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## DETAILED SITE PLAN

## DSP-02058

Application	General Data
<b>Project Name:</b> QUEENS MANOR GARDENS APARTMENTS  <b>Location:</b> Intersection of 27 <sup>th</sup> Street and Queens Chapel Road, 4615 27 <sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Rainier, MD  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> AHD, Inc. 2 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 707 Bethesda, MD 20901	Date Accepted: 12/17/2002
	Planning Board Action Limit: 03/14/2003
	Plan Acreage: 13.78
	Zone: R-18
	Dwelling Units: 331
	Square Footage: NA
	Planning Area: 68
	Council District: 2
	Municipality: Mt. Rainier
	200-Scale Base Map: 206NE02

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
Renovation of the existing apartment buildings to reduce number of units from 348 to 331 units	Adjoining Property Owners: 12/17/2002 (CB-15-1998)
	Previous Parties of Record: NA (CB-13-1997)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site: 01/15/2003
	Variance(s): Adjoining Property Owners: NA

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: H. Zhang	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

January 22, 2003

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Prince George's County Planning Board

**VIA:** Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

**FROM:** Henry Zhang, Senior Planner, Urban Design Section

**SUBJECT:** Residential Revitalization Detailed Site Plan DSP-02058, Queens Manor Gardens Apartments

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the Residential Revitalization Detailed Site Plan for the subject property and presents the following findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions as described in the recommendation section of this report.

## **RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION LEGISLATION**

Many jurisdictions have in recent years introduced various innovative land use and zoning tools to make urban renewal more efficient. The residential revitalization legislation in CB-58-2001 is such an alternative zoning tool designed to encourage and assist the efficient rehabilitation of older apartment buildings and other residential development in designated revitalization areas of Prince George's County. CB-58-2001 provides a consolidated process employing detailed site plan review for a residential revitalization project that may not comply with the conventional regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, such as number of parking spaces, lot coverage, setbacks, etc. As the result of this legislation, Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, has been added to the Zoning Ordinance. Compared with the traditional zoning requirements, this residential revitalization legislation provides more flexibility in the design review for eligible residential rehabilitation projects.

CB-58-2001 was approved by the District Council on September 11, 2001, and became effective on the day of its enactment.

## **EVALUATION**

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

- a. CB-58-2001, Residential Revitalization Legislation
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance
- c. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
- d. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance
- e. Referral comments

## FINDINGS

Based upon the evaluation and analysis of the subject detailed site plan, the Urban Design Review staff recommends the following findings:

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a Residential Revitalization Detailed Site Plan, DSP- 02058, for 331 multifamily dwellings in the R-18 Zone.
2. **Development Data Summary**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	R-18	R-18
Use(s)	Multifamily Residential	Multifamily Residential
Acreage	13.78	13.78
Lots	NA	NA
Parcel #	5	5
Square Footage/GFA	338,862	338,862
Dwelling Units:	348	331

<i>Site Plan Data</i>	
Zone	R-18
Existing Use	Multifamily Housing
Proposed Use	Multifamily Housing
Lot Area	13.78 acres
Existing Parking	169 spaces
Parking Required	496 spaces
Parking Required (with 30% reduction)	348 spaces
Parking Proposed on site	169 spaces
Existing On-Street Parking Spaces	205 spaces
On-Street Parking Spaces Proposed	205 spaces
Existing Loading Spaces	0 spaces
Proposed Loading Spaces	0 spaces

<i>Unit Mix</i>		
Type of Unit	Original Unit Number	New Unit Number
Efficiency	0	0
1 BR	200	165
1 BR for the Handicapped	N/A	1
2 BR	148	143
2 BR for the Handicapped	N/A	5
3 BR	N/A	16
3 BR for the Handicapped	N/A	1
Total	348	331

3. **Location:** The site is located in Planning Area 68, Council District 2. More specifically, it is situated in a subdivision known as Queens Manor Gardens, located south of Queens Chapel Road on the north side of 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the town of Mount.Rainier.

