**

**P66 (TDDP, page 107): “The minimum building height for uses other than residential shall be 4 stories.”**

**P67 (TDDP, page 107): “The maximum building height shall not exceed 16 stories for all uses.”**

Comment: The proposed height of the office/retail structure is 14 stories; the parking garage is seven/eight stories, both of which fall within these required limits.

1. **The Transit District Site Plan is consistent with, and reflects the Site Design Guidelines and criteria contained in, the TDDP.**

#### **Relevant Site Design Guidelines**

**G1 (TDDP, page 30): “All pedestrian walkways should be designed to minimize vehicular/pedestrian conflicts.”**

Comment: The proposed system of pedestrian walkways generally minimizes vehicular/pedestrian conflicts by reducing the number of road crossings to a minimum. The pedestrian walkway running along the south side of the bus / kiss and ride lane presents safety problems due to its width. Although the walkway is approximately six feet wide, there are several points where the support columns for the office building take up much of the sidewalk, reducing pedestrian space to approximately two feet. This is insufficient under the Americans with Disabilities Act. To ensure pedestrian safety, staff recommends that the plan be revised to show a minimum of four feet of unobstructed pedestrian space along the entire length of this walkway.

**G2 (TDDP, page 30): “Pedestrian link(s) should be barrier-free.”**

Comment: There are no barriers in the pedestrian walkway system. A landscaped planting area on the east side of the office building blocks pedestrian access to that area, but this is an important design feature as a pedestrian link is not intended for that side of the building, where electrical service equipment is located.

**G3 (TDDP, page 30): “Landscaping plantings and/or low walls should be used to screen views of parking areas selectively and soften the façade treatment of parking structures whenever possible.”**

**G42 (TDDP, page 39): “Landscaping elements, where appropriate, should be used to soften the appearance of the parking structure.”**

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Comment: The southern side of the proposed parking structure is to be screened with heavy landscape plantings. Due to the narrow spaces adjacent to the structure on the west, east, and north sides, landscaping on those sides is not feasible. The northern side of the structure will be screened at the ground level with a charcoal-colored welded-wire mesh screen approximately nine feet tall, which will provide some architectural interest as viewed from the tracks

**G4 (TDDP, page 35): “Building scale should be minimized by creating architectural transitions between lower and higher buildings.”**

Comment: The 14-story office building is located across Belcrest Center Way from the retail development of Phase II, which does not exceed five equivalent stories in height. A smooth transition between these heights does not seem feasible. However, the setback of the office building from MD 410 provides a mitigating effect on the scale of the building on the Transit District main street.

**G5 (TDDP, page 36): “Building facades should be varied and articulated to provide visual interest. Arcades, bays, windows and balconies should be provided where appropriate to define and enhance the pedestrian experience.”**

Comment: The office building has a varied façade with the blue-tint glass forming the majority of the surface in the center of the northern elevation, flanked on either side by terra-cotta concrete panels. The northern façade is varied in its form as there is an open area beneath a canopy to define the main lobby entrance and variations in the extent of the building edge.

**G6 (TDDP, page 36): “Office buildings fronting on pedestrian pathways should be consciously designed with a base scaled to relate to pedestrian activities.”**

**G7 (TDDP, page 36): “Continuity of retail activities at the street level in office buildings, adjacent to pedestrian pathways, should be used to enrich street life and enhance pedestrian experiences.”**

Comment: The office building provides pedestrian scale at the ground level along its northern side with the ground floor retail spaces and the lobby area. Windows on the ground floor permit visual permeability and the floor plan provides for 3-4 entrances along the north side of the building to allow interaction between the interior and exterior of the building. There is less provision for pedestrian scale along the office building’s western and southern sides, which are less permeable and feature plainer, unadorned walls. A card-secured entrance for office employees exists on the southern side, but this part of the structure is primarily oriented towards service uses and the flow of the bus / kiss and ride lane, making pedestrian orientation difficult to achieve. There is no pedestrian pathway along the building’s eastern side, which is devoted to electrical service equipment.

**G8 (TDDP, page 36): “Where possible, building entrances separated by roadways, parking plazas or open space should be oriented toward one another.”**

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Comment: The retail uses to the north in Phase II of the development front on East West Highway and do not face the building entrances in the subject application.

**G9 (TDDP, page 35): “All sides of a building should receive equal design consideration if viewed from a public area.”**

Comment: All sides of the proposed building have similar facades. The northern (front) side of the building is designed to be the primary access point and public face of the building, with a finished façade extending up the entire height of the structure to cover the penthouse, and with a canopy above the main lobby entrance. The penthouse is visible from the other three sides, and ground level views of the electrical equipment on the east side of the building and the loading area doors on the south side of the building suggest that the structure is designed to be most attractive from the north side.

**G10 (TDDP, page 35): “Building rooflines should be designed to create architectural interest and contribute to the overall identity of the area.”**

Comment: The northern façade extends up the entire height of the building to screen views of the penthouse from that direction, presenting a unified finish when viewed from East West Highway. The penthouse, constructed primarily with charcoal aluminum, is exposed on the other three sides of the building, but is stepped back approximately 36 feet from the south roofline, 27 feet from the west roofline, and 52 feet from the east roofline. These setbacks allow the 28-foot-high penthouse to be almost entirely screened by the roofline from lower vantage points. For example, when viewed from approximately 40 percent of the roof area of the nine-level parking garage, the penthouse will be entirely invisible; from the remainder it will be only partially visible. The roofline will not conceal the penthouse from the houses on Oliver Street, but this view may be screened by the proposed buffer plantings along the southern edge of the subject property.

