

July 30, 2009

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Gary Wagner, Planner Coordinator

SUBJECT: Limited Detailed Site Plan, SP-00049
Departure from Design Standards, DDS-517
BJ's Wholesale Club

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the site development plans and departure from design standards for the subject property 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:

- a. Conditions of Preliminary Plat 4-94074.
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the C-M Zone.
- c. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
- d. Referrals.
- e. Site Design Guidelines.

FINDINGS

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

1. A Limited Detailed Site Plan is required for this site in accordance with condition 13 of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-94074 (PGCPB No. 94-298(A)) which states the following:

13. **Prior to the issuance of any building permits, a limited Detailed Site Plan shall be approved by the Planning Board. The site plan, which shall be subject to a 45 day time limit from the date of acceptance, shall address the following:**

a. **Landscaping and buffering in relation to views from US 301.**

b. **Internal driveway circulation, parking and truck access.**

The Detailed Site Plan is for a BJ's Wholesale Club with a gross floor area of 108,532 square feet. The site is located on the north side of Ball Park Road, behind the existing Home Depot, and consists of 11.432 acres in the C-M Zone. The use is categorized in the Zoning Ordinance as ■Bulk Retail.●

With regard to landscaping and buffering in relation to views from US 301, the building has been sited so that it is more than 1,300 feet from the right-of-way of US 301. Because of this fact, and because the building will be located behind the existing Home Depot and other buildings along US 301, views into the site will be minimal. Additionally, the site is flag-lot shaped and only has approximately 100 feet of frontage along Ball Park Road. Berming and landscape materials have been provided along the frontage of the Home Depot site which serve as a visual buffer for the BJ's site.

Internal driveway circulation, parking and truck access have been adequately designed, given the irregular shape of the site. The location of truck access to loading is within 50 feet of residentially zoned land which requires the applicant to file for a Departure from Design Standards. The applicant has also filed a Departure from Design Standards for a reduction in the size of parking spaces. See Finding 2 below for Departure from Design Standards No. 517.

2. Departure from Design Standards Application No. 517

I. Nature of Request:

The applicant requests a departure from the requirements of Section 27-579 (b) which reads as follows:

No portion of an exterior loading space, and no vehicular entrance to any loading space (including driveways and doorways), shall be located within fifty (50) feet of any Residential Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential purposes on an approved Basic Plan for a Comprehensive Design Zone, approved Official Plan for an R-P-C Zone, or any approved Conceptual or Detailed Site Plan).

The applicant also requests a departure from Section 27-558 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to reduce the size of standard parking spaces. Standard parking space sizes are 9.5 feet by 19.0 feet. The applicant intends to use a universal parking space size of 9.0 feet by 19.0 feet and not provide any compact parking spaces.

II. Ordinance Requirements:

Section 27-239.01 of the Zoning Ordinance sets the following required findings for a departure from design standards:

- A. **The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.**
- B. **The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.**
- C. **The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances which are unique to the site or prevalent in areas of the County developed prior to November 29, 1949.**
- D. **The departure will not impair the visual, functional, or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.**

III. Findings:

- A. The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance will be equally well or better served by the departure. The fundamental purpose in the Zoning Ordinance is to protect public health, safety and welfare.

The site is a flag lot-shaped parcel (Parcel C of 3809 Subdivision) with approximately 100 feet of frontage onto Ball Park Road. The site is extremely irregular in shape and surrounded to the south, east and north by residentially zoned property. The residentially zoned property to the north and east consists of property in the R-R Zone that is designated as Patuxent River Primary Management Area (Parcel F of 3809 Subdivision) and is therefore not developable. Beyond the PMA to the east is the Prince George's County Stadium. To the west is the existing Home Depot, which also has an approved Limited Detailed Site Plan and departure of 40 feet for access to loading within 50 feet of residentially zoned property. To the south, between the subject site and Ball Park Road is Parcel E of 3809 Subdivision. Parcel E is zoned R-R and is improved with an existing 2.5 acre stormwater management pond that serves the entire development. The balance of Parcel E consists of an overflow parking lot for the Prince George's County Stadium. A perpetual easement has been granted to The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission for the overflow parking on Parcel E.