4. **Use:** The subject application consists of three parcels, Parcels A, B and C, Block A and two parcels, Block B and C in the Queens Manor Gardens subdivision. The property has been developed since the 1940s with multifamily, residential and rental apartments.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The subject site has been developed since the early to mid 1940s as a residential district. The 1994 Planning Area 68 Plan and Sectional Map Amendment recommended that the subject property be developed for multifamily residential uses at an urban density with a maximum of 12 dwelling units per acre. The 1994 Planning Area 68 Plan and Sectional Map Amendment retained the existing R-18 Zone for the subject property. The master plan recommends placing a high priority on rehabilitation of existing old living areas through both public and private actions.
6. **Design Features:** The proposed residential revitalization Detailed Site Plan, DSP-02058, is a renovation of the existing multifamily dwellings. The proposed revitalization plan will not alter the existing street pattern of the site. Major exterior improvements include adding building entrance canopies, additional landscaping, and three tot lots. Meanwhile, other improvements such as pole-mounted street lighting fixtures, brick pedestals, accent fencing and new monumental signage are also proposed for the site.
7. **Parking Requirements:** The site has 169 existing parking spaces. The applicant proposes to create 37 compact parking spaces and eight handicapped parking spaces as part of this request. By Section 27-445.10(b)(5), the normal parking requirement of 496 parking spaces can be reduced by 30 percent, to 348 spaces, with an additional reduction provided, by Section 27-410(b)(5)(A), if the additional reduction is necessary to alleviate conditions that are particular to the proposed use, given its nature at this location, or to alleviate conditions that are prevalent in older areas of the county predominantly developed prior to November 29, 1949. Both situations are certainly true in this case. The multifamily apartment complex was built prior to 1949 when parking requirements were far below current requirements. Use of the parking lot by the existing, fully occupied 348 apartments shows that the parking lots are usually only 50 percent full. The site is within one mile of the West Hyattsville Metro Station. Bus stops are located on the perimeter of the site. A further reduction is permitted by Section 27-410(b)(5)(B) when the additional reduction will not infringe upon the parking and loading needs of adjacent residential areas. Approximately 206 on-street parking spaces exist both within the boundaries and on the perimeter of the subject property. These spaces have served the existing multifamily complex without infringement upon adjacent residential areas since the 1940s. Continuation of the existing number of spaces is, therefore, appropriate with the compact and handicapped spaces proposed by the applicant.

With the exception of one existing 20.6-foot-wide aisle between the rows of parking spaces in the parking pod located between Allison Street and Queens Chapel Road, all the drive aisles are at least 22 feet wide. The 20.6-foot-wide drive aisle will be validated by the approval of this site plan in accordance with Section 27-445.10(b)(3) as it has functioned successfully since the 1940s.

The complex has operated since the 1940s without any loading spaces as none were required then. There is no factual basis upon which to alter this existing situation and require any loading spaces be created.

8. **Signs:** Two existing monument signs on 27<sup>th</sup> street off Queens Chapel Road are shown in the median of streets, which are within the jurisdiction of the City of Mount Rainier. The existing sign faces will be improved as part of the revitalization. The staff recommends that new sign

faces will be approved by the Urban Design Section, with review and comments by the City of Mount Rainier, prior to application for sign permits.

9. **Bicycle Racks:** Bicycle racks will be located within the complex. The exact location and number will be added to the site plan prior to certification of approval. The Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) will assist the applicant in determining the locations and number of bike racks. NDC has been retained by the applicant to recommend renovations and improvements to the site.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA:

10. **CB-58-2001, Residential Revitalization Legislation and Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in CB-58-2001 and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.
  - a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27- 441, Uses Permitted, which governs permitted uses in residential zones. The proposed multifamily revitalization project as shown on Detailed Site Plan DSP-02058 is a permitted use in the R-18 Zone.
  - b. Per Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, (c) Findings, in approving a Residential Revitalization project, the Planning Board shall find that the project:

**“(1) Improves a deteriorated or obsolete multifamily or attached one-family dwelling unit development by replacing or rehabilitating dwellings, improving structures, or renovating and improving other facilities;”**

