

RESOLUTION

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

WHEREAS, in consideration of evidence presented at a public hearing on October 4, 2007, regarding Detailed Site Plan DSP-05100 for Public Storage-Capitol Heights, the Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** The subject detailed site plan is for the renovation of the existing consolidated storage facility on the site. Of the seven single-story storage buildings currently existing on the site, the applicant proposes to raze three and construct a larger, three-story storage building in their place.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	I-1	I-1
Use(s)	Consolidated Storage	Consolidated Storage
Acreage	3.82	3.82
Parcels	1	1
Dwelling Units	1	1
Square Footage	62,610	133,650
Floor-Area Ratio	0.37	0.79
Green Area	9.6%	15%

Parking Summary

Parking Spaces Required	4	19
Parking Spaces Provided	14	22
Vehicle Storage Spaces Provided	32	28
Handicapped Parking Provided	1	1
Loading Spaces Required	-	5
Loading Spaces Provided	-	5

3. **Location:** The subject property is located on the south side of Central Avenue (MD 214), approximately 400 feet west of its intersection with Hampton Park Boulevard.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject property is surrounded by land in the I-1 Zone. Along the eastern property line from north to south are located a bank, an auto repair body shop, and a hotel. To the south and west is located a large vacant lot associated with the Skye-TMB operation farther east on Central Avenue. Directly to the west along Central Avenue from the subject property is a U-Haul operation. On the north side of Central Avenue, across from the subject site, is a McDonald's restaurant, an office building, and single-family houses.

5. **Design Features:** The site is currently developed with an existing consolidated storage facility, consisting of seven one-story storage buildings with roll-up doors and including an on-site apartment for a facility manager. This detailed site plan proposes to demolish three of the existing buildings in the central third of the site, replacing them with one large modern three-story climate-controlled storage building. The existing storage building in the northern third of the site and the three existing buildings in the southern third of the site would remain.

Access to the site is from Central Avenue, on a driveway along the eastern edge of the site. Within the site, drive aisles of at least 22 feet surround all sides of the storage buildings except the northernmost building, which is only accessible from the main site driveway on its east side. Small parking areas are proposed on the edges of the site. The storage facility is enclosed on all sides by a chain-link fence, with a gate for the driveway access. A two-sided 48-foot-tall billboard is currently located above the entrance driveway but is proposed to be removed.

The proposed new building is three stories tall with interior access for the climate-controlled storage units. Architecture for this building was originally reviewed by the Planning Board at the hearing on September 13, 2007. The case was continued for three weeks to allow the applicant to improve the architecture. The revised architecture utilizes colored split-face concrete masonry on the ground level and EIFS on the higher levels. Both the masonry and EIFS areas feature differently-colored wall panels, brick patterning, and accent bands in order to provide visual interest. The north (front) side of the building also has a large two-story storefront window on the second and third floors. Access to the building will be through one main entrance on the west side of the building, sheltered by a canopy.

As part of the renovation of the facility, the applicant proposes to improve the appearance of the northernmost building so as to provide a more attractive entry into the site. The front parking lot will be rearranged with a landscaped strip along the right-of-way. The existing 20-foot tall sign advertising the consolidated storage facility will be replaced with a shorter monument sign in the landscaped strip. The applicant proposes to put a new front façade on the existing one-story building that is designed to match the appearance of the new three-story building. The front façade features a similar combination of masonry and EIFS as well as a planting box in front of the facility's office window.

The applicant's proposal currently provides this façade improvement only on the front and northeast side of the one-story building. However, the sides of the building are also visible from Central Avenue, creating an awkward composition as the existing sides, constructed of white brick, contrast with the red masonry and EIFS on the upgraded front façade. Staff recommends that the sides of the existing building should be revised to have a similar appearance to the front. This may be accomplished by extending the masonry and EIFS treatment around the sides of the building, or by painting or otherwise modifying the existing brick in a manner which will match the front.

6. **Previous Approvals:** A site plan was approved for the area in 1979, which approved the existing arrangement of seven consolidated storage buildings.

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the I-1 Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.

