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Detailed Site Plan

DSP-06015

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Capitol Heights Shopping Center Location: South side of Central Avenue (MD 214), approximately 200 feet east of its intersection with Shady Glen Drive Applicant/Address: Zimmer Development Company, LLC 111 Princess Street Wilmington, NC 28402	Planning Board Hearing Date:	01/07/10
	Staff Report Date:	12/28/09
	Date Accepted:	01/27/09
	Planning Board Action Limit:	Waived
	Plan Acreage:	29.44
	Zone:	CSC/DDO
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	113,389 sq. ft.
	Planning Area:	75A
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	06
	Election District:	18
	Municipality:	N/A
	200-Scale Map:	201SE07

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
This case was heard by the Planning Board on June 11, 2009 and continued to the agenda date of January 7, 2010. A 113,389-square-foot integrated shopping center with grocery, retail, restaurant, and bank uses.	Informational Mailing:	08/29/08
	Acceptance Mailing:	01/27/09
	Sign Posting:	05/12/09

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: H. Zhang, AICP/C. Jones	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan DSP-06015
Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/009/09
Capitol Heights Shopping Center

The Urban Design staff has completed the review of the subject application and appropriate referrals. The following evaluation and findings lead to a recommendation of APPROVAL, as described in the Recommendation Section of this report.

EVALUATION

This detailed site plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

- a. The requirements of the May 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ);
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the Commercial Office (C-O) Zone;
- c. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) Zone and the site design guidelines;
- d. The conditions of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06139;
- e. The requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*;
- f. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance;
- g. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of an integrated shopping center with a gross floor area (GFA) of 113,389 square feet in the Commercial Shopping Center Zone and a Development District Overlay Zone.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	C-S-C//D-D-O	C-S-C/C-O/D-D-O
Use(s)	Undeveloped	Commercial Shopping Center
Acreage	27.77	27.77
Parcels	1	1
Building square footage/GFA	-	113,389
Of which Building 1-Giant	-	57,960
Building A-Retail	-	15,027
Building B-Retail	-	8,320
Building C-Retail	-	8,612
Building D-Bank	-	4,670
Building E-Restaurant	-	4,800
Building F-Restaurant (Sit-Down)	-	7,000
Building G- Restaurant (Sit-Down)	-	7,000

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Total Parking Spaces	548(min.)-568(Max.)	593*
Of which Compact parking spaces	-	0
Handicapped spaces	11-12	27
Van accessible spaces	3	23
Loading spaces	3	10

*Note: Parking spaces provided are in excess of the maximum permitted by the DDOZ standards as stated in the 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas*. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to remove 25 parking spaces to be within the maximum allowed number of parking spaces.

3. **Location:** The property is located along the south side of Central Avenue (MD 214), approximately 200 feet east of its intersection with Shady Glen Drive, in Planning Area 75A/Suitland-District Heights, and Council District 6.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The site is bounded on the north by the right-of-way of Central Avenue (MD 214), and by the right-of-way of Walker Mill Drive on the west and south sides. Walker Mill Drive is designated as a historic route from Shady Glen Road to Ritchie Road. Across Walker Mill Drive from the proposed shopping center are residential lots zoned R-80

(One-Family Detached Residential) and R-R (Rural Residential). To the north of the subject site, across Central Avenue (MD 214), are properties zoned C-O (Commercial Office) and C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center). To the west, there is a 0.49-acre property zoned C-O (Parcel 194) that is under the ownership of Prince George's County and is the site of a proposed fire and rescue station. To the southwest, there is a property that is zoned C-S-C. To the east of the site are properties in the I-1 (Light Industrial) Zone. The site is within one mile of Seat Pleasant, and two-thirds of a mile from the Morgan Boulevard Metro Station.

5. **Previous Approvals:** The subject site was previously zoned I-1 (Light Industrial). The 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas* (Council Resolution CR-36-2004) rezoned the subject site to the C-O (Commercial Office) Zone. The 2004 sector plan also included the site in the Central Avenue Corridor Node, which is adjacent to the Morgan Boulevard Metro Core.

A revisory petition was filed on June 25, 2004 by the owners of the Santos property (adjacent to the subject site) with the District Council, to request restoration of the I-1 Zone, based on a mistake in the SMA. On October 20, 2004, the Santos petition was amended by adding the adjacent Zimmer property and requesting the C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) Zone instead of the I-1 Zone. On February 14, 2005, the District Council approved Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005 to revise the Morgan Boulevard sector plan and sectional map amendment (SMA) to change the zoning classification from C-O to C-S-C based on a factual error made in the SMA and superimposed a development overlay zone on the property. On September 4, 2008, the Prince George's County Planning Board (PGCPB Resolution No. 08-109) approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06139 and the Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/26/06) for the Capitol Heights Shopping Center, Parcels A and B with conditions. The site also has an approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 32244-2005-00.

6. **Design Features:** The subject site is a currently undeveloped site in the southern portion of the proposed Central Avenue Corridor Node. The site is irregular in shape with two sides fronting public rights-of-way. Existing site features include a stream, with an existing wetland, running from the northwest to the southeast through the site. The site plan proposes two access points from Central Avenue (MD 214), which is an arterial roadway, and one access point from historic Walker Mill Drive. The access point that connects Walker Mill Drive to Central Avenue will be shared with a proposed fire/EMS station on Parcel A. The subject site, Parcel B, consists of two major sections: a 'shopping center' in the southern portion and a 'restaurant row' in the northern portion of the site. The two sections are divided by a stream and two associated stormwater management ponds. The Giant store is identified as an anchor in the DSP and is located in the shopping center section. An unknown number of 'build-to-suit' retail stores will be introduced in the future within the retail section. The restaurant row consists of three pad sites for a bank, a drive-through restaurant, and two sit-down restaurants, which are shown in an attached footprint. All of the stores are oriented toward a private, internal road with the surface parking located on the other side of this internal road. There is an access road connecting the two sections, which are separated by surface parking lots and in-stream stormwater management ponds. The site design has been modified to treat the access drives for the surface parking as internal, private streets to meet DDOZ standards. Staff is recommending that all requirements for private roads be met prior to signature approval. An in-depth discussion of this issue is provided in Finding 7 below.