**G11 (TDDP, page 35): “Primary entrances should be designed as one of the major architectural features so they are clearly identifiable and offer a sense of arrival.”**

Comment: The main entrance to the building lobby is located in the center of the frontage, with two double doors set back from the sidewalk beneath the upper floors of the building. This creates an open space in front of the doors within the building mass and shaded by a canopy. The primary entrance is clearly identifiable and offers a sense of arrival.

**G12 (TDDP, page 35): “Excessive changes in materials on a single building or within a development should be avoided.”**

Comment: The proposed buildings meet this guideline by not proposing excessive changes in materials within the development.

**G39 (TDDP, page 39): “All parking structures should be designed as an integral component of the overall site and be architecturally compatible with adjoining buildings.”**

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Comment: The proposed parking structure is similar in design to the adjacent existing Metro parking structure, and is designed with materials that echo those used in the façade of the existing parking structure that was constructed by WMATA. It is physically connected to the Metro structure by the ramp system and is clearly linked to the office building by the breezeway-sheltered walkway.

**G40 (TDDP, page 39): “Convenient and safe pedestrian linkages should be provided between the garages and the main buildings.”**

Comment: The plan provides for a convenient linkage along the closest possible route between the parking structure and the office/retail building.

**G43 (TDDP, page 39): “Service and loading areas should be effectively screened from public view and be located so as to perform their functions conveniently.”**

Comment: The service and loading area for the office building is an internal area within the south side of the building structure, accessed from the bus/kiss and ride lane. Although it will be effectively screened from public view and be less obstructive than an exterior loading area, there is still a potential for inconveniences and conflicts as service trucks may impede the movements of traffic in the lane. Staff recommends a condition of approval that trucks may not enter and exit the loading area except during the night or early morning hours so as not to conflict with traffic in the bus/kiss and ride lane.

#### **Site-Specific Design Guidelines for Subarea 5**

**G58 (TDDP, page 108): “The subarea layout should allow for shared parking between all uses.”**

Comment: The proposed parking garage will serve as shared parking for the office building and the Metro station. The proposed parking and loading arrangements are calculated on the basis of shared use.

#### **Additional Required Findings for Detailed Site Plans in the TDOZ**

- 3. The Transit District Site Plan meets all of the requirements of the TDOZ and applicable regulations of the underlying zones.**

#### **Section 27-545**

The base floor area ratio (FAR) for the 22.22 acres of net tract area is 0.40, consistent with Section 27-548(a)(1). As an incentive in the M-X-T Zone, a bonus density is permitted where 20 or more dwelling units are provided, which allows for additional gross floor area equal to a FAR of 1.0, per Section 27-545(b)(4)(A), for a total of 1.40 FAR permitted. Phase I was for a residential component of over 200 dwelling units. The applicant is proposing approximately 1.0

FAR.

- 4. The location, size and design of buildings, signs, other structures, open spaces, landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems, and parking and loading areas maximize safety and efficiency and are adequate to meet the purposes of the TDOZ.**

The proposed design will meet this requirement. The restricted nature of the site poses challenges to safety and efficiency, but the proposed design addresses these problems. There are potential problems for pedestrian safety on the three crossing areas in the development, and in the bus/kiss and ride lane where pedestrians walking westwards from the Metro station may attempt to walk along the south side of the bus lane despite the lack of a sufficiently wide walkway there. There may also be potential conflicts between loading vehicles attempting to access the loading bay from the south side of the building and vehicles using the bus/kiss and ride lane.

The proposed site plan will meet the purposes of the TDOZ, promoting transit usage and enhancing the development opportunities in the vicinity of transit stations. The proposed plan will also increase the return on transit investment and improve local tax revenues, provide for convenient and efficient pedestrian and vehicular access to the Metro station, promote an appropriate mix of land uses, and complement and enhance the character of the area. The conditions recommended by the staff will alleviate these problems.

- 5. Each structure and use, in the manner proposed, is compatible with other structures and uses in the transit district and with existing and proposed adjacent development.**

The proposed office building and parking garage will be compatible with other structures and uses in the district, which will integrate as an urban environment, and with existing and proposed adjacent development. There are no use conflicts foreseen with the surrounding development, which is generally commercial in nature and urban in design.

- 6. In addition to the findings above, the following is required for Detailed Site Plans:**
  - a. The Planning Board shall find that the Detailed Site Plan is in general conformance with the approved Conceptual Site Plan (if one is required).**

**Conceptual Site Plan, CSP-02001:** The detailed site plan is in general conformance to the conditions of the conceptual site plan (CSP-02001). The conceptual site plan was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board (PGCPB No.03-214) on October 9, 2003, and the District Council affirmed the Planning Board's decision on February 9, 2004. Conditions of the conceptual site plan that are applicable to this detailed site plan are as follows:

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1. **In addition to the information required for each detailed site plan, the applicant, his heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall submit a parking demand analysis which reflects appropriate reduction for shared parking between the existing and proposed uses. A parking demand analysis shall not be required for any Detailed Site Plan relating to the standalone residential units.**

Comment: See Transportation Planning Section Finding 21 below.