The I-1 Zone requires a minimum of 10 percent of the net lot area to be green space. The plan shows 15 percent of the net lot area to be open space, which is sufficient to meet the requirement.

Consolidated storage is permitted in the I-1 Zone (subject to Special Exception if within 300 feet of residentially zoned land). The Zoning Ordinance requires (27-475.04) that entrances to individual storage units shall not be visible from a street or adjoining land in residential or commercial zones. The proposed new storage building will utilize internal access for its storage units, so it will be in conformance with this requirement. The three existing storage units in the southern third of the site adjoin land zoned I-1 and are not visible from nearby streets. However, the existing storage building in the northern third of the site may not be able to meet this requirement. The individual units in this building are accessed from the driveway along the eastern side of the building, rendering them obliquely visible from Central Avenue. To remedy this situation, the applicant proposes converting the existing gate for the site driveway to a sight-tight visual screen blocking view of the interior of the site from Central Avenue.

The Zoning Ordinance also specifies that consolidated storage buildings shall not exceed 36 feet in height. The existing one-story buildings easily meet the requirement, and the proposed new building, when measured from the average grade along its front side to the highest point of the roof, measures very slightly less than 36 feet in height.

8. **Landscape Manual:** The proposed development is subject to the requirements of Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, of the *Landscape Manual*.

The application is exempt from Section 4.3 of the *Landscape Manual*.

The proposal meets the requirements of Section 4.4 for screening. The plan is also in conformance with the requirements of Section 4.7 along most of the property lines, as most of the surrounding properties are considered to be compatible uses not requiring buffering. The applicant has requested Alternative Compliance along part of the eastern property line for Section 4.7. On May 7, 2007, the Planning Director approved AC-06019, issuing the following recommendation on the request:

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located at 8701 Central Avenue. The site is Zoned I-1 (Light Industrial). The subject property is currently improved with consolidated storage buildings, being a high impact use for Section 4.7 along the east property line. The east property line abuts an auto repair, bank and hotel, which are all considered medium impact uses. The south property line abuts vacant land. The west side abuts vacant land and mini warehouses.

This request for Alternative Compliance, in conjunction with the detailed site plan, is to replace three existing buildings with one three-story building. The original buildings were built prior to 1990 and

were not subject to the *Landscape Manual*. The size of the new building triggers the entire site to be brought into conformance to the *Landscape Manual*.

REQUIRED: 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses: Adjoining Parcel B, a bank use

Length of bufferyard	390	feet
Building setback	30	feet
Landscape yard	20	feet
Fence or wall	Yes	(chain-link)
Plant units (80 per 100 linear feet)	312	plant units

PROVIDED: 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses

Length of bufferyard	390	feet
Building setback	34.9	feet
Landscape yard	4.4	feet
Fence or wall	Yes	(chain-link)
Plant units	312	plant units

REQUIRED: 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses: Adjoining Parcel S-1, a hotel use

Length of bufferyard	417	feet
Building setback	30	feet
Landscape yard	20	feet
Fence or wall	Yes	(chain-link)
Plant units (80 per 100 linear feet)	334	plant units

PROVIDED: 4.7 Buffering Incompatible Uses

Length of bufferyard	417	feet
Building setback	27	feet
Landscape yard	5.1	feet
Fence or wall	Yes	chain-link
Plant units	334	plant units

JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant is requesting relief due to existing conditions of this site. The site was built prior to 1990 and prior to the requirements of the *Landscape Manual*. The applicant has shown an existing six-foot chain-link fence around the property. In order to justify the reduction in width of the building setbacks and the reduction of the landscape yard, the Alternative Compliance committee finds no other alternative than to recommend that replacement of the existing chain-link fence with a sight-tight fence along the entire eastern property line would be deemed equal or better than the requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Alternative Compliance Committee recommends Approval of Alternative Compliance pursuant to Section 4.7 of the Prince George's County *Landscape Manual* for the building setbacks and the landscape yards along the east property line subject to the following:

1. The site plan shall be revised to remove the existing chain-link fence and replace it with a six-foot-high, non-wood, natural colored, sight-tight fence along the entire eastern property line.