Pedestrian access and internal circulation are concerns in this DSP. The applicant is providing a five-foot-wide sidewalk along the property's frontage on Walker Mill Drive in compliance with the sector plan. There are no streetscape improvements proposed for Central Avenue (MD 214). An internal pedestrian circulation system with streetscape improvements, such as pedestrian scale

lighting, benches, and garbage cans is proposed, but will need to be improved in several locations to conform to applicable standards and provide a complete pedestrian circulation system. There is a bike rack located in front of the retail section, close to the Giant building.

The proposed Giant store is a one-story, flat-roof, big-box building. The north (front) and east elevations of the Giant utilize rose and buff colored face brick facades and pilasters. The cornices are exterior insulation finishing system (EIFS) cornices, face brick water tables, and pilasters. The entrances are accented by dormers. There are primary and secondary entrances, which utilize a storefront system of window glass in clear anodized aluminum framing. The primary entrance has display windows. The building is articulated by a two-step bump out that displays the signage for the store. Second story windows have been added to give the appearance of a functional two-story building. Additional windows to meet the minimum 40 percent display window requirement and additional porch have been recommended to meet DDOZ standard (Building Design, Window and Door Openings B, which requires a minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 80 percent of a storefront's frontage measuring in linear feet to be display windows). The rear elevation of the Giant is a less ornamented façade with three loading spaces and a compactor, which will require additional screening from Walker Mill Drive. A sightline analysis for this location should be provided in order to help determine the amount of the screening planting materials to be installed at this location. Two conditions have been proposed in the recommendation section to require additional windows to be put on the front elevation of the Giant building and additional landscaping in accordance with the sightline analysis should be provided to screen the rear of the building from the views of Walker Mill Drive prior to certification of this DSP.

Three additional buildings are included in the shopping center for future 'build-to-suit' retail. The front elevations of those building are designed in a similar three-part composition and are accented with hip roof towers to moderate the horizontal dominance of the entire façade. Windows have been added to these towers to create the illusion of a functional second story. The entire shopping center front façade is finished with a combination of split-face concrete masonry units (CMUs), face brick, and an aluminum storefront system. Horizontal and vertical accents are rose and buff toned face bricks, cast stone, and EIFS. Dark gray metal, green and white, and red and white fabric awnings have been added between the primary entrances. The south (rear) elevation incorporates EIFS, standard and ground-face CMUs, 21 service entrances, and four loading spaces. Compared to the front elevation, the rear elevation is less decorative. The side and rear of the retail section will be screened by the proposed afforestation between the building and Walker Mill Drive.

The three freestanding buildings in the restaurant row section are designed in a three-part composition with the same combination of finishing materials as the buildings in the shopping center section. Decorative rose brick and cast-stone bands are used on each elevation. Since no specific tenants are identified, the building-mounted signs shown on the elevations are placeholders. Additional refinement of the elevations and signage will be needed through a revision to the detailed site plan in the future. The side and rear façades of the restaurants and bank are oriented toward Central Avenue. However, additional fenestration and detailing have been added to these elevations to improve their appearance from the road.

The lighting for this site falls into two basic categories: building-mounted and pole-mounted fixtures. The architecture is lit by six types of accent lighting with a diverse range of styles. A materials board indicates that they will be painted with the same white finish, which should help to unify the various styles. The parking lot is lit by pole-mounted lamps of various heights with cut-off fixtures, which direct light toward the ground and prevent light pollution. A decorative post lamp has been utilized to provide additional pedestrian lighting. A second pedestrian-scale

lamp type is proposed and shown on the Landscape and Lighting Plan, but no detail has been submitted at this time.

The detailed site plan indicates that there will be three monumental signs proposed for the subject site. One sign is proposed at the eastern and western entrance from Central Avenue. The other sign is proposed for the entrance to restaurant row from the access drive. A third sign has been proposed for the entrance from Walker Mill. However, DDOZ Site Design, Monument/Freestanding Signs, Standard J, only allows one monument on-site sign along the street frontage. Since the subject site fronts on both Central Avenue and Walker Mill Drive, two monumental signs are allowed. A condition has been proposed to remove one of the monumental signs from the detailed site plan.

The subject site has service and loading entrances on the rear elevations of the buildings. In the shopping center, these loading areas are located on the southern elevation, adjacent to Walker Mill Drive. In the retail section of the shopping center, the loading areas will be adequately screened by a proposed area of afforestation. The Giant store has a large loading dock servicing three trucks at a time and a compactor. The rear elevation of the Giant will require additional evaluation to ensure that views of the loading dock and service areas are screened from Walker Mill Drive. There is an unplanted ten-foot public utility easement (PUE) between the road and the sidewalk. Inside the sidewalk, within the property boundary, the applicant has placed a ten-foot-wide landscaped strip with one shade tree per 35 linear feet, and shrubs in between. In restaurant row, loading spaces face the existing sidewalk on Central Avenue. While architectural details have been added to the rear elevations, these service areas will be visible from the public right-of-way. There is limited screening in this location; only a ten-foot PUE and a ten-foot landscaped strip are located between the rear of these buildings and Central Avenue. Additional screening should also be added.