2. **Prior to certification of the conceptual site plan, the applicant, his heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall submit a detailed on-site transportation study for the entire site of this conceptual site plan, which shall include traffic projections for all access points. This information will be used to determine the adequacy of the site access points. A copy of an access approval letter from SHA and DPW&T shall be provided prior to the approval of a Detailed Site Plan.**

Comment: See Transportation Planning Section Finding 21 below.

4. **Retail stores, including "big box" retail, shall have their entrances fronting on East West Highway and/or the open-air urban plaza unless otherwise approved at the time of Detailed Site Plan approval.**

Comment: The first-floor retail stores in the office building are on Belcrest Center Way, an internal access street. This condition was met with Phase II of the development which included the majority of the retail component of this mixed-use development.

6. **Any parking structure visible from East West Highway shall be designed to incorporate techniques and architectural treatments which cause the structure to blend harmoniously with retail, office or residential structures along East West Highway. It is the intent of this condition to mitigate the visual impact of any such parking structure.**

Comment: The proposed parking structure south of the Metro tracks is mostly screened from East West Highway by the taller office building, but the western end of the structure and the garage access ramps will be visible. The visible portion of the structure is approximately 45 feet long. The garage has been designed so that the part of the structure visible from East West Highway will be the area occupied by the elevator and stairway of the garage. The façade of this area consists of aluminum-framed clear glass windows between the light grey concrete floors. This will not exactly match the terra cotta concrete and aluminum-framed blue-tinted glass windows of the office building but the overall effect will be similar and the large amounts of glass employed in each façade should result in the parking structure blending harmoniously with the building.

8. **A 45-foot-wide vegetative buffer, consisting of existing trees to be preserved and substantial evergreen and ornamental plantings to supplement the buffer and increase the visual barrier, shall be provided along the south property line. Building setbacks from the property line shall be a minimum of 65 feet, except for one leg of**

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**the proposed residential structure that may be 45 feet from the property line. Any proposed office or associated parking structure must meet the required 100-foot-wide buffer requirement of page 70 of the TDDP.**

Comment: The landscape plan shows a vegetative buffer of adequate size that includes both preserved existing trees and new evergreen, ornamental, and shade tree plantings along the southern property line. At the western edge of the buffer it is approximately 47 feet wide, expanding to a maximum of approximately 137 feet at its widest point. The proposed parking structure meets the minimum 65-foot building setback. It intrudes upon the required 100-foot buffer in one area, approaching to within 69 feet of the property line. This intrusion is fully discussed in the requested amendment to P70 above, and is considered as a revision to the condition above.

- 16. At time of Detailed Site Plan review, the DSP shall show the location of trash cans throughout the site and shall contain the following note: "All storm drain inlets shall be stenciled with the words 'Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage.'"**

Comment: The DSP does not show the location of trashcans. Therefore a condition of approval requires the location to be shown on plans prior to signature approval. It does contain the required note.

#### **Required Findings in the M-X-T Zone:**

- 7. The proposed development is in conformance with the purposes and other provisions of this Division.**

The detailed site plan meets this requirement. The commercial retail, restaurant and office development is Phase III of a major redevelopment of the Metro site. The proposed development will promote redevelopment of this land in order to provide an expanding source of desirable employment, maximize the development potential in the location, and promote effective use of transit. Depending on the character of the retail clients, it will facilitate a 24-hour environment.

- 8. The proposed development has an outward orientation, which either is physically and visually integrated with existing adjacent development or catalyzes adjacent community improvement and rejuvenation.**

The detailed site plan meets this requirement. As the third phase of development on the site, the project will help to complete the previous stages and promote an integrated environment. The office building will help to enclose Belcrest Center Way and create a more pedestrian-oriented environment in the space adjacent to the existing Phase II buildings on the north side of this road. The proposed access roads and pedestrian system are physically integrated into the existing transportation network.

- 9. The proposed development is compatible with existing and proposed development in the vicinity.**

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The detailed site plan meets this requirement in that the proposed office building is compatible with the retail surrounding it. The parking structure is compatible with the existing WMATA structure on the site as well.

**10. The mix of uses, and the arrangement and design of buildings and other improvements, reflect a cohesive development capable of sustaining an independent environment of continuing quality and stability.**

The detailed site plan meets this requirement in that the design and layout of the entire Belcrest Center reflects a cohesive development and will create a quality and stable environment.

**11. If the development is staged, each building phase is designed as a self-sufficient entity, while allowing for effective integration of subsequent phases.**

The development meets this requirement. The proposed development constitutes the third phase of the three-phase project on the Metro site. Phase I consisted of the development of housing on the southeast corner of the site. Phase II consisted of the retail buildings along East West Highway. The proposed office building and garage will complete the development.

**12. The pedestrian system is convenient and is comprehensively designed to encourage pedestrian activity within the development.**

The detailed site plan meets the above requirement in that the pedestrian movement has been accommodated to provide for safety and efficiency.

**13. In areas of the development which are to be used for pedestrian activities or as gathering places for people, adequate attention has been paid to human scale, high quality urban design and other amenities, such as the types and textures of materials, landscaping and screening, street furniture and lighting (natural and artificial).**

The detailed site plan meets the above requirement by providing the plaza in Phase II of the development. The plans provide for a high degree of Urban Design elements, particularly along the streetscape in front of the office buildings with the use of special paving treatments and street trees.