Urban Design comment: Since this recommendation was issued, the applicant has revised the plans to provide the specified sight-tight fence along the eastern property line. It should be noted, however, that rather than remove the existing chain-link fence as recommended by the Committee, the applicant's plans specify that the new sight-tight fence will be placed alongside the chain-link fence, along the property line. As this will have the same screening value from outside the site as would removing and replacing the existing fence, the Urban Design section does not object to the arrangement. However, as the existing chain-link fence runs nearly along the property line, the applicant should be careful when installing the new fence so as to ensure that it does not overlap onto the neighboring properties.

9. **Sign Review:** The application proposes several signs, mostly building-mounted on the northernmost one-story building and the large three-story building. The plan also proposes to remove the existing 20-foot tall freestanding sign at the northeast corner of the site, and replacing it with a monument sign within the landscaped strip between the parking lot and MD 214.

The notes of the site plan state that the monument sign will be eight feet in height and have a pedestal to match the exterior of the northernmost building. However, the submitted sign detail shows the height of the monument sign at six feet, one inch. The plan and the sign detail should be brought into agreement.

Section 27-614 sets forth regulations for freestanding signs on this site. The site is permitted to have one freestanding sign with an area of no more than one square foot per four feet of the site's street frontage. As the site has a street frontage of 95 feet, the sign area permitted is 23.75 square feet. The proposed monument sign is two-sided, with a proposed sign area for each side of 15.9 square feet. As the two sides are back to back, this falls within the allowable area.

This sign is located on the landscaped strip between the parking lot in the front of the site and the right-of-way for MD 214. The sign is entirely outside the ultimate 140-foot right-of-way for the road, but 27-614 (a) (4) requires that freestanding signs must be located at least ten feet behind the street line. Because the sign is less than ten feet from the ultimate right-of-way, it is allowed only

under the following circumstances:

- (A) **The land area involved has not been, and is not in the process of being, acquired for street purposes;**
- (B) **The sign is located at least ten (10) feet behind the existing street right-of-way line; and**
- (C) **A written agreement between the owner and the Department of Environmental Resources assures that the sign will be removed, at the owner's expense, at the time of acquisition of that area for street purposes.**

Staff recommends a condition of approval that the applicant must secure the agreement with DER prior to the issuance of a permit that will allow construction of the freestanding sign.

The allowable area of building-mounted signs is dependent upon the length of the side of the building that faces the front of the lot (in this case, the north side of the two buildings where signage is proposed). The front building is permitted 90 square feet of building-mounted signage and the three-story building is permitted 400 square feet of building-mounted signage. The plan lists the proposed building-mounted signage as 30 square feet for the front building and 80 square feet for the three-story building. However, the architectural elevations show approximately 88 square feet of signage on the front building and 95 square feet on the three-story building. The table on the site plan should be revised to reflect these numbers.

10. **Permits Referral:** In a memorandum dated March 2, 2007 (Gallagher to Srinivas), the Permits section offered the following comments:

- a. A detail of the fence around the dumpster must be provided on the site plan.

Urban Design comment: The plans show the dumpster enclosed with a concrete masonry wall, with a vinyl gate. The plans should show a detail of this wall and gate.

- b. In the I-1 Zone at least 10 percent of the net lot area must be maintained as green. Provide the calculations and demonstrate the green area.

Urban Design comment: The plan notes state that a total of 15 percent of the site will be open space.

- c. Section 27-454 (C) states that the maximum height of this structure shall be 36 feet; this

proposal exceeds the allowable height.

Urban Design comment: Under Section 27-107.1, the height of a flat-roofed building set back more than 35 feet from the street is measured from the average elevation of the finished grade on the front side of the building to the highest point of the roof. By this method, the building measures about 35 feet 7 inches tall, which is slightly less than the maximum allowed.

- d. The billboard sign must be removed from the site plan as billboard signs are illegal.

Urban Design comment: The billboard has been marked to be removed on the Existing Conditions Plan and has been removed from the proposed site plan.