The applicant has not provided any green building techniques in the submittals, but expressed willingness to utilize green building techniques when possible, during construction and in insulation choices and techniques.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. ***The 2004 Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ):*** The 2004 Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center master plan defines long-range land use and development policies, detailed zoning changes, design standards, and a DDOZ for the Central Avenue Corridor Node. The subject site is in the southern portion of the corridor node. The vision for the node is to enhance pedestrian, cyclist, and bus circulation between the two nearby metro cores. The standards developed for this node implement the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* recommendations for centers and corridors. The sector plan for the corridor node at Central Avenue calls for development and redevelopment of higher intensity residential and nonresidential mixed uses. Linkages to Central Avenue promote pedestrian movement to bus service on Central Avenue and access to the Metro station. Development will not have the same intensity as the Morgan Boulevard Metro Station core areas, but should have greater intensity than the surrounding suburban properties.

Section 27-548.25(b) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board find that the site plan meets applicable development district standards. The development district standards are organized into three categories: public areas, site design, and building design. The applicant has

submitted a statement of justification that provides a detailed explanation of how the proposed shopping center conforms to each development district standard.

The detailed site plan meets most of the standards with the exception of several development district standards for which the applicant has requested an amendment. In order to allow the plan to deviate from the development district standards, the Planning Board must find that the alternative development district standards will benefit the development and the development district, and will not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan. The amendments that the applicant has requested are discussed below.

SITE DESIGN

Parking Requirements Standards

- A. The maximum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for each land use type shall be equal to the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces in accordance with Section 27-568(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, except modified as follows:**
 - 2. The maximum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for Shopping Centers between 25,000 and 399,999 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA) shall be modified from Section 27-568(a) as:**
 - a. All uses except theaters shall provide no more than one space per 200 square feet of GLA.**
- B. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for each land use shall be reduced 20 percent from the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces in accordance with Section 27-568(a) of the Zoning Ordinance. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for Shopping Centers (between 25,000 to 399,999 square feet of GLA) shall be equivalent to a 20 percent reduction of the maximum number of permitted off-street parking spaces (as calculated per Standard A.2).**

Comment: The parking requirements include three steps of calculation to allow parking reduction in order to reduce vehicle trips in the entire sector plan area including the subject site. Standard A sets out the maximum number of parking spaces allowed, which is equal to the minimum allowed number of parking spaces pursuant to Section 27-568(a); Standard B allows a 20 percent reduction of the number as result of Standard A; and Standard C factors in an additional reduction if two or more uses have been proposed in the development.

The parking provided is in excess of the maximum number of parking spaces required by the DDOZ standard of the sector plan. The developer has proposed no reductions, or compact spaces. Staff recommends, at a minimum, that the number of overall parking spaces be reduced to conform to the maximum number permitted by the sector plan. Staff is also recommending that parking spaces that have been shown with an **X** on the plan that are not provided for shopping cart storage should be organized in a logical pattern within the parking lot and utilized as additional planting beds for interior parking lot trees or should be removed from the plan. A condition has been proposed in the

Recommendation Section to require the applicant to remove 25 extra parking spaces. Additional space as a result of removal of extra parking spaces should be converted into landscaped islands.

Parking and Loading Area Design Standards

- A. Surface parking lots shall not be located between the main building on a lot and the street. Parking lots should be located to the rear of buildings. When this is not possible or feasible, parking should be located to the side or rear to the extent possible. In no case may surface parking areas occupy more than 30 percent of the frontage of the lot.**

Comment: The solution proposed by the developer is to create internal, private roads, within the shopping center. This strategy has permitted the applicant to meet build-to lines and other DDOZ standards. By creating an internal street, the parking, which did not conform to the above standard due to its location in front of the building, is now ‘across the street’ from the building.

No subdivision is proposed with this application. The internal streets are private. Therefore, the area occupied by surface parking does not exceed 30 percent along the ‘frontage’ of the lot. However, these surface lots will occupy 100 percent of the frontage along the internal, private roads that are proposed. Staffs is recommending that, at a minimum, the applicant enclose these parking areas with brick walls and landscaping and revise the streetscape to conform to applicable standards for private, internal streets.

- C. Parking lots shall be well lighted to ensure safety and shall be located and designed so as to avoid creating isolated and remote areas. Internal pedestrian paths shall be well illuminated and clearly delineated within parking lots.**

Comment: An internal pedestrian circulation system has been proposed by the applicant with pedestrian-scale lighting. The pedestrian system is not complete in some locations. The trails coordinator has provided recommendations for additional sidewalks within the site to provide a clearly delineated and contiguous pedestrian environment. The recommendations will make the pedestrian system complete. The recommendations have been incorporated into the proposed conditions of approval.

- L. Parking lots shall be screened from roadways and public areas (such as sidewalks, plazas, and abutting open space) with appropriate landscaping, a continuous, low masonry wall, or other appropriate screening techniques. Landscaping shall be provided in surface parking lots, as follows:**

- 1. A landscaped strip consisting of a minimum four-foot-wide landscaped strip between the right-of-way line and the parking lot, with a brick, stone, or finished concrete wall between 36 and 48 inches in height shall be provided to screen the parking lot. The wall shall be located adjacent to but entirely outside the four-foot-wide landscaped strip. Plant with a minimum of one shade tree per 35 linear feet of frontage, excluding driveway openings, and with a mixture of evergreen groundcover and low shrubs planted between**

the shade trees.