**14. The application meets the requirements of the Landscape Manual as demonstrated below:**

**a. Section 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses: Southern Boundary of Site**

The primary proposed use of this phase of the development is professional offices, which are rated as a medium impact under this section. Retail uses are also proposed for the ground floor of the office building. The proposed medium impact is incompatible with the single-family detached houses that front on Oliver Street and border the subject site's southern edge, requiring a type C

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bufferyard. The C bufferyard requires a minimum 40-foot building setback and a minimum 30-foot landscaped yard with at least 120 plant units per 100 linear feet of the property line. The proposed landscaping plan will easily exceed these requirements, providing a building setback which at its smallest point measures approximately 72 feet. The entire area of this building setback is to be landscaped with both existing woodland and new plantings, as well as a six-foot tall privacy fence along the property line. With a 50 percent reduction given for the presence of the fence, the 300-foot long buffer yard requires a minimum of 180 plant units; the applicant proposes to provide a total of 335 new plant units in addition to the existing woodland.

The lot to the southwest of the subject property is a school, which is rated as a medium impact use. It is therefore compatible with the subject property and does not require buffering under Section 4.7.

**b. Section 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses: Western Boundary of Site**

To the west, the subject site borders a Giant Food store, which is considered a Food and Beverage store under section 4.7 of the *Landscape Manual*. This is a medium-impact use, so the Giant Food is a compatible use to the medium impact of the proposed office building. The two sites do not require buffering.

**Referrals**

8. In a memorandum dated January 5, 2007 (Metzger to Lareuse), the Environmental Planning Section offered the following comments:

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the above referenced revised Detailed Site Plan, DSP-04004/03 for Belcrest Center, stamped as received on November 15, 2006. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-04004/03 and TCPII/36/04-02 subject to the conditions at the end of this memorandum.

This site was previously reviewed by the Environmental Planning Section in conjunction with the approval of a Conceptual Site Plan CSP-02001, for a mixed-use development proposal on land zoned M-X-T located in the Prince George's Transit District Development Plan and subsequently as Detailed Site Plan (DSP-04004). The proposal as submitted includes both multi-family residential and retail commercial sections.

This 22.2-acre site is located on the south side of East West Highway at the Prince George's Plaza Metro. A review of the information available indicates that no streams, wetlands, wetland buffers or 100-year floodplain are found to occur on the property. The soils found to occur according to the Prince George's County Soil Survey are Christiana Clay, Hatboro Silt Loam and Sunnyside-Urban Land Complex. The Christiana Clay soils are considered highly erodible and have limitations with respect to stability and high shrink-swell potential. The Hatboro soils are in Hydrologic Group D and have limitations with respect to high water table, flood hazard and poor drainage. The Sunnyside soils, which are the predominant soils on site, pose no difficulties for development. East West Highway is a significant noise generator.

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According to information obtained from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program there are no rare, threatened or endangered species found to occur in the vicinity. There are no scenic or historic roads in the vicinity of this site. The property is located in Subarea 5 of the Prince George's Plaza Transportation District Overlay Zone and in the Developed Tier according to the adopted 2002 General Plan.

### **The Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone**

In addition to the normal site requirements that apply to specific zoning categories, properties in the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone have district-wide requirements and guidelines, and subarea requirements and guidelines. This memorandum will first address the district-wide environmental requirements, then the subarea requirements, and finally any remaining environmental issues. Below is a summary of the district-wide and subarea environmental requirements that apply to this site.

#### **District-wide Requirements and Guidelines**

##### **Stormwater Management**

Mandatory Development Requirements P25, P26 and P27 address stormwater management requirements.

**Comment:** These requirements have been addressed. A Stormwater Management Concept Approval Letter (CSD 3239-2002-00) dated April 16, 2003, was submitted with this application. The requirements for the stormwater management will be met through subsequent reviews by the Department of Environmental Resources.

**S31** addresses the number of trash cans and their locations. This information is required to be shown on the detailed site plan. **S32** requires that all storm drain inlets associated with this development be stenciled with, "Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage." This requirement is required to be addressed at time of detailed site plan review. None of this information is shown on the plans submitted.

**Recommended Condition:** Prior to certificate approval, the DSP shall show the location of trash cans throughout the site and shall contain the following note: "All storm drain inlets shall be stenciled with the words "Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage."

**S33** "Afforestation of at least 10 percent of the gross tract shall be required on all properties within the Prince George's Plaza Transit District currently exempt from the Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance. Afforestation shall occur on-site or within the Anacostia Watershed in Prince George's County, with priority given to riparian zones and nontidal wetlands, particularly within the Northwest Branch sub-watershed."

**Comment:** This site is subject to the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance so

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this requirement does not apply. See comments in Environmental Review Section below.

**P33** “Each Preliminary Plat, Conceptual and/or Detailed Site Plan shall show a 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour based upon average daily traffic volumes at Level-of-Service E. Upon plan submittal, the Natural Resources Division shall determine if a noise study is required based on the delineation of the noise contour.”