The subject property's irregular shape dictates the location of the building, parking field, loading and access to the loading. Consequently, the access to loading must follow along the southern boundary, adjacent to the R-R zoned property. Because Parcel E is used for stormwater management purposes and for parking for the stadium, access to loading in this location will not be a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the public in any way.

With regard to the reduction in the size of standard parking bay sizes from the required dimension of 9.5 feet by 19.0 feet to 9.0 feet by 19.0 feet, the applicant has proposed to provide all the parking spaces at this universal size, foregoing the option to provide up to one-third (1/3) of the required spaces as compact spaces. With the universal-sized parking spaces, the area of the parking compound is virtually the same as a parking compound utilizing compact spaces. Departures have been granted for other development in the County for the same reason. The universal parking space size of 9.0 feet by 19.0 feet will not be a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the public in any way.

- B. In order to place the building on the site in such a way as to provide the necessary parking and circulation, it must be placed close to the rear property line, in the east corner of the site. The site is further constrained by an irregular property boundary to the south. Furthermore, Parcel E to the south, although it is zoned residentially, is used for stormwater management purposes and for overflow parking for the stadium. It is highly unlikely that it will ever be used for residential purposes. Furthermore, the access drive to the loading area cannot be located any further from the residentially zoned land without substantial disruption of proposed circulation patterns. Given the above, unique circumstances, the departure for access to loading is the minimum necessary.

With regard to the reduction in the size of the standard parking space dimension, the departure is the minimum feasible reduction (0.5A. per space in the width of the spaces only) that will allow the applicant to employ the increasingly-popular universal parking standard to achieve an efficient, functional parking layout. The applicant has proposed to provide all the parking spaces at this universal size, foregoing the option to provide up to one-third (1/3) of the required spaces as compact spaces. With the universal sized parking spaces, the area of the parking compound is virtually the same as a parking compound utilizing compact spaces. Departures have been granted for other development in the County for the same reason.

3. The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstance which are unique to the site, such as the extremely irregular shape of the lot which dictates the location of the building, parking compound, loading bays and access to the loading.
- D. It is staff's opinion that the departure will not impair the visual, functional or environmental quality of the site. In fact, the departure preserves these site characteristics whereas requiring full compliance with the Zoning Ordinance would likely impair them. Moreover, the residential property abutting the site is used for a stormwater management pond and an overflow parking lot for the

Prince George's Stadium. It is highly unlikely that this residential property will ever be developed for residential use. With regard to the reduction in size of the standard parking spaces, there will be no discernable difference in the visual quality; the parking lot will function as well, if not better, because there will be no compact spaces which are difficult for the average vehicle to negotiate; and from an environmental standpoint, the universal size parking space does not increase the area of the parking compound and therefore does not have a negative impact on surface runoff. Therefore, staff recommends APPROVAL of DDS-517.

Referrals

3. The Transportation Planning Section reviewed the above-referenced site plan and provided the following comments:

On September 22, 1994, the Prince George's County Planning Board approved preliminary plat 4-94074 known as 3809 Subdivision. Based on PGCPB resolution # 94-298(A), the preliminary plat was approved with 13 conditions, including the following:

6. *The maximum commercial development allowed for this site shall not exceed an amount of square feet of gross floor area that would generate 9,089 vehicle trips per day (not including the approved special exception for a banquet hall and the relocation of existing uses described in Finding 12.i.).*
7. *Prior to the issuance of each commercial building permit (not including any of the existing uses as "Rips" that may be relocated to the subject property as described in Finding 12.i.), the applicant, his heirs, successors and/or assigns, shall pay a fee-in-lieu of construction for US 301 and MD 197 to the M-NCPPC based on the following formula:*

$$\$210 \times (\text{Daily Trips Generated per Building}) \times (\text{FHWA Construction Index for 4 quarters preceding permit application})$$
(1994 FHWA Construction Index)

The Southeast Quadrant Study indicates that the banquet hall would generate 820 daily trips and the 6 pump gas station 330 daily trips totaling 1,150 daily trips. The applicant, his heirs, successors and/or assigns, shall receive a credit against the \$210/daily trip fee-in-lieu contribution. Different uses may be substituted to absorb this capacity with written permission from the current owner. The appraised value of the R-R zoned portion of the right-of-way for the Stadium Access Road represents a credit that may only be applied toward the cost of the above-referenced improvements with written permission from the current owner.