2. **Perimeter landscaping from incompatible uses as defined in Section 4.7 of the *Landscape Manual* shall consist of a landscaped strip to be a minimum of four feet wide, with a minimum three-foot-high brick, stone, or finished concrete wall, and/or plantings to consist of one tree and three shrubs per 35 linear feet of parking lot perimeter adjacent to a property line.**

If walls are constructed, they shall be located adjacent to but entirely outside the four-foot-wide landscaped strip and shall provide at least one passage with a minimum of three feet in width per every 60 linear feet when the wall is adjacent to open space, a pedestrian path, public plaza, or other pedestrian-oriented space to facilitate pedestrian movement and foster connections between parking areas and nearby uses.

Comment: The applicant provided a ten-foot-wide landscaped strip, in accordance with the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, on the perimeters along Central Avenue and Walker Mill Drive. The DDOZ standard above modifies that standard to reduce the width of the landscaped strip while requiring a wall to increase the amount of buildable area and encourage higher densities in the corridor node.

A retaining wall will be visible to the loading area behind Giant, not facing Walker Mill Drive. The wall rises from behind the Giant to 16 feet tall. The wall then maintains this 16 foot height as it curves around Giant at the southern entrance. No details or material specification has been provided for any retaining walls. Staff is recommending that the applicant provide details for the wall to ensure it will be reasonably attractive, or divide the wall into terraces to break up the height and monotony. A condition has been proposed in the Recommendation Section of this report to require the applicant to provide the retaining wall details along with the sightline analysis prior to certification.

On the eastern side of the retail section is a steep 1:3 downhill slope away from the parking lot with a retaining wall at the base that will range in height from 2–18 feet. This wall is also quite long and it wraps around the northern edge of the retail parking area and runs along the road leading to restaurant row. This retaining wall is within 12 feet of the boundary shared with the Santos property.

The applicant has proposed to modify the drive lanes of the parking lot to create internal, private drives. However, this concept should be expanded to come closer to conformance to the requirements of the sector plan. The sidewalks in several locations are immediately adjacent to the curb. The parking lot for the proposed Giant has too many entrances and other surface parking features to be considered 'across the street.' Staff is recommending that the above standards be applied to all parking areas adjacent to these internal, private roads. A condition has been proposed to close two driveway entrances that are located farthest away from the main entrance of Giant building prior to certification.

3. **Interior planting shall be required for any parking lot which is 6,000 square feet or larger. A minimum of nine percent of the lot must be interior planting area. For purposes of calculation, all areas within the perimeter of the parking lot shall be counted, including planting**

islands, curbed areas, corner areas, parking spaces, and all interior driveways and aisles except those with no parking spaces located on either side. Landscaped areas situated outside the parking lot, such as peripheral areas and areas surrounding buildings, may not be counted as interior planting area.

Comment: Since the applicant has chosen to utilize internal, private streets with parking lots enclosed by perimeter plantings, the perimeter plantings should not be counted toward the interior planting requirement. Since parking spaces in excess of the maximum allowed should be removed and those spaces converted into interior planting areas, the site plan conforms to this requirement. The site plan should be revised to show the percentage of the interior planting area prior to certification.

M. Convenient and easily visible pedestrian connections shall be provided between parking areas and adjacent buildings and destinations.

Comment: Pedestrian circulation has been provided for within the parking areas. Sidewalks have been provided on both sides of most proposed internal roads. However, the pedestrian allée in front of Giant should be curbed and expanded to include planting beds, if possible. The current proposal has shown this as an asphalt gap with perpendicular parking spaces on either side. This path is only five feet wide, which will not provide sufficient protection from overhanging, parked vehicles. It should also be extended to provide access to the deck near the northwestern SWM pond.

The pedestrian circulation system provided is not complete. The trails coordinator has provided additional comments to address these deficiencies. The site plan will conform to this requirement if the conditions recommended by the Transportation Planning Section are addressed by the applicant.

Landscaping, Buffering, and Screening Standards

A. Public spaces shall be planted with shade and flowering trees, evergreen shrubs, and other appropriate landscaping to provide shade, increase air quality, and treat stormwater, as well as to add interest, visual appeal, and year-round greenery and color. Other devices, such as trellises, covered walkways, pavilions, and gazebos are also encouraged in public spaces to mark special locations and contribute to sense of place.

Comment: A public outdoor plaza space with a deck projecting over the water has been provided on the south side of the SWM pond in front of the parking lot where the Giant building is located. A gazebo along with landscaping and benches has been provided. However, the size of the plaza is not large enough for this shopping center and there is no pedestrian connection from the rest of the shopping center to this plaza.

Monument/Freestanding Signs Standards

A. Freestanding signs located anywhere within the development district shall consist of monument signs between two and eight feet in height mounted

directly on a base and shall be constructed from or faced with high quality materials such as brick or stone. Signs shall not be constructed of tin, aluminum, signboard, and other similar, low-quality materials. New pole-mounted signs shall not be permitted.

- B.** The area of the freestanding sign shall not exceed 1 square foot for each 2 linear feet of street frontage, to a maximum of 100 square feet for each sign for building(s) located in an integrated shopping center, other commercial center with three or more businesses served by common and immediate off-street parking and loading facilities, or an office building complex, as modified from Section 27-614(c). The street frontage shall be measured on the property occupied by the center or complex associated with the sign.
- C.** The area of the freestanding sign shall not exceed 1 square foot for each 4 linear feet of street frontage, to a maximum of 100 square feet per sign for building(s) not located in an integrated shopping center, other commercial center with three or more businesses served by common and immediate off-street parking and loading facilities, or an office building complex, as modified from Section 27-614(c). The street frontage shall be measured on the property occupied by the use associated with the sign.
- H.** Plantings and low masonry walls should be incorporated around the base of signs to soften their appearance and help integrate them into the surrounding urban pattern.

