

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 November 30, 2017, regarding Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-15 for Mall at Prince George's Plaza (End Cap Signage), the Planning Board finds:

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a detailed site plan (DSP) for a new building-mounted sign to advertise a new retail store at the Mall at Prince George's, and to amend the sign standards to provide an internally-lit, 6.5-foot, building-mounted sign, which exceeds the 3-foot height standard by 3.5 feet.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	APPROVED
Zone	M-U-I/T-D-O	M-U-I/T-D-O
Use	Commercial/Retail	Commercial/Retail
Gross Tract Area (acres)	51.78	51.78
Net Tract Area (acres)	51.78	51.78
Gross Floor Area (square feet)	N/A	N/A

3. **Location:** The subject property is located in Council District 2 and Planning Area 68. More specifically, the project is located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of MD 410 (East-West Highway) and Belcrest Road, approximately 1,600 feet west of the intersection of MD 410 and MD 500 (Queens Chapel Road).
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject site, The Mall at Prince George's, is bounded to the south by MD 410, to the north by multifamily apartments in the Mixed Use–Infill (M-U-I) Zone, to the west by commercial office space in the M-U-I Zone, and to the east by Belcrest Road. Surrounding the property are a variety of retail and multifamily uses in the M-U-I, Multifamily High-Density Residential (R-10), Mixed Use–Transportation Oriented (M-X-T), and Multifamily Medium Density Residential (R-18) Zones.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The original existing development on the site was an enclosed shopping mall that was developed in the late 1950s. The 2016 *Approved Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan and Transit District Overlay Zone* (Prince George's Plaza TDDP/TDO Zones) retained the property in the M-U-I and Transit District Overlay (T-D-O) Zones. The original Detailed Site Plan (DSP-99044) and companion cases (Primary Amendments TP-00001 and Secondary Amendments TS-99044A) have been previously approved, and are discussed

below. The property was also the subject of a Departure from Sign Design Standards (DSDS-440), approved in December 1991, and Departure from Design Standards DDS-515 was reviewed and approved by the Prince George's County District Council on July 10, 2001.

The original DSP was designed for Phase I of the redevelopment of the mall, and included the renovation of an existing pad site as an Outback Steakhouse, a portion of the streetscape improvements along MD 410 in front of the Outback Steakhouse, and redesign of the area around the east end of the shopping center.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-01 was for the purpose of constructing a new anchor store (Target) and the addition of two tenants at the rear of the shopping center. The Prince George's County Planning Board granted a further amendment to Standard S8 in 2003, in conjunction with DSP-99044-01. Departure from Design Standards DDS-515 was also approved for conformance with Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual).

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-02 was for the purpose of renovating the rear of the shopping mall to improve access into the center, repaving, and incorporating additional green area, and was approved administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-03 was to allow two-way traffic in an existing drive aisle that was previously utilized for one-way traffic for loading purposes, and was approved administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-04 was for the purpose of adding a restaurant pad site (Olive Garden) of 7,685 square feet, and was approved by the Planning Board on June 21, 2005.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-05 was for modification of the rear elevation on the east end of the structure to accommodate new tenants and to remove 19 parking spaces, and was approved administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-06 was for the purpose of constructing a pad site for a sit-down restaurant (Famous Dave's) of 6,574 square feet and was approved by the Planning Board on September 11, 2008. The approved Famous Dave's restaurant was never constructed.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-07 was for the purpose for constructing a Chick-fil-A fast-food restaurant on Prince George's Plaza Parcel A-1 and was approved by the Planning Board on October 3, 2013. The approved Chick-fil-A fast-food restaurant was appealed to the District Council on April 14, 2014. The District Council approved the use, but disapproved the drive-through service, as recommended in PGCPB Resolution No. 13-127, and the fast-food restaurant was not constructed.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-08 was for the purpose of adding a T.J. Maxx, including signage, to an existing tenant site, and was approved administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-10 was for the purpose of exterior renovations to Outback Steakhouse and changes to the entrance, and was approved administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-12 was for the purpose of amending the building-mounted signage standards of the Prince George's Plaza TDDP/TDO Zones to allow two 6.5-foot, building-mounted, internally-lit, channel letter signs.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-13 was for the purpose of adding a building addition of 8,600 square feet within the 15-percent threshold allowed by the TDDP, and is permitted. The application has been withdrawn and is proceeding through the permit process administratively.

Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-14 is currently under review and is for an infrastructure-only pad site for construction of a future 7,718-square-foot restaurant, and was approved by the Planning Board on November 30, 2017.