The DSP as submitted shows the location of the 65 dBA (Ldn) noise contour as required. Results from the noise study reflect noise impacts above required standards and provided the required noise mitigation measures. Based on staff’s review and analysis of all evidence as submitted, staff is of the opinion that the development will provide the necessary required minimum noise level reduction to ensure an acceptable noise level for the residential areas.

**Comment:** No further information is required at this time with regard to noise impacts.

#### Environmental Review

As revisions are made to the plans submitted the revision boxes on each plan sheet shall be used to describe what revisions were made, when, and by whom.

- a. A Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) has been submitted for the proposal, and was generally found to address the criteria for an FSD in accordance with the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

**Comment:** No additional information is needed at this time with regard to the FSD.

- b. This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the site has a previously approved tree conservation plan. The previously approved Type II Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII/36/04-01) meets all the requirements to recommend approval of the detailed site plan except for some minor changes that are needed to the TCPII to reflect the current development proposal.

The TCPII Woodland Conservation Worksheet indicates that the minimum woodland conservation requirement for this site is 3.33 acres (15 percent of the Net Tract). A replacement requirement of 2.33 acres is required due to removal of woodland below the threshold level for a total requirement of 4.96 acres. The TCPII proposes to meet the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance by providing a total of 0.67 acres of on-site preservation, 0.11 acres of on-site reforestation and 4.18 acres of off-site mitigation. The approved Type II Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII/36/04-01) is in general compliance with the approved Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/26/04) and must be revised to reflect changes made to the DSP.

**Recommended Condition:** Prior to certificate approval of the revised detailed site plan, the TCPII shall be revised as an -02 and shall show the proposed building footprints. The revision box shall be revised to type in the previous signatures and dates of approval.

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9. In a memorandum dated December 4, 2006 (Stabler to Estes), the Historic Preservation Section offered the following comments:

Phase I archeological survey is not recommended on the 22.22-acre Belcrest Center, DSP-04004/03 property at the southwest corner of the intersection of East West Highway and Belcrest Road. 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. Aerial photographs indicate that the property has previously been impacted by the construction of the Prince George's Plaza Metro Station.

However, Section 106 review may require archeological survey for state or federal agencies. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, to include archeological sites. This review is required when state or federal monies, or federal permits are required for a project.

10. In a memorandum dated February 7, 2007 (O'Connor to Lareuse), the Community Planning Section found the following:

This application is not inconsistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Regional Center in the Developed Tier.

This detailed site plan for development at the Metro station does not conform to the 1998 *Approved Transit District Development Plan for the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone* for Condition 8 (45-foot buffer along the south property line), Condition 9 (25-foot landscaped buffer adjacent to the stormwater management pond), and Condition 16 (show locations of trash cans and note "Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage) as stated in PGCPB Resolution No. 03-214, CSP-02001; these conditions are based on compliance with the TDDP mandatory development requirements. In addition, the plan does not conform to the required TDDP-S3 (1.25 minimum footcandles for primary and secondary pedestrian walkways), TDDP-S5 (special paving materials for crosswalks), TDDP-S6 (specify paving material for primary and secondary pedestrian system), TDDP-S25 (lighting minimum of 1.25 footcandles), TDDP-S26 (reduce light glare), TDDP-G34 (landscape irrigation). (See Planning Issues section of this memo for deficiencies.)

The site is within the Developed Tier and the core area of the Regional Center for the Prince George's Plaza Metro Station. The vision for a center is mixed residential and non-residential uses at moderate to high densities and intensities, with a strong emphasis on transit-oriented development.

Master Plan: The 1998 *Approved Transit District Development Plan for the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone*.

Planning Area/Community: Planning Area 68/Prince George's Plaza area of Hyattsville and University Hills

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Land Use: The 1998 *Approved and Adopted Transit District Development Plan for the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone* recommends promoting transit ridership by taking advantage of the transit-oriented development potential of the Metro site. (Page 79, Subarea 5-Purpose)

SMA/Zoning: The 1998 *Approved Transit District Development Plan for the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Overlay Zone* rezoned the underlying R-55, C-S-C and C-O Zones to the M-X-T Zone. The Transit District Overlay Zone imposes restrictions on uses. (See Table 17 - Permitted Uses, Pages 144-148.)

**P70 (page 107, TDDP)—A 100-foot-wide buffer consisting of preservation of existing trees shall be provided along the southern boundary adjacent to the residential uses.**

The applicant states, “only 12 homes are contiguous to the residential units proposed to be constructed in the southeast corner of the WMATA property,” therefore, the intrusion into the required tree preservation area only affects a “small portion of the property’s southern boundary.” While there are 12 homes contiguous to the proposed residential development, there are nine additional homes along the southern boundary contiguous to the 7-story parking garage, which results in a total of 21 homes that will be impacted. The applicant states, “almost all of the homes are single story and about one-half of them are at a higher grade than the first floor of the proposed residential units.” However, the proposed height of the 4-5-story residential units and the 6-7 story parking garage(s) is significantly greater than the height of the existing single-family homes, even those “at a higher grade.”