With regard to condition number 6 above, the applicant has provided information to staff indicating, additional trips that were not part of the original 9,089 trip cap identified in PGCPB No. 94-298(A). Specifically those additional trips were attributable to an approved Special Exception application, for which the development would generate an additional 2,243 trips. Consequently, the actual trip cap for the 3809 Crain Ltd. Partnership Property is $2,243 + 9,089 = 11,332$ trips. As of this writing, the approved developments within the original 3809 Property generate cumulatively, 6,758 trips. Therefore the remaining number of trips under the original cap is $11,332 - 6,758 = 4,574$ trips.

Based on the trip generation rates cited in the Institute of Transportation Engineer's (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual, 6th Edition*, a warehouse club (861) such as the one being proposed generates 41.8 daily trips per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. The site plan proposes a building with a gross floor area of 108,532 square feet. With a proposed floor area of 108,532 square feet, the trip generation for the warehouse would be $(108,532 \times 41.8 =) 4,537$ daily trips. The trip cap identified in condition 6 has therefore not been exceeded.

Based on the fee structure identified in condition number 7, the applicant payment to Prince George's County would be $4,537 \text{ trips} \times \$210/\text{trip} = \$952,770.00$.

The Transportation Section concludes that the proposed site plan is deemed acceptable as required by Section 27-285 of the Prince George's County Code subject to condition #1 below.

4. The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the Type II Tree Conservation Plan for the above-referenced detailed site plan and recommends approval of TCPII/161/91. The following findings and recommendation are offered for your consideration.

Woodland Conservation

A Type II Tree Conservation Plan, TCPII/161/91, was previously reviewed and approved for this property in conjunction with an application for a larger area of which the subject property is a part. The TCPII as previously approved provided the woodland conservation along the northern and southern property boundaries of the overall site and adjacent to the stormwater management pond in the central portion of the site. This plan, as received by the Environmental Planning Section on December 19, 2000, has been revised to eliminate the woodland conservation area near the stormwater management pond and provide additional woodland conservation along the southern property boundary adjacent to a priority retention area. TCPII/161/91 is recommended for approval subject to condition 2 below.

Streams, Wetlands, 100-year Floodplains and Associated Buffers

Although streams, wetlands, 100-year floodplains and the buffers associated with these features, which comprise the Patuxent River Primary Management Area (PMA) are found to occur on the larger overall property these features are not found to occur within the limits of this application. These features have been protected and are included in the woodland conservation areas as reflected on TCPII/161/91. No impacts to the PMA are proposed by this application.

5. The Limited Detailed Site Plan represents 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.

In accordance with Section 27-277 of the Zoning Ordinance (Limiting the review) the review of the site plan is limited to those issues imposed by Condition 13 of Preliminary Plan, 4-94074. Only those submittal requirements (Section 27-282) and site design guidelines (Section 27-283) which apply to those issues have been considered.

6. The Detailed Site Plan is in conformance with all applicable requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.
7. The City of Bowie recommends approval of the Limited Detailed Site Plan, subject to eight conditions. The applicant has made the appropriate revisions to the site plan to address all of those conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation, analysis and findings of this report, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE SP-00049 and TCPII/161/91, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of any building permits, the applicant, his heirs, successors and/or assigns shall pay to Prince George's County an amount calculated as **\$952,770.00** x (*FHWA Construction Cost Index yearly average* at the time of building permit application)/(*FHWA Construction Cost Index* for 1994).
2. Prior to certificate of approval of DSP-00049 the applicant shall make the following revision to TCPII/161/91:
 - a. The ■Woodland Natural Afforestation Areas■ as reflected on the TCPII are difficult to distinguish from other non-woodland conservation areas. Revise the TCPII to reflect a distinctive pattern for the ■Woodland Natural Afforestation Areas.■