6. **Design Features:** This application involves signage for a new retail location for a Five Below store, which will be part of a larger 51.78-acre development known as The Mall at Prince George's. The site is currently improved with a 900,000-square-foot mall, which includes multiple retail stores and restaurants. The site can be accessed from its main entrance on MD 410 to the south, Belcrest Road on the east, and from multiple locations along Toledo Terrace, which circumvents the mall on the site's northern and western boundaries. The existing parking compound fully encircles the mall. Three building-mounted signs displaying the retailers name are proposed on the front, side, and rear of the building, which is set back approximately 400 feet from MD 410. The sign facing MD 410 to the south is 6.5 feet in height and has a sign face area of 199 square feet. During the course of review, the signs proposed on the western side and rear of the building were reduced in height and now meet the maximum allowed signage height in the TDDP. These signs have an area of 63 square feet and are not part of this application or subject to the DSP process because they are permitted by-right. The signs are all internally-lit channel letter signs, mounted to the building, and located 10 feet above the sidewalk.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **2016 Approved Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan and Transit District Overlay Zone**—The following transit district standards warrant discussion:

Attached Signs, Design Standards

1. **Signs shall be rectangular and oriented horizontally or vertically.**
2. **Vertical wall signs may not exceed a maximum dimension of three-feet by two times the business' frontage width.**

3. **The bottom of the wall sign shall not be installed less than ten feet above the sidewalk.**
4. **A wall sign with digital or electronic content is a digital screen.**

The limitations on the size of building-mounted signage allowed for the transit district above are not entirely consistent with the subject application, with the exception of Standard 3, regarding height above a sidewalk, which this application meets.

The Planning Board notes that a diagram is referenced in the TDDP, showing the maximum allowed sign height of 36 inches, or 3 feet. The signs proposed on the western side and the north-facing rear side of the building meet this requirement, with proposed signage that is 36 inches in height. The proposed sign on the front façade of the building is taller than allowed and, therefore, the applicant has requested an amendment of 3.5 feet from the 3-foot maximum height, to place a 6.5-foot sign on the southern building elevation.

The material proposed is shown as follows:

Sign Face—The face of the sign is acrylic with channel-style letters for the logo and name.

Lighting—Internal illumination with white light emitting diode (LED) bulbs.

The applicant provides (in part) the following justification for the amendment:

“The signage design standards are intended to ‘...permit a creative and interesting array of sign designs...interesting visual presentation which attracting visitors to the Transit District.’ The additional increase to the existing three-foot maximum dimension allows this intent to be fulfilled and allows a new tenant to the area to enjoy similar brand recognition and identification as other existing well-known tenants to this portion of the transit district. The TDDP recognizes the larger Prince George’s Plaza Mall as a significant part of the transit district and allows for its continuation of the main center as parking areas are subsequently developed, consistent with the TDDP. The proposed amendment of the sign dimension allows for development and attraction of additional retail, as envisioned by the TDDP and, therefore, does not substantially impair implementation. For these reasons, the applicant requests an amendment of the wall sign standards for the additional 3.5 feet.”

Modification of a development district standard is permitted through the DSP process pursuant to Section 27-548.08(c) of the Zoning Ordinance. That section provides that an applicant may request the Planning Board to apply different development standards from the transit district standards implemented in the TDDP. The Planning Board, however, must find that the alternate standards requested will benefit the development and the transit district, and will not substantially impair implementation of TDDP.

The Planning Board agrees with the applicant's justification and finds that the need for advertising of the property is paramount to the success of the retail stores, and takes into consideration that the speed of vehicles along MD 410, the distance from the road, the proposed size of the sign, and illumination of the sign will not substantially impair the implementation of the TDDP.

In support of the applicant's request, the Planning Board notes that building-mounted signs, similar in size, have been approved by the Planning Board for other retailers in the mall, and this amendment is consistent with previous approved amendments, which have included signage with a height of 6.5 feet. The Planning Board evaluated this request and approved this amendment.

8. **Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance:** The DSP application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the M-U-I and T-D-O Zones of the Zoning Ordinance:
- a. The application is subject to the applicable requirements of the M-U-I and T-D-O Zones. See Finding 7 for a discussion of the applicable T-D-O Zone signage-related standards.
 - b. Pursuant to Section 27-548.08(c), the following findings shall be made by the Planning Board when approving a DSP in the T-D-O Zone:

(A) The Transit District Site Plan is in strict conformance with any mandatory requirements of the Transit District Development Plan;

The DSP requests an amendment to the standard for maximum signage height that has been found to not substantially impair implementation of the TDDP and will benefit the proposed development and the transit district, as set forth in this approval.