- e. If the parking lot is to be used at night, adequate lighting must be provided.

Urban Design comment: The applicant has submitted a photometric study that shows adequate light levels for the site.

- 11. **Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T):** In a memorandum dated June 18, 2007 (Abraham to Srinivas), DPW&T stated the following:

- a. The property is located at the south side of Central Avenue (MD 214), approximately 300 feet west of Hampton Park Boulevard. The property frontage is on MD 214, which is a state-maintained roadway. Coordination with the Maryland State Highway Administration is required.
- b. All storm drainage systems and facilities are to be in accordance with DPW&T's requirements.
- c. Existing utilities may require relocation and / or adjustments. Coordination with the various utility companies is required.

- 12. **Transportation** In a memorandum dated February 9, 2007 (Masog to Srinivas), the Transportation Planning Section affirmed that site access and circulation as proposed on the plan are acceptable, and that there are no transportation-related conditions that would affect the expansion proposal. However, the plan shows Central Avenue with a 120 foot right of way, whereas the Morgan Boulevard Sector Plan recommends a 140-foot right-of-way. This ultimate right of way must be shown on the plan.

Urban Design comment: The required 140-foot right-of-way has been shown on the revised plans.

13. **Trails:** In a memorandum dated March 30, 2007 (Shaffer to Srinivas), the trails coordinator stated the following:

There are no master plan trails issues identified in the Adopted and Approved Suitland-District Heights and Vicinity Master Plan. There is an existing sidewalk along the south side of MD 214 from Ritchie Road to Brightseat Road, including the frontage of the subject site. There are no master plan trails recommendations.

14. **State Highway Administration (SHA):** In a memorandum dated March 14, 2007 (Foster to Srinivas), the State Highway Administration stated the following:

This office completed a review of the site plan and support documentation. We have no objection to Detailed Site Plan DSP-05100 approval as submitted.

15. **Community Planning:** In a memorandum dated March 5, 2007 (Fenwick to Srinivas), the Community Planning Section stated the following:

- This application is not inconsistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for Developed Tier Centers.
- This application is in conformance with the Employment Land Use recommended in the 1985 Approved Master Plan and 1986 Sectional Map Amendment for Suitland-District Heights and Vicinity (Planning Areas 75A and 75B).

2002 General Plan: The property is located in the Developed Tier. The vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density neighborhoods.

The vision for Centers is mixed residential and nonresidential uses at moderate to high densities and intensities, with a strong emphasis on transit-oriented development.

16. **Environmental:** In a memorandum dated March 13, 2007, the Environmental Planning Section stated the following:

The Environmental Planning Section recommends the approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-05100

subject to no environmental conditions.

Background

The Environmental Planning Section has no records of previous applications for this property. Currently, the site is cleared and predominantly developed. The current submittal proposes to raze existing storage buildings and construct a three-story facility on a site totaling 3.82 acres in the I-1 Zone.

Site Description

This subject property is located on the west side of Hampton Park Boulevard and south of Central Avenue (MD 214). A review of the information available indicates that the site is developed, relatively flat and is characterized with terrain sloping towards the northwest portion of the subject property, and drains into unnamed tributaries of the Southwest Branch watershed in the Potomac River basin. There are no streams, wetlands, or 100-year floodplain found to occur on the site. The predominant soil type found to occur on this property, according to the Prince George's County Soil Survey, is the Collington series, which generally exhibits moderate limitations to development due to steep slopes. No Marlboro clay has been identified on this site. There are no rare, threatened, or endangered species located in the vicinity of this property based on information provided by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program. There are no historic or scenic roads affected by the proposal. Central Avenue is an arterial roadway, generally regulated for noise impacts associated with residential uses. Adverse noise impacts are not associated with this site due to the commercial zoning of the subject property and the proposed uses. The subject property is located in the Developed Tier as delineated in the 2002 General Plan. The site is within a network gap as part of the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan.