The applicant states, “lastly, there is substantial tree cover between the two uses... an encroachment up to 75 feet occurs,” and “for the most part, the 100-foot buffer is provided.” The 100-foot buffer requirement is not provided as the applicant has stated. In addition, the notes conflict with what is shown on the conceptual site plan regarding tree preservation. The plan notes indicate a “50-foot undisturbed buffer” to adjacent property, however; only a 25-foot buffer is provided along the 12 homes contiguous to the residential development and a 20-to-45-foot buffer (average) is provided along the nine homes contiguous to the proposed 7-story parking garage. All of the existing 21 single-family homes along the southern boundary will be visually impacted by the reduction of the required TDDP 100-foot-wide buffer.

Trees planted high up on the slope may provide the necessary mitigation. The applicant will supply an elevation that demonstrates the view from Oliver Street when trees are planted on the highest part of the southern slope of the property.

**S3 (TDDP, page 29)—All primary and secondary pedestrian walkways shall be well-lighted to a minimum standard of 1.25 footcandles.**

Applicant: The applicant’s plan shows a lighting symbol along some of the pedestrian walkways.

Staff Comment: The plan does not show lighting for all areas of proposed pedestrian

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walkways, and no photometric chart is submitted for evaluation of the 1.25 minimum footcandle requirement. The plan should show compliance with the TDDP-S3.

**S6 (TDDP, page 29)—...Urban Design staff shall select and specify the paving material to be used for the primary and secondary pedestrian system throughout the transit district**

**Applicant:** The applicant's plan provides a primary and secondary pedestrian system.

**Staff Comment:** The plan does not specify the paving material to be used for the pedestrian system. It is important that the primary and secondary walkway system be coordinated. The plan should show compliance with the TDDP-S6 requirement.

**S26 (TDDP, page 39)—Lighting shall be designed to prevent glare, where possible, on adjoining properties, roadways and uses within the subject development.**

**Applicant:** The applicant provides a 12-foot high Belcrest Road lighting fixture.

**Staff Comment:** All lighting fixtures proposed for the development shall specify on the plan "full cut-off light fixtures to reduce glare and sky glow." The plan should show compliance with the TDDP-S26 requirement.

**Signage ( pages 40-41, TDDP)—**P3 does not seem to be applicable for this phase. More information is needed to determine if P2, P4 and P5 and S28 are met. In former phases staff was concerned that signage appears to be excessive; metal/plastic material is provided; signage is not coordinated; and signage plan needs comprehensive list of all proposed signage and specifications. The plan should provide a sign plan and show information for all proposed signs as required by the TDDP for sign size, color, lettering style, construction details, material and illumination methods. The sign plan can then be reviewed for design compatibility for the transit district. The plan should show compliance with the TDDP-P2.

11. In a memorandum dated November 22, 2006 (Hampton to Estes), the Permit Review Section offered the following comments which continue to be outstanding:

- a. All prior approvals of DSP-04004 with revisions must be provided on Sheet 2 of 4.
- b. The height of all retaining walls must be provided on the site plan.

These outstanding comments have been included in the recommendation section of this report.

12. In a memorandum dated February 5, 2007 (Lockard to Lareuse), the Subdivision Section offered the following comments:

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Pursuant to the Subdivision Regulations, Section 24-107(c)(7)(D) a preliminary plan of subdivision is not required for the development of more than five thousand square feet of gross floor area, which constitutes at least ten percent of the total area of the site that has been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991. The applicant must vest the existing development by demonstrating conformance to Section 24-107(c), i.e., that the existing development was constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991.

There are no other subdivision issues at this time.

13. In memorandum dated February 7, 2007, Foster to Lareuse, the State Highway Administration provided the following comments:

This office completed a review of the site plan and support documentation. Based on submitted information, this office has no objection to Detailed Site Plan DSP-04004/03 as submitted. The applicant is currently coordinating with the State Highway Administration's (SHA) Engineering Access Permits Division to obtain a permit for the signal relocation and modifications to the existing MD 410 entrance.

14. In memorandum dated February 9, 2007, the Transportation Planning Section reviewed the above-referenced detailed site plan for the proposed construction of the office component on the subject site. The proposed development will consist of:

Commercial Retail 8,913 square feet,  
Commercial Office 319,661 square feet, and  
637 space parking garage with four on-street surface parking  
(604 new spaces total)

The proposed development will be in addition to the approved and currently under construction Phase I development plan consisting of 263 multifamily residential units, and Phase II development plan of 153,915 square feet of mixed use development consisting of retail, restaurants and office space. In addition to the existing parking for Metro (1,068 long-term; park and ride spaces, and 167 short-term; kiss and ride spaces), Phase I and II development plans thus far have included the provision of 951 (881 structured and 70 surface) parking spaces.

#### **Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan:**

The approved Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan (TDDP) guides the use and development of all properties within its boundaries. The findings and recommendations outlined below are based upon staff evaluation of the submitted site plan and the ways in which the proposed development conforms to the Mandatory Development Requirements and Guidelines outlined in the TDDP.

