

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 May 17, 2001, regarding Detailed Site Plan SP-01013 for Walker Mill Business Park, Lot 8, Block B, the Planning Board finds:

1. The subject site (Lot 8, Block B), consisting of approximately 2.03 acres, is located on the south side of Rochelle Avenue in the Walker Mill Business Park. The adjacent property to the north, zoned R-A, is vacant. The adjacent properties to the north and west, zoned I-1, have contractor's storage yards and the adjacent property to the south, zoned I-1, is vacant.
2. The proposed use is an outdoor storage yard for vehicles (12-wheel vehicles). There is no trailer storage on the site. The applicant is proposing a six-foot-high board-on-board fence along all the property lines. The board-on-board fence is proposed to be set back approximately 10 feet from the property line along Rochelle Avenue. A gate is proposed along Rochelle Avenue for entry into the property.
3. A Preliminary Subdivision Plat 4-87194 was approved on January 7, 1988 (PGCPB No. 88-06) for 43 lots and one parcel on a 74.4-acre parcel of land known as Walker Mill Business Park. Condition #3 of Preliminary Plat 4-87194 reads as follows:

■Detailed Site Plans for individual lots shall be approved by the Planning Board prior to building permits. These site plan reviews shall address, but not be limited to, the items listed in the Area Planning Division's memorandum dated September 16, 1987.●

The master plan approval, CR-147-1985, which set forth guidelines for development of the subject property, also adopted language identical to that of the above referenced Area Planning memorandum that was specifically for the purposes of providing criteria for review of any proposed development within Walker Mill Business Park.

The memorandum dated September 16, 1987, lists the following design criteria that are applicable to the subject property:

1. *All projects within this subject property shall be subject to site plan review by the Prince George's County Planning Board. The site plan shall contain a landscaping plan.*

The applicant has submitted a landscape plan.

2. *The Planning Board shall review the development to assure its compliance with the following design guidelines:*

- a. *An effective visual buffer created by substantial berms and landscaping shall be provided along Walker Mill Road, Rollins Avenue and Addison Road and along abutting areas which are planned or developed for residential purposes in order to maintain the residential character of surrounding properties.*

This section is not applicable to the subject lot because it is not located on any of the above streets. However, screening of the subject lot is addressed in Finding 6.

- b. *The internal organization of the site shall address the following:*

- (1) *Minimizing the views of parking, loading, storage and service areas.*
- (2) *Providing architectural elevations consistent in materials and treatment on all sides, and with all mechanical equipment enclosed or screened. Screening and enclosures shall be treated as integral elements of building design.*
- (3) *Signs shall not be placed above the roof or parapet line. No moving or flashing signs, or signs projecting significantly from a building, shall be permitted. Low ground-mounted and landscaped signs in keeping with the scale of the buildings and the site shall be encouraged in lieu of building-mounted signs.*

Since there are no buildings on the site, the above design criteria for buildings do not apply to this site. A landscape buffer has been provided along Rochelle Avenue for minimizing views of parking, loading, storage and service areas. The landscape buffer is discussed in detail in Finding 6.

4. The proposed use, outdoor storage of vehicles, is a permitted use in the I-1 Zone. Approximately 9,000 square feet of green area has been provided along the western property line.
5. Section 27-469, I-1 Zone (Light Industrial), of the Zoning Ordinance establishes the following parameters for landscaping, screening and buffering of development in the I-1 Zone:

- (1) *At least ten percent (10%) of the net lot area shall be maintained as green area.*

The applicant has provided more than 10 percent of green area. The green area calculations on the drawings are incorrect. A condition of approval has been added to correct the green area calculations to 10.17 percent.

- (2) *Any landscaped strip adjacent to a public right-of-way required pursuant to the provisions of the Landscape Manual shall not be considered part of the required green area.*

The landscaping proposed along the public right-of-way will not be considered a part of the required green area.

6. The proposal is subject to the requirements of Section 4.7 (Buffering Incompatible Uses) of the *Landscape Manual*. The proposed use is considered a high-impact use, the adjacent vacant lot to the south is considered a high-impact use, and the adjacent outdoor storage uses to the north and west are also high-impact uses. Since these adjacent uses are compatible uses, no landscape buffers are required along these property lines.

According to the applicability section of the *Landscape Manual*, new uses on sites with existing buildings and addition of square footage of more than 10 percent of the existing building are subject to the requirements of Section 4.2 (Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip Requirements) of the *Landscape Manual*. The applicability section does not specifically address new uses on sites with no buildings. The Planning Board had previously made a finding that the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual* also apply to properties like the subject site that have new uses but no buildings. Therefore, this proposal is subject to the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual*. A ten-foot-wide landscape strip planted with three shade trees and 28 shrubs would normally be required along Rochelle Avenue to meet the requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.

The proposal is also subject to the requirements of Section 4.4 (Screening Requirements) of the *Landscape Manual* that requires all outdoor storage areas to be screened from the streets. Section 4.4 of the *Landscape Manual* provides that screening can be accomplished by any of the following options:

- 6-foot-high sight-tight fence or wall
- 6-foot-high berm
- 6-foot evergreen screen (trees or shrubs, minimum six (6)-feet high at planting, minimum nine (9)-feet on center, double staggered row)

Staff believes that the recommended elements for screening provided in Section 4.4 of the *Landscape Manual* are minimum standards, and as evidence of this Section 4.4 also provides the following statement:

■Screening in addition to that specified below may also be required if, because of slopes or other specific conditions on the site, the normally required screening measures do not achieve the necessary level of concealment.■

Furthermore, Section 27-469(c)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance provides the following:

■Outdoor storage shall not be visible from the street.■

The proposed plan includes a fence that will provide screening of the loading and storage areas and also includes landscaping that will provide some screening.