*Comment:* The proposed development is to renovate an existing old development. The detailed site plan proposes to repair and improve the existing buildings, reduce density, provide handicapped access, and other facilities such as playground areas, picnic areas, community room and laundry rooms. With respect to the interior of the units, they will be provided with new heating and air conditioning systems, updated kitchens and bathrooms, refurbished interior finishes including flooring and carpets, and upgraded electrical wiring. Covered entries to buildings will be added to those buildings that have none. In order to improve its outdoor neighborhood environment, artist space for artistic endeavors, new sidewalks, additional landscaping and three tot lots will also be provided to the site. Additionally, two entrances will be closed (with break-away bollards for fire department emergency access) to prevent flow-through circulation of vehicles on the site. The applicant is also working with the State Highway Administration to obtain approval to substitute landscaping for the service lane that now exists along Queens Chapel Road and along 30<sup>th</sup> Street between Queens Chapel and Allison Street. This improvement will be provided upon approval and public funding being available. The physical quality of this old neighborhood will be greatly improved upon the completion of the revitalization project.

**“(2) Maintains or improves the architectural character of the buildings so that they are compatible with surrounding properties;”**

*Comment:* The proposed renovation will not alter the current architectural character of the buildings and site. The contextual relationship between the subject property and the surrounding neighborhood is maintained and improved with the augmentation of existing landscaping. Building entrance canopies will be added to buildings currently without entrance features to improve the buildings’ scale and curb appeal. Additional

landscaping and site improvements, such as pole-mounted street lighting, brick pedestals, and accent fencing are improvements to the current site conditions.

**“(3) Serves a need for housing in the neighborhood or community;”**

*Comment:* The subject application is a renovation of the existing multifamily dwellings. It will not involve any change of the gross floor area of the existing apartment buildings. The rehabilitated neighborhood will, as it did before, continue to serve the housing needs of the community but in a much better way. Some single bedroom units are being combined to provide a number of three bedroom units in order to better serve the needs of the existing clientele.

**“(4) Benefits project residents and property owners in the neighborhood;”**

*Comment:* According to the development statistics provided by the applicant, the proposed development will preserve some 95 percent of the existing units and add handicapped friendly units. Approximately 85 percent of the current tenants are expected to remain in the neighborhood. As the direct outcome of this project, the majority of the existing residents will be the beneficiaries of this revitalization.

**“(5) Conforms with the housing goals and priorities as described in the current Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan, for Prince George’s County; and”**

*Comment:* Community building and revitalization are key to housing and community development activities in Prince George’s County. The proposed revitalization project conforms with the housing goals and priorities of the current Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan FY 2001-2005 for Prince George’s County. Among six goals and priorities of the consolidated plan, the proposed project meets specifically four of them that are applicable to this detailed site plan. The revitalization will be a special housing reinvestment in Inner Beltway communities. It will develop a range of housing for all residents including, but not limited to, families and persons with disabilities. It will build and restore vibrant communities by creating safe neighborhoods where people want to live and improve the quality of life for all residents by reducing the concentration of inferior, low-value housing units in the communities. The Prince George’s County Housing Authority, in a referral dated January 9, 2003, has stated the redevelopment proposal meets the requirements of the consolidated plan.

**“(6) Conforms to either specific land use recommendations or principles and guidelines for residential development within the applicable Master Plan.”**

*Comment:* The Planning Area 68 Plan and Sectional Map Amendment, approved in 1994, recommends that the subject property be developed for multifamily residential uses. The master plan also recommends placing a high priority on continual rehabilitation of existing old living areas through both public and private actions. The subject application thus conforms to the master plan recommendations.

11. ***Landscape Manual:*** The proposed residential revitalization is exempt from the requirements of the applicable sections of the *Landscape Manual*, because the proposed development is a rehabilitation of existing buildings that does not involve any change of use or increase of more than ten percent of the gross floor area of the buildings.

The existing residential district had been established well before the *Landscape Manual* came into effect on January 1, 1990. It is bordered on its western side by 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue; retail uses are across Queens Chapel Road to the north; multifamily units are across Arundel Road to the south; the Rainier House senior center is to the east.