(B) The Transit District Site Plan is consistent with, and reflects the guidelines and criteria for development contained in, the Transit District Development Plan;

As applicable and discussed in this approval, the DSP is consistent with the TDDP.

(C) The Transit District Site Plan meets all of the requirements of the Transit District Overlay Zone, and applicable regulations of the underlying zones, unless an amendment to the applicable requirement or regulation has been approved;

With the approval of the requested amendment to the sign standards, the DSP meets the requirements.

- (D) **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 Transit District Overlay Zone;**

The DSP does not change any site features, except for signage. By clearly displaying the retailer's location, it maximizes safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation on-site and, therefore, the proposed signage meets this required finding.

- (E) **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; and**

The DSP proposes signage that is consistent with existing signage at The Mall at Prince George's and is similar in height and placement on the building and, therefore, meets this required finding.

- (F) **Requests for reductions from the total minimum required parking spaces for Transit District Overlay Zones pursuant to Section 27-548.09.02 of the Zoning Ordinance, meets the stated location criteria and are accompanied by a signed Memorandum of Understanding between a car sharing corporation or company and the applicant.**

This DSP does not change any parking-related standards; therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

9. **Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044 and its revisions:** Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044 was approved for construction of the Prince George's Plaza Shopping Center. The site plan was subsequently revised 13 times. Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-12 was approved by the Planning Board on May 25, 2017 (PGCPB Resolution No. 17-20). That application included an amendment to the TDDP standards to allow for a 6.5-foot signage height, and this application is not proposing a height inconsistent with this previous approval.

No other amendments to DSP-99044 have any other sign-related standards or condition that are applicable to the review of this DSP. All signage related standards are from the T-D-O Zone, as approved with the 2016 Prince George's Plaza TDDP/TDO Zones (see above Finding 7).

10. **2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The proposal is not subject to the requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, because this application is for building-mounted signage and does not involve an increase in impervious surface or gross floor area (GFA).

11. **Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance:** The proposal is not subject to the requirements of the Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance because this application is for building-mounted signage and will not affect the previously approved Type II tree conservation plan.
12. **Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The proposal is not subject to the requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance because this application is for signage and does not propose 5,000 square feet or greater in GFA or disturbance.
13. **Further Planning Board Findings and Comments from Other Entities:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:

a. **Community Planning—**

General Plan: This application is located in the Prince George's Plaza Regional Transit District. The vision for the regional transit districts is to direct the majority of future employment and residential growth to the districts, and create medium- to high-density areas featuring high-quality urban design, a mix of complementary uses and public spaces, and a range of transportation options.

Transit District Development Plan: 2016 *Approved Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan and Transit District Overlay Zone.*

Transit District Mandatory Standards

Pursuant to Section 27-548.08(c)(2)(A), this application was in conformance with the mandatory requirements of the Prince George's Plaza TDDP/TDO Zones, with the exception of the signage height. The original application did not conform to the following transit district standards:

The transit district standard for attached signs specifies that signs may not exceed 36 inches in height. The original sign proposed for the southern face of the building exceeded the standard and was more than 2 times the height standard, exceeding the standard by 40 inches.

Pursuant to Section 27-548.08(c)(2)(C), this application did not meet all of the requirements of the Prince George's Plaza TDDP/TDO Zones because it is required to meet the transit district design standards for new signs as part of the DSP review process.

As a result, the applicant revised this application to meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

All other elements of this application meet the requirements of Section 27-548.08(c)(2)(A) and (C).

- b. **Permit Review**—The permit-related issues have been addressed through revisions to the plans or are worded as conditions included in this approval.
- c. **City of Hyattsville**—In an e-mail dated November 8, 2017 (Gerber to Bishop), the City of Hyattsville indicated that they did not have any issues with the subject application.

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:

- A. APPROVED the amendment to the building-mounted sign standard of the 2016 *Approved Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan and Transit District Overlay Zone*, as proposed by the applicant, to allow one 6.5-foot, building-mounted, internally-lit, channel letter sign.
- B. APPROVED Detailed Site Plan DSP-99044-15 for Mall at Prince George's Plaza (End Cap Signage), subject to the condition that the detailed site plan be revised to provide a note identifying all approved transit district standard amendments, prior to certification.

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 Geraldo, seconded by Commissioner Bailey, with Commissioners Geraldo, Bailey, Doerner, and Hewlett voting in favor of the motion, and with Commissioner Washington absent at its regular meeting held on Thursday, November 30, 2017, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 14th day of December 2017.

Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman

By Jessica Jones
Planning Board Administrator