The design of the proposed solid fence along Rochelle Avenue will, if approved in accordance with recommended conditions, have an architectural design that is identical to the fence design approved by the Planning Board for development elsewhere in the Walker Mill Business Park. The condition of approval has been added to require the applicant to add notes to the drawings that ensure the previously approved requirements for the proposed fence.

The minimum landscaping required to meet the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual* will be inadequate in terms of type and quantity. Shade trees planted approximately 35-feet on center will not provide any immediate screening and even upon maturity will only provide seasonal screening that will not be continuous across the entire property frontage. The proposed shrubs offer no element of screening and only act as supplemental plantings to the shade trees for the purposes of variety in the landscape strip. Staff believes that the width of the required Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip should be increased to a minimum of 12 feet to accommodate the type and quantity of plant units necessary to provide an effective and appropriate landscape screen and that a row of large stock evergreen trees should be planted in the landscape strip with shrubs to add variety to the strip.

The surrounding community has requested that proposed storage yards in the subject subdivision be required to provide and demonstrate immediate 100 percent, year around, opaque screening of all storage areas from visibility at all adjacent rights-of-way upon Detailed Site Plan approval. Therefore, it is recommended that the required landscape strip adjacent to the right-of-way be a minimum of 12 feet wide and planted with a row of large stock evergreen trees and supplemental shrubs.

Conditions of approval have been added for providing the recommended fence and landscaping.

7. The Permits Review Section (Gallagher to Srinivas, March 19, 2001) has requested minor changes to the site and landscape plans. A condition of approval has been added to require the same.
8. The Community Planning Division (Osei to Srinivas, April 9, 2001) has stated that the proposed development is in conformance with the approved master plan recommendations for Walker Mill Business Park. However, community concerns regarding the quality of past development activities resulted in the approval of various Detailed Site Plans in Walker Mill Business Park requesting a comprehensive design approach for the entire subdivision. Recent Detailed Site Plans have been approved with three conditions of approval regarding the proposed fence and landscaping for the subject lots. The conditions and the recommendations of the resolution have been incorporated into the findings and conditions for the subject lot.
9. The Transportation Planning Section (Masog to Srinivas, April 26, 2001) has stated that Rochell Avenue has a 70-foot right-of-way and that the conditions on the Preliminary Plat have been bonded.
10. The Environmental Planning Section (Metzger to Srinivas, April 2, 2001) has stated that the site is not subject to the requirements of a Tree Conservation Plan even though it is larger than 40,000 square feet because it contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodlands. The Preliminary Plat requires a review of methane gas on the subject property. The study has been reviewed by the Section and there is no presence of methane gas in the area. A condition of approval has been added to require the applicant to obtain a letter of exemption from the Environmental Planning Section.
11. The Subdivision Section (Chellis to Srinivas, April 4, 2001) has stated that Lot 8 is the subject of final plat NLP 141 @ 12, recorded August 16, 1988. The final plat shows a 10-foot-wide public utility easement along all public rights-of-way. A condition of approval has been added to show the easement on the drawings.
12. The Department of Environmental Resources (De Guzman to Srinivas, April 3, 2001) has stated that there is no stormwater management concept approval on file for the subject site. A condition of approval has been added to require the same.
13. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (Hizazi to Srinivas, March 29, 2001) has stated that roadway improvements along Rochelle Avenue must be in accordance with DPW&T standards and specifications.
14. Referrals were sent to the Town of Capitol Heights and Town of District Heights. The Town of Capitol Heights (Dodson to Srinivas, telephone conversation, March 30, 2001) has stated that the applicant must obtain a permit from the Town of Capital Heights for the proposed outdoor storage yard. No response has been received as of this date from the Town of District Heights.

15. With the proposed conditions, the Detailed Site Plan SP-01013 is found to represent a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines without requiring unreasonable costs 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 for the above-described land, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to certificate approval,
 - a. the site/landscape drawings shall be revised to show the following:
 - (1) corrected green area calculations
 - (2) correct parcel numbers for the adjacent properties
 - (3) notes stating that the proposed fence shall be a continuous six-foot-high sight-tight wood fence with swinging or sliding gates (solid wood fence in accordance with details shown on Attachment A). The notes shall also include information on measures taken to ensure that the proposed fences are weather resistant and low maintenance
 - (4) 12 feet of commercial/industrial landscaped strip along Rochelle Avenue. Plant materials provided within the landscaped strip shall be evergreen trees planted 10 feet on center, or other acceptable planting arrangement utilizing the same quantity of trees, which is approved by the Planning Board or the Urban Design staff as designee of the Planning Board. White pine trees shall constitute no more than 20 percent of the trees in this landscaped strip
 - (5) cross-sections through the subject site to demonstrate that any area of outdoor storage visible from any adjacent right-of-way shall have the solid wood fence specified in Condition 1.a.(3).
 - (6) the 10-foot-wide public utility easement along the public right-of-way.
 - b. the applicant shall obtain a letter of exemption from the Environmental Planning Section.
 - c. the applicant shall obtain stormwater management concept approval for the subject site from the Department of Environmental Resources.

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 Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lowe, with Commissioners Brown, Lowe, Eley, Scott and Hewlett voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, May 17, 2001, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Adopted by the Prince George's County Planning Board this 21st day of June.

Trudye Morgan Johnson
Executive Director

By Frances J. Guertin
Planning Board Administrator

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