Per Section 1.1, Applicability, of the *Landscape Manual*,

**“... all building and grading permits shall be in compliance with this Manual to the extent that the requirements can be satisfied without demolition of any building, or parking or loading spaces.”**

Per Section 27-445.09, Residential Revitalization of the *Zoning Ordinance*, one of the requirements for the revitalization project is that:

**“The project shall comply with the requirements of the *Landscape Manual* to the extent that is practical.”**

Even though the project is technically exempt from the *Landscape Manual*, the applicant recognizes the desirability of increasing the landscaping on site. An extensive landscaping plan is proposed as part of the redevelopment of the site. This will greatly improve the visual attractiveness of this old neighborhood upon the completion of the revitalization project.

Details will be added to the site plan prior to certification of approval to note the depth of the mulch and edge treatment specifications of the playgrounds.

12. **Woodland Conservation Ordinance:** The subject application is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Woodland Conservation Ordinance. Even though the site is more than 40,000 square feet, it contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland and the construction proposed is to renovate the existing multifamily buildings. A tree conservation plan is not required.
13. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to all concerned agencies and divisions. Major referral comments are summarized as follows:
  - a. The Department of Housing and Community Development, Prince George’s County, in a memorandum dated January 9, 2003, has found that the approval of this application is in conformance with the housing goals and priorities as described in the Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan for FY 2001-2005.
  - b. The application was referred to the Transportation Planning Section and in a memorandum dated January 2, 2003, transportation staff noted that:

“With slight decrease in number of residences, transportation staff has no comment.”
  - c. The Subdivision Section, in a memorandum dated January 2, 2003, stated that “No subdivision issues related to reduction of units.”
  - d. The Permit Review Section on December 30, 2002, provided questions regarding compliance with regulations of the Zoning Ordinance. Most of the questions were

answered during the review process. Some of the questions have been included in the recommendation section of this staff report as conditions.

- e. The Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County, in a memorandum dated January 2, 2003, indicated it has no comment.
- f. The Prince George's County Fire Department raises questions about the existing parking lot configuration. These issues will be satisfied in order to comply with the applicable regulations prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy by the Department of Environmental Resources. The detailed site plan is required to be revised to reflect any changes required by the Fire Department's approval. A standard condition has been included in the recommendation section.
- g. By a memorandum dated December 26, 2002, the Department of Environmental Resources of Prince George's County has no objection to this project.
- h. The Community Planning Division, on January 9, 2003, stated that the application is consistent with the *1994 Approved Master Plan for Planning Area 68*, which recommends retention of multifamily use for the property. The application conforms with the master plan's goal to protect, maintain and enhance area neighborhoods to further foster safe and stable residential environments.
- i. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), in a memorandum dated January 6, 2003, indicated that the proposed revitalization has no impact on the existing conditions. The other comment made by WSSC should be addressed by the applicant during the building permit review process.
- j. In a resolution (Resolution 26-22) of the City Council dated November 19, 2002, the City of Mount Rainier supports the proposed revitalization plan. No other response had been received from the City of Mount Rainier at the time the staff report was written.
- k. The Environmental Planning Section, in a memorandum dated January 15, 2003, recommended approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-02058.
- l. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) of Prince George's County has no objection to the approval of this revitalization project, according to its electronic communication with the applicant. But the Urban Design Section had not received written comments from DPW&T at the time the staff report was written.
- 14. The detailed site plan, if revised in accordance with the proposed conditions, will 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 from its intended uses.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis of this report, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE residential revitalization Detailed Site Plan DSP-02058, subject to the following conditions:



1. Prior to certificate approval of residential revitalization Detailed Site Plan DSP-02058, the applicant shall make the following revisions:
  - a. Identify the location, number and design of the proposed bike racks on the site plan.
  - b. Provide the depth of the mulch and edge treatment specifications for the proposed tot lots.
2. Prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy by the Department of Environmental Resources, the applicant shall satisfy the Prince George's County Fire Department in regard to compliance with the applicable fire prevention regulations. The detailed site plan shall also be revised to reflect any change that may be required by the Fire Department's approval.
3. Prior to issuance of any sign permits, the applicant shall provide the design of the sign faces for the two existing monument signs on 27<sup>th</sup> Street for review and comment by the City of Mount Rainier and approval by the Planning Board's designee.