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During the preparation of the TDDP, staff performed an analysis of all road facilities in the vicinity of the TDOZ. This analysis was based on establishment of a Transit District-wide cap on the number of additional parking spaces (preferred and premium) that can be constructed or provided in the transit district to accommodate any new development. Pursuant to this concept, the plan recommends implementing a system of developer contributions to insure adequacy of the transportation facilities, based on the number of additional parking spaces, as long as the authorized total parking limits and their attendant, respective, parking ratios (Tables 5 and 6 of the TDDP) are not exceeded. The collected fee will be applied toward the required number of transportation improvements totaling \$1,562,000, as summarized in Table 4 of the TDDP. These improvements are needed to ensure that the critical roadways and intersections in the transit district will remain adequate and will be operating at or above Level of Service E, as required by the plan. Among the most consequential of these are

- a. Establishment of a Transit District-wide cap on the number of additional surface parking spaces (3000 Preferred, plus 1000 Premium) that can be constructed or provided in the Transit District to accommodate any new development.
- b. Implementation of a system of developer contributions. Based on the number of Preferred and Premium surface parking spaces attributed to each development project. The contributions are intended to recover sufficient funding to defray some of the cost of the transportation improvements as summarized in Table 4 of the TDDP, and needed to ensure that the critical roadways and intersections in the transit district remain at or above the stated LOS.
- c. Retaining a mandatory Transportation Demand Management District (TDMD). The TDMD was established by the 1992 TDDP plan to ensure optimum utilization of Trip Reduction Measures (TRMs) to combine, or divert to transit, as many peak hour SOV trips as possible, and to capitalize on the existing transit system in the district. The TDMD will continue to have boundaries that are coterminous with the transit district. As of this writing, the Prince George's Plaza Transportation Demand Management District (TDMD) has not been legally established under the TDMD Ordinance (now Subtitle 20A, Division 2 of the County Code) enacted in 1993.
- d. Developing an annual TDMD operations fee based on the total number of parking spaces (surface and structured), each property owner maintains.
- e. Requiring that the TDMD prepare an annual transit district transportation and parking operations analysis that would determine whether or not the LOS E has been maintained, and to determine additional trip reduction, transportation and parking management measures that are required to restore LOS E. Reauthorization of the Prince George's Plaza Transportation Management Association recommended in the predecessor 1992 PG-TDDP.

#### **Status of Surface Parking in the Transit District**

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Pursuant to the Planning Board's previous approvals of Detailed Site Plans in the Transit District, the remaining available Preferred and Premium surface parking for the Transit District and each class of land use are reduced to the following values:

	RESIDENTIAL		OFFICE/RESCH		RETAIL		TOTAL	
	PREF.	PREM	PREF.	PREM	PREF.	PREM	PREF.	PREM
TDDP Caps	920	310	1,170	390	910	300	3,000	1,000
Subarea 1	(178)							
Subarea 4					(121)			
Subarea 5- Retail + Office					(74)			
Subarea 6					(72)			
Subarea 9					(321)			
Subarea 10A			(82)		(191)	(15)		
Unallocated	742	310	1,088	390	135	285	2,031	985

As structure parking is not included in the parking caps pursuant to MDR P6, the parking figures reported above, do not include the number of parking spaces that will be constructed as structured parking in each subarea.

#### Detailed Site Plan Findings

- a. The PG-TDDP identifies the subject property as part of the Subarea 5 of the Transit District. There are 15 subareas in the Transit District, two of which are designated as open-space and will remain undeveloped. The proposed site consists of approximately 22.2 acres of land in the MXT zone. The property is located on the southwest quadrant of the East West Highway (MD410) and Belcrest Road.
- b. The proposed application is for construction of 9,480 square feet commercial retail and 257,705 square feet commercial office space.
- c. The applicant is proposing to construct a total of 604 parking spaces, of which four are proposed to be surface parking. While, the approved concept plan indicated that all development related parking would be constructed as structured parking, provision of only four spaces as part of this plan, or 74 total surface parking spaces for the entire Belcrest Center project, is well below the permissible surface parking recommended by the TDDP. For the proposed four surface parking spaces, the total amount of the applicant's cash contribution will be \$ 1,600 or ( $\$ 400.00 * 4$ ). It is important to note that approval of the proposed plan with these four surface parking spaces will reduce the

available preferred surface parking for retail for the Transit District to 135 spaces.

- d. Condition 1 of the approved conceptual site plan requires that “the applicant, his heirs, successors, and/or assigns shall submit a parking demand analysis which reflects appropriate reduction for shared parking between the existing and proposed uses.” A shared parking analysis for commercial and retail uses demonstrating that the peak parking demand will be less than the provided parking, and prepared by the applicant’s traffic consultant, has been reviewed by staff and was deemed acceptable.
- e. Condition 2 of the approved conceptual site plan requires that he applicant, his heirs, successors, and/or assigns submit a detailed on-site transportation study for the entire site including traffic projections for all access points. Furthermore, the applicant was required to submit an access approval letter from SHA and DPW&T for any new access. The proposed detail site plan does not propose any new additional access to MD410 or Belcrest Road. As part of the detailed site plan application for the retail component (DSP-04004/01) staff was provided with a copy of the a detailed access study prepared by the applicant and submitted to WMATA, SHA and DPW&T for their review. While the study fulfilled the conceptual plan condition requirement, it will be used by the SHA and DPW&T in ensuring the timely construction of the needed access-related improvements.
- f. Internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns appear to be acceptable. However, Condition 20 of the approved conceptual site plan requires that “ the design and function (including turning movements), of the access driveway to serve the existing Giant Food property which is proposed to intersect the westernmost access driveway to the subject property from East West Highway, shall be finally determined at the time of the approval of the first detailed site plan for any use other than the standalone residential”. While the proposed access configuration as shown in the submitted detailed site plan is slightly different than the configuration illustrated in the approved concept plan, this issue was discussed at the time of retail component detailed site plan review (DSP 04-004/01), and staff was provided with the assurance that the proposed configuration is the most desirable alternative to all affected parties. Since the proposed detailed site plan application for the office component (DSP-04004/03) does not proposes any changes to the approved and concurred joint access road configuration, staff finds the full compliance to this conceptual site plan requirement as well.

