

June 22, 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Laxmi Srinivas, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan SP-00020
Rainbow Child Care

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the site development plans for the subject proposal and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions.

EVALUATION

This Detailed Site Plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

1. The requirements of the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:
 - Section 27-461 governing permitted uses in the C-S-C Zone
 - Section 27-464.02 regarding Day Care centers for children
 - Section 27-568 regarding minimum parking requirements
2. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
3. Referrals.

FINDINGS

Based upon evaluation and analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff recommends the following findings:

1. Detailed Site Plan SP-00020 was submitted in accordance with Section 27-464.02 (a)(2) which requires a Detailed Site Plan for all day care centers in commercial zones. The subject property is zoned C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) in which a day care center for children is a permitted use according to Section 27-461 of the Zoning Ordinance.

2. The day care center is proposed within units E and F of the existing building in the Oaklawn Shopping Center at the intersection of Allentown Road and Oaklawn Road. Oaklawn Shopping Center has a variety of retail uses. The property to the east consists of single-family residential uses and the properties to the south include a church and vacant land.

The details of the proposal are as follows:

- Proposed enrollment: 45
- Gross Floor Area: 2,000 sq. ft.
- Parking required by Section 27-582 for day care centers: 1 per 8 children =(6)
- Parking provided for 45 children: 8
- Play area required by Section 27-464.02 : 75 square feet of play space per child for 50 percent of the licensed capacity or 75 square feet per child for the total number of children to use the play area at one time, whichever is greater.
- Number of children to use the play area at one time: 23
- Area of play area required: $45 \times 75 \times 0.5 = 1687.5$ square feet
- Area of play area provided: approximately 1,728 square feet
- Hours of operation: 6.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. on weekdays
- Outdoor play hours allowed by Section 27-464.02: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- Proposed play hours (Weather permitting): 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Play area will not be used after sunset

The proposed parking, square footage of the play area and hours of outdoor play are consistent with the requirements of Section 27-464.02, day care center for children, of the Zoning Ordinance.

3. The day care center is proposed within Units E and F. The vacant area to the east of Units E and F will be used for the play area. Two existing trees within the play area will be retained. Access to the play area will be through the day care center via a side door. The access to the day care center will be through the parking lot for the shopping center on the north side of the building. There is a sidewalk along the north side of the building for access into the building. A combination of paving and other soft groundcover (for example, lawn, groundcover, mulch) will provide a combination of hard and soft surfaces in the play area. Some shrubs should also be added along the fence to soften the appearance of the play area from the parking lot. A condition of approval has been added to require the additional landscaping.

4. Section 27-464.02, Day care center for children, states (in part):

■All outdoor play areas shall be at least twenty-five (25) feet from any dwelling on an adjoining lot, and shall be enclosed by a substantial wall or fence at least four feet in height; a greater setback from adjoining properties or uses or a higher fence may be required by the Planning Board if it determines that it is needed to protect the health and safety of the children utilizing the play area. The play area shall contain sufficient shade during the warmer months to afford protection from the sun.●

The outdoor play area is set back more than 25 feet from any dwelling unit. The height and design of the existing six-foot-high stockade fence will be sufficient to completely enclose the play area to ensure safety of the children utilizing it and screen the play area from the adjacent uses.

The applicant should provide a six-foot-high gate along the fence enclosing the play area. The gate should be closed when the play area is being used to prevent the children from wandering into the parking lot. The gate should only be open when the children are being taken into the day care center from the parking lot and vice versa. The gate should have a latch that is located at a height of minimum four feet from the finished grade in the play area so that the children cannot access it. The latch should be designed in such a way that it can be easily operated by adults. A condition of approval has been added to ensure these requirements.

The proposed fence and trees will not be sufficient to shade the play area. A condition of approval has been added to require an outdoor shade structure for the play area to provide sufficient shade during the warmer months.

With proposed conditions, the proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 27-464.02 regarding screening and safety of the play areas.