Comment: Three monumental signs have been provided with this DSP. Judged by the graphic the sign face area should be within the allowed limit. The method utilized to light the monumental sign, specific materials utilized, and landscaping surrounding the sign are not sufficient in this sign package. A revised sign package should be submitted with consistent details that comply with sector plan standards prior to certification. A condition has been proposed in the Recommendation Section to accomplish this.

- J.** Only one monument on-site sign shall generally be permitted for each office building complex, single office building, commercial/retail building, shopping center, mixed-use development, or multifamily residential complex. If the property or development project has frontage on two parallel (or approximately parallel) streets, one monument sign shall be permitted on each street, as modified from Section 27-614(d) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Comment: The applicant has proposed three identical signs. One is located 20 feet from the right-of-way on Central Avenue. The second is at the entrance of restaurant row. The third is at the entrance at Walker Mill Drive. The applicant has argued that the development has frontage on two approximately parallel streets, which is correct, but only one sign is permitted on each street. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to remove one monumental sign from the site's frontage along Central Avenue.

BUILDING DESIGN

Height, Scale, and Massing Standards

- C. For the Central Avenue Corridor Node area, buildings shall be between two and four stories in height. The shopping center on the Santos/Zimmer properties shall be anchored by a national grocery chain store, a food or beverage store, which includes a bakery, pharmacy, deli, and seafood counters. No store on the Santos/Zimmer properties may exceed 125,000 square feet gross floor area.**
- H. The massing of a building should be appropriate to its surroundings and the size of its site. Monolithic box-like structures should be avoided.**
- I. The height, scale, and massing of buildings within a large parcel should be clustered so that the relationships create a sense of outdoor space.**
- J. Buildings located at prominent intersections should address the corner by providing proper articulation, appropriate building forms, and an entrance on the corner.**

Comment: The proposed buildings in the subject detailed site plan are single story and therefore, do not technically meet this standard. The standard above calls for a building height of two to four stories because the corridor node is in the Developed Tier within a Development District Overlay Zone. The applicant has responded to this comment by indicating that all of the proposed buildings are 20 feet or more in height. The applicant has also provided some faux second story windows in addition to a small number utilized for office space. In addition to the building height requirements, other building-related standards also clearly indicate the intent of the DDOZ to create a built environment that is highly urban in character.

The fact that the sector plan specifically requires a national grocery chain store and allows up to 125,000 square feet of gross floor area, coupled with the confined two separate buildable envelopes, mandates a suburban site design. The inconsistency between the land use vision of the sector plan and the specific design standards in the DDO Zone is not common and creates ambiguity in the interpretation of the applicable design standards.

The applicant has proposed compensating for the building layout through improvements to the site. Providing an internal street network with improved pedestrian connections and amenities has improved the quality of the outdoor space created by the buildings despite not complying fully with the above standard. The negative effects of the building arrangement are minimized by the provision of improved streetscape and pedestrian environment. Additional building articulations and site amenities have also been provided to further improve the quality of the center.

In addition, the subject site is the only property included in the core area of the Morgan Boulevard DDOZ that is located south of Central Avenue, which is a barrier to any pedestrian connection from the subject site to the Morgan Boulevard Metro station. Given that the surrounding area is still a suburban area served predominantly by

automobile, the current site design is a reasonable solution to meet the site constraints.

Materials and Architectural Details Standards

- A. High quality materials that are durable and attractive shall be used on the façades of all proposed buildings. These materials include, but are not limited to, brick, stone, precast concrete, wood, and tile.**
- D. Low quality materials such as standard smooth-faced concrete masonry units, prefabricated metal panels, and exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS) shall not be used. Imitation or synthetic exterior building materials, which simulate the appearance of natural materials, should be avoided.**

Comment: The proposed buildings are finished with a combination of brick, split face CMUs and EIFS panels. The elevations are generally acceptable, but use of EIFS is prohibited by the standard above. No breakdown of the proposed finish materials has been provided. By looking at the rendered elevations, it seems that EIFS accounts for a large percentage of the wall surfaces. The reason that EIFS is not recommended in the sector plan is that this type of finish material is easily worn out if it is located on the lower portion of the buildings. If they are away from pedestrians, such as they appear to be in this project where the EIFS is located on the upper part of the building elevations, EIFS provides some visual variety of building materials from a design perspective. However, since the standard explicitly prohibits the use of EIFS, the applicant should revise the elevations and remove all EIFS.

- G. Trademark buildings with typical franchise architecture shall not be permitted.**

Comment: Even though the sector plan specifically required a national chain store be placed on this site and the applicant responded by providing a Giant grocery store, the Giant building is not typical franchise architecture. However, certain architectural elements including using of EIFS panels are presented– the Urban Design Section believes that the proposed building is acceptable if the recommended improvements including removal of EIFS in the Recommendation Section will be reflected on the certification package.

Window and Door Openings Standards

- B. Storefronts with retail uses at street level shall provide large display windows. Display windows shall encompass a minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 80 percent of a storefront's frontage (measured in linear feet).**

Comment: This standard has been met to the greatest extent possible on all of the buildings except for the front elevation of the Giant building. Staff is recommending that additional windows be provided on the front elevation and the side elevation facing the entrance from Walker Mill Drive.