### **Transportation Staff Analysis and Conclusions**

Based on the preceding findings, the Transportation Planning Section concludes that the proposed development as proposed does conform to the circulation requirements of the Prince George’s Plaza Transit District Development Plan, and approved conceptual site plan provided that:

Prior to the certification of the detailed site plan, the applicant shall provide proof of payment for a total of \$1,600.00. This fee is expressed in 1998 dollars, and shall be adjusted for inflation at the time of payment. The required fee shall be paid to Prince George’s County Department of Public

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Works and Transportation and shall be applied toward the construction of the required Transportation improvements listed in Table 4 of the PG Plaza TDDP.

15. In a letter dated February 7, 2007 (Gardiner to Parker), the City of Hyattsville offered the following comments:

The City Council recently reviewed the detailed site plan for the Metropolitan Shops office and garage. The Council voted to support the detailed site plan with the following conditions:

- a. The developer shall contact the property owners on the north side of Oliver Street, west of the metro entrance, and discuss providing assistance to the owners if additional screening enhancements on their properties are desired. Large trees shall be planted to screen the parking garage.
- b. Per previous Council motion, the developer shall incorporate quality public art in the project.
- c. The developer shall ensure that pedestrian access through the site is safe and attractive.

The developer has indicated support for the items above, and will work with the city to contact the nearby property owners. Since 2004 the city has reviewed and supported previous conceptual and detailed site plans for several phases of this project. We are excited to see the retail and residential components under construction, and look forward to the approval and construction of the office building.

16. As required by Section 27-285(b), the detailed site plan represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, of the Prince George's County Code without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

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 an amendment to P70 for an encroachment of 31 feet of the 100-foot buffer requirement;
- APPROVED an amendment to S22 to eliminate the requirement of green space on top of the parking garage;
- APPROVED an amendment to P6 for the purpose of reducing the size of the standard parking spaces from 9.5 x 19 feet to 9 x 18 feet;

and further APPROVED the Type II Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII/36/04-02) and APPROVED Detailed Site Plan DSP-04004/03 for the above-described land, subject to the following conditions:

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1. Prior to certification, the detailed site plan shall be revised in accordance with the following:
  - a. All prior approvals of DSP-04004 with revisions shall be provided on Sheet 2.
  - b. The height of all retaining walls shall be shown on the plan.
  - c. A photometric plan shall be provided to ensure conformance to S3, S25 and S26 of the TDDP.
  - d. The pedestrian walkway along the south side of the bus lane shall be widened to show a minimum of four feet of unobstructed pedestrian space along its entire length.
  - e. An appropriate planting detail or landscaping note shall be added specifying that street trees will be limbed up to a minimum of six feet above grade.
  - f. The DSP shall show the location of trashcans throughout the site and shall contain the following note: All storm drain inlets shall be stenciled with the words "Do Not Dump, Chesapeake Bay Drainage."
  - g. The DSP and the TCP shall be revised as needed to demonstrate conformance to both the Woodland Conservation Ordinance as well as the requirements of Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual.
  - h. The applicant shall provide details and specifications of the welded-wire mesh screen along the south side of the office building and the north side of the parking structure. The materials and design selected shall be approved by the Urban Design Section.
  - i. The two serviceberry trees located north of the electrical equipment on the east side of the building shall be replaced evergreen trees (American holly) of sufficient size and density to provide visual screening.
2. Prior to certificate approval of the revised detailed site plan, the TCPII shall be revised as an -02 and shall show the proposed building footprints. The revision box shall be revised to type in the previous signatures and dates of approval.
3. Prior to the certification of the detailed site plan, the applicant shall provide proof of payment for a total of \$1,600.00. This fee is expressed in 1998 dollars, and shall be adjusted for inflation at the time of payment. The required fee shall be paid to Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation and shall be applied toward the construction of the required transportation improvements listed in Table 4 of the PG Plaza TDDP.
4. The developer shall contact the property owners on the north side of Oliver Street, west of the metro entrance, and offer to provide assistance to the owners if additional screening

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enhancements on their properties are desired. Consideration shall be given to planting additional shade and/or evergreen trees that will attain significant height and provide additional screening of the parking garage.

5. Prior to issuance of building permits for the office building or garage, the developer shall provide plans for incorporating quality public art in the project to be reviewed and approved by the City of Hyattsville and the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
6. The developer shall ensure that use of the loading bays for the office/retail building shall not conflict with the movement of traffic in the bus/kiss and ride lane, and that trucks shall enter and exit the loading bays only at night or early morning hours.

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.

\* \* \* \* \*

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 Eley, seconded by Commissioner Clark, with Commissioners Eley, Clark, Squire, Vaughns and Parker voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Thursday, March 1, 2007, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 22nd day of March 2007.

R. Bruce Crawford  
Executive Director

By Frances J. Guertin  
Planning Board Administrator

RBC:FJG:SL:bjs