5. The subject Detailed Site Plan will not significantly alter the existing conditions on the site. Eight of the existing parking spaces will be utilized for the day care center. The shopping center requires a total of 43 parking spaces according to the Zoning Ordinance requirements. There are 43 existing parking spaces in the shopping center. Since the proposal does not include addition of new square footage, the reconfiguration of the parking lot to add new parking spaces or change in use of the subject property as a whole, it is exempt from the requirements of the *Landscape Manual*. The existing dumpster in the proposed play area is being relocated to the northeastern corner of the parking lot. The dumpster must be completely screened by landscaping to meet the requirements of Section 4.4 of the *Landscape Manual*. A condition of approval has been added to require the landscape screening.
6. The State Highway Administration (McDonald to Srinivas, May 30, 2000) has stated that they have no objections to the proposal.
7. The Permits Review Section (Ferrante to Srinivas, May 30, 2000) has requested minor revisions to the Site/Grading Plans to show revised parking calculations, information on the hours of operation of the day care center/play area and compliance with previous approvals. A condition of approval has been added to require these changes.
8. The Environmental Planning Section (Metzger to Srinivas, June 1, 2000) has commented that the proposal is exempt from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Manual because the site is more than 40,000 square feet but contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland. The Section also found that there are no significant environmental impacts due to

the proposal and a tree conservation plan will not be required. A condition of approval has been added to require a letter of exemption from the Environmental Planning Section.

9. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (Maholtz to Srinivas, May 25, 2000) has stated that the proposal will not have any impacts on the existing facilities.
10. The Department of Environmental Resources (De Guzman to Srinivas, June 12, 2000) has no objections to the proposal.
11. The Subdivision Section (Chellis to Srinivas, June 15, 2000) has stated that the proposed play area is located within the 23-foot access easement serving Lot 397. The easement provides secondary access for Lot 397 (on the south side of the subject property) to Oaklawn Road. Lot 397 has adequate access along Marston Drive. Therefore, the applicant must either demonstrate that the easement has been extinguished or provide an alternative location for the play area. A condition of approval has been added to require the same.
12. The proposal is not altering the overall existing use of the property as an integrated shopping center and is utilizing the existing building and vacant area for the day care center and play area. There are no significant alterations to the existing site that will impact the existing grading and drainage conditions on the property. The proposal will not have any significant adverse impacts on the subject property or the surrounding properties. The addition of shrubs along the play area will enhance the existing appearance of the center. Therefore, Detailed Site Plan SP-00020 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.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE SP-00020 subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to certificate approval the applicant shall:
 - a. revise the site/grading and landscape plans to show the following:
 - (1) a combination of paving and other soft ground cover (for example, lawn, groundcover, mulch)
 - (2) shrubs along the north side of the fence to partially screen the fence and the play area from the parking lot
 - (3) a six-foot-high gate along the fence enclosing the play area
 - (4) a note stating that the gate shall be closed when the play area is being used. The gate shall only be open when the children are being taken in and out of

the play area . It shall have a latch that is located at least four feet from finished grade in the play area and easily operated by adults

- (5) an outdoor shade structure for the play area to provide sufficient shade during the warmer months
- (6) a fence or an evergreen screen to completely screen the dumpster in the parking lot in accordance with Section 4.4 of the *Landscape Manual*.
- (7) the proposed enrollment, parking and play area requirements for the day care center
- (8) parking and loading table for the entire building provided by address, square footage and use
- (9) a 16-foot-wide and 19-foot-long van-accessible parking space for the physically handicapped according to ADA regulations
- (10) correct dimensions of the loading space
- (11) a note stating that there will be no outdoor play before 7 a.m. to comply with Section 27-464.02 (vii) of the Zoning Ordinance
- (12) a note stating that the site is in compliance with the landscape plan previously approved under permit 843-88-CGU
- (13) all ramps and drop curbs for the physically handicapped labeled according to previously approved permit 843-88-CGU.
- (14) correct lot numbers, plat number, tax map number and all easements.

b. A letter of exemption shall be obtained from the Environmental Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division.

2. Prior to the Department of Environmental Resources issuing a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall demonstrate that the 23-foot-wide easement serving Lot 397 has been extinguished or the play area shall be relocated to another location where it is easily accessible from the day care center.