Suitland, District Heights and Vicinity Master Plan Conformance

The subject property is located within Employment Area Analysis Area 1 of the Suitland, District Heights and Vicinity Master Plan. There are no specific environmental requirements or design standards that require review for conformance. The environmental requirements for woodland preservation and stormwater management are addressed in the Environmental Review section below.

Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan Conformance

This site is within a regulated area and small network gap areas as part of the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan. This portion of the network gap is also associated with both evaluation and regulated areas off of the subject property. Although it is the intent of the Green Infrastructure Plan to connect network gaps with the regulated areas and evaluation areas, the site is currently developed and is proposed to be fully developed which impedes any possible connection to those areas.

Comment: No further comments needed with regard to the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan.

Environmental Review:

1. This property is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Ordinance because the site contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodlands, and there is no previously approved Tree Conservation Plan. A Type I Tree Conservation Plan was not submitted with the review package and is not required. A standard letter of exemption from the ordinance was issued by the Environmental Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division, on November 8, 2007.

Comment: No further action is needed at this time as it relates to woodland requirements. The letter of exemption should accompany all future applications for plans and permits.

2. A Stormwater Management Concept Approval Letter (37896-2005-00) dated October 13, 2005, was submitted for the subject property. The requirements for stormwater management will be met through subsequent reviews by the Department of Public Works and Transportation.

Comment: No further action is needed at this time with regard to stormwater management.

17. **Subdivision:** In a memorandum dated April 12, 2007 (Lockard to Lindsay), the Subdivision section stated the following:

The property consists of one parcel (Parcel Q) recorded in 1979 in Plat Book 102, Plat 65. The applicant is proposing to expand the existing consolidated storage use on the site which was built sometime prior to 1990. The DSP is consistent with the layout and access scheme shown on the record plat. Section 24-107 (b)(7) exempts this site from further subdivision because it was created prior to January 1, 1982, and more than 5,000 square feet of gross floor area, which constitutes at least ten percent of the total area of the site, has been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991. There are no other Subdivision issues at this time.

18. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC):** On March 2, 2007, WSSC offered the following comments:

- a. Water and sewer is available.
 - b. Onsite plan review package should be submitted.
 - c. The site has existing water and sewer service. A WSSC onsite plan review may be required if serving the proposed building. Contact Permit Services Unit for procedures.
19. As required by Section 27-285(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, 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 the Detailed Site Plan DSP-05100 and further APPROVED Alternative Compliance No. AC-06019, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to certificate approval, the detailed site plan and landscape plan shall be revised as follows:
 - a. Show details of the screening wall and gate for the dumpster enclosure.
 - b. Revise the landscape plan to show shrubs and ornamental grass along the southern property line to screen the perimeter of the parking lot, subject to the approval of the Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources.
 - c. Revise the parking calculations and use notes on the site plan to account for the existence of an apartment for the on-site manager.
 - d. Correct the signage table to agree with the signage totals shown on the building elevations and the monument sign detail.
 - e. Add the detail of the monument sign to one of the plan sheets.
2. Prior to certificate approval, the architectural elevations of the three-story building shall show the architectural masonry material extending up to the decorative bands on the first level of the building.
3. Prior to certificate approval, the applicant shall submit architectural elevations for the existing one-story building at the northern end of the site. These elevations shall show a refurbished façade along the east and west sides of the building designed to match the color and style of the proposed northern façade. The sides may be modified by extending the renovated front façade or by altering the existing brick to match the style of the front.
4. Prior to issuance of a permit authorizing construction of the free-standing monument sign, the

applicant shall submit a copy of an approved agreement between the applicant and the Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources, stating that the proposed monument sign may be built on the location shown in the plans and assuring that the sign will be removed, at the owner's expense, if and when the land is acquired for road use.

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

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This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the action taken by the Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on the motion of Commissioner Squire, seconded by Commissioner Clark, with Commissioners Squire, Clark, Vaughns and Cavitt voting in favor of the motion, and with Commissioner Parker absent at its regular meeting held on Thursday, October 4, 2007, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 18th day of October 2007.

R. Bruce Crawford
Executive Director

By Frances J. Guertin
Planning Board Administrator

RBC:FJG:CL:bjs