Lighting Standards

- D. Proposals for new development shall submit a comprehensive lighting package at the time of detailed site plan review, to include illustrations, plans, or photographs indicating the design, size, methods of lighting fixture attachment, and other information the Planning Board requires.**

Comment: The applicant provides a lighting package with this DSP including lighting fixtures for parking lots, pedestrian pathways and buildings. Pedestrian lighting is proposed on the plan, but no detail has been provided. Details should also be submitted for external lighting for monument signs. Lighting should be shown on all elevations of all proposed buildings. In addition, the lighting details submitted indicate a great diversity of fixture styles. DDOZ standards require consistent and coordinated lighting styles among different lighting types and specifically require that building lighting be coordinated with the site lighting and sufficient lighting be provided to ensure a safe environment is created for patrons, while dissipating at the property line, and taking measures to prevent light pollution. A comprehensive lighting plan should be provided. A condition has been proposed in the Recommendation Section of this report to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board prior to certification.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACES

Parks and Plazas Standards

- A. Public art, such as statues, decorative fountains, and sculpture shall be incorporated into public and private open spaces, and coordinated with appropriate agencies.**

Comment: A plaza area has been proposed on the south side of the SWM pond with amenities and landscaping. In addition to the size of the plaza that staff has recommended be increased, additional amenities including public art should be included as stated in the proposed condition below.

- G. Crosswalks should be provided at all intersections. At locations with high pedestrian traffic, these crosswalks should be safe crosses, with bump-outs, special paving, reflector treatments, countdown pedestrian crossing signs, or street narrowing at corners to provide a greater degree of pedestrian safety (subject to the approval of DPW&T and other appropriate agencies).**

Comment: Crosswalks have been provided in many locations within the subject proposal. Crosswalks will need to be added to the intersections of the ingress and egress drives from the roads adjacent to the site as recommended by the Transportation Planning Section.

- K. Pedestrian circulation should provide convenient and well-marked access to the Metro stations.**

Comment: The subject site is within two-thirds of a mile of the Morgan Boulevard Metro Station, but adjacent to the metro core. The sector plan envisions that the subject site should create a stronger public-transit connection through enhancement of the nearest bus stop by adding a bus shelter and other pedestrian amenities. However, the subject site is located on the south side of Central Avenue, which is a barrier to the pedestrian circulation from the subject site to the metro station. Given the distance from the subject site to the metro station and difficult crossing over Central Avenue, it is very unlikely that pedestrians would walk from this site to the Morgan Boulevard Metro Station.

Street and Site Furniture Standards

- A. Bus shelters shall be provided on bus service routes as determined by appropriate agencies. These shall be constructed with high-quality materials and shall be compatible with the overall character and materials of the mixed-use center in the core area.**

Comment: The applicant has indicated that no bus shelter will be provided with this development. The sector plan indicates that bus transportation from metro cores should be enhanced in the Central Avenue Corridor Node, which is adjacent to the metro cores and offers opportunities for bus transportation. The character of the bus station should be compatible with those in the core area. A bus shelter has been recommended by the Transportation Planning Section to be placed along the site's frontage on Central Avenue subject to final approval of the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) which has the jurisdiction over this matter.

8. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the C-S-C Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.

- a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-461(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, which governs development in commercial zones. The proposed uses including a shopping center, a bank, and restaurants are permitted uses in the C-S-C Zone. In addition, the subject site was rezoned from the I-1 Zone to the C-S-C Zone through a zoning map amendment application, which was approved by the District Council (via Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005) on February 14, 2005, with two specific conditions as follows:

- A. The shopping center on the properties shall be anchored by a national grocery chain store, a food or beverage store, which includes a bakery, pharmacy, deli, and seafood counters.**

Comment: The Giant grocery store is the only known tenant of this DSP. The rest of the retail, bank, and restaurant tenants are still unknown.

- B. No store on either property may exceed 125,000 square feet gross floor area.**

Comment: The Giant grocery store, which has a total gross floor area of approximately 57,960 square feet, is the largest store in the proposed shopping center. The DSP satisfies this condition.

- b. The only regulation in the C-S-C Zone is the front building setback from the street that has been superseded by the build-to-line DDOZ standard. See above Finding 7 for discussion.
9. **Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06139:** The Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06139 with 21 conditions. The following conditions are applicable to the review of this DSP. Other permit-related conditions will be enforced at the time of issuance of the respective permits.

8. **At the time of detailed site plan, the approved technical stormwater management plan shall be submitted for review. The plan shall demonstrate the incorporation of wetland benches and forebays into the stormwater management design for the in-stream stormwater management pond and shall be correctly reflected on the associated TCPII.**

Comment: This information has not been provided with the DSP. According to the review by the Environmental Planning Section (Shoulars to Zhang, April 24, 2009), this information is needed for review. The plan should demonstrate the incorporation of wetland benches, with emergent planting, into the stormwater management design for the in-stream stormwater management pond and should be correctly reflected on the associated DSP, TCPII, and landscape plan.

10. **The applicant, the applicant's heirs, successors, and or assignees shall provide a standard sidewalk a minimum of five-feet wide along the property's entire street frontage of Walker Mill Drive. The sidewalk shall be set back from the curb edge with a green, landscaped strip of at least five feet in width, unless modified by DPW&T.**

Comment: The applicant has provided a standard five-foot-wide sidewalk along the length of Walker Mill Drive with a ten-foot strip (except where the turn lane enters the site) between the curb edge and the sidewalk.

15. **The development of this property shall be in accordance with the conditions set forth in Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005.**

Comment: See Finding 8 above for discussion. The DSP fulfills the conditions attached to Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005.

21. **Total development of Parcel A, excluding a public safety facility by the County, and Parcel B within the subject property shall be limited to uses which would generate no more than 621 AM, 1,612 PM, and 1,545 weekend peak hour vehicle trips. Any development generating an impact greater than that identified herein above shall require a new preliminary plan of subdivision with a new determination of the adequacy of transportation facilities.**

Comment: According to the review by the Transportation Planning Section (Mokhtari to Zhang, May 15, 2009), the proposed development is projected to generate no more traffic than the required AM and PM peak-hour vehicle trips.

10. ***Prince George's County Landscape Manual:*** The 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) have modified the applicable sections of

the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*. Specifically, DDOZ standards for Site Design, Landscaping, Buffering and Screening Standard J, state that Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, and 4.7, do not apply within the development district.

The proposed development for a commercial shopping center is subject to development district overlay standards. See above Finding 7 for discussion.

11. **Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance:** This property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance because the gross tract area is in excess of 40,000 square feet, there are more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland, and there is an approved Type I Tree Conservation Plan, TCPI/026/06, for this site.

- a. The subject site has a previously approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI/001/06-01), dated October 29, 2006. The current NRI correctly shows all of the required information. No additional information regarding the NRI is required with this DSP.
- b. A Type II Tree Conservation Plan (TCPII/141/91) was approved for a portion of the subject property in 1991. A new Type II tree conservation plan has been submitted with this DSP. The total requirement for the 29.44-acre site is 4.56 acres. The requirement is proposed to be met with 0.91 acre of on-site preservation and 3.65 acres of on-site reforestation/afforestation and landscaping. The TCPII meets the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

12. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:

- a. **The Community Planning North Division**—A memorandum dated May 20, 2009, stated that the subject DSP is consistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Developed Tier and conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas* for retail uses per District Council Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005. However, this application does not adhere to the Development District Overlay Zone standards. Specifically, the Community Planning North Division identified the following:

The intent of these standards as stated earlier is to promote an urban town center; however, the large setbacks and one-story buildings reflect the design of a suburban shopping center. Table 10: Summary of Building Regulations, recommends that buildings be set back 10 to 16 feet from the curb edge and be between two and four stories in height (p. 89). None of the buildings meet the standard for setback or height requirements. In addition, façades in the Central Avenue Corridor Node must occupy more than 50 percent of the property's street-facing frontage. Of the total 113,389 square feet proposed, only 23,470 square feet or 21 percent would meet the street frontage requirement.

The Materials and Architectural Details section states "low-quality materials such as standard smooth-faced concrete masonry units, prefabricated metal panels, and exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS) shall not be used" (p. 109). These materials are proposed in the design of the Giant Food Store, as part of this application.

b. **The Subdivision Section**—In a memorandum dated February 12, 2009, the Subdivision Section noted that the property is the subject of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06139, which was approved by the Planning Board on July 17, 2008, and provided an overview of the conditions that are applicable to the review of this DSP. The Subdivision Section concluded that the DSP is in substantial conformance with the previously approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-06139.

c. **The Transportation Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated May 15, 2009, identified five transportation-related conditions attached to the previously approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision, 4-06139, that are enforceable at the time of building permit. In general, the subject property complies with the necessary findings for a detailed site plan, as those findings may relate to transportation.

In a separate memorandum dated December 22, 2009, on review for master plan trail compliance, the trails planner noted that there are no master plan trails that impact the subject property. The trails planner also provided a comprehensive review of the applicable DDOZ standards related to sidewalks and pedestrian environment, and recommended nine conditions that have been incorporated into the Recommendation Section of this report.

d. **The Environmental Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated April 24, 2009, stated that the plans as submitted have been found to address the environmental constraints for the site and the requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-06015 and Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/009/06, subject to several conditions.

In a second memorandum dated December 17, 2009, in response to the review of the revised site plan, the Environmental Planning Section indicated that the revisions shown are minor and recommended approval with the conditions as previously stated on the memorandum dated April 24, 2009.

e. **The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**—In a memorandum dated February 6, 2009, indicated no comments on the subject application.

f. **The Historic Preservation Section**—In a memorandum dated May 8, 2009, stated that the proposed DSP for a shopping center would have no effect on identified historic sites, resources, or districts.

g. **The Permit Review Section**—In a memorandum dated February 17, 2009, provided nine referral comments and questions. The Permit Review Section found that the subject detailed site plan appears to be consistent with the conditions established by the District Council within Zoning Ordinance No. 2-2005. However, concerns were expressed about conformance with sector plan standards, signage, and landscape requirements.

h. The subject application was also referred to the Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T). At the time that the staff report was written, DPW&T had not responded to the referral request.

i. **The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)**—In a memorandum dated

May 12, 2009, stated that an access approval and a permit are required and that the permit is subject to plan reviews and approvals by the Engineering Access Permits Division of the SHA.

- j. **The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—In a memorandum dated February 26, 2009, WSSC stated that there are issues concerning the project that need to be addressed. These comments will be released upon receipt of payment for the WSSC plan review.
 - k. **Verizon, Inc.**—In response to a referral request dated February 5, 2009, Verizon stated the steel post located in the public utility easement (PUE) must be removed (Sheet 4). The applicant, on April 2, 2009, indicated that the steel post has been removed in response to the comment.
 - l. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)**—PEPCO responded via telephone with some comments on requirements and instructions for the applicant to submit information on their website, and indicated that PEPCO's review prior to any action taken on this DSP is required.
13. In accordance with Section 27-285 (b) and Section 27-548.25 of the Zoning Ordinance, the detailed site plan represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, of the Prince George's County Code without requiring unreasonable cost 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 Section recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan DSP-06015 (Capitol Heights Shopping Center) as follows:

- A. APPROVAL of the alternative development district standards for:
 - 1. Site Design, Building Siting and Setbacks Standards, A. 3. (to allow the placement of buildings to be outside of 10–16 feet of the edge of the curb)
 - 2. Site Design, Parking and Loading Area Design Standards, A (to allow the parking to be located partially in the front of the buildings)
 - 3. Building Design, Height, Scale, and Massing Standards, C. (to allow the proposed buildings to be primarily one story high with partially second story)
 - 4. Building Design, Height, Scale, and Massing Standards, H. (to allow the boxy building footprint of a large anchor store to be developed on the site)

B. APPROVAL of Detailed Site Plan DSP-06015 for Capitol Heights Shopping Center and Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/009/09, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to certificate approval of this detailed site plan, the applicant shall
 - a. Provide additional windows to meet the minimum 40 percent display window requirement and additional porch on the front elevation of the Giant building, and remove all EIFS from the elevations with all changes to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
 - b. Provide additional landscaping in accordance with the sightline analysis to screen the rear of the Giant building from the views of Walker Mill Drive.
 - c. Close two additional driveway entrances which are located farthest away from the main entrance to the Giant building.
 - d. Provide a comprehensive lighting package including locations, size, design and types of lighting fixtures for the shopping center to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
 - e. Revise all plans to remove the proposed tree line from the legend and plans, and only show the existing tree line.
 - f. Submit the approved technical stormwater management plan. The plan shall demonstrate the incorporation of wetland benches, with emergent planting, into the stormwater management design for the in-stream stormwater management pond and shall be correctly reflected on the associated DSP, TCPII and landscape plan.
 - g. Add the following note to each sheet of the TCPII that shows reforestation/afforestation areas:

“All reforestation/afforestation and the associated split-rail fencing along the outer edge of all reforestation/afforestation areas shall be installed prior to the building permits for the adjacent lots/parcels. A certification prepared by a qualified professional may be used to provide verification that the afforestation has been completed. It must include, at a minimum, photos of the afforestation areas and the associated fencing for each lot, with labels on the photos identifying the locations and a plan showing the locations where the photos were taken.”
 - h. Provide a comprehensive sign plan for the DSP including sign details such as lighting method to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
 - i. Remove 25 parking spaces from the parking table and from the site plan and one monument sign from the frontage along Central Avenue (MD 214) on the detailed site plan.
 - j. Provide pedestrian amenities such as benches and site furniture along the pedestrian path and public art in or around the plaza area. The plaza area shall be

expanded to approximately twice the size of that currently proposed.

- k. Provide a bus shelter at the site's Central Avenue (MD 214) frontage or provide written evidence from the governing agency that the bus shelter is not needed.
- l. Provide details of the proposed street furniture on the detail sheet.
- m. Provide a minimum five-foot-wide sidewalk along the subject site's entire frontage of Walker Mill Drive, unless modified by DPW&T. This sidewalk shall be set back from the curb edge with a green, landscaped strip at least five feet in width, unless modified by DPW&T.
- n. Provide a minimum five-foot-wide sidewalk with curb cuts and marked crosswalks along the east side of the western access road from Walker Mill Drive unless modified by DPW&T.
- o. Provide a minimum five-foot-wide sidewalk along the east side of the eastern access road from Central Avenue (MD 214) to the private road for the commercial pad sites, unless modified by DPW&T. This sidewalk shall include a curb cut and marked crosswalk across the private drive to the proposed sidewalk along the east side of the access road to the south.
- p. Reconstruct the sidewalk along the subject site's entire frontage of Central Avenue (MD 214) to be a minimum of eight feet in width and separated from the curb by a five-foot-wide landscaped planting strip, per Mandatory Development Requirements C, D, and E of the Sidewalk, Crosswalk and Trails portion of the DDOZ, unless modified by the State Highway Administration (SHA). Provide crosswalks at both access points to the subject site consistent with Mandatory Development Requirement F, unless modified by SHA.
- q. Provide a minimum five-foot-wide sidewalk along the northern edge of the supermarket parking lot from the western access road to the eastern access road.
- r. Provide a crosswalk with curb cuts from the sidewalk along the western access road to the sidewalk in front of the proposed supermarket.
- s. Provide a pedestrian zone of contrasting surface material and/or pavement markings across the private road in front of the proposed supermarket entrance. This pedestrian zone shall link the proposed parking lot with the store entrance and highlight the location of the high volume pedestrian crossing.
- t. Provide a total of 20 bicycle parking spaces at two or more locations throughout the subject site. These locations should be well lit and convenient to building entrances.

- u. All crosswalks and curb cuts shall be marked and labeled on the approved detail site plan and shall conform to Design Standards F, G, and H of the Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Trails Section of the DDOZ (Sector Plan, page 117).
 - v. Provide a note stating “An automatic fire suppression system shall be provided in all new buildings in this DSP, unless the Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department determines that an alternative method of fire suppression is appropriate.”
2. Prior to the issuance of any permits which impact wetlands, wetland buffers, streams or Waters of the U.S., the applicant shall submit to the M-NCPPC Planning Department copies of all federal and state wetland permits, evidence that approval conditions have been complied with, and associated